

BRENT ELEMENTARY
Diversity Working Group (DWG)
February 2019 Meeting Minutes

The Brent Elementary Diversity Working Group met on 2/28/19 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, Melinda Copeland, Danielle Drissel, Sara Ewbank, Candace Hines, Lucy Hynes, Sharon Santos & Adi Segal

1. Welcome and Reflection on Advancing Equity. Reading of the DWG Mission Statement: The Brent Diversity Working Group advances the school's commitment to recognizing, respecting, valuing and promoting diversity by serving as a resource and liaison for students, families, staff, and faculty on issues of equity through education, outreach, and advocacy.
2. Feedback on Recent DWG Events
 - MLK March: Extreme cold changed the plans. A small contingency of Brent marchers in the parade. Others had indoor gathering at Danielle's house to discuss Dr. King and do a craft about advancing his legacy. Posters created for march displayed at school.
 - o Suggestions: Put photos of parade and gathering in TuesNews. Consider coordinating with other Ward 6 schools, such as Van Ness, who also attended this year's parade. Consider adopting "feels like 16 degrees" as the threshold for moving MLK-day event indoors.
 - UNITY Dance: Over 320 attendees – quite high! This year had more students in lower grades and also alumni and students attending without family (e.g., one chaperone for multiple unrelated students?). Good feedback on DJ and food although meat and desserts ran out very early. Open space rather than closed dance floor, craft to make a community quilt, and second security guard to police hallways were all appreciated. Event is resource intensive for teachers and staff, especially when so close to International Night.
 - o Suggestions: Display craft at school. Clarify connection between Unity Dance connect with Black History Month. Consider if finger food would help increase levels of adult socializing. Consider shortening to a one-hour event. Consider making International Night a year-end event, perhaps renamed Multicultural Night.
 - Schoolwide readings: *I Am Jazz* read in over 12 classrooms participated, reaching over 300 students. *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* reading was announced in a letter that went to all teachers and books and resources are available, if they choose to read it.
 - o Suggestion: 12 copies of a title are needed to fully support a schoolwide reading. Titles can then be integrated into classroom libraries.
3. Current Focus: National Women's History Month (March).
 - This year's theme is "Visionary Women: Champions of Peace and Non-violence."
 - Lucy will draft a Reading Spotlight for TuesNews. No school-wide shared reading expressly based on Women's History Month; however, *Malala's Magic Pencil* is Brent's selected text Read Across America Day on Monday March 4th.
 - March DWG Meeting will include discussion of *We Should All Be Feminists* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie.

- Suggestions: Send open invitation to Brent Community and link to the TedTalk. Consider using discussion to launch a Brent book club.
 - Weekend family event options under consideration include Sunday Portrait Story Days at National Portrait Gallery.
 - Suggestion: Consider starting with a gathering at Brent, in order to go as a cohesive group and get more interest.
 - *Contact Danielle with suggestions for this month's family event.*
4. Looking Ahead
- Family Affinity Survey: DWG will draft a survey to be included in the 2019-20 school year registration packet. Goal is to structure survey to answer question "What is important for our community to lift up and celebrate?" Piper will help draft.
 - Month of the Military Child (April): Lindsay is working with the Marine Barracks on the possibility of an all-school trip to hear the Marine Band perform.
 - Suggestions: Consider combining Brent's April School Spirit Day with DoDEA Purple Spirit Day.
 - *Contact Danielle if interested in developing bulletin boards for Military Child month and/or Women's History month.*
 - 2019-2020 Budget: PTA budget to be discussed in board meetings in March and April.
 - DWG to develop and submit a budget for next year. Discussed spend to date and potential need for additional funds based on event expenses this year.
 - DWG input will be sought on the PTA school budget, in terms of equity and inclusivity.
 - *Contact Danielle with suggestions for budget evaluation.*
 - Rising Tides: Spring term started this week with 8 students.
5. Open Floor
- Gala organizers are seeking DWG engagement. Free tickets are available to volunteers. DWG donation to the auction was discussed. Although insufficient time for this year, consider turning images of Inclusive Schools Week self-portraits into a photo book to be auctioned/sold.
 - Panorama Survey, the DCPS tool to measure student socio-emotional learning and parent satisfaction, is coming up. Emails to be sent to parents. Responses due by March 29. Brent's goal is at least 30% parent participation.
 - Listening Sessions with Brent Families are going forward. First sessions will be March 15th for families at Bolling Airbase. Strong interest expressed in session for families who joined Brent in 2-5th grade.

Next meeting date: Wednesday, March 20, 2019

The meeting concluded at 8:05 pm.