

PDAC Meeting
How can we welcome families of diverse structures?
April 21, 2015
Minutes

Mission of PDAC

Focused on student achievement, the mission of the Parent Diversity Advisory Council is to positively impact the academic achievement of a diverse student population through school-specific outreach efforts and initiatives that focus on and directly address disparate academic performance.

Welcome

- Saily and Sindee welcomed the audience to meeting.
- Saily reviewed the topic – Families of Diverse Structures with the group.
- Norms were reviewed – Be on Time – Be Relevant - Be Open –Be Honest- Be Respectful

Guest Panel

Christina Jakubas
Michelle Jett
Peggy McGuire
Patrick Nolten

Jen Rowe
Savannah Smith
Michael Treptow
Pam Witt

Presentation by Dr. Nolten – Student Achievement

- Dr. Nolten shared the Illinois Report Card website with the audience. – www.illinoisreportcard.com
- Dr. Nolten provided directions how to navigate the site. District #204 achievement, demographic and teacher data was briefly reviewed.

Considerations

- Project HELP serves families in DuPage County with an active parenting curriculum. Workshops have been offered in District #203 and District #204. It is important to reduce isolation of diverse families. A parent mentoring program is also available.
- It is important to include our students when discussing the creation of inclusive environments. Students need voice to express their personal concerns.
- It is important to have personal relationships with our students. Gender identification issues need to be addressed in a sensitive, personal way.

- Professional development for staff is important to create a safe and supportive environment for the diverse needs of our students. Staff needs to know appropriate language when dealing with diverse and/or LGBT students.
- Building adaptations and/or considerations may need to be considered for our LGBT students.
- LGBT district policy might need to be specific to address specific bullying and sexual harassment issues.
- Mental health issues and providing resources to our students has become more prevalent.
- Neuqua Valley High School is meeting with its diverse parents. Themes emerged from these discussions. Discussion with parents resulted in specific areas of concerns and focus. Transitions from eighth grade to high school, the selection of courses for new students to Neuqua, general communication, cultural sensitivity, and parent orientation were topics that have been discussed.
- It is important that Gay/Straight Alliances are available for students.
- The Day of Silence activities from the three high schools were also reviewed.

Group Discussion

Two questions were provided by PDAC and considered by the small groups.

1. Based on what we have learned, what could be some of the considerations in our efforts to create welcoming and inclusive school environment for students from diverse structures?
2. What are some possible resources we should be aware of in our continued efforts to be welcoming and inclusive?

Final Comments

The last PDAC meeting is scheduled by May 19th, 7:00-9:00 PM. A reflection of the year's activities will occur. Come hungry. Food will be provided by some of our local businesses. You will received a special invitation in the mail with RSVP instructions.