**Julian PTO Meeting Minutes**

**Community Meeting**

**Monday March 11, 2019**

**7-8:30 pm**

\*\*The meeting was live streamed on Facebook\*\*

**Present:**

Students (of panel): Shenice, Sebastian, Dallis, Christian, Taylor, Seth, Marlene

Highschool Mentors: Antwon, Chloe Ieach –

Parents:

Wendy Barrett, Todd Fitzgerald, Lori McConnell, Michele Gurgas, Debra Woods, Denise Frank, Nathania Montes, Cynthia Brito, Molly Wulkowicz, Jason Wulkowicz, Alisan Welch, Deanna Humphrey-Smith, Yasmina Duwe, Makesha Flournoy, Jacki Buckmast Liberty, Laura Lallos, Dan Giloth, Melania McQueen

**Principal Update** (Todd Fitzgerald)

Illinois Readiness Testing is underway. Student course election requests are underway. Last week was “Respect Week”, focusing on culture and climate in the building including peer to peer and adult to students interactions.

**Diversity and Inclusion Student Panel** (Mediated by Nathania Montes and Cynthia Brito)

A student lead the panel off by para-phrasing quotes from other students about race. The pamphlet was from an integrated studies class regarding African American Studies.

They presented examples of teachers escalating situations and acting dis-favorably towards black student.

White students get more teacher attention than students of color. Students find this offensive.

Teachers have made comments about students “hair” which have afros hairstyles.

A number of teacher racial based comments were given as examples.

The school needs more black history information in the curriculum.

Dress code discrimination – unfair enforcement of dress code towards students of color.

The school would not allow the re-enactment of the Trayvon Martin killing but allowed CAST a play which used guns.

Central education does not include queer dialogue.

The school needs more teachers of color.

Students have witnessed a number of white students using the “N” word regularly. They are not disciplined.

Racial profiling. Most people have witnessed it. i.e. white male students clapping during lunch; adults find it funny; then black students made a “beat” on a table, the Assistant Principal shuts it down immediately.

If a female white student is outgoing, it is favored upon; if a female black student is outgoing, they are considered hostile.

Students reviewed which teachers they turn to for support.

Teachers only paying attention to loud racism and not the soft forms of racism taking place throughout the school.

The students want a change. They really hope that the administration and parents listen to us.

The students do not feel welcome or safe at the school. The club meets once a week. They have 18 members.

Discussed the picture on the wall in the lunchroom which is an old picture consisting of all white students. (Dr. Fitzgerald: During spring break, the school will see if they can remove it safely. If it is difficult to remove, they will try and figure how to get it taken down later since it was created in the 1930’s. -- A parent asked if they can cover it up in the meantime). (Parent: Use the removal of this picture as a teaching tool for the IB program curriculum.) (PTO: Willing to pay to have the picture covered immediately.)

Question: What would you like to see in your white peer students? Answer: They should be more understanding of black issues. They need to speak up for the black students when seeing racist things happening. When white students are called out doing something racially offensive, whites needs to accept they did something wrong and to learn from it.

Question: If you can imagine a school, what would it look like? Answer: I want the kids to be smiling and to have that smile come from the inside. School should be a place where people are happy and excited to go to school and that all students are involved equally. Students want people of color history integrated into the curriculum throughout the school year.

Administration Response:

* Dr. Fitzgerald wants to meet with the Club and try and address their issues.
* During Respect Week, they covered the topic of not using the N Word. When N Word usage is brought before the Administration, the students are disciplined.
* There is a list of 11 items from the Social Justice group which the Administration will be working on with the Student Group.
* There is a collation of black teachers that meet at D97 to discuss topics. He would be receptive of staff doing something for Black History Month.

**See Agenda**