

BRENT ELEMENTARY
Diversity Working Group (DWG)
December 2018 Meeting Minutes

The Brent Elementary Diversity Working Group met on 12/13/18 in the Brent Elementary library. Brent Elementary is located at 301 North Carolina Ave SE, Washington DC. The meeting began at 6:35pm.

Meeting Participants: Jon Berg, Melinda Copeland, Danielle Drissel, Sara Ewbank, Julie Gutin, Dayon Hairston, Candace Hines, Jasmine Leary, Abby Maslin, Charrise Robinson, Sharon Santos, & Adi Segal.

Agenda

1. Teaching children about race
 - Discussion framed by 2 articles: “How Well-Intentioned White Families Can Perpetuate Racism” by Joe Pinsker & “White parents teach their children to be colorblind. Here’s why that’s bad for everyone.” by Megan Underhill.
 - Members broke into two groups and reflected on how the idea of race was introduced to us as children, and how we introduce it to children today. 30 minutes of thoughtful discussion informed by a wide range of experiences and perspectives.
2. Feedback on Recent DWG Events
 - National Adoption Month: Consider options to identify and celebrate adoptive families in the Brent community.
 - Inclusive Schools Week: Strong positive feedback. Students were highly engaged and teachers and staff see ongoing positive effect on peer interactions. The front hall board of symbolic self-portraits looks fantastic and is being used as tool for student self-empowerment. Lot of hard work by faculty and staff. Support for establishing as an annual celebration with more parent volunteers, especially for Mix it up at lunch.
 - Human Rights Day: Good dialogue in 4th grade. Earlier planning may improve intentionality in all-school activity.
3. Report on School-Based Initiatives
 - DWG Budget: Details approved by Principal Lycknell, including specific funds for International Night, Unity Dance, acquisition of diverse books, displays and support for Rising Tides.
 - Rising Tides update: Fall will be 6-week program, anticipate 8 weeks in the spring. Shared interest in collaborations for MLK March and Black History Month.
 - Outreach to Brent Populations: Collaboration with LSAT on listening sessions with specific populations, starting with a session for military families in early 2019; option for all-school survey in connection with registration to determine how families self-identify and facilitate outreach for cultural celebrations.
4. Current Focuses
 - **International Night (1/11)** Mr. Krohn coordinating. Performance options unclear as budget may not be sufficient to fund mariachi band. Food contributions via potluck and donation requests to two families. Offer of support for additional restaurant outreach if requested by Mr. Krohn.
 - o *Google doc for parent volunteers and student participation.*
 - **MLK March (1/21)** Imagine Greater to host poster-making party for all Brent students. Date and detail TBD. Option for partnering with other schools in Capitol Hill Public Schools Parent Organization.
 - o *Email Danielle to volunteer.*
 - **Black History Month (February)** Rising Tides students picked Brent’s 2019 theme, Adventurers and Inventors; possible Black Panther tie-in? Ms. Hairston coordinating 2-3 in-school performances, one scheduled for 2/14. Ideas sought for all-school readings, reading spotlight and family Saturday activity.
 - o *Email Danielle or Ms. Hairston with suggestions or to volunteer.*
 - **Unity Dance (2/8)** Exploring DJ options with goal of both students and parents dancing. Budget for light food, hotdogs? Options discussed for cellphone ban or earlier start time
 - o *Email Danielle to volunteer.*
 - **I Am Jazz Reading (2/28)** Brent to participate in national reading sponsored by the Human Rights Campaign and the National Education Association.

Next meeting date: Wednesday, January 16, 2019.

The meeting concluded at 8:05 pm.