



DISTRICT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

Fostering Discrimination-Free Working and Learning Environments

Thursday, June 7, 2018

School Board Office - Board Room

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Board of Education	Deb Butler	Moyra Baxter (<i>Alternate</i>)	
Community	Joyce Brinkerhoff, <i>Community Member</i>	Anima Anand, <i>Kelowna Community Resources</i>	
COPAC	Adam Clarke		
COPVA	Mike Kormany		
COTA	Leigh-Ann Yanow	Lori Dawson Bedard	
CUPE	Colleen Elder		
Central Okanagan Public Schools	Dr. Rick Oliver	Kyle Cormier	Deb Roseleine, <i>Recorder</i>

REGRETS

Aboriginal Education	Joanne DeGuevara		
Community	Latif Kacuri, <i>Kelowna Community Resources</i>		
COTA	Erin Talbot		
COPAC	Sarah Shakespeare (<i>Alternate</i>)		
COPVA	Kathy Weninger		
District Student Council	Isis Darosa (OKM)	Lily Robinson (GESS)	Jessica Proulx (RSS)
International Education	Carol Rimmer		
UBCO	Dr. Catherine Broom		

1. WELCOME

Rick Oliver

Rick Oliver welcomed the following new committee members to the meeting:

- **Anima Anand**, Kelowna Community Resources
- **Lori Dawson Bedard**, COTA Representative

2. AGENDA

Rick Oliver

2.1 Additions to Agenda: There were no additions to the June 7, 2018 agenda.

2.2 Approval of the June 7, 2018 Agenda – APPROVED.

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

3.1 Adoption of the January 25, 2018 Minutes

Rick Oliver

Although there are no changes to be made to the content, the committee decided that meeting minutes will be condensed and summarized, indicating that there was a discussion, with some main points listed and any necessary action to be taken. The January 25, 2018 draft minutes will therefore be reviewed and adopted at the next Human Rights Committee meeting.

4. ACTION ITEMS

4.1 Human Rights Hiring Exemptions

Kyle Cormier

The school district has received a special exemption for both the CUPE and the COTA bargaining units. Once an exemption is granted, the tribunal requests a yearly review or update. Kyle Cormier completed the review for CUPE and Bob McEwen, Human Resources Director, completed the review for COTA.

Background: As an example, the Human Rights Hiring Exemption allows an employer to advertise in a job posting that an applicant with Aboriginal descent will be given preference over other applicants.

The benefit of the special exemption is that if someone were to file a complaint of discrimination with the Human Rights Tribunal, the employer could show that the Tribunal granted them that right of special exemption.

Question arose as to how long the hiring exemption process has been in effect.

Action Item: Kyle Cormier will find out when the Human Rights Hiring Exemption first came into effect and how often it comes up for renewal.

4.2 Diversity of Teaching Staff in the Central Okanagan

Adam Clarke

COPAC is asking if there are processes in place to address the issue of a changing diverse community in relation to a school staff that may not change. What COPAC is asking the district to be aware of is our changing demographics.

COPAC is aware of reports that have indicated that increasing staff diversity in schools with diverse populations is a positive improvement for students. COPAC recognizes that some schools have had changes in demographics and others have not, but they are raising the issue because they feel that our district should start thinking about it now.

Discussion followed.

- o Our whole recruitment process is about finding the best qualified candidates and the best suitability in terms of a match with our district and the positions that are available, with the goal of hiring the best people available.
- o The committee was unsure exactly what COPAC is asking for and what their expectations are. No matter what a job candidate's background is, they will be interviewed and hired (or not hired) based on their abilities, their credentials, and the way they present themselves.
- o In interviews, candidates are given an opportunity to talk about some of their skill set, but they are not specifically asked about cultural competency. We can take it under advisement and do some research into what possibilities there could be in this regard.
- o Our district has a very good process for recruiting and goes through the questions with a committee. Perhaps there can be a question in the interview process where candidates are asked about their experiences of managing a school with a diverse group of people, or asked to describe how they made their school more inclusive using examples. This would be something that we could consider going forward.

Action Item: Request will be made to Human Resources to review the selection process and the possibility of including questions pertaining to cultural competency and experience.

5. INFORMATION ITEMS

5.1 SOGI Update

Rick Oliver

Rick provided an update to the committee.

There are two SOGI links on our district website. One links to a letter that the district sent out to all of our parents and the other links to *Frequently Asked Questions* (FAQ). I would like to thank and give kudos to the Board and the Board Chair. There is some adversity that has shown up and will continue to show up at different meetings across the district. We had a meeting with the Provincial Coordinator and have been made aware that there are some organizations that are pushing to organize as a protest against SOGI.

The district stance on SOGI has been open. We haven't changed the way that we are doing business. We are looking after the safety, comfort, security, and interest of our students. We have had Gay/Straight Alliance and Diversity Clubs in our schools for many years. The district's approach, the Board putting a policy in place a couple of years ago, and us being responsive to the students' requests that have come to this committee, really is just part of the business that we've carried on. SOGI is about providing resources and support for teachers so that they are comfortable supporting kids in classrooms.

