

DISTRICT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE
Fostering Discrimination-Free Working and Learning Environments

Thursday, September 24, 2020

Zoom Meeting

4:00 pm - 5:30 pm

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Tracey Beckett Parents for Inclusive Education	Joanne De Guevara Indigenous Education	Naim Cardinal Indigenous Education
Latif Kacuri Kelowna Resources Community	Julia Fraser Board of Education	Moyra Baxter (Alternate) Board of Education
Paula Morrison COPAC Representative	Raquel Steen COPVPA Representative	Violeta Malfair COPVPA Representative
Leigh-Ann Yanow COTA Representative	Lori Dawson Bedard COTA Representative	Simone Gauthier CUPE Representative
Sebastian Sharma (OKM, Grade 12) District Student Council	Dr. Catherine Broom UBC Okanagan Campus	Mary Hope COTA Representative
Dr. Rick Oliver Central Okanagan Public Schools	Kyle Cormier Central Okanagan Public Schools	Cerise Campbell (Recorder) Central Okanagan Public Schools

REGRETS

Anima Anand Kelowna Community Resources	Bill Wang Central Okanagan Local Immigration Partnership	
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INTRODUCTION

Rick asked the members to introduce themselves and welcomed the following new members:

- **Tracey Beckett**, Parents for Inclusive Education
- **Violeta Malfair**, COPVPA Representative
- **Sebastian Sharma**, District Student Council

1. AGENDA

Rick Oliver

Rick acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the traditional territory of the Okanagan (Syilx) People.

1.1. Additions to the September 24, 2020 Agenda

1. Lori Dawson-Bedard requested that a discussion of the Pride video feedback be added. *(Information Items)*
2. Moyra Baxter requested that a discussion of WE Day be added to the agenda. *(Action Items)*
3. Rick Oliver requested to add the topic of resources from FAST Foundation. *(Information Items)*
4. Tracey Beckett requested Inclusive Education Month be added. *(Action Items)*

1.2. Approval of the September 24, 2020 Agenda – APPROVED by the committee with the above changes.

2. PREVIOUS MINUTES

2.1. Adoption of the February 6, 2020 Minutes

The committee reviewed and **ADOPTED** the minutes of the February 6, 2020 District Human Rights Committee meeting.

3. ACTION ITEMS

3.1. Welcome Centre Update

Rick Oliver

The Central Okanagan Public Schools' Welcome Centre helped to settle 307 students and their families into the District and community in 2019/2020, and for school opening this year, staff have welcomed 89 students and their families from 31 countries to the Central Okanagan.

There are also 16 students doing Distance Learning while they wait for the borders to re-open for travel, and 264 other students waiting to come when the borders re-open.

Not a single student coming to Canada from another country has arrived with COVID-19 to date. Our homestay families have been amazing at welcoming students in this time of quarantine and have also been doing a great job connecting with those students waiting to come.

There are currently a total of 1,264 students from 80 countries attending Central Okanagan schools, adding a rich diversity to our educational environment.

3.2. Motion – Discussion

Rick Oliver/Julia Fraser

Rick introduced the following motion from the School Board and passed over to Julia to address:

Establishment of Processes to Assess and Support Education Regarding Systemic Racism

THAT: The Central Okanagan Public Schools Board of Education put in place a process to assess and support education throughout the school district regarding systemic racism; anti-racist education; and historic and contemporary content by and about Black, Indigenous and People of Colour.

Julia remarked that it has been in the news there are other school districts that are including anti-racism material in their curriculum. Moyra explained that the motion was from the Board meeting in July. The motion was also put before the Education and Student Services Committee last night and there was a long discussion about how it should be dealt with. The motion is broad and it was to be determined which committee it should go to. They surmised that it might fit under the umbrella of the District Human Rights Committee, based on the terms of reference. There was discussion at the Board meeting about taking an inventory of what Central Okanagan Public Schools is doing in this regard and that the Deputy Superintendent would discuss with the Superintendent. They will move the process forward.

Rick read this committee's mandate to the members:

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The District Human Rights Committee's mandate is supporting discrimination-free learning and working environments in S.D. No. 23 (Central Okanagan) through the promotion of UNDERSTANDING, ACCEPTANCE, INCLUSIVENESS, and HARMONY.

Discussion continued about whether we are inclusive as we could be with programs, academies, etc. Are they open and accessible to everyone?

It was asked if the motion was meant to include things like religious discrimination and it was noted that this motion came out at the time of Black Lives Matter movement but comments were made from committee members that it does need to be broadened to include tolerance and acceptance of all people. Joanne DeGuevara pointed out that this fits in with the Equity in Action agreement that they have just been working on.

Dr. Broome added that UBCO School of Education has just put out a statement regarding their anti-racist commitment.

There was further discussion regarding the intent of the motion, and whether other types of discrimination should be included such as sexism and disabled/diversely-abled persons.

