The Brent Elementary Diversity Working Group (DWG)
April 2019 Meeting Minutes

The Brent Elementary Diversity Working Group met on 4/25/19 in the Brent library. Brent Elementary is located at 301 North Carolina Ave. SE, Washington DC. The meeting began at 6:30pm.

Meeting Participants: Jon Berg, Lindsay Bernard, Piper Campbell, Danielle Drissel, Sara Ewbank, Dayon Hairston, Candace Hines, Lucy Hynes, Sharon Santos, and Tarinna Terrell

1. **Feedback on Family Funday at NMAAHC**: Outing on 4/7 had 5 families participating. Participants were of a range of ages and experience was accessible to all. Meeting at Brent beforehand to travel to museum together fostered community. Of the 30 tickets, 8 were unused. Sunday morning event was a scheduling conflict for interested families attending religious services.
   
   a. **Recommendations**: Consider publicizing Family Funday events via room parents, a separate section in TuesNews and in school calendar. Consider having a physical sign-up sheet. Schedule Fundays on variety of dates/times to maximize opportunities for all.

2. **Feedback on Month of the Military Child**: Brent participated in Purple Up day (4/11), allowing students to be uniform-free in support of military children. Significant degree of purple worn; some kids (esp. boys) wore camouflage. Recognition was appreciated by the military children (and parents). Purple Up and bulletin board generated conversations in the family setting and classroom. Challenges developing the reading spotlight as many books focused solely on deployment/absence of parent rather than larger experience of military children. Field trip to Marine Barracks (4/26) will be for kindergarteners.
   
   a. **Recommendations**: Consider allowing red/white/blue clothing in addition to purple. Continue to search for child-centric readings – possibly with sub-plots related to military families (e.g., Molly the American Girl Doll and Zapato Power series).

3. **Rising Tides Update**: Closing ceremony (4/25) had presentations of the Spring semester group projects. Participants received t-shirts funded by PTA budget and pizza/drinks funded personally by teachers and staff.

   DWG helped draft a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the 2019-2020 school year. Plan is for school administration to tender the RFP for Rising Tides and two additional activities – which may have one service provider for meeting all three. Striving to have more established curriculum/framework at start of the year.
4. **Listening Sessions Update**: Halfway to the goal of conducting listening sessions with three Brent parent populations in Spring 2019. Listening sessions with families at Bolling AFB are completed with high levels of participation. Listening sessions for new families of 2\textsuperscript{nd}-5\textsuperscript{th} have started. The initial session reached only a small portion of the approximately 30-40 families in the category. Another session will be scheduled in early May. Listening sessions with families who joined Brent in K-1 are also planned for May. All sessions have notetakers who create anonymized summary documents. Plan is to share the summaries with school and PTA leadership so they can note trends and identify action items.

5. **PTA budget.** The PTA proposed budget was circulated. Budget line for Diversity Events would provide DWG our requested funding level of $2,350. The funding for Rising Tides is spread across three separate lines: Academic enrichment/Tutoring, Academic enrichment/expenses and Playworks partnership (also funding other programming) and would provide level funding for 2019-20.

The group discussed resource allocation issues. Positive observation that Special Education materials budget line is going up. Brent does not have a trauma-trained counselor; unclear whether additional funds are needed to support mental health services at Brent. Issue to be explored further. The budget indicates Welcome Picnic is generating substantial revenue. Robust discussion led to a consensus that separate fees associated with participation & food (and the relatively high participation fee) undercuts efforts to have an inclusive, accessible event.

   a. **Recommendation:** DWG recommends that financing for the Welcome Picnic be restructured so that participation is free of charge, with possibly higher fees for food and more explicit labeling of the fundraising activities (including Used Book Sale and Bake Sale).

6. **Brent Buddies**: Brent Buddies is evolving into a partnership between DWG and the PTA. The PTA community liaisons coordinate to solicit family volunteers (e.g., through room parents). Goal is to make pairings with incoming families before the end of this school year.

7. **Summer Brain Gain**: Unclear how best DWG should support summer learning. Shared reading approach piloted in summer 2018 among rising Third Graders (i.e., one book passed among classmates) was resource intensive and not likely to prevent brain drain. May be opportunities to highlight the DC Public Library summer program. Everybody Wins may also have summer program.

8. **Upcoming Events**: Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month (May) will have a reading spotlight in TuesNews and possible a Family Funday event of doing Tai Chi in China Town. Pride (June) will have a reading spotlight in TuesNews as well as poster party at Brent in advance of a contingent marching in the DC Pride Parade.

Next meeting date: May 15, 2019

The meeting concluded at 8:20 pm