Discussion followed.

- o We can keep updating the SOGI FAQs on the site to prevent false information from circulating. If anyone thinks that there are still questions that need to be answered, please let us know and we can keep adding to the FAQ link.
- o We have a small number of parents who are concerned and those concerns are being alleviated as more information becomes available.
- o We want to support our students and our teachers. Our Board, our Superintendent, our leaders in COTA and Admin are really doing the groundwork.
- o We need to look after students first. The Board's direction is to make adjustments in schools where we can, and when a new school is being built, gender-neutral washrooms will be a consideration in the plan. We will continue to go forward as we renovate buildings. An inventory will be done to find out how many of our schools have gender-neutral washroom facilities available to students.

Action Item: Determine the inventory of gender-neutral washrooms in schools.

Rick Oliver

5.2 Harmony Day 2018 Update

Leigh-Ann Yanow

Leigh-Ann reported that Harmony Day was a fantastic, enriching day and that the biggest takeaway was the students' reaction to the conference. Leigh-Ann told the committee that she was at a school yesterday and saw three girls wearing their Harmony Day t-shirts. The event has moved and morphed into more than just one day in our district.

For the next **Living Library Middle School Conference**, the date is currently being scheduled for the end of January, with plans to try to work around the semester turn-around. We received \$5,700 from RBC to purchase SOGI resources. Leigh-Ann received comments from the schools that they were very appreciate of the selection of books that they received as Harmony Day resources.

Moyra mentioned that Leigh-Ann and Rick attended a meeting with trustees from around the region and people were really interested in the Harmony Day resources that had been provided to our schools.

Rick thanked Leigh-Ann for her amazing work on both the conference and Harmony Day. Yesterday at Hudson Road Elementary, the students were placing their "Harmony Hearts" up on the fence. This project was started on Harmony Day. The students painted a message/picture of kindness and/or harmony on a wooden heart. The back of the hearts were pre-painted in rainbow colors so the fence ended up with a rainbow pattern after all the hearts were placed. The parent community was invited to attend the event.

5. INFORMATION ITEMS (Continued)**5.3 Global Schoolhouse 2019 Update*****Joyce Brinkerhoff***

Joyce told the committee that they are hoping for even more students at the next Global Schoolhouse. Last year 1600 district students attended. The Global Schoolhouse will be scheduled a couple of weeks earlier next year to take place before the Family Day weekend and the event will be increased to eight days. Last year the students completed a survey after attending and their comments were profound. Some of the comments went to Mayor's Council and to the United Nations Special Summit.

5.4 WE Day 2018***Rick Oliver***

At the Education and Student Services Committee meeting last night, our Deputy Superintendent let them know that our WE Day Committee met and discussed the WE Day scheduled date of November 22, 2018.

The history of Coquihalla weather over the last five years shows that there are road closures during those two to three weeks in November. Our WE Day Committee decided that safety is a huge concern and that overrides anything else, so our district will not be sending a group of 600 students and staff to take busses to Vancouver at that time of year.

The WE Day organizers may be able to send some speakers to our district at a different time during the year and will be meeting to discuss local schools can be supported. The WE Day organizers are committed to supporting us and would love to work with us. If WE Day is able to send us speakers, perhaps it could tie into Harmony Day or the Mental Health Summit.

5.5 District Human Rights Committee Meeting Dates 2018-2019***Rick Oliver***

Rick provided the committee with a draft schedule of Human Rights Committee meeting dates for 2018-2019. As has been done in the past, there are three set meetings scheduled and two optional meetings that take place in the event that emergent items come up.

- o It was suggested that September 27 be the optional meeting date instead of November and that November/December be set as the next meeting date because that would then place the first meeting of the year after the Trustee elections. The committee agreed that the first meeting date of 2018-2019 will be November/December, 2018 and September 27, 2018 will be changed to the optional meeting date.
- o It was noted that the tentatively scheduled January 24 meeting date will most likely conflict with the BCPSEA's AGM. The committee decided to schedule that meeting for January 31 instead, with the option to change it once the BCPSEA AGM date is confirmed.

5.6 Rainbow Crosswalk***Moyra Baxter***

The Deputy Superintendent has made the suggestion that we have a rainbow crosswalk outside the front door of the School Board Office. The committee was in agreement with this idea and thought that it would be amazing to do this. A Rainbow Crosswalk has already been painted at Mount Boucherie Secondary School.

6. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**6.1 TEDxYouth Talks*****Rick Oliver***

Through TEDxYouth we had a couple of students who would be representative of SOGI give a TEDx talk. Those presentations were videotaped, but they are being edited so they will not be ready for a few months. For our next meeting we will try to have students delivering TEDx talks about their experience. They are pretty powerful.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

Upcoming District Human Rights Committee Meetings
Thursday, February 7, 2019
Thursday, April 25, 2019 (Optional Meeting Date)