There was a consensus that a broader range of types of discrimination should be explored and a recommendation should be brought back to the School Board. Rick proposed that the DHR committee do some exercises to come to a common understanding by way of having a workshop at the next meeting on December 3.

It was suggested that we could use some of the Equity in Action process. It was also agreed that it would be good to share the information from UBCO's commitment statement, and information from the KCR's United Against Discrimination project that Latif would provide.

3.3. Equity in Action

Joanne DeGuevara

Joanne gave an overview of the process and shared slides from the Education and Student Services meeting. They gathered a lot of data from different people to come up with their commitment goals over a 5-year agreement.

The group discussed how we are going to address racism, and equity for all. One of the highlights is that an important part of the learning environment for indigenous students is to have indigenous language present and acknowledged in schools. Land-based learning is another key factor.

Joanne noted that Indigenous Education is not always the responsibility of only the Indigenous Ed. staff and it was great to see others such as the ILT participating. The result of the agreement is to outline their hopes and dreams for the year, along with what is already being done.

3.4. WE Day

Moyra Baxter

Moyra retracted her request to discuss WE Day.

4. INFORMATION ITEMS

4.1 Inclusive Education Month

Tracey Beckett

Tracey advised that February is National Inclusive Education month and referred to the resources available through Inclusive Education Canada. As a parent, she previously participated in a celebration at CLE and now as a representative from Parents for Inclusive Education would like to do some things on a broader scope throughout the month. She would like to possibly highlight the successes of inclusion throughout the District, and have activities for students to participate in to create some awareness regarding accessibility, etc.

Moyra said the Board agrees on a list of declarations to make for the year. In February there was so much going on that they decided that apart from Harmony Day, they would all be consolidated into Human Rights Month. Maybe all schools need to know what the sub-categories of Human Rights month are, and perhaps inclusive education can be added to the list. There needs to be a way to get the information out to schools.

4.2 Harmony Day 2020 Report and 2021 Update

Leigh-Ann Yanow

Leigh-Ann Yanow invited Tracey to join the Harmony Day Committee, and Tracey accepted.

There was discussion regarding how to ensure all students feel they belong. Testimonials from marginalized students could be useful to find out how any particular change has made them feel included. Sebastian offered to ask the District Student Council for ideas. Clubs are a good way to include students, as they are accessible to all, but clubs are not running due to COVID-19.

It was noted that there may not be an understanding among students that Harmony Day has anything to do with inclusive education. Harmony Day assemblies and other events at schools tend to be more like any other spirit event at schools, so students may not be getting the gist of what Harmony Day is about. Leigh-Ann agrees with this

assessment and would like to address it. She would like to speak more with District Council representatives about secondary school events.

Harmony Day is scheduled for February 17, 2021. The committee will plan to meet in early October. Like everything else, things are up in the air with COVID-19 so it is uncertain how the conference will work.

Last year the theme was "Gratitude", which followed the School District theme. Harmony Day may keep the theme the same as the District's again this year in which case it would be "Courage".

Leigh-Ann and Raquel would like to include more International students in Harmony Day and are open to mixing things up with respect to ideas. Leigh-Ann will advise regarding when the meeting will be and everyone is welcome to attend.

4.3 Signage Update

Rick Oliver

Last year the District Human Rights Committee supported providing signage in the Okanagan language, and the signs were approved for each school along with a sign acknowledging the traditional territory that the schools are on. The language of the signs translates to "We are happy you've arrived".

4.4 United Against Discrimination Project Coalition

Rick Oliver

Lori Dawson-Bedard would like the membership list for this group so that she can contact on behalf of COTA.

4.5 Pride Video

Rick Oliver

The Pride video went out through the District's Communications Advisor, Justin Schneider. Rick said he did get some positive feedback. Julie Fraser did too, although the feedback was limited. It was suggested that Justin be asked for an update regarding the video's outreach, likes, etc.

4.6 FAST Foundation

Rick Oliver

Rick will share resources from the FAST Foundation which address key topics for students and help support sensitive conversations.

4.7 District Human Rights Committee Meeting schedule

Rick Oliver

December 3rd, 2020 (workshop)

February 4th, 2021

April 22nd, 2021 (optional)

June 3rd, 2021

4.8 Other

- Sept. 30 is Orange Shirt Day (Every Child Matters, honouring Residential School Survivors)
- The members expressed many positive comments regarding today's meeting.
- Equity in Action agreement to be sent out by Cerise to members who are not part of the School District.

5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

5.1 Cultural Sensitivity

Kyle Cormier

Kyle acknowledged that Human Resources and the Equity in Action Implementation Committee will work on this.

5.2 Accessibility in Schools

Rick Oliver

Dr. Peter Molloy was invited to but could not attend this meeting. We will invite him to the February meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:33 p.m.

UPCOMING DISTRICT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Thursday, December 3, 2020

(Workshop to be held at HRES gym)

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2021

Zoom Meeting

ACTION ITEMS SUMMARY

Action Item	Person(s) Responsible	Status
Create workshop on Discrimination For December 3, 2020	Rick Oliver	New