



## Verona Public Schools Office of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

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March 22, 2021

Dear Stakeholder:

We wanted to thank everyone who attended and participated in our first Diversity Committee meeting last Tuesday, March 16th, led by Mr. David Schwartz (more information about David can be found [here](#)). Mr. Schwartz led us through the topics of civil discourse, identity, and implicit bias, while providing us an opportunity to have one-on-one short conversations with different committee members so that we could learn more about each other. This was the goal of our first meeting - to establish norms, to begin to understand what viewpoints and perspectives we each have, and how we can work together to make the Verona Public Schools a more inclusive, empathetic, and open-minded district.

We would like to provide you with an outline of the work our committees will conduct over the next several months in our remaining meetings for the 2020-2021 school year. Our work will continue into next year and beyond as we continue to build an inclusive community for all students, staff, and families. These sessions will provide opportunities for small group dialogue amongst committee members that will guide our efforts.

- In April, we have scheduled three successive evening sessions - **April 20th, April 21st, and April 22nd from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.** Mr. Schwartz will lead our training on equity, “colorblind” vs. culturally responsive education, and begin to define the sub-committee tasks. *Please note that you will only need to attend 1 of the 3 sessions for all subsequent monthly sessions below, depending upon your preferred choice of committee assignment. We will do our best to honor your request (based upon your survey response from the September 2020 letter), while at the same time trying to balance the numbers in each of our sub-committees.* Discussions on equity will be framed and viewed through the lens of each of the following sub-committees:
  - Tuesday, April 20th - Curriculum & Instruction and Professional Development
  - Wednesday, April 21st - Recruiting & Hiring and Community Outreach
  - Thursday, April 22nd - District/School Climate & Culture and Educational Equity

- In May, we have scheduled three successive evening sessions - **May 18th, May 19th, and May 20th from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.** Our sub-committees will review guidelines for community conversation, challenges in meeting the goals of equity and inclusion, and begin to discuss the existing areas of strength and areas in need of improvement, while considering perceived challenges that may exist toward driving improvement.
  - Tuesday, May 18th - District/School Climate & Culture and Educational Equity\*
  - Wednesday, May 19th - Recruiting & Hiring and Community Outreach
  - Thursday, May 20th - Curriculum & Instruction and Professional Development\*
- In June, we have scheduled three successive evening sessions - **June 1st, June 2nd, and June 3rd from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.** Our sub-committees will continue to discuss the challenges and identify resources necessary to begin to implement positive change.
  - Tuesday, June 1st - District/School Climate & Culture and Educational Equity\*
  - Wednesday, June 2nd - Recruiting & Hiring and Community Outreach
  - Thursday, June 3rd - Curriculum & Instruction and Professional Development\*
- On **Wednesday, June 16th**, we will have a meeting of the **full Diversity Committee from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.** Our goal in this meeting is to review guidelines for community conversation, share and discuss the recommendations and ideas from each committee, and begin drafting an action plan that will specify and detail the steps needed to accomplish our goals. Additionally, such a plan will help determine our agenda for Fall 2021.
- During the **months of July and August**, Mr. Schwartz will provide staff development for our Administrative Team to help guide our work on topics such as: antiracist education practices, culturally responsive teaching, and culturally responsive classroom observation and evaluation