

**2016-2017 Diversity and Equity Committee
Report and Recommendations- Narrative
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Narrative Report:

OCS launched the 2016-2017 year with a change to the name of the committee to the Diversity and Equity Committee (DEC). Based on the recommendations from 2015-2016, the members wanted to see the Committee be more proactive where equity and inclusion are concerned for all students and families. The school year started strong with well-attended meetings comprised mostly of parents. Parents volunteered to be Diversity and Equity Reps for most of the classrooms on both campuses. We found the strongest representation on the Del Rey campus. However, we soon noticed that without participation from the Room Parent Coordinator, this effort meets many communication and logistic breakdowns. The goal was to have DEC update the parent community at large and address issues around current events on campus concerning race, gender identity and culture in smaller parent groups. The class meetings are the best venue and would be the best place to recruit strong participation from those who may not otherwise have an opportunity to attend other meetings. Conversations began to grow about how to create more a more tolerant, sensitive and conscious community for all students and families. There was a high regard for the diversity visible on each campus. But, a clear acknowledgement that the culture of the community needed to improve to be reflective of the broad range of diversity that OCS has achieved.

DEC supported the Winter Fair by offering feedback to the outreach materials and including a broader range of cultural influences in the event program and vendor booths. The inclusion of a booth where parents could order a broader range of cultural dolls for the students and classrooms seemed to be a hit with the community. Also, contacts were made by committee members for vendors to include in the annual Book Fair, to bring a broader range of cultural stories that uphold the Waldorf traditions with storytelling. In the years to come, we want our influence to be a part of the planning of the Book Fair, Winter and Spring Fair by having a DEC representative on the Planning

Committee. Notification from the Planning Committees to the DEC would be helpful in ensuring our participation from the beginning of the planning process. There appears to already be 2 DEC members involved in the planning. The proper connections were made late in the game and there were missed opportunities due to deadlines.

As a follow-up to the Culturally Responsive Teaching, which was facilitated by Consultants Arnita Porter and Paula Brown last year, we opened conversations between Administration and Arnita Porter about how to build an Equity Framework for the Institution. These conversations were shared with the Committee and Arnita Porter presented an overview of the Equity Framework to the Diversity and Equity Committee and plans to return to present to a larger group on May 18, 2017. (see attached description of Equity Framework and flyer)

With Charter renewal coming up next year, the committee shifted to a new approach to reaching the OCS Diversity goals for the State and LAUSD. Instead of focusing on external outreach to pre-schools and libraries, as we have in past years, the focus shifted to personal referrals and outreach. The DEC will continue to engage in the personal referral model, as we have found that parents speak best about OCS from their own personal experience. OCS students will be engaged in an array of summer programs with other likeminded children and families. A simple info flyer will be sent to parents at the end of the school year that they may use over the summer to begin to introduce families to OCS. DEC members also wanted to do one separate picnic / park event over the summer and invite friends and/or prospective families. All felt like the school year was far too late to begin the recruitment effort, when they meet so many new families over the summer. After all, the best demonstration of OCS is its product ...the mind and vibrant spirit of an OCS student.

Success has been proven with offering scholarships for the After Care / Homework Assistance program to students/families that needed additional help with homework assistance. This offering from OCS has enables students to catch up on behind assignments, better manage their workload and provide the families with the added level of relief to improve their quality of time spent at home.

While we did not implement a formal "Buddy" program. Some families have shown a great deal of success in working out transportation issues for those who do not live in the local school district. DEC would like to move into a more formalized matching program with families coming from outside the local school district. However, there is a

real capacity issue in terms of the time and staff to make the connections. This must be done by staff and Administration to be successful due to issues of confidentiality and disclosure. A remedy would be to add a confidential permission form to the enrollment packet that would enable staff, faculty, Administration and DEC to support with hardships concerning transportation, homework assistance, after care, and other issues.

Over the course of the school year, Diversity Committee attendance has decreased down to a few core members who attend consistently. As in 2016, the March 2017 meeting resulted in the committee discussing the various ways that DEC can better accommodate parents and make it easier to attend the DEC meetings. Alternating campuses for meetings seems to work for offering attendance options. However, this resulted in having two completely different groups of parents meeting and conversations are not consistently forwarding. In any event, the number of attending members dropped down so low on both campuses by March due to the increased busy-ness of families, extra-curricular student programs, and simple scheduling of dinner and homework. DEC is working with Administration to coordinate after school meetings at 3:30 pm with After Care provided. Also, the flyer distribution at valet on the Monday prior to a meeting is essential to attendance. The email reminders sometimes are not seen until the day before or day of the meeting, even by the most involved members. That face-to-face reminder drives it home and ensures that there is 3-day lead time for scheduling.

DEC has developed a list of recommendations for the 2017-2018 year that will better forward the success of DEC and anchor the committee and Administration in implementing a level of equity that enriches the OCS community. Some of the recommendations listed have already been implemented but need to be noted as follows:

1. Develop a formal transition program for new diverse families in the summer. The program would include pairing new families with an active diverse family to assist them transitioning into the OCS culture and familiarizing them with Waldorf traditions.
2. Ensure that the Room Parent Coordinator is included in the recruitment process for DEC classroom rep's. One DEC rep for each classroom on both campuses

will regulate attendance and ensure that DEC meeting information is reported to the Room Parents.

3. Plan a DEC Recruitment event, including a presentation on Waldorf philosophy and traditions prior to the Ice Cream Social to acclimate new families.
4. Develop Buddy Family system to support new diverse families and assist with their transition.
5. Announce the DEC room rep opportunities at the Ice Cream Social upon introducing the Coordinator.
6. Develop a DEC Scholarship Fund for After Care to support more working families that cannot afford the after-school program as an additional fundraising opportunity implemented by DEC outside of the OCS communities.
7. DEC to have its own fundraising event to support the After Care Scholarships per Administration's approval.
8. Alternate meeting facilitators, so that there are times when Administration is not present when discussing campus issues. Members want to create a "safe space" for tough conversations.
9. Change morning meeting times to Friday at 8:15 am during Reef Café on alternating campuses.
10. Change evening meetings to 3:30 pm on scheduled dates and offer free After Care for attendees.
11. Leave time on the agenda to bring up emerging issues.
12. Develop a method of monitoring and tracking emerging issues to ensure satisfactory results.
13. Administration to budget for Equity Framework Training for Admin, Board, Faculty and Parent Community leading to the unification of both campuses at the new site.
14. Debrief with Culturally Responsive Teaching and Faculty to see what has been adopted in the classroom and what OCS can project moving forward.
15. Authorization from Administration for DEC to continue working over the summer (work group) on recruitment and development processes to implement recommendations. The summer work will include, but not limited to the following:

Summer Work:

- Develop Transition Program including a summer DEC picnic event
- Assist with the development of a master calendar

- Develop a Scholarship Fund for after school care / homework assistance
- Scheduling legislator tours for Fall 2017 (3 month lead time)
- Investigate transportation and ride share opportunities for students outside of the local district. (possible fundraising opportunity for legislators)