



TEAM Westport Meeting Minutes

April 3, 2012, 7:30 AM

Room 201

Westport Town Hall, Westport, CT

Attendees: Dolores Paoli, Patricia Wei, Maggie Mudd, Harold Bailey (Presiding), Bernicestine McLeod, Stu Losen, Barbara Butler, and Stephane Kirven

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 AM.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes for several previous meetings were reviewed. Maggie Mudd made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Dolores Paoli.

New Business

What's Up:

1. Anderson Cooper has a series on race on CNN this week. Some of the statistics quoted indicated that among children as young as 1st grade, 38% of white kids had positive impressions about black kids while 70% of black kids had positive impressions about white kids. These results are indicative of the same results as the black doll/white doll test that was conducted by Dr. Kenneth Clark in the 50's.
2. Even locally, there are recent examples where black students are represented in a not so positive light when compared to white kids. We as a committee must try to continue to make people aware of what and how things are said with regard to race. Statements may be made innocently; however, they are racist and are hurtful or at the very least reflect biases of which the speaker may be unaware.
3. We talked about the Trayvon Martin situation with regard to the commentary of Charles Blow (NY Times) who addresses wider issues like the Wild West attitude of vigilantism. Also discussed briefly was the 'Stand Your Ground Law' in 23 states and what that means with regard to this issue as well as safety in general.



TEAM Westport Meeting Minutes

April 3, 2012, 7:30 AM

Room 201

Westport Town Hall, Westport, CT

Old Business:

- Education Committee
 - We talked more about Open Choice. There has been some more publicity about the program including a piece in Dan Woog's blog 06880 about one student who is now mentoring younger Open Choice kids.
 - We could build upon the mentoring idea and encourage more mentors on several levels: parents/parents, students/students, Town of Westport mentors.
 - Brought to Harold's attention was a video that covers Project Concern years ago (where students were first bussed from Bridgeport) here in Westport. In addition, Great Neck, NY was doing something similar. This video is important and should be good for a great discussion – although it happened in the late 60's/early 70's.
 - One outcome of this discussion was that we should support conducting impact studies to show additional merits of the Open Choice program – how it influences attitudes and whether students in interacting with each other have experienced any changes along racial lines in an effort to determine the impact these programs have. Thus far we have spoken anecdotally about how Open Choice affects people – how positive it is for the participants, but there may not have been as much emphasis on the value to Westport students.
 - We are working with Julie Horowitz to possibly talk further to Open Choice graduates to find out and document the impact of the program upon them personally.
 - We also would like to outline what might be of help to the students in the program. Suggestions to be evaluated are: tutoring, extra-curricular exposure to support the educational experience, additional funding, and liaisons in each school via the PTA, for example.
- Playhouse Partnership Update
 - We as a committee are reaching out to community partners for programming during the run of 'Raisin in the Sun' in October/November.
 - We are following up with several people re: programming for gay teens and parents of gay teens to run around the time that 'Harbour' is being presented at the Playhouse in September. This will hopefully help us capture and talk about the spectrum of sexuality and exploration in light of the public case of Tyler Clementi and not so public situations. Maggie is coordinating.
 - We would like to take a trip into NYC to see 'Clybourne Park' with reference to 'Raisin'.
 - Action: Harold will send a 'Doodle' to us to get possible times set up.



TEAM Westport Meeting Minutes

April 3, 2012, 7:30 AM

Room 201

Westport Town Hall, Westport, CT

- Program Plan and Announcements
 - We discussed possible recipients of our Trailblazers Award for this fall. We skipped last year (2011), but held events in 2009 and 2010.
 - Aaron Sanders will be running a session on the reality of “The Help” (film) on Wednesday at 3:15 at Norwalk Community College. He is the former Affirmative Action Officer at the College.
 - On this coming Wednesday (April 4th) at 7, there is a meeting in Norwalk for the proposed approval of a mosque.
 - The Wilton Library is holding a series of programs on Islam. We will do research on holding programs here in Westport. Ideas for speakers and topics were suggested.
 - Maggie Mudd will be following up with Staples with regard to this year’s TEAM Westport Staples Award given to a senior who has furthered diversity over this past year. The award includes a scholarship amount.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 AM. The next meeting is scheduled for May 1, 2012, at 7:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernicestine E. McLeod
Secretary