

DEI Notes 5/29/25

Emergency Meeting started 7:27

Roll call:

Present- Nnenna Uneke, Safa Khan, Joanna Steffey, Janine Taylor, Thomas Plihcik

Absent- Isaac Tesfay, Serena Hu

- I. Welcome and Opening of Meeting
 - A. Welcome
 - B. Land Acknowledgement
- II. Review/Approve prior Meeting Minutes - None
- III. Public Comment - None
- IV. Resident request to share concerns with DEI Commission about instances of discrimination in our community
 - A. Resident Pallavi Gupta- 20 Scottswood Drive, Sudbury
Concerning incident regarding son at school. Parent contacted Mr. Mela regarding jokes and stereotypes regarding Indian culture, directed towards her child. Another child involved had their parent addressed, but this parent was not addressed, Soham was not comforted directly, and district was not addressed. Requesting such issues be taken more seriously by the district, and to be equitable to various cultures.
Request for DEI Commission to help superintendent to hear this message, not just one school or one grade.
 - B. Response from Thomas Plichik acknowledging micro-aggressions being addressed at the highschool community this week via letter from superintendent
 - C. Response from Nnenna Uneke acknowledging similar experience for her child in middle school- when incident 1 isn't being addressed, other incidents occur
 - D. Suggestion from Joanna Steffey of a group of parents each using 3 minutes at the same school committee to present these incidents and the lack of satisfactory response
 - E. Response from Janine Taylor acknowledging incidents her own children have experienced, shared the limited diversity of the adults at Curtis
 - F. Reflection from Nnenna Uneke regarding lack of response from schools
 - G. Joanna raised question of what was done in response to the SPS equity audit <https://www.sudbury.k12.ma.us/a-to-z-pages-style-container/equity-audit-report>
 - H. Next Steps:
 1. Statement to school committee, supers, administrators
 2. Gather impacted families and plan for school committee
 3. Deliberate questions from equity audit- in the context of increased occurrences for individual students, be proactive systemicallyJoanna MOTION- write a letter to school committee, superintendent, administrators, requesting an update on progress on the results of the 2022 equity audit, in light of recent and ongoing incidents of racial and cultural

discrimination and microaggressions; include a question to address whether and what training school leaders (assistant principals, principals, those who address behavioral incidents) have undergone since 2022.

Plichik YES, Khan YES, Uneke YES, Steffey YES, Taylor YES

Nnenna to draft letter

- V. Email (attached) received regarding hostility and disinformation surrounding religious holiday inclusion initiative
 - A. Muslim community, Chinese community, wanted June 12 Q&A at library to inform broader community
 - 1. Generated a lot of discussion on social media, people worried it was about questioning all the holidays, whether certain groups were trying to replace other groups holidays
 - 2. Members of the group worried about moving forward, whether there will be backlash
 - 3. Representatives brought their request for Eid, Diwali, and Lunar New Year to school committee- doesn't have to mean "day off", could mean acknowledge that day
 - 4. Committee discussed amending draft letter to recommend "all" holidays be added to SPS and LSRHS calendars. Joanna shared how Concord removed "all" and Acton added "all". Safa shared the deep impact on families when Sudbury scheduled graduation, town meeting, special elections etc on Eid. Members discussed reasons for "all" or "none"- Thomas reflected that we need more information.
 - 5. Joanna MOTION: to amend our letter to request SPS and LSRHS include observed dates for Hindu (Diwali), Muslim (Eid), and Chinese (Lunar New Year) communities on the calendar immediately, for the 25-26 school year in order not to schedule significant events such as MCAS, field trip, graduation- and then to urgently discuss whether these be taken as holidays in order to implement such a change by 2027
- Plichik YES, Steffey YES, Uneke YES, Khan YES, Taylor YES

Janine to rewrite letter

- VI. DEI Commission Membership
 - A. Nnenna and Thomas (both terms ending 5/31/25)
 - 1. MOTION to extend Thomas 1 year
Khan YES, Uneke YES, Taylor YES, Steffey YES, Plichik YES
 - 2. MOTION to extend Nnenna 1 year
Khan YES, Uneke YES, Taylor YES, Steffey YES, Plichik YES
 - B. Co-chair (vote needed)
 - 1. Janine motion for Safa Khan to co-chair

Uneke YES, Plichik YES, Taylor YES, Steffey YES, Khan YES

C. Note regarding removal of Isaac Tesfay due to missing 6+ meetings

D. Confirm Next meeting Date- June date will be scheduled via poll

VII. Meeting close

Nnena MOTION to close

Khan YES, Uneke YES, Steffey YES, Thomas YES, Plichik YES,