

**DEI Meeting  
January 28, 2021**

Members Attending: Andy Corey, Diane Marsolini, Caitie Parikh, Marie Ramas, Andrew Scott, Gerrell Smith, Tiffany Testa, David Werner

The meeting was called to order by Facilitator Testa. Superintendent Corey had a meeting conflict and arrived at the meeting at 7PM. Minutes were taken by Member Marsolini.

Facilitator Testa presided over approval of meeting minutes from November 5 and January 21.

The November 5<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes were updated by member Scott to reflect comments from the previous meeting. A motion to take the November 5<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes off the table was made by member Parikh and seconded by member Ramas. Facilitator Testa called for a roll call vote and the motion was approved 6 – 0 – 1 (member Werner abstained; Superintendent Corey was not yet present).

A motion was made to approve the November 5<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes by member Parikh and seconded by member Ramas. Facilitator Testa called for a roll call vote and the motion was approved 6 – 1 – 0. Superintendent Corey was not yet present and Member Werner objected.

Member Werner objected to approving the minutes because he feels the meeting minutes are not complete and do not include private meetings and emails.

A motion was made to approve the January 21<sup>st</sup> meeting minutes by Member Ramas and seconded by Member Scott. The motion was approved 6 – 1 – 0. Member Werner expressed the same objection as stated for the November 5<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes.

Rick Barnes, Principal at Hollis Brookline High School attended to provide an update on meetings he has been having with a group of students regarding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The students have described their K-12 experiences in the district. Some of their experiences were difficult to hear. The students are expressing the desire to learn about other cultures and to see changes to the curriculum. They are challenging the status quo and are very interested in the work this DEI committee is doing. The kids want to continue to meet and would like to see policy changes.

Facilitator Testa briefly reviewed the discussion from the January 21<sup>st</sup> meeting. The committee agreed to keep the law in the resolution document. The remaining item for discussion surrounded the use of the graphic demonstrating the difference between equality and equity, and the definition of the word equity.

Member Scott stated there was a need to clarify in words what is demonstrated in the graphic. The words “not outcomes” was included in the definition of equity to clarify the definition the group agreed to.

Member Parikh, Superintendent Corey, Member Ramas, Facilitator Testa and Member Smith expressed support the graphic as they feel it provides clarity for those who are visual learners.

Member Werner described the recent privilege of participating in the US Student Senate. This included a diverse group of highly motivated students. When the students were asked what motivated them to succeed, their response was they were self-motivated. He spoke with a woman from Communist China and her interpretation of equity was state determined outcomes. Member Werner's concern is that others may interpret the word in this way and suggests removing it from the document.

Member Smith stated the goal is to move away from equal outcomes and meet each kid where they are so that they can meet their own goals rather than those set by others. He suggested adding a definition of the word equality to help clarify the difference.

Member Parikh stated the addition of the words "not outcomes" in the equity definition clarifies the intention.

Member Testa expressed concern that removing the word equity is politicizing the document. Equity is a commonly used term in education and listed several materials frequently used in education that use and define equity to mean equal opportunity. (*Mathematical Mindsets* by Joe Boaler, *Building Equity: Policies and Practices that Empower All Learners* by Smith and Frey, *Culturally Responsive Teaching*, by Geneva Gay, *Coaching for Equity: Conversations that Change Practice* by Elena Aguilar, *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity and the Hidden Power of Character* by Paul Tough, *Student Centered Coaching: The Moves* by Sweeney and Harris, *We Got This: Equity, Access and the Quest to be Who Our Students Need Us to be* by Cornelius Minor) She stated in education equity always refers to equal opportunities and not outcomes. The proposed resolution is meant to support the students and is not meant as a political document. It is known if you have 50 students, equity means giving all 50 students the supports they need in order to access the curriculum and learning and in the end, you will have 50 individually different outcomes from fifty different learners.

Member Ramas stated her concerns with the word equality based on history. In the 1960s equality was used to support Jim Crow laws. You can provide equal materials but different quality. There is consensus in the group that none of us are proposing equal outcomes.

Member Scott explained his reasoning for joining this group was the importance of defining the words. He wanted to ensure the words used would be healthy for the community. He expressed support for local control. This group has worked hard to define terms that support a variety of viewpoints and that the community can understand. There are laws that are dictating some of this work and the community should understand that DEI will be a part of the school community. He suggested the wording of the document is inclusive of all students, the definitions are clear and represent views across the political spectrum. He suggested the community members not in support read the document closely as he feels it represents their views as well. He feels there is a significant weakness in the district regarding political neutrality and this is an area for improvement.

