

CITY OF HOLYOKE

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

DEI SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE HOLYOKE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Monday DECEMBER 13, 2023

TIME: 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

DEI Sub-Committee Mr. Collamore, Mr. Romero , Ms. Feliciano, Dr. Rivera Colón, called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m. and announced that pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, s. 20, attendees are hereby informed that a video and audio recording is being made of the meeting and the meeting is being live-streamed via zoom.

Present:Mr. Romero, Dr. Rivera Colón, Ms. Feliciano and Mr. Collamore, Ms. Feliciano

Additional Attendees: Mr. Moguel, Mr. Soto, Jay Whelihan

Item #1- Updates on Holyoke Public Schools' Equity Task Force

Mr. Moguel explains how he facilitated the Affinity Group and how he Modeled it. The Affinity group will come back together on January 9th to Finalize that plan. The Intended plan is to get an affinity group by mid to late February 2024. We are using a Racial Healing handbook to help guide these affinity groups.

Dr. Rivera Colón opens the floor for questions for Mr. Moguel and the affinity group. She also attended that meeting and expresses how energized and how powerful the philosophical aspect of racial healing is.

There are no questions. Moving on to Item number 2.

Item # 2 Item 2: Discussions create an equitable and inclusive process to rename the replacement Peck School building:

- Dr. Rivera Colón starts by asking for permission to suspend the rules to read a public comment that actually came through for this meeting, normally we don't get to read public comments during a subcommittee meeting.

-Ms. Feliciano Motions to allow permission to read the public comment. Mr. Collamore seconds that motion.All in favor Motion passed.

- Dr received an email from Mr. Grant Sullivan the Email Discusses the Naming of the Future Middle School. Implying we should touch up on the history of Holyoke and the history of Peck Middle School. Let us learn some of the brief history of Holyoke's Schools names.
- Dr. Rivera Colón Reads history of William Peck. He was a Young 25 year old Superintendent of Holyoke Public Schools in the 1920. Most of the changes he initiated are now generally accepted as sound modern educational doctrine. As part of the summary we got all of the accolades that Mr. Peck had.

- Dr. Rivera Colón now asked how we want to move forward with the naming process and then be able to make our recommendations to the Full School Board. What do we do ?
- Mr. Collamore explains the application process to vote for the school name. We narrow down the applicants to 3 Names. Each applicant is interviewed and we then vote on the 3 members.
- Dr. Rivera Colón reiterates that their job in this subcommittee is to create the Process for naming this new school building.
- Superintendent Soto joins in via Zoom. Soto expresses that we have examples of a community wide process when Holyoke Public Schools went through a rezoning process. HPS developed a well thought of inclusive process. Soto knows this is not his decision but he wants to support the School Committee on how we're going to make this an inclusive process and we have models that we can share and develop for the Naming of the School.
- Superintendent Soto brings up a valid point, Renaissance School was never named after a person. What is the naming process Holyoke wants? Should this new school be Named after a Person or would they want it to be Named after a word that expresses the goal of that specific school . It's good to get feedback from the community about something they want to name after a person or a great educational adjective.
- Ms. Feliciano seconds that it would be great to hear from the community. The School Committee is now doing their board meetings that would be a great time to bring up the topic and get some feedback.
- Dr. Rivera Colón states this a prime opportunity to connect with the community so that they see what they say serves a purpose. We have a policy act of Naming Facilities In selecting a name the committee will give higher preference to deceased persons. Preferably local people that made significant contributions to education.
- Ms. Feliciano asked to clarify that the School Committee is the one that makes a decision: the city council can give input but the vote goes to the school Committee ?
- Mr. Collamore says the vote is based on the School committee not City Council.
- Mr. Soto expresses that we engage in these feedback sessions and they should be very social. Find the core values if the school is named after a person or a name let's gauge it by the decisions of our Community. Do we do focus groups or do we develop a survey? There are so many ways to get input from the city.
 - Dr. Rivera Colón this brings us to our next question: what should be our next steps to develop the process 2025 will come sooner than we think ?
 - Mr. Collamore asked whether this will be a new building or a replacement Building and we will get a better understanding for the school committee?
 - Mr. Soto clarifies that it is a new building . The process can be the building remaining the same name? There can be multiple options of different variations: A person, a word or the same name.
 - Dr. Rivera Colón entertains a motion for the subcommittee that allows her as the chair to meet with Mr. Soto to develop a draft process of what this process can be so that way we can bring the draft.
 - Ms. Feliciano Motions for Dr. Rivera Colón to meet with Mr. Soto and Erin Brunelle.

- Motion Passes to allow Dr. Rivera Colón
- Dr. Rivera Colón Motion Ms. Feliciano seconds that motion to suspend the rules to allow Jay Whelihan to speak.
- Ms. Feliciano votes yes on the motion, Mr. Collamore votes yes for the motion. Motion passes to allow Dr. Rivera Colón to meet with Mr. Soto and Mrs. Brunelle.
- Jay Whelihan brings up that the town of Agawam is going through the same challenge where they are renaming a school after the current Mayor and they received some backlash. It's almost a negative point for the community but in our City we want a positive outcome.
- Moving onto item 3

Item 3: To Vote to approve the past meeting Minutes

- Dr. Rivera Colón comments that we have approved the September 2023 minutes as we cleared from HR.
- Mr. Moguel clarifies all the minutes were approved. Terminology was accepted.
- Motion to approve the Minutes from October 23 2023
- All in favor voted.
- Motion Passes
- Motion to adjourn. Ms. Feliciano motioned yes.
- Mr. Collamore seconds that motion
- Motion passes- meeting adjourned.

Adjournment: 6:42 PM