



FORT WORTH ISD MISSION:
 PREPARING ^{all} STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS IN
 COLLEGE, CAREER AND COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP.

**Fort Worth Independent School District
 Racial Equity Committee
 Meeting Minutes
 Thursday, December 3, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. via Zoom**

Committee Members Present:

Affleck, Holly	Darr, Anne	Krochmal, Dr. Max	Phillips, Quinton
Anderson, Sue	Garcia-Lopez, Norma	Luebanos, Anael	Poullard, Eric
Benavidez, Dr. Dorene *	Grover, Barbara	Masterson, Twyla	Poullard, Precious
Bond, Clint	Hall, Mia	McKinney, Wanda	Walker, Dr. Carlos *
Breed, Sherry *	Herrera, Alfonso	Nickerson, Porshe *	Williams, Dr. Jared
Chavez, Aracely	Hodges, Charles	Pace, Brandi	
Clark, Rickie	Jones, Ebony	Paz, Ashley	
Cytron-Walker, Adena	Jones, Trevon *	Pérez, Jonathan *	

Committee Members Absent:

Argumedo, Miguel	Harris, Cleveland	Moss, Christene	Turcios, Carlos
Balzer, Dr. Jill	Harrison-Jordan, Tina	Nixon, Glenn	Villalobos, Lupita
Dominguez, Nyssa	Lee, Yassmin	Richter, Breinn	West, Bill
El, Robert	Masterson, Tim	Rincón, Cynthia	West, David
Gravelle, Elizabeth	Mattingly, Dr. Cissy *	Sorensen, Marcy	Young, Patricia
Griffith, Barbara	Mohamed, Mohamed	Starr-Malone, Sonja	

Courageous Conversations About Race Affiliate Practitioners (*) Present:

Mouton, Dr. Marion *			
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Courageous Conversations About Race Affiliate Practitioners (*) Absent:

Burrell, Dr. Stacy *	Crespo, Mirgitt *	Ramos, Jr., Jacinto "Cinto" *	Townsend, Rian *
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Guests:

Kermit Spears	Roxann Martinez	Krista Coleman	Telecia
Christopher Riddick	Susan Rhoten	Krista Varando	
Nydia Lewis	Sol Tager	Trish	

CALL TO ORDER:

- The meeting was called to order at 5:02 p.m.
- Minutes from prior meeting approved by consensus
- Mrs. Breed reviewed the Virtual Meeting Protocol.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

NOTE: The internet connection in the FWISD Administration building was lost at various times throughout this meeting; therefore, there may be slight gaps in the Minutes. Every effort has been made to capture the events/discussion that took place during this Zoom meeting.

1. Introduction of new FWISD Chief of Human Capital Management

Mrs. Breed introduced Mr. Kermit Spears, Chief of Human Capital Management for Fort Worth ISD.

- Mr. Spears shared his vision for the future of FWISD Human Capital Management the focuses on creating a great first impression.
- FWISD rotates through 600-800 teachers per year. How can we impact their experience when they first come through the door – if we can give staff a positive experience, we can make a stronger impact on students.
- By creating, developing & designing great processes, we attract great personnel.
- How does this look when you break it down? We must examine the process from the day they apply to when they are hired, to when they start, and then how are they supported through their first year.
- Mr. Spears wants to see long lines of people who want to work at FWISD. When that happens, then we wouldn't be hiring so many teachers after July 15th. This would make a bigger impact on equity. We would then be able to hire from the top 10% of talent available in the US.
- We must also have a common and consistent message from the board room to the classroom. Without a consistent message, we will lose credibility.
- We have 145 campuses – are they telling the same story on each campus? Is it the same on the East & West sides of the district? Is every leader saying that 'this is an A-rated school'.
- My job is to build that story, to make sure our selection process matches what we are trying to bring in and that the talent is experiencing what we are promising.
- I can bring in the best processes and attract the best talent, but we must give them the experience that we promise. If not, we won't be able to retain them.
- If we have deficit thinking, we'll keep seeing that we can't get top talent. We must create a great first impression! If we get that right, a lot of these discussions can be more innovative, rather than reactive. When the lines start to form, we can be more strategic about who and when we hire.