Member Werner suggested the following change:

Equity provides fairness in resources and opportunities so that all individual students get what they need. As a district, **we are committed to removal of all barriers** ~~we seek to provide equality of opportunity (not outcomes)~~ to each of our students, helping them access their education in the best way possible for their individual needs and allowing our students to excel to the best of their abilities going forward to prepare to enter a competitive world. We are committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, religion, height, or weight, medical condition. Whether our students experience safe, nurturing home environments, or if they are impacted by physical, economic or developmental challenges our community recognizes that our schools can play an integral role in the facilitation of a student's experience by modeling positive interactions. We understand that creating a culture of mutual respect and value of perspectives can plant seeds of positive change in a child's life.

Facilitator Testa called for a consensus roll call regarding keeping the graphic and equity definition as it is currently stated with no change. The graphic and equity definition remaining in the document was approved 7 – 1 – 0. Member Werner objected. He doesn't disagree with the sentiment but feels there are inconsistencies between the graphic and definition.

Members Werner and Smith propose submitting alternate language. Member Scott will prepare a summary of information exchanged via email.

Member Scott wanted to explain to the community the committee originally formed to provide Superintendent Corey input from varying viewpoints. The committee has no decision-making authority and was meant to exchange perspectives that Superintendent Corey could bring back to the school boards. The impression by some in the community that work was done secretly is not accurate.

Superintendent Corey agreed and stated this resolution was brought to all three school boards in the summer with public input. Two meetings occurred before member Werner brought up RSA-91. After speaking with legal counsel, he agreed to bring the meetings public and reproduced meeting minutes. Nothing has been done in private. Since these meetings have gone public, we have alternated committee work with public input meetings. The next meeting agenda, in two weeks, will review the alternate language suggested by committee members and open again to public input. The public input via chat during this meeting will be appended to the meeting minutes.

Member Ramas called for a motion that following input from the next meeting, the committee will catalog public comments and submit a package with all input to the school boards. The motion was moved by Facilitator Testa and seconded by Member Marsolini. The motion was approved 7 – 1 – 0. Member Werner objected.

A motion to adjourn was made and approved 8 – 0 – 0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:07PM.

Chat comments DEI Committee from 1/28/2021

From Dr. Marie Ramas to Everyone: 06:37 PM

Agenda:1. Approve the past minutes 2. Presentation from Rick Barnes 3. Review resolution

From Pam to Everyone: 06:44 PM

The minutes should not be accepted.

From Pam to Everyone: 06:47 PM

The tax payers of this town object as well. This is wrong. You are not being transparent.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 06:48 PM

This committee is doing soooo many illegal things!!! Wow!!!

Dave is absolutely right.

From Tim Voruz to Everyone: 06:49 PM

Why can't David Speak without being cut off? He's been cut off every time. We gave time to desserts, but not a member of the group.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 06:51 PM

The committee needs to comply with the law, like every other committee in the state.

When committees do things in secret, it means they are doing something wrong.

From Pam to Everyone: 06:53 PM

This is soo wrong. The minutes should NOT be approved unless everything is included.

Dave needs to be listened to. He is 100% correct.

Hi Doug. All of the minutes have been published. I respect your concern. I would recommend to ask Mr. Corey. Since public is not supposed to comment at this point, please don't misinterpret my lack of response as disrespect

From Pam to Everyone: 07:11 PM

Could not agree more. Equity will only hurt our kids and our school system.

From Sherry to Everyone: 07:13 PM

I couldn't agree more.

From Tim Voruz to Everyone: 07:15 PM

Agree to remove equity. The word equity is too confusing and used by too many people in different ways. We all want the equal treatment of the children in the school with the same opportunities.

From Paula Ellis to Everyone: 07:16 PM

100% agree on remove equity

From Heather Niebel to Everyone: 07:16 PM

remove equity... I too agree

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:19 PM

Equity means socialism/communism, folks.

From bob cimon to Everyone: 07:19 PM

Remove Equity it is political and confusing

From Pam to Everyone: 07:19 PM

It absolutely is. Those books are what are wrong with our educational system. Many of us do not agree with what you are pushing on our curriculum and our children. You are 100% making this political. We already have policies and do not need this.

