

Minutes

Town of Hartford Committee on Racial Equity and Inclusion (HCOREI)

Hartford Town Hall, Room 317 and via Zoom

Wednesday, October 2, 2024, 6:00 pm

Attendees:

Committee members: Pat Autilio, Mary Erdei, Susan Mullens, Sarah Campbell, Nancy Russell, and Staff Liaison Tatum Barnes. (Absent: Joe Major)

Community members: Kim Souza and Julia Lau, Hartford School District Equity Coordinator

Call to order - 6:00pm

Approved Meeting Minutes from September 18 - Motion: Mary, 2nd: Pat

Acknowledge and Welcome Community Members

Appoint new HCOREI Vice-Chair

Sarah nominated and moved Susan Mullens as HCOREI Vice-Chair, seconded by Mary. Nominee approved by unanimous voice vote.

Julia Lau – Hartford School District

Julia shared information on District Equity Committee work during the 23-24 school year as well as the goals and work accomplished to date in 24-25. (See Addendum.) She stressed the importance of the Building Equity Leaders and the BIPOC/Global Majority Leaders in the each of the schools. We talked at length of the Vision of a Graduate initiative and the on-going consultant work of Dr. Luvell Brown in this endeavor. Her office is also helping to develop a comprehensive K-12 health education curriculum, which will include age-appropriate information on gender inclusivity and sexual orientation. Finally, Julia suggested some ways that HCOREI might help her work – collecting stories for the Vision of a Graduate project or coordinating regular meet-ups with members of the BIPOC/Global Majority community.

HCOREI meetings – times and meeting frequency

We discussed whether it was necessary to meet twice a month and whether 6:00 was the best starting time. Sarah moved and Pat seconded that we start our meetings at 7:00 and that we consider a ‘hybrid’ calendar; Pat seconded the motion. Motion approved. Pat will work on a ‘hybrid’ calendar and bring it to the next meeting for final review and approval.

Budget items for 2025

Pat requested members be thinking of possible needs/expenditures for the next budget year.

HCOREI Outreach

Pat shared the Flyer that he recently did up to share HCOREI's mission and activity. He plans to have an HCOREI banner printed.

Adjourn - 7:30pm

HCOREI Members

- Pat Autilio, Chair, Community Member (through 4/1/2026)
- Susan Mullens, Vice-Chair, Community Member (through 8/22/2025)
- (shared) – Clerk
- Sara Campbell, Community Member (through 3/11/2026)
- Joe Major, Community Member (through 4/29/2026)
- Nancy Russell, School Board Member
- Mary Erdei, Selectboard Member
- Tatum Barnes, Town Staff Liaison
- (vacant) - Student Liaison, Vice Chair

Julia Lau's Notes presented at the meeting...

Hartford School District Equity Committee

2023-2024 District Equity Committee Work

- BIPOC Back to School Event
- August Inservice focused on Equity with workshops led by HSD staff members
- Each building has a designated Equity Leader (stipended position), some have 2
- Each Building Equity Leader took a professional development course about facilitating equity work
- Each building has a BIPOC Affinity Group for students or access to one
- Most buildings have a Teacher Equity Committee.
- Principals have allocated 15 minutes of Equity Work at every staff meeting.
- District Equity Coordinator meets weekly with each building equity leader to discuss equity issues that have arisen, planning for staff meetings, discussing larger systemic issues to address as a district. Once a month, these meetings include the building principal.
- The District Equity Committee meets once a month to share ideas, brainstorm, and problem solve together.
- Onboarding of new staff - On line Equity PD
- Instructional Coaches are using "Street Data" as a guide for their work this year (based in equity)
- Dr. Luvelle Brown was the Keynote in August and came back to do training with ALL HSD in October, January, and March. He also meets remotely with the Administrative Council at every AC meeting. He'll continue to do this for the rest of 23-24 and I'm hoping to continue this partnership next year as well.
- HSD is a member of the Vermont Educators of Color Affiliate
- [Holiday Guidance](#) for the HSD
- [Palestine-Israel Conflict](#) - Resources
- The Gender Inclusivity Policy approved by the Board
- [Hiring with Equity in Mind](#)
- Creation of Onboarding materials for all HSD staff around the antiracism and gender inclusivity policies
- Equity Focused PD for staff and lessons for students around identity, antisemitism, N-word, calling folks in/courageous conversations, Palestine/Israel conflict, student activism, Gender 101, case studies

