

Call to Order

The regular meeting was called to order at 7:08 pm in Conference Room C at Troy City Hall

Roll Call

Present: Mayada Fakhouri Lulu Guo, student
 Reuben Ellis Helen Yang, student
 Grigore Buia Tony Haddad
 Gladson Remos Cindy Stewart, Staff Liaison

Absent: Anju Brodbine
 Kelly Jones
 Michelle Haight

Guests: Karen Yelder
 Sushma Shrestha

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Gladson Remos seconded by Mayada Fakhouri that the minutes of May 7, 2007 be approved with one change - Mayada Fakhouri was not at the Troy School District meeting. Approved unanimously.

New Business

- a. Report on Healing Racism: tabled until July meeting
- b. Report on meeting with school district:

Attending the meeting with the school district were: Michelle Haight, Anju Brodbine, Padma Kuppa, Rev. Rich Peacock, Jan Staton, Reema Butt, Tim McAvoy, Dr. Fowler, Michael Silverstein, Hailu Robele, Dr. Steve Matthews, Cindy Stewart and JesPal Elan. The following topics were covered:

Staff Diversity Training – Such training is past due in the district. Training will be offered in 2007-08 for new teachers and mentor teachers, and tenured teachers later. Representatives from Oakland Schools have met with Steve Matthews. Diversity training will be a required part of the new teacher orientation. It will also be a required subject in staff meetings, to alleviate the need for substitute teachers.

Student LINC Project – 100 kids participated in 2005-06. The bottom line of the project evaluation was that it needs to be stronger. In the

2006-07 school year, 50 students participated. They will work with mentors/ombudsmen to continue the training. Kids will create goals for their schools and with help from Michigan Roundtable Mentors will implement goals.

Resources – Unstructured activities related to diversity and cultural awareness: calendar/fairs (Hamilton), cultural community (Barnard) and clubs at the middle and high schools. Structured activities include curriculum guidelines and content review. Dr. Fowler challenged the community to come to schools if a book is incorrect or they have a problem with it.

Hiring a diverse population – Very difficult, they would love for more people to apply for jobs. Until a diverse staff is in place, training is critical.

TIG – Religious holiday education and policies. Room to review.

EIA Collaboration –

- A. Diversity Training
- B. Bridging the Racial Divide
- C. Teaching Tolerance
- D. EIAB as liaison
- E. Cultural Diversity Connection newsletter

How to incorporate diversity in elementary schools? Encourage during “all about me” section sharing culture.

Help with translations of website and brochures.

Very difficult to be sure info on web is accurate.

Any parent can review books at school libraries.

- c. Bridging the Racial Divide was tabled. Cindy passed out comments from students who attended.
- d. Tony Haddad made a motion to change the July meeting from July 3 to July 10. The motion was seconded by Reuben Ellis. Approved unanimously.

Old Business

- A. Recommendations regarding board vacancies and absences.

Gladson suggested the following Recommendations to be an advisor & Application:

1. *Must be a US citizen*
2. *Must be a resident of Troy for a minimum period of two years*
3. *To be an advisor to a certain ethnic group, the person should:*
 - a. *Belong to a certain ethnic group which does not have more than two representatives on the board*
 - b. *Be currently involved with activities of the ethnic group they are representing*
 - c. *Preferably be someone who migrated to the US and has a good understanding of the ethnic group's culture they are representing*
 - d. *Have leadership qualities and be a team player*
4. *There must be an equal number of males and females in the advisory group. Gender selection is necessary so views of both gender perspectives can be shared*
5. *Must attend minimum two board meetings*

Application for Ethnic Advisory Group

Date:

Name of Person:

Ethnic group representing:

US citizen since:

Troy resident since:

List current ethnic activities:

Other activities:

Briefly state why you would like to be part of the Ethnic Advisory Group.

Signature

Recommended by Board member:

Remarks by Board member:

Yes Recommendation

No Recommendation

The EIA Members voted to postpone this topic to the July meeting.

B. Update on Troy Daze – Ethnicity

Applications have been mailed out and we are waiting for returns. Need volunteers to call groups. Would we charge a school group? Board said no. Board needs to commit to volunteering at the Troy Daze Ethnicity Tent. Cindy will bring a schedule to the next meeting.

C. Translation of Brochures

Cindy Stewart is waiting for quotes to translate brochures.

Member Comment

Tony Haddad voiced a concern with students at the High School speaking their language at school and using it to hurt others or using it for Social and/or for studying. Some Staff at school tell students they can only speak English. Is this right? Reuben Ellis said they would have a problem if staff told kids they can not speak their own language. There just needs to be more diversity training. This is a “freedom of speech” issue. If students are told not to speak their own language, they should go to their principal or their parents should talk to the principal or Dr. Fowler. We can bring this up the next time we meet with Dr. Fowler and ask about the school policy. Cindy will call Tim McAvoy and ask what the school policy is regarding students speaking languages other than English during school.

Helen will be at a summer program at Michigan State University researching environmental science.

Lulu will be at a summer program at Harvard researching molecular biology pharmacology.

Public Comment

Karen Yelder is working with Michelle Haight dealing with Athens High School staff. One essay assigned to Karen’s daughter was very insensitive to African Americans. This, along with some literature they feel is insensitive, has been brought to the attention of Tim McAvoy and the Athens principals. They’re also working on finding individuals from different cultures to apply as teachers. There are five positions available at Athens. Karen is finding applicants to turn into John Toma, Athens Principal. The school district is serious about finding teachers from other cultures.

Sushma Shrestha, from Nepal, is a Troy resident for nine years with sons in kindergarten and sixth grade.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by Reuben Ellis, seconded by Gladson Remos.
Meeting is adjourned at 8:04 pm.

Next meeting: July 10 at 7 pm.

Mayada Fakhouri, EIA Board Member

Cindy Stewart, EIA Recording Secretary