From bob cimon to Everyone: 07:20 PM

Are those books part of the curriculum in Hollis

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:21 PM

Who do they think they are kidding? This committee is ultra-political toward communism. Wonder why they keep meetings and minutes secret and won't allow public participation? Hmmm.

From Pam to Everyone: 07:22 PM

Enough... Seriously. This hatred needs to stop.

From Deana to Everyone: 07:22 PM

I agree, remove equity. our children deserve to make their own path , views and values without this being pushed upon them

From Sherry to Everyone: 07:23 PM

Lets just say equal opportunity.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:24 PM

This "Dr" is a master at brainwashing people. She goes either way depending on the feedback she hears. Why are we paying this woman to do this? All of our kids do have equal opportunity.

From Pam to Everyone: 07:24 PM

Our children need to be taught to think for themselves and NOT taught what to think.

You can teach whatever you would like in your own home. This should not be a part of the curriculum.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:25 PM

Actually, no, definitions don't change. Look in the dictionary. You can't invent your own definitions, sorry.

It's only legal for all meeting and all minutes to be available to the public. It's the law. Are you above the law?

No, they don't

No need to be confused. Just look in the dictionary.

From Sherry to Everyone: 07:29 PM

If we have policies that already do that, why are we doing this now?

From Pam to Everyone: 07:30 PM

Then why are you pushing this?

Why?

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:31 PM

They apparently want to create new definitions for words in the English language.

How many students at HB have difficult outcomes?

From Pam to Everyone: 07:31 PM

You are going too far. Soooooo many do not want this. These efforts should be going into our kids.

From Doug Davidson, Hollis to Everyone: 07:32 PM

BTW, if the 'Race' situation is as 'bad' as we are hearing or alluding too...How did we get her in the year 2021.?

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:32 PM

Has anyone at the school put this much effort into improving the curriculum? Answer: Never.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:33 PM

Where is the problem in our SAU that resulted in the need for this?

Where is the evidence those things are under attack?

From Dan Glass to Everyone: 07:35 PM

The intensity of the resistance to this demonstrates the need for it. If there was no need, it would have been little more than a footnote, causing no disruption at all.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:35 PM

Maybe it's programs like this that actually cause the division. Ever consider that?

From Heather Niebel to Everyone: 07:35 PM

I agree Monica. Evidence?

From Pam to Everyone: 07:36 PM

We are falling so far behind in curriculum with Common Core that the town's voted out, yet was implemented. How on earth are these efforts not going in to needed areas like that?

From Dan Glass to Everyone: 07:36 PM

Why are you afraid of it?

From Pam to Everyone: 07:36 PM

You are forcing our children to see color where they NEVER did before.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:37 PM

Because it's easier to sow fear in the public than work to achieve academic greatness.

From Heather Niebel to Everyone: 07:37 PM

I may of missed it, did anyone reach out to MS/HS kids about their thoughts?

From Stacie DeJoie to Everyone: 07:38 PM

I'm looking guard

I'm looking forward to reading the document based on Andrew's description. Where can I find it?

From Tania to Everyone: 07:39 PM

re: "seeing color"...this is around diversity across many domains. What is the resistance?

From Pam to Everyone: 07:39 PM

The kids don't have a voice and are shut down very quickly if their views are not inline. So much pressure is being put on them in these areas. They are not allowed to just be kids.

From Tania to Everyone: 07:39 PM

I believe the document was attached to the board meeting agenda.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:39 PM

Because this rhetoric divides people

From Sherry to Everyone: 07:40 PM

Dave said it perfect.

From Doug Davidson, Hollis to Everyone: 07:40 PM

Hey Folks, Common Core was resoundingly vote out in the COOP/SAU (over 70%) several years ago. Yet, those voices where not heard by the respective Boards and the taxpayers were ignored. So, why do we think that anything this Committee produces will reflect the best interest and voice of the voters, given this Committee has been operating in secret until recently?

From Werner Niebel to Everyone: 07:41 PM

The fact that disruption is cited as a prerequisite for policy is very troubling.

From Tania to Everyone: 07:41 PM

i disagree with you. I don't feel acknowledging my identity is divisive. Neither do my children.

From Deana to Everyone: 07:41 PM

I'm curious as to how the group of 17 high school students that have been meeting with Rick were selected?

