

MINUTES OF HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

A regular session of Human Relations Commission was held on Thursday, February 11, 2021, at 6:00 p.m. at Troy Senior Citizens Center.

Members Attending: Feltner, Fong, Holycross, Keller, Major, Phillips, Severt.

Presiding Officer: Chairman Marvin Major, Sr.

Others Attending: City Staff
Troy City Schools Staff
Kathi Roetter (Troy Chamber of Commerce)
Melissa Kleptz (The Troy Foundation)

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting commenced at 6:05 p.m. by the Chairman's call to order.

ROLL CALL: Roll call was conducted by Ms. Hekate as Ms. Brown was absent.

MINUTES: Upon motion of Mr. Severt, seconded by Mr. Keller, the January 14, 2021 minutes were approved by the commission unanimously having no corrections or additions to these minutes.

PRESENTATION: Troy City Schools (TCS) Superintendent Chris Piper thanked the Human Relations Commission for inviting TCS staff to share information about "so-called stadium programs," social-emotional learning, and the equity and inclusion survey. Mr. Piper introduced three speakers, Dave Dilbone, High School Principal, former 'stadium program' supervisor and current Assistant Principal at Troy Junior High Josh Patterson, and Social Emotional Learning Coordinator Megan Campbell.

Ms. Campbell stated that TCS had partnered with Panorama to conduct a social-emotional learning (SEL) competencies survey and add-on equity and inclusion survey. The survey provided the ability to obtain feedback from students to identify and address achievement and experiences gaps, track progress toward district and State SEL and equity and inclusion expectations, evaluate the effectiveness of TCS equity initiatives, and identify each school's strengths and weaknesses to develop a plan for improvements. The first round of the survey was conducted during the fall of 2020. Students from grades third to twelfth were encouraged to participate in the Social Emotional Learning Competencies Survey. The teachers had received the survey questionnaire to evaluate the vocabulary equitability before the survey process commenced. The parents who did not wish their child to participate in the survey could opt-out. The survey evaluated students' supportive relationships, self-management skills, growth mindset, and self-efficacy. The students also answered questions regarding what teachers and other school staff members can do to support them better. In addition to the SEL Competencies Survey, sixth through twelfth graders participated in the Equity and Inclusion Survey. The survey's goal was to determine how inclusive and fair the TCS is for diverse students and how often students learn about and discuss race and ethnicity issues. The survey allowed students to share their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and suggestions on race-related topics. Ms. Campbell added that TCS plans on conducting the survey twice a year, and the second round of the survey for the 2020-2021 school year would be between April 15 and May 15.

The Commission members inquired about how the TCS plans on proceeding with the survey. Ms. Campbell responded that the goal is to increase student participation in the survey, identify the area where TCS needs to improve, and start working with TCS staff to develop a plan to address the issues and strengthen TCS equitable practices.

Mr. Dilbone spoke about 'Stadium Programs.' He noted that there might have been concerns regarding the program at one point, but many of those issues had been addressed, and the program had been improved during the past few years after visiting various schools with similar programs and learning from the best practices. He added that Mr. Patterson had been heavily involved in the process and contributed to the betterment of the program. Mr. Dilbone also talked about the location and purpose of the program. He noted that the program is located at the stadium in a protected air-conditioned room, which provides

quiet space to students who prefer or need such an environment due to anxiety or medical concerns. He offered to give a tour to the HRC members if they would like to see the space. He added that the goal of the program is to help at-risk students to obtain the necessary credits for graduation. Students can enroll in Troy Online Program for Success (TOPS) or Career Based Intervention (CBI). Mr. Major inquired about the student's selection process for honors classes. Mr. Dilbone responded that the students take tests and their past academic performance is taken into consideration. He also mentioned that the TCS offers Advanced Placement (AP) and College Credit Plus (CCP) with specific requirements. Mr. Major further inquired if the TCS identifies students capable of succeeding at school, but the challenging environment at home prevents them from achieving higher academic standing. Mr. Dilbone staff that school staff works on establishing relationships with students to identify their needs to support them better. TCS also offers to students individual advisory sessions, which is called Trojan Time.

Mr. Patterson talked about Troy Online Academy that has been offered due to the pandemic; Career Based Intervention (CBI) program, which requires students to work while earning credits and re-take failed classes to graduate, and Troy Online Program for Success (TOPS). He added that students could switch between two 'Stadium Programs.' Mr. Patterson also gave a synopsis of a day of a student enrolled in 'Stadium Programs.' He noted that TCS had created an edge list to track students falling behind and are not earning enough credits to graduate. Parents decide if they want to enroll their children in any of the programs.

Ms. Phillips asked about why the programs are located at the stadium. Mr. Patterson and Mr. Dilbone explained that due to lack of space in the high school building, the CBI and TOPS classes are held in the Alumni Victory Room, located in a separate building. The room is also used for other meeting purposes. However, they could not explain why the programs were initially placed at the stadium as they were not working at TCS when the programs started. Ms. Campbell noted that none of the students who had responded to the survey stated that they felt isolated in 'Stadium Programs.' The Commission members asked about the demographics of the students in 'Stadium Programs.' Mr. Dilbon said that about 20% of Troy High School students are diverse, and the 'Stadium Program' has around 23% minority students. Mr. Patterson also read a letter from the former student at the 'Stadium Program' who shared how the program helped her graduate and go on to higher education, after coming into the program with only two credits toward graduation.

Ms. Philips addressed the TCS and said that there is a need for more minority teachers to create a more inclusive environment at schools. She offered to provide a list of Historically Black Colleges and Universities to help TCS with minority teacher recruitment. Mr. Piper informed the HRC that the Ohio Department of Education had allocated grants for schools to enhance minority hiring practices. The Troy City Schools HR Director, Mr. Barhorst, has been pursuing those grants.

Ms. Philips and Mr. Feltner also offered to provide a list of books to the TCS to increase awareness about the history of the minority groups.

GRANT SUPPORT LETTER TO THE TROY FOUNDATION: The City of Troy and the HRC have signed and submitted a grant support letter to The Troy Foundation for partial funding of the purchase of body cameras for use by the Troy Police Department.

APPROVAL OF POSTER AND FLYER: The Commission Members proposed a few changes to the draft poster and tri-fold flyer. Upon motion of Mr. Severt, seconded by Mr. Major, the poster and flyer were approved with proposed changes.

The Commission also discussed and decided to take headshot photos to post on the website.

NEXT MEETING: March 18, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at Troy Senior Citizens Center.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Chief of Troy Police Shawn McKinney thanked the HRC for signing the grant support letter to The Troy Foundation.

There being no further business to be discussed, the meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.