HSD Equity 2024-2025

Goals: 1) Increase knowledge of two HSD Policies ([Anti-Racism](#) and [Gender Inclusivity](#)) and how to implement them at the classroom, school, and district levels
2) Begin Phase 1 of Restorative Practices through Advisory and Meeting Circles
3) Begin writing a policy/resources centered around neurodiversity and disabilities

Building Equity Leaders

School	Building Equity Leaders	BIPOC/Global Majority Affinity Group Leaders
DBS	Jordan Ela	Joyce Babbitt
OQS	Julia Anderson Kari Amick	Julia Anderson
WRS	Kathleen Grady Amy DeMatteo	Wyoming Esquivel (until December)
HMMS	Patrick Lincoln Carley Malloy (Virtually)	Sara Rice
HHS	Becky Whitney Mary Bouchard Steve Gagliardone	Julia Anderson
HACTC	Timmy MacDonnell	Angela Janoo
TWS	Megan Geiselhart	N/A - Students can opt into one offered in the District

Building Equity Leaders and Student Equity Liaisons attend monthly District Meetings and meet weekly with the District Equity Coordinator in their buildings. Building Administrators join these building-based meetings once a month.

Equity at Faculty meetings (every other faculty meeting, about once a month)

Focus: [“Onboarding”](#) Materials around the Anti-Racism and Gender Inclusivity Policies, Building Community (Tier 1 of Restorative Practices) through circles so that we can practice and model for staff to be able to use this practice in their own classrooms.

[Weekly Newsletters to Staff and Families](#)

A section of each building's weekly newsletters to families is devoted to a quick equity blurb called the Curiosity Corner. The first third of the year will be focused on the Gender

Inclusivity Policy. The 2nd third of the year will be focused on the Anti-Racism Policy. The last third of the year will focus on stories. They can also be found on the equity and inclusion page of the HSD website: <https://hsdvt.com/equity-and-inclusion>

Monthly Equity Newsletter to the HSD (part of Superintendent's Newsletter)

- [Aug/Sept](#)

Chain of Command

What happens if an equity issue arises? Who does what? *(Note: This is a guide. The circumstances may change who steps in and when. Please communicate with all parties.)*

Restorative Practices:

- Suffolk University Training
 - Wednesday, September 25 and Thursday, the 26th. (9:00-3:00) for 20 HSD staff (including administrators) across the District.
 - We'll offer these again 7 more times throughout the year.
- Elijah Hawkes- UVEI
 - Work with Administrative Council, HMMS, and HHS

Vision of a Graduate:

- Administrative Council with Dr. Luvelle Brown (Equity lens)
- Gathering data through stories
 - What are the things that stayed with you in your experience as a student?
 - What do you hope the Hartford School District will provide our students with as a part of their experience in our schools?
 - What are the most important things you think a graduate of Hartford School District should know before they leave our district?
 - What do you think our students should be able to do before they leave the Hartford School District?
 - What do you think our students should understand before they graduate from high school?

Mapping PreK-12 Health Curriculum:

- Dr. Laura Pascoe will begin developing an evidence-based and comprehensive health education curriculum across K-12 that includes a set of materials implementers can use.

How can HCOREI support our work?

- Collecting stories from the community (written, audio, video, etc.) - hearing voices of the most marginalized, to be published in the Curiosity Corners and used for Vision of a Graduate work
- Regular meet ups with members of the BIPOC/Global Majority community