

Equity Advisory Committee Minutes



Date: 06/02/21

Time: 5:00-6:30pm

Location: Zoom

Agenda

I. Check-In (5 minutes)

- a. Review and Approve Minutes
- b. Motion to approve by Paras, seconded by Lulu Roarick
- c. Jayne motion to approve tonight's agenda, seconded by Paras
- d. Updates from committee members

II. Infinite Campus – LGBTQ Updates (Matthew Haxton)

- a. Matthew Haxton - Invited to talk about things we've been working on for our student information system. We are switching from Power School to Infinite Campus. This keeps all of our records for our schedules and student information.
- b. One reason we were switching was that there were some issues for performance for power school, and most schools that used this system were quite a bit smaller. With this new system there is more customization ability, and more access to data we can collect.
- c. Both Infinite Campus and Power School are older platforms and have limitations, and we are not able to do customize everything exactly how we'd like it but it is more customization than we currently have.
- d. Parents will have a "Parent Portal" and in the online registration students will have a new way to add their information in the demographics screen that differs from Power School. Instead of

- saying “First Name, Middle Name, Last Name”, it now says “Legal Name/Gender” to indicate that this is data that needs to be reported to the state.
- e. There is now a question that Says “Does your student’s identity (In terms of gender, preferred pronouns, or name) differ from their legal status? If you select yes there is a drop-down to enter first name, last name, and gender that is appropriate to the child’s gender identity.
 - f. Once this information is entered the staff will see the students populated name and gender instead of the legal name/gender populating.
 - g. There is a flagging process for when a parent selects that the child’s gender status does not match legal gender, this then alerts the secretaries that they will need to enter “Protected Identity Information” which cannot be seen by teachers. This will be the student's legal name and gender that needs to be entered into the state. Only those with elevated access can see this information, and it is only used for state reporting. The student's preferred name and gender will populate for all other things like report cards, attendance, student’ IDs. Etc.
 - h. **Feedback/Comments**
 - i. Dasia – The backdoor with the legal information looks very good. One question, do the actual students have the ability to access their own information, or is this something that parents can only enter in? If parents are not supportive of student’s identity, can students change their names without this?

- ii. Answer: Matt – They can't change it through the portal, but they can go to the building secretary and it can be updated from there.
- iii. Dasia – Will this be for teachers as well, or just for students?
Can teachers list their pronouns?
 - 1. Answer: Matt – There is an option for teachers to enter their pronouns into. We are still in the implementation process so we will still need to find out where we can list this information and we can look into it.
- iv. Paras – Can all students put their pronouns into the system even if they don't check the "Gender differs" option?
 - 1. Answer: Matt- They can, but they will have to ask the secretary
- v. Paras – Will these contact persons be trained to deal with this sensitive information?
 - 1. Answer: Matt – There is training that has been happening to help the office staff learn to run this system, and there are guidance documents that have been put into a shared drive that can point them to documentation in case they are not familiar with the process. There is also training being done by CIC which is an org that is helping implement, and training by the IDS staff
- vi. Heidi – Can a student protect or hide their name/pronouns from their parents? The legal name is hidden from teachers, but is there a way to hide the preferred name from parents in case they are not supportive?

1. Answer: Matt – Does not think there is a way to hide this from their parents, but this is something that can be looked into.
 2. Answer: Andrea – We’ve struggled with parent knowledge of preferred pronouns and preferred names with PowerSchool. The policy that we currently have in place is that if a student is not “out” at home, or if their parents are not aware of the gender identity, the student will be given the option to create a gender support plan where the school can accommodate the student’s needs without making any changes to PowerSchool.
- vii. Reyna – Can the “Legal Gender” section be changed to “Legal Sex” because this is more accurate terminology
1. Answer: Matt – Can look into this, but because this section populates state reporting, it is difficult to manipulate. The state of Iowa only recognizes “male” and “female” at this time. We can try to change how it reads and have the backend data stay the same.
 2. Paras – This is a good point, and the state of Iowa does list “Sex” and not gender on birth certificates so we may be able to list “Sex” for reporting as well.

III. Volunteer Day at HIH – Jayne

- a. Would like to send out a doodle poll to see if any committee members would be interested in volunteering as a group for Houses into Homes. This could allow us to meet up, see each other and live our values. Houses into Homes deliver furniture. This organization was created by Lucy Barker.

b. Caroline – This is the coolest organization and it is so much fun.

IV. Subcommittee Updates

a. Paras – Proposal for Student Recruitment

- i. Students have met in a subcommittee to try to find ways to increase student involvement. We've developed an idea that we could create a student group that would be subordinate to the Equity Committee. One adult member would be elected as an adult ally and would attend these student meetings and help facilitate the discussions. Other non-student participants could be co-chair, vice-chair, or members of the equity department.
- ii. There is a lot of potential to just getting a represented group of students into a space together where they feel safe and can be heard.
- iii. Proposed that 8-10 seats on the EAC will continue to be allotted to student members and will be elected to the committee. These students would also then be representatives of this student council/group and could present their needs during EAC meetings. The student group would not be restricted by a capacity number, there may not be much involvement until it is more established.
- iv. Students in this group would also be able to be invited to Equity Advisory Committee meetings as guests so they can participate.
- v. It is also proposed that there be a guest process because if guests are adults, we want to protect students.
- vi. Students in this group will be given training about the structure of the district, EAC, and should be able to receive circle training once per trimester.

