

Minutes of the Trumbull Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Task Force, June 16, 2022

Present: Andrea Fonseca, Chair, David Rosenberg, Tara Figueroa, Lincoln Johnson, Marty Isaac, Zdena Quinn; Absent from the meeting: Jonathan Tropp, Vice Chair, Dede Robinson and Dan Wisneski

Also present: Dan Schopick, Town of Trumbull Attorney and Melissa McGarry, Project Director, TPAUD, William Chin, Town of Trumbull Technology Director.

Andrea Fonseca called the meeting to order at 7:32pm. She noted a quorum was present.

Correspondence: None

Public Comment: None

Minutes of May 19, 2022: Mr. Rosenberg noted his last name was misspelled. Mr. Johnson noted a typo in the fourth paragraph should have read “year”, not “ear”. Ms. Figueroa made the motion to approve the minutes as corrected, Mr. Rosenberg seconded. VOTE: All in favor.

Ms. Fonseca stated May was Pacific Islander and Asian American month. June is Pride Month; Juneteenth is June 19th. She feels it is important to acknowledge members of the Community. Ms. Figueroa added that June is also Caribbean American month.

TPAUD

Melissa McGarry, is the Project Director for TPAUD, Trumbull’s Prevention Partnership. TPAUD is a grant-funded community coalition, whose mission is preventing youth substance abuse, fostering social and emotional health, and building a safe and healthy Trumbull. They are under the umbrella of the Trumbull Public Schools, which acts as their fiduciary. She and Kiersten Naumann are both employees of the TPS.

They have raised \$1.8 in funding since 2006 – their main grant is from the Drug Free Communities foundation, which runs through 2024 (and is then not renewable.) This grant’s focus is on alcohol, marijuana and prescription drug abuse prevention, with a new emphasis on mental health.

They are also funded by the CT Department of Mental Health and the State Targeted Response opioid prevention grant.

All three grants are in different cycles and have different emphasis. TPAUD uses the strategic prevention framework.

They have been nationally recognized and held up as a model.

Since 2007, TPAUD has surveyed all the students of Trumbull public middle schools and the high school. The depth of their data is enormous. The last survey was done at the end of 2021. 837 middle schoolers and 1944 THS students completed the survey.

Diversity is growing in Trumbull, and is reflected in the survey. 14% identify themselves as LGBTQ, which is exactly the same as the national average. Statistically LGBTQ kids are most likely to engage in risky behaviors, trans kids more so. The surveys back this up. Factors include not feeling cared for or about, respected by adults. This year, for only the 2nd time, they asked a mental health question, which they'd like to refine. The question was if in the past year they have felt so sad or depressed it disrupted their lives: that they stopped doing their regular activities – 32% of middle schoolers and 43% of high schoolers said yes. That's 843 kids in the High School. Asked if they knew where to go for help, about 75% said yes, but those at most risk were amongst those who did not.

There has been a real drop in the perception of harm from marijuana, especially in the last few years. There have been positive shifts in attitudes toward alcohol and vaping, though parents of HS seniors seem conflicted and fuzzier on how to "launch" them.

TPAUD needs more direct student feedback, focus groups of students and parents. The CDC is giving more support for mental health work. Funding has caught up with the need.

Ms. McGarry said this year they started the monthly series "Let's Talk About Mental Health", and it will continue. They have a partnership with the Triangle Community Center, which provides amongst other things LGBTQ+ allyship training and training for First Responders. TPAUD provided the funding for a Trumbull Police Officer to attend de-escalation training. This summer they are doing social media and direct mail about marijuana and mental health.

Future steps include providing peer intervention for mental health, training for health and wellness educators, collaboration with GSA and the Shades Club, marijuana education, retailer engagement, and continuing to give out medication lock boxes.

The committee was very impressed with the work TPAUD has been doing. There was discussion of possible ways to collaborate; Ms. McGarry would love to share the data even more. TPAUD is on facebook and TPAUD.org is a very rich site. EDIT would like to share the good work they are doing with more of the community.

Interviews

Ms. Fonseca said with the breadth of interviews now done it's time to decide on action. She did her presentation to Town Council at their last meeting. Their charge is first programmatic and second is how to promote EDI work through community collaboration. Many on the committee said they felt overwhelmed. The suggestion was to pick two areas to begin, one proactive inclusion and another reactive problem solving. It was suggested at the next meeting members should come prepared with an area that needs problem solving and they can assemble a list.

Program ideas could be voted on. Ms. Figueroa said EDIT does not have the power to change existing policies, their job is to bring it to the table. Programming can be done without Town Council permission, as long as no cost is incurred. Mr. Schopick confirmed this.

Mr. Schopick noted he was subbing in for Mr. Cordone at this meeting because Mr. Cordone's daughter was graduating from Trumbull High School.

Mr. Rosenberg made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Johnson seconded, VOTE: all in favor at 9pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Glasser Orenstein
July 10, 2022