Building a Framework for Cultural Transformation

2nd Annual Envisioning Equity Community Forum

March 10, 2020

Welcome & “The Why” - Dr. James Montesano, Superintendent of Schools
Pillars of Equity for a District-wide Plan - Joyce James, District Equity Consultant
Panel Discussion: Equity at Work in Nyack Schools – NPS Staff
Help us plan how to achieve the future we want for all our children.
Nyack Community is a microcosm of the United States, as reflected in our diversity and demographics.
Nyack’s Music Department prioritizes learning music from around the world. BOE President, Michael Mark, pictured in VCE Music classroom.
Nyack students learn to collaborate with each other from the time they are in elementary school.
Morning Greeting with elementary bilingual students at Liberty begins the day with a happy message in English and Spanish.
T-SHIRT created by the NHS African American/Haitian Club students

DREAM LIKE MARTIN
LEAD LIKE HARRIET
FIGHT LIKE MALCOLM
THINK LIKE GARVEY
WRITE LIKE MAYA
BUILD LIKE MADAM C.J.
SPEAK LIKE FREDERICK
EDUCATE LIKE W.E.B.
BELIEVE LIKE THURGOOD
CHALLENGE LIKE ROSA
NHS students celebrating African American history and influence on music and dance during a presentation for the high school student body.
Miss Lynnette, Nyack Basics Coordinator, demonstrating Basics Principle #2: "Talk, Sing & Point" with Jeffrey Freidburg, mamas and babies.
NHS American History students created children’s books highlighting multiple perspectives surrounding Thanksgiving and read their stories to our 4th graders.
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Dr. Montesano and Nyack High School students discuss ideas about how the District could achieve more equitable outcomes for students
“Reaching Towards Equity” training with Valley Cottage staff asked teachers to consider how white privilege impacts our relationships with each other and in the classroom.
“Reaching Towards Equity” training with Liberty staff asked teachers to consider how white privilege impacts our relationships with each other and in the classroom.
Reaching Towards Equity trainer, Dornzella Milligan leading a discussion at Liberty
Dr. Montesano’s opening remarks introducing Joyce James at the March 16th Superintendent’s Conference, “Envisioning Equity” for all NPS Staff
A District-wide consortium for “Envisioning Equity” involved the participation of all staff as a part of an ongoing challenge to deepen collective understanding and effectuate change.
Teachers in small groups discussed and answered “Visioning Questions” during Superintendent’s Conference Day, March 16, 2019.
District Equity Consultant, Joyce James, lead all staff in a District-wide consortium for “Envisioning Equity” as part of the process in developing and implementing a District Racial Equity Plan.
Teachers in small groups discussed and answered “Visioning Questions” during Superintendent’s Conference Day, March 16, 2019
Staff & Administrators in small groups discussed and answered “Visioning Questions”. Input from these sessions are being utilized as the District develops a District Racial Equity Plan.
Students helping students; learning together in NHS
1st and 2nd Grade Bilingual Classes at Liberty celebrating Cinco de Mayo
Learning and growing together in the class room
From Haiti to Rockland

Nyack High School

Zuri Chrispin  Edna Ferdinand
Winogé Ferdinand-Laguier  Emileie Kebreau
Rose Leger  Beverly Flucide

Presentation at the Rockland County High School Local History Conference featuring six NHS students sharing their stories.
ENL After School STEM program
NMS students actively learning about how to make the world a better place through the “Say Hello” program that encourages development of empathy and inclusion.
Community Partners such as the Nyack Rotary support literacy for all children. Nyack Rotarian & Superintendent Montesano pictured in a Read-Aloud Day for elementary students.
Nyack Middle School’s entrance message serves as a daily reminder that we believe all students are capable learners.
Our 1:1 Technology Initiative in its 2nd year, provided lap tops for all incoming 9th graders & chromebooks for all incoming 6th & 8th graders. Last year, mobile devices were provided to all students in grades 3, 4, 5 & 9.
Virtual Reality curriculum created by NMS teachers provided all students with a multi-disciplined approach to experiential learning in English, Math, Social Studies and Science.
LATI Class Room encourages a growth mindset and critical thinking skills as children work together on projects in the class room.
BOE Members are invested in ensuring a sense of belonging for all students who walk the hallways of our schools.
Positive role modelling encourages optimism in children of all ages.
Professional development and group exercises with staff build capacity and skills required to be culturally competent educators.
The Visual Arts Department expanded their curriculum and A&P classes to encourage all students who want to explore the artist within them.
A Liberty School bulletin board
Nyack is committed to addressing disparities that prevent Kindergarteners from equitably entering school, ready to learn.
Nyack Basics presentation to the Nyack Chamber of Commerce raises awareness about our campaign to ensure all children enter Kindergarten ready to learn and are reading on level by the 3rd grade.
High school students and ENL club collaborate with Nyack Center during the holidays to wrap gifts for children.
ENL STEM Class
Community Outreach Forums and Innovation Showcases seek to engage the school community in the work of equity and innovation.
The Guidance Department Lunch and Learn program brings NHS alumni in during lunch time to speak with students about college and career opportunities.
“Reaching Towards Equity” training with Liberty staff asked teachers to consider how white privilege impacts our relationships with each other and in the classroom.
“Reaching Towards Equity” training with High School staff asked teachers to consider implicit biases and systemic racism’s impact on our daily work.
“Reaching Towards Equity” training with Middle School staff asked teachers to consider implicit biases and systemic racism’s impact on our daily work.
ENL STEM Class
“Hooked on the Hook” is a new curriculum that combines local history, geography and the expertise of local parent scientists, providing opportunity for ALL 3rd graders to learn science on location at Hook Mountain.
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Nyack Middle School with Principal Johnson
Upper Nyack Elementary School with Principal Mercora
“Start with Hello” project at Nyack High School
Nyack Unified was created by NHS ENL students to be a strength-based approach to uniting various Latinx cultures that are represented in the school.
BOE Trustees visit a LATI Class Room at Upper Nyack Elementary School.
LATI = Learner Activated Technology Infused
Nyack Basics at the Farmer’s Market with Ms. Lynnette
Teamwork
The children of Nyack Public Schools represent the small villages and hamlets of the Nyacks and Valley Cottage.
Principal Addison greets Kindergarteners on the 1st day of school
Administrators received a private tour by Nyack Historical Society curators Brenda Ross & Leontine Temsky, of the Liberty Street School Exhibit. We have to understand our history in order to move forward with equity.
Dr. Alexandria Connally, Director of Equity, Inclusion & Innovation
Nyack’s BOE & Superintendent are committee to training all staff with the People’s Institute for Survival & Beyond Undoing Racism Workshop. As of May, 2019, over 30% of our staff have attended.
College-Bound
Administrators and Board Members working together
We will remember.

With hope, because hopelessness is the enemy of justice.
With courage, because peace requires bravery.
With persistence, because justice is a constant struggle.
With faith, because we shall overcome.
Building Bridges for today’s students to cross into tomorrow’s world with Equity, Innovation & Optimism