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## **Board of Education Committee Minutes**

Committee: SAAC  
Facilitator: Alexandra White  
Date of Meeting: October 20, 2020  
Location: Via Zoom  
Time of Meeting: 7pm - 9pm

There were 63 attendees - Board Members, Administrators, BCSD Staff, Parents, Community Members, Students, Alumni.

Dr. Adelberg opened the meeting with a few welcoming comments, including appreciation to the Board of Education and the community for addressing the issue of race this year and acknowledging the readiness of the staff to engage, reflect, study and change. Also shared was that the Curriculum Council met earlier in the week and started to “unpack” the Board Value Statement on Racism and its implication for their work in 2020-2021.

Alexandra White, Board of Education, officially welcomed the committee to the work for 2020-2021.

In opening the meeting, Ms. White presented the Board of Ed adopted Value Statement.

In introducing this work, Ms. White discussed the following:

- Why the Board of Ed chose racism and a commitment to anti-racism as the SAAC charge for 2020-2021.
- The BCSD is not alone in this work. This is a discussion in districts and communities across the nation.
- The work is multi-faceted, including a conversation of equity and inclusion.

Will Krasnow and Ellie Crummy, Student Representatives to the Board of Education presented the work they are leading at FLHS, including the introduction of FLARE (Fox Lane Anti-Racist Environment). They noted the importance of making sure there is a strong student voice component to this work. They reported on their first FLARE meeting which was held on 10/15/2020. They talked about the relationship they hope to establish between FLARE and SAAC. A number of students from FLARE were in attendance at the SAAC meeting.

The first question to the SAAC membership: What brings you to this work?  
Among the responses:

- Working to unpack and dismantle the system.
- Parent voice, especially concerned about creating a safe, inclusive, accepting environment starting in the earliest grades.
- The desire to effect change.



- Wanting to give back to the district.
- Hoping that SAAC will consider the experiences of current students.
- Parents want to ensure that we “get this right” for future generations.
- Comments made in classrooms are at times insensitive and inappropriate. Are students and teachers held accountable? What education has to take place?
- Ever since the murder of George Floyd, the concern for how we address race has called some to participate.
- This could be a space for the beginning of important conversations.
- Parents of elementary students want a voice.
- Some community members and parents chose Bedford for its diversity.
- Doing our best is not enough. Schools can do a lot better.
- How do we teach history? What is included? What is missed? Are we supplementing what we teach?
- Some student speakers spoke of their own privilege.
- Some students spoke of their own experiences, in some instances as one of very few students of color in their classes or even grades.  
Hope that the faculty and the district stand together.
- Hope that we address the trajectory of student participation in advanced courses as students age up. Are our classes representative of our demographics? Are students of all races represented in advanced courses and in all activities?
- If sub-groups of students are not availing themselves to advanced courses, why not? What happened along the way? What supports are necessary?
- Appreciation for the Board of Education Value Statement.
- Some participants hope to be able to grow themselves as a part of this experience.
- Pride in the community for taking this topic on.
- Concern that the current pandemic has disproportionately impacted communities of color.

Ms. White asked the group to consider what SAAC would wish to do next. What is the information needed to move forward in this work? What do we need to know to move forward? In reviewing the Value Statement and the 7 goals identified by the Board of Education, the SAAC membership was asked to reflect on what these mean to them. Among the responses:

- Academic Achievement - what does the current data show about student participation, access, etc? We need to understand how discrepancies are occurring and why.
- What are some short and long term goals?
- What is available for teacher training?  
Anti-Racism and SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) - How are these connected? What resources are we using? What resources do we need?
- Can we continue personal learning?
- How do we plan to move from conversation to action?
- Do teachers have the tools to talk about racism, appropriate to each age group?
- Without training, conversations can cause harm. What training is needed?  
Focus on curriculum. Where is our curriculum in regards to this work?
- How do we teach history and social studies? What literature is taught in ELA?
- How can we begin this work at the earliest grades?  
Are we talking to teachers about the language used in their classrooms?





- What are our expectations of teachers?
- What are our hiring practices regarding diversity?
- Could we learn about some of the historical initiatives the district has used to address these issues?
- Could we examine our arts curriculum for focus on cultural diversity?
- Teaching Tolerance is a resource that is used by many.
- What literature is in our school libraries?
- What is on our summer reading lists?
- What are other ways to make sure more voices are heard?
- Beyond the schools, what can be provided to parents and families to engage in these discussions?
- Could we look at achievement data, both in performance and in the opportunity gap?
- What financial resources are available and what additional financial resources might be necessary?
- Are we working with other local groups also committed to discussions of race and equity? Members of the Greater Bedford Anti-Racist Effort participated in SAAC.
- Consider early intervention efforts in the district in literacy education as a possible area where they could be disproportionality and inequities.
- Anti-bullying and anti-racism.
- Is anti-racism a core value in the BCSD?  
Is there continuity of curriculum for addressing race across the grades?
- Are there systems, policies and structures in the BCSD that work for some and not for others?  
How can we foster community partnerships?  
What are some budgetary implications for this work?
- Should there be more outreach to the community to make sure we have the widest representation on SAAC?

Ms. White and Dr. Adelberg thanked those in attendance for their engagement and participation in this first meeting of 2020-2021.

Ms. White shared that all would receive minutes prior to the next meeting. We would make an effort to disaggregate the comments into distinct groups for the next meeting. The plan is to ask committee members to identify the area/group with which they would like to engage first, so that we can “divide and conquer” as we proceed. This information, the agenda for our next meeting, will be included in an email to all in early November.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

**Next SAAC Meeting: Tuesday, November 17, 2020**