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:41 PM

Exactly, the SAU does not do as the voters have asked for many years. Why is that?

From Pam to Everyone: 07:41 PM

None of this is OK. Thank you David.

From Allison to Everyone: 07:42 PM

he JUST read it to you!

From Pam to Everyone: 07:42 PM

You do have power and you affect our children.

From Heather Niebel to Everyone: 07:42 PM

Thank you David!!!

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:43 PM

It's not for the benefit of the students, that's for certain.

Maybe you should take public comment to help you decide. Novel idea!

From Pam to Everyone: 07:43 PM

STEP BACK AND LEAVE IT ALONE.

From Doug Davidson, Hollis to Everyone: 07:43 PM

Yes, Dr. Ramas, Exactly, Start over with FULL transparency and public input opportunities at each meeting. Starting with: What is the problem we are trying to solve?

From Pam to Everyone: 07:44 PM

You make so many of us feel so powerless.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:45 PM

Nothing about this sounds like American ideals, logic, or reason.

How can the definitions be clear if they are always changing? Hmmm.

Don't pass the buck.

From Kelly Zakar she/her/hers to Everyone: 07:48 PM

Equity means that EVERYONE has access to the tools/resources that they need to be successful

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:48 PM

There is no way the school is going to help kids with advanced math skills. You've got to be kidding.

From Doug Davidson, Hollis to Everyone: 07:49 PM

What was the date this become public?

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:49 PM

No, that's not what equity means.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:49 PM

No, that's not what equity means.

From Andrew Scott to Everyone: 07:49 PM

<https://www.sau41.org/administration/114>

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:49 PM

That's equality, not equity.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:51 PM

Plus, everyone already has access to everything just as everyone else does in our schools.

From Kelly Zakar she/her/hers to Everyone: 07:51 PM

Equity involves trying to understand and give people what they need to enjoy full, healthy lives. Equality, in contrast, aims to ensure that everyone gets the same things in order to enjoy full, healthy lives. Like equity, equality aims to promote fairness and justice, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same things.

From Kelly Zakar she/her/hers to Everyone: 07:50 PM

I'm sure these definitions have been discussed many times, great definitions for these important terms are found on the Annie E. Casey Foundation [https://www.aecf.org/blog/racial-justice-definitions/?gclid=Cj0KCQiA3smABhCjARIsAKtrg6l6cRxSr5YGUfgEqgAW9rbf469Qz6rt2QO-dHVI7Eb\\_v6JA77NfuioaAg71EALw\\_wcB#](https://www.aecf.org/blog/racial-justice-definitions/?gclid=Cj0KCQiA3smABhCjARIsAKtrg6l6cRxSr5YGUfgEqgAW9rbf469Qz6rt2QO-dHVI7Eb_v6JA77NfuioaAg71EALw_wcB#)

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:51 PM

Plus, everyone already has access to everything just as everyone else does in our schools.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:52 PM

That statement is about as political as you could get, Kelly.

No wonder these meetings were kept secret with no minutes for several months.

From bob cimon to Everyone: 07:53 PM

yYrs

From Deana to Everyone: 07:54 PM

Thank you David

From Kelly Zakar she/her/hers to Everyone: 07:56 PM

From Merriam-Webster Dictionary: Equity is often related to justice or proportional fairness. Additionally, it is often seen in financial contexts relating to property or one's share of a company.

Equality differs from equity in that it relates more to sameness or equal distribution. In society, equal treatment does not always produce an equitable result.

From Brooke to Everyone: 07:56 PM

Thank you Mr. Werners

From Werner Niebel to Everyone: 07:56 PM

Yes

From Pam to Everyone: 07:56 PM

You are only close to what YOU want to implement. Many are not in agreement and the process with secret meetings should never be allowed. The public has not been involved.

From Doug Davidson, Hollis to Everyone: 07:56 PM

And let's please add the following statement: "Virtually NO public input was requested or included in the document."

From Heather Niebel to Everyone: 07:56 PM

yes please...

From Sherry to Everyone: 07:57 PM

We are the PEOPLE...doesn't matter how many hours you worked on it. These are our KIDS!!!

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:57 PM

Equity = Communism. Study history.

From Doug Davidson, Hollis to Everyone: 07:57 PM

"And two thirds of the process was held in secret."

From Sherry to Everyone: 07:58 PM

Students are not over 18 and should not be voting on this.