Questions/comments from Committee members:

- W.McKinney: Prior to COVID only 2 of 10 African American students were reading on grade level. Since COVID, that has regressed. Does HCM have a plan for positioning high quality teachers in those schools with lower performance/greater regression to help recover some of the academic loss? Are there plans for incentivization?
 - Mr.Spears: I have requested a report so I can dive deeper into the data. There are strategies that we hope to use, but we will need to examine the data in order to make decisions.
- N.Garcia-Lopez: I have concerns about the District not hiring bilingual applicants or promoting bilingual staff.
 - Mr.Spears: I was not aware of this. I will need to look at the data to see if that is supported. We want the best talent in every position. If we aren't getting it, we need to look at why.
- M.Krochmal/B.Pace: What are some strategies that HCM can use to encourage principals to hire diverse faculty/staff? Would HCM consider a uniform rubric to evaluate and increase equity? How do we ensure that underrepresented groups are getting hired from the applicant pool?
 - Mr.Spears: If you have a job that is attractive, there will be a line of people who want to be hired. For more challenged schools, you may not have those lines. The challenge is how do we create an environment where the talent will stand in line to be hired at those campuses with challenges.
 - M.Krochmal: What you're describing is opposite of what we are trying to accomplish through this committee. Why are the Black and Brown staff not getting selected for interviews?
 - Mr.Spears: According to the data, we are struggling to get bilingual teachers. Are we talking about at each campus, or the District aggregate?
 - M.Krochmal: We're talking about having the staff at the campus reflect the demographics of student population.
 - Mr.Spears: Then the question becomes, do we have enough people applying for these jobs to meet the threshold?
- A.Chavez: As a former recruiter, I know that there are people out there who are not even getting interviews. The emphasis must be to build relationships with applicants. It starts with the system up front. The Frontline system must be optimized. If the best applicants aren't contacted in a timely manner, they will just go on to the next potential employer. People are applying but if we don't get to them fast enough, they'll go to a district that gives them a contract sooner.

A lot has to do with culture – but if your staff aren't being customer friendly, eg, not answering the phones, then they're not going to stay.

I've seen the difference that teachers can make with children, both good & bad. We only hire the end of the line because our processes are so slow and this impacts students. I'm glad you're here and I hope that you optimize every system to make the needed changes.

- Mr. Spears: Going back to the diversity question. Diversity is very tough to manage because someone always feels like they're being left out. My focus is on how we are treating people once they're hired. I can get people on the campuses and I need to be sure they are getting the support that they need to be successful. Its more than hiring them, they need support to be successful so they can grow and thrive. Without that, they will continue to recycle .

I would like to get a copy of the questions from this committee. I want to be able to refer back to them so I can be sure that we include these thoughts in the design work.

- P.Poullard: As an AP in the district, and a member of the subcommittee for Staffing & Recruiting for a while, from my vantage point, I see a lot of positive movement toward the recommendations that have been made. We are moving forward in a positive way.

As an AP who does hiring, I have seen that the time to hire has been reduced. Some of the delay issues are with the applicant providing documentation. Also, the malware attack and COVID this year has been a big setback as well.

People outside may not see all the things that HCM is doing for the FWISD staff. But they are happening.

- Q.Phillips: If those things are happening, we need to be sure to get that info out there so people know that.
- K.Varando (Audience member): I appreciate being invited to be on this zoom. I am from the Houston area where I worked in college/career readiness. I have applied to FWISD 12-13 times and was hired into the substitute pool. The challenges of the pandemic have made filling sub positions on campuses difficult as well. I agree that building relationships is critical. There are currently a number of vacancies listed on the HCM website. Why isn't the substitute office working with HCM to fill these positions? January 31st is the deadline for teacher retirements – when that arrives, the vacancies will be double. What is the plan/strategy to address this?
 - Mr. Spears: We are ramping up. One of the processes we had to do first was to level all of our schools. We didn't get some of the kids we were counting on this fall. This process was just completed about 3 weeks ago. Now we are ramping up for school next year and are looking at applicants for open positions.
 - B.Pace: I want to speak from having been a teacher for 10 years in FWISD. A lot of people have done good stuff, but there are also systemic things that need to be addressed. Even basic policy changes have been very stark. When we speak systemically we need to be sure

to broaden the scope. I appreciate Mr. Spears speaking to how teachers are treated on campus. Things like microaggressions as well as broader issues need to be addressed.

- Mr.Spears: I agree, the support system, and people having time to work together. We need to connect similar people so they can grow within the organization.
- Sol Tager (Audience member): Is there still a possibility that FWISD will bring in H1B visa teachers. Districts can hire people that they can't find in your region/country to get a working visa – once that expires, they have to apply for a permanent visa – this is where the challenge is because oftentimes, when the visa is about to expire, there are people locally who must be hired instead.
 - Mr.Spears: I need to look at the FWISD's strategy and determine if it is still feasible. The federal government owns the process, so this can be difficult. I want to be sure that everyone we bring on board has a great experience.
- R.Clark: I have 2 questions. 1) What story do we tell on our campuses now? 2) Is it possible for those who are leaving the District to evaluate us so we can learn from them?
 - Mr.Spears: That's the question I've been asking for the last few months. We need to build the story together – it must include our tradition, where we've been, but also where we are now, and where we are going. This has to be created by the people who are here. This will help us attract the best custodians, teacher assistants, teachers, etc.
 - R.Clark: what is the story that FWISD is giving? Is it a bad story now? What would you tell me if I came in?
 - Mr.Spears: We're preparing all students for success in college, career and community leadership – we do this by creating a great experience for our employees. If we do that for staff, we will do the same for our students.
 - R.Clark: We need to create an evaluation for staff leaving the District to complete so they can tell us what we need to do to change.
 - Mr.Spears: I agree
- J.Perez: Welcome to the FWISD family. Have we talked about intentionally recruiting teachers from HBCUs and HSIs? Have we challenged higher education to interrogate their processes / teaching to address equity?
 - Mr.Spears: We are developing a residency/cohort with an area college. I am hiring someone to develop that relationship. That will be our strategy to develop that pipeline of talent. The challenge is that we are competing with other districts. We need to tell a strong compelling story to attract them to FWISD and away from other districts. Right now that's not happening. We are doing everything we can to develop that pipeline.

- C.Hodges: I appreciate the fresh perspective that you bring to the District. If we do have a story to tell, we'd better live up to it. If we don't, we'll lose our credibility and this will discourage others from applying. It's a huge challenge throughout the entire organization.
 - Mr.Spears: At my last district, I worked hard on core competencies and the mission statement. If the staff exit-evaluation indicates that they aren't being taken care of, then we need to go back to the leadership to find out why. Once I understand, I can hold the leaders accountable, and I will be accountable as well.
- A.Luebanos: Customer service and support for our staff and students is SO important – especially in the first year.
- Q.Phillips: Thank you Mr. Spears. We have been having these conversations specifically around the work of your department. We welcome you back any time.
- Mr.Spears: I would like a copy of the questions, '...as a committee, this is what we heard, and this is what you committed to'. I don't want to just sit and talk. I want to be able to show you what we are doing to address the concerns. HCM has 3 staff who attend the REC meetings regularly and bring information back to me each month.
- S.Breed: Thank you Ms. Hall for being prepared today to share about her department. We will have Mrs. Hall and her team back at the next meeting.
- A.Paz: As a future agenda item, I suggest a meeting dedicated to the Board's governance process and our work on equity.
- R.Clark: MBK will host a virtual movie night where they will be showing "Tell Them We Are Rising" on Sunday, December 13th.
- A.Darr: My daughter recently read 'All American Boys'. There was good conversation in classroom and home around equity and systemic racism. She joined our meeting today.
 - Q.Phillips: We need to get more students involved in the REC.
 - S.Breed: Yes, we are working on that.

2. **Update from Equity & Community Collaborations**

- No report today due to time constraints.

3. **Report on Virtual Racial Equity Summit III**

- No report today due to time constraints.

4. **Discuss the intersection of COVID with other subcommittee goals.**

- Discussed at prior meeting and added to Minutes for 11/5/20.

5. **Subcommittee Reports:**

- No reports today due to time constraints.

REMINDERS:

- *Student Speaker Series* *Join on FB LIVE: www.facebook.com/FWISDEquity/*
 - LGBTQIA+ Students of Color: Schooling Experiences - **DATE CHANGE: January 19, 2021 / 3pm**
- Google Drive is now ready for Subcommittee uploads
- Next Meeting: Thursday, January 7, 2021 5 pm via Zoom

FUTURE AGENDA TOPICS:

- Race and Disparities in Healthcare
- FWISD Board Governance Process

ADJOURN: Meeting adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

Signed: Quinton Phillips Date: 1/15/21
Mr. Quinton "Q" Phillips, Co-Chair

Signed: Maximilian Krochmal Date: 1/13/21
Dr. Max Krochmal, Co-Chair

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