- vii. Proposes to send a survey to Jr. High and High school students to see if they know their resources, how to access them, and know how to speak up.

b. Feedback:

- i. Heidi – This is great work, and more inclusive for kids with disabilities. If students have ADHD or other disabilities it may be hard for them to sit for a long time in the EAC meetings. Also wanted to bring up the idea to allow elementary school students to be considered for the student group. Many students have done amazing things, and there might be an occasional elementary student that could be interested.
- ii. Ty- This reminds me of the youth participatory evaluation program within the Minneapolis school district.
- iii. JP – When we talk about Tate, we’d probably want to not single them out, and just say “All high schools”. As far as the survey, we don’t know exactly the future of the climate survey where we could capture some of those questions.
- iv. Charlie – This is well done, and is a developmental program to help students participate and learn to participate in the district. It is brilliant. Overall this is a real snazzy way of getting many students geared up for doing this type of work.
- v. Andrea – With elementary we may need to do a cap, because at a certain point with young children we will run into needing to have parental involvement.
- vi. JP – Would recommend running a pilot. This is a huge idea that inevitably is going to run into roadblocks along the way. As a board member, I would also feel good if the equity department

would help with this because as a district we are responsible for what we are exposing students with. It is sort of like our LGBTQ policy, where the board is taking some risks where it excludes parents in many ways, to protect the students. This is also a big project to develop the curriculum information. Knowing the equity department has a hand in steering things along will help the board.

- vii. Ty – I think getting some training on collecting and summarizing qualitative and quantitative information from students might also be a helpful part of the curriculum.
- c. Andrea – This student sub-committee has already been making changes. The newsletter will now be sent to high school students because of the feedback from their last meeting. Would Jr. High students like to read this as well? We will be adding content in future newsletters for students or events they can attend, as well as more student geared resources.
 - i. Answer: Reyna – Would have liked to be sent these things
 - ii. Answer: Caroline – Even if they don't want to read it, it would be good to send it to students.
- d. Paras – Another recruitment option is to involve the school newspapers.
 - i. Lulu – The newspapers have current events sections.

V. ELP Inequity

- a. Caroline – This is something that parents, teachers, students, and community members don't understand how ELP works at a high school level. It is not equitable and has many issues. In high school, ELP students get emails a couple of times a month that tells them

- about scholarship opportunities, a webinar resource for college, or resources beyond high school. These resources are only sent to the ELP students which are mainly affluent White/Asian students who are typically already going to college. These resources are being missed by a large population of students.
- b. *West Side Story* also did a story on divisions and communication talking about ELL and ELP. Some of the quotes were upsetting, and when asked about accessibility it was said that the resources that are sent to ELP are available to everyone but you just need to ask your counselor. Asking people to opt in to get help isn't equitable.
 - c. We could suggest restructuring ELP in some way so that it can be more equitable.
 - d. Lulu – The first steps seem to be a conversation, and we would want to bring people in to talk about these issues and hear their side of the story.
 - e. Paras – Last year the focus of the student senate was trying to take away some of the things ELP was withholding and distributing to students on a widespread basis. The main thing was a standardized testing schedule and informational packet that was only being sent to ELP students.
 - i. We need to reimagine how ELP works, and think about enrichment opportunities for students.
 - f. Reyna – Is in ELP at City and has never heard of the testing resource, so there is a difference between high schools. Does not know how ELP is structured at City High.
 - g. Heidi – ELP is very inequitable in terms of who is referred to ELP as young children. The district changed in the past few years how they

are determining who is eligible and are sending ELP teachers into K-2 classes to assess students who are demonstrating evidence that they would be good candidates for the program. We need to recruit and retain more POC teachers and teachers of diverse backgrounds to help with this.

- h. Dasia – How are students chosen for ELP?
 - i. Answer: Heidi - It is a combination of factors, from parent recommendations, teacher recommendations, and standardized test scores.
- i. JP – It is highly subjective to be recruited. There is a wide criteria but is very weighted towards academics. There is most likely not enough money to have meaningful programs for the high school levels, and it is a pool of money that has to be spent on a specific age group. As a board member, it would be good to know what ELP looks like on a secondary level. According to the Iowa Code, each ELP student must have an identified plan, what do those look like at an individual level? How does our district compare to other districts, and are there other creative ways to allocate this funding and make it more equitable? Inviting them in to explain how this program works would be helpful.
- j. Jayne – Can we invite someone to explain to us what it looks like at the secondary level?
 - i. Answer: Eric – Will talk to Jeremy Tabor and figure out a good person to contact for ELP.
- k. JP – This will be a good opportunity to bring the Uol in for some people who are studying this at a high level and do some integration with our district to take some steps that could be considered best practices.

- i. Heidi – Alissa Doobay from Belin Blank would be a good person to reach out to.
- l. Caroline – It is important to balance whatever ELP representatives say with student experiences. It doesn't matter the intent of programs if students are not feeling the effects of the program.
- m. Reyna – Do we have data for the demographics of students in ELP?
 - i. Answer: Andrea – Yes, the district has this data, but it is unclear who would have access to pull this for the committee.
- n. Jayne – Proposes to reach out to a representative or two for ELP to come to the next meeting?

VI. Summer Schedule

- a. Summer dates: July 7th and August 11th. Motion approved unanimously

VII. Check Out (10 Minutes)

- a. Dasia – Will be attending the UOI next year and was hoping to continue the role of co-chair.

VIII. Adjourn

- a. Jayne motion to adjourn, Paras seconded. Motion passed.