From Pam to Everyone: 07:58 PM

You had meetings that were not public and the minutes are not even available.

From Heather Niebel to Everyone: 07:58 PM

Some of us didn't even know this was going on in the beginning...

From Werner Niebel to Everyone: 07:58 PM

@monica... That is why is I said disruption cited as a prerequisite for change is troubling

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:58 PM

I've been a reporter for many years and have never, ever seen a board operate in this manner. And I've seen some very corrupt ones in my day.

From Deana to Everyone: 07:59 PM

it seems there are only certain students selected to give their opinions on this idea

From Pam to Everyone: 07:59 PM

Select students

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 07:59 PM

@Deana I'm sure they are

From Heather Niebel to Everyone: 07:59 PM

what I heard about making sure all the students get what they need academically and socially is something that this district already does? am I wrong...

From Doug Davidson, Hollis to Everyone: 08:00 PM

David Werner's remarks represent Many of us who are now just becoming aware of this 'process'.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 08:01 PM

Could Supt Corey send out a town wide email out with links to the minutes?

From Deana to Everyone: 08:01 PM

many of us just found out this was going on. please Mr Corey send this out to everyone .

From Pam to Everyone: 08:03 PM

They are only our children Scott.

From Kelly Zakar she/her/hers to Everyone: 08:03 PM

I've been aware of this group since this summer... this is a committee formed to advise the superintendent, not the school board(s)... I agree with Mr. Scott, it would be great to catch those up who are new to this process.

From Tania to Everyone: 08:03 PM

As far as I witnessed, there was a move in the summer to discuss DEI. A group of community members were invited to start these meetings, and there was announcements at the meetings to open to folks if interested.

From Sherry to Everyone: 08:04 PM

Please post all the meeting notes on the school page to include the emails. We the People want to see it.

From Tania to Everyone: 08:04 PM

The DEI initiative was part of the agenda at the various board meetings and public input was given.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 08:04 PM

It's state law that any committee meeting must be public and have minutes provided to the public. It has nothing to do with perspective or excuses. It is law.

From Tania to Everyone: 08:04 PM

The people have had access to it.

From Kelly Zakar she/her/hers to Everyone: 08:05 PM

As a member of the public, I've logged into as many zoom meetings as my schedule has allowed.

From Pam to Everyone: 08:05 PM

It's freight train and opposing opinions clearly were not listened to. You just continued on.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 08:05 PM

It has nothing to do with feelings. It is the law.

From Tim Voruz to Everyone: 08:05 PM

People have not had access to the private meetings and emails.

From Tania to Everyone: 08:06 PM

As a Brookline resident, I am just describing my experience to counter the misinformation being put forth here.

From Doug Davidson, Hollis to Everyone: 08:06 PM

As a tax-paying parent with 2 HB grads and a third (5th grader) in HB Schools, as a former HS teacher of Gov't, Afro-Asian Studies, Constitutional Law, Ranking Member of the COOP Budcom, and student of Robert's Rules of Order...To see this group so far along with little consideration to Transparency and Public In-put, I am aghast that this has gone on for so long. This sort of meetings Must, by law, have FULL transparency, published minutes and public input. That has not happened here.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 08:07 PM

If you're not following the law, the amount of energy and work is irrelevant.

From Pam to Everyone: 08:07 PM

Why are the "private" meetings not being addressed? They are not allowed and have driven this process.

From Kelly Zakar she/her/hers to Everyone: 08:07 PM

As a Brookline resident, I have had access to these zooms and have watched intently and have appreciated the openness of the committee, and the generosity of the committee members who are putting themselves out here in a very vulnerable way.

From Tim Voruz to Everyone: 08:08 PM

This should be viewed as a fair and transparent process to give community trust. The private meetings and emails not being released makes people question the intentions.

From Doug Davidson, Hollis to Everyone: 08:08 PM

It's SHAMEFUL. All the nice chat does not make up for the rules and opportunity for input not being paramount.

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 08:10 PM

You're going to question a 40 year attorney? Wow.

From Doug Davidson, Hollis to Everyone: 08:12 PM

"ouch"

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 08:12 PM

ouch!

From Michelle St. John to Everyone: 08:13 PM

what's shameful is that people are trying to stifle a DEI initiative

From Monica's iPhone to Everyone: 08:13 PM

okay, what kind of ice cream is everyone going to eat now?