

## **We Rise Together Advisory Council October 16, 2017 – Meeting Minutes**

- 1. Welcome and Introductions (Leslie Grant, School Effectiveness Lead, Peel District School Board)**
  - Start time: 6:20 p.m.
  - Introductions were given by council members, who each provided one word to describe their top priority of the We Rise Council (WRC).
  
- 2. Terms of Reference (Sharon Douglas, Co-Chair, We Rise Together Advisory Council and Director, Community Investment, United Way of Peel Region)**
  - a. Sharon was chosen to be a co-chair on the WRC to ensure a community representative presence was felt.
  - b. The Terms of Reference is a guideline for the council to follow, outlining the roles and responsibilities of members who sit on the council.
  - c. Possible changes to consider adopting as apart of the Terms of Reference are as followed;
    - PDSB Staff should abstain from voting allowing community members, parents and students to vote exclusively.
    - Two parent representatives per city should sit on the council.
    - Redefine “safe environment” as listed in the ‘Purpose’ section of the terms or remove/replace the term.
    - Progress updates and time frames of updates should be indicated.
    - How should the PDSB receive feedback from the WRC? Should the council issue an annual report (report card) or summary of concerns/issues?
    - Should we request or have measurables/data such as decrease in suspension rates to ensure the council meets its mandate?
    - Currently there is no race-based census data at the PDSB but will be available in the future.
    - A ratio of staff versus community members, parents and students on the WRC will be confirmed. Currently there are approximately 12 staff on the WRC and approximately 15 community groups.
  - d. WRC members were instructed to email co-chairs Trustee David Green and Sharon Douglas with recommended changes to the Terms of Reference by Oct. 31, 2017.

### **3. Review of Facilitating Access, Change and Equity in Systems (F.A.C.E.S.) Report (Sharon Douglas)**

- a. United Way of Peel Region's Black Community Advisory Council, in collaboration with the Social Planning Council of Peel, the Black Community Action Network and the F.A.C.E.S. Collaborative launched the 2015 F.A.C.E.S. report on Monday, May 4, 2015.
- b. The F.A.C.E.S. report– examines the social well-being of Black youth in Peel Region and the supports needed to ensure the opportunity to thrive. The research presented is a compilation of demographic and socio-economic data as well as key interviews with service providers and Black youth themselves. Report link: <http://www.unitedwaypeel.org/faces/>
- c. The report can be used as reference guide for the WRC since many of the recommendations made, as a result of the report, is inline with the WRC's 4 pillars. Five out of the seven F.A.C.E.S. recommendations are already being examined by the WRC.

### **4. *We Rise Together* focus area reports**

- a. **Deliver anti-Black racism and bias awareness professional development (Kervin White, Principal, Peel District School Board)**
  - Training is facilitated by Dr. Beverly Jean Daniels.
  - Training began with all senior staff.
  - An overview of the historical context of race and racism in Canada such as issues of "White Privilege" was given.
  - Best Practices of working with Black students were discussed at length.
  - The training takes place for two, half-day sessions.
  - Dr. Daniels advised attendees to scan their school environments and staff to determine hindrances that could limit Black student success.
  - The training will be researched based using surveys and evaluations of participants to determine if the outcome of the training had an impact on staff.
  - Training is mandatory for all senior personnel. Some of those in attendance included psychology staff, Principals and Vice-Principals, social Workers, supervisors, senior administration and staff coordinators
- b. **Integrate the experiences of Black Canadians into curriculum (Yonnette Dey, Prinicpal, Peel District School Board)**

- Develop lesson plans and resources to embed the Black Canadian experience into the Grade 10 mandatory history curriculum and the Grade 11 Black Studies open course for the 2018-2019 year. Grades K-12 will also see these changes beginning Sept. 2017.
- A meeting with teachers at David Suzuki has been scheduled for Oct. 17, 2017 to discuss the above and another meeting will follow with other secondary school teachers. Date to be determined.
- The *We Rise Together* Monograph, in draft form, is being reviewed by Dr. Beverly Jean Daniels. The monograph compiles resources for teachers to access and use in their lesson plans.
- Concerns raised by council members: the current curriculum must be reviewed to see what is missing, continuum of a pathway to success must be outlined for students and staff, the presentation of lessons must be considered, the PDSB should include more speakers from the Black community to come into schools and speak with students.
- The *Future We Want* 2015 report explores the PDSB's approach to inclusivity and can be used as reference guide for the WRC. Report link: [http://www.gobeyondwords.org/The\\_Future\\_We\\_Want.html](http://www.gobeyondwords.org/The_Future_We_Want.html)

c. **Inspire Black student leadership and engagement  
(Rasulan Q. Hoppie, Principal, Peel District School Board)**

- A Teachers Symposium has been formulated to provide teachers with the knowledge to help Black male students form leadership groups within their schools. Takes place on Oct. 25, 2017
- There are two upcoming leadership conferences happening on May 10 and May 11 at the middle school and high school level to encourage Black male students to thrive academically. Mentors from the Black community will attend to provide valuable support to students.
- Concerns raised by council members: Black females are excluded. Will there be any attempt to include them or have a separate conference just for girls? Student engagement should be tracked to determine which schools Black male students are coming from to attend the conference.

d. **Engage with the community (Leslie Grant)**

- Parent council vacancy positions were posted and 56 applications were received.
- One parent from each city (Brampton, Caledon and Mississauga) will be selected to sit on the council.
- Peel Association of African Canadian Educators (PAACE) on Sept. 18, 2017 spearheaded a parent engagement event. On Oct. 28, 2017 another event will be held. Details to follow. Contact for PAACE is Gale Solomon-Henry.
- The first initiative (of the Parent and Community Engagement pillar) was to create the WRC of community members, parents, students and staff to increase engagement and input.

- The WRC needs to decide what to do with the remaining parental applicants. Suggestion: create a Parent Sub-committee of which one parent from the committee will be a liaison for the WRC.

## **5. The Journey Ahead/Peel Student Census (Farrell Hall, Manager of Workplace Equity, Peel District School Board)**

- a. Deferred to the next WRC meeting.

## **6. Other Business:**

- a. Suggestions:
  - An overview of the PDSB educational system should be presented to WRC members.
  - A 'Student Voices' section should be added to the agenda/minutes: Student representatives recommended the WRC examine the high rate of Black student suspensions in the PDSB. The council should also examine extra-curricular involvement to determine if groups/clubs are safe and inclusive spaces for Black male students as some are more inclined to join sport teams and shy away from drama classes because they feel uncomfortable due to their race.
  - Add an 'Updates' section to the agenda.
  - Possibly creating a student sub-committee to ensure student voices are being heard and that we as adults are not pushing our agenda onto them expecting them to adapt. As with the parent sub-committee, a representative should liaise with the WRC from the student led group.
  - Bring questions to each meeting to be addressed.

## **7. Meeting Adjourned: 8:12 pm.**