

**TROY ETHNIC ISSUES ADVISORY BOARD  
TUESDAY, MAY 9, 2006  
TROY CITY HALL - CONFERENCE ROOM C**

I. Call to Order 7:05 p.m.

II. Roll Call:

Present:

Padma Kuppa

Anju Brodbine

Tom Kaszubski

Michelle Haight

Helen Yang, Student Rep

Cindy Stewart

Kelly Gu, Student Rep

Lulu Guo, Student Rep

Tony Haddad (late 7:50 p.m.)

Malini Sarma

Absent:

Reuben Ellis, Mark Pritzlaff

Excuse absent members

III. Approval of Minutes

Moved by Padma Kuppa seconded by Michelle that the minutes of April 4, 2006 be approved. With correction match = March

Introduction of new student representative, Helen Yang – 10<sup>th</sup> grade at Troy High – future problem solvers, SADD, club med (medical volunteers). Kelly's last meeting is June, 2006.

IV. Correspondence/Articles –

Smith Middle School Celebrates Diversity – Troy Somerset Gazette

Day of Prayer More Diverse This Year – Free Press 5/3/06

Suburbs are the New American Melting Pot – Detroit News 4/20/06

V. New Business

Diversity Program – Pam Mathers, Hamilton Principal, Nadia Hak and Racha Massarani, parents on cultural committee. 450 students @ Hamilton.

5 years ago – conversation to bully proof Hamilton – led to differences in culture, religion, etc. and ultimately led to a cultural committee. Originally there were 15-20 on committee, but now 10 regular members. Goal was

to help each group understand the other groups. Example holidays, traditions, etc.

Committee met October, 2005 on how to teach children to understand their differences. First project to celebrate their differences, they made paper dolls and sent them home to decorate as their culture then hung them around school. This was tied in with academic night.

Second Activity – Holidays: sent form home with all students to list all celebrations observed by students. After obtained all dates got together and photographed the dolls to put together as a school calendar with all major holidays from each culture listed. Costs covered by sponsors/donations. Cost for 500 calendars = \$1,600.

Hamilton always did a Family Fun Night (late spring) with rides, arcade games, food. In 2005 added an ethnic flair (sharing food, culture, clothing, books).

Family Fun Night (May 19, 2006) – will not have ethnic section in one corner, but throughout the entire school. Adding music, fashion show, dancing from around the world.

Hamilton's goal: eventually won't need a separate cultural committee – instead all students, teachers and parents - the entire school will be responsible for spreading the message of diversity and cultural understanding.

Committee also did seasonal greeting cards 10 pack = \$10 using the students doll art.

Cultural committee meets on monthly basis to find ways to promote “our differences unite us all” and “One culture – one school”.

They are also working on the academic side – different students learn differently.

Hamilton has a showcase in the school that they decorate for all holidays though out the year. The teachers promote diversity programs in each individual classroom. Example: Thanksgiving – international feast, diversity journal, March is leading month, Reading Olympics – choose a country, read books about it and had speakers on the country's culture.

Principal Pam Mathers, teachers and parents are all very proud of the cultural programs. Of the 450 students at Hamilton, the cultural make-up is 22% Asian, 7% Middle Eastern, 1% Other. They have 22 different languages spoken at Hamilton.

Hamilton has a packaged program to help students with conflict resolution, peer mediation, and to celebrate differences. Diversity training has been students and parents teaching one another about differences. It is a comfortable environment in the school – hands on training. Kids are not afraid to ask questions, ask why someone does something.

Staff/Teachers have not been resistant to the diversity training. They are very accepting. They will be having a three-hour diversity training in Fall, 2006.

Over the past 3 years Hamilton has received a lot of grant money for programs (Troy Schools, Troy Foundation for Education Excellence, SOC Credit Union). Just completed a grant from Target and just received an award for bullet proof Hamilton program from MI Assoc. of School Boards. Hamilton is one of 28 finalists that could receive future funding.

Suggestion from Padma – look up the Southern Poverty Law Center – assists with teaching tolerance (Montgomery, AL).

Question: Have you seen anything like this @ other Troy schools? No, but Schroeder has shown interest in what Hamilton Cultural Committee has done.

Hamilton also has a MLK Assembly done by the students – readings, music, poetry. And before the winter break – they have a Holiday sing with songs from all cultures, celebrations.

M Sarma - If all schools had this diversity training the students would then feed into the middle schools and high schools accepting others differences.

## VI. Old Business

### A. EthniCity

CS – send EthniCity poster contest flyer to Tim McAvoy for approval. Need copies for elementary schools.

Book room for judges Wednesday, September 13 at the Community Center.

Michelle will line up judges. EIA members - email her names and numbers of possible ideas for judges.

Malini will check numbers needed for participation ribbons:  
We need 3 first place ribbons, 3 second place ribbons and 3 third place ribbons.

Ideas for Children's Activities -

Placemat – A world map kids would color and get stickers @ each booth to place on the map. EIA Board would laminate maps.

Michelle and Tony will check on supplies and laminating machine.

Get price estimates on maps (1,000 quantity).

CS - Resend applications for booths in EthniCity tent then send contact info to the EIA Board to make contact. Booth participant meeting is September 6 at 6:30 p.m.

Ambassadors – Lulu and Helen will coordinate all student volunteers. 4 Students per shift

- B. Goals – Nothing new to report
- C. Senior Citizen Project – very worthwhile – low attendance but we will repeat the program. Send thank you notes to Rabbi Starr, Jaya Doraiswamy, Mayada and Ann.

Motion to Adjourn by Malini Sarma, seconded by Padma Kuppa. Meeting adjourned at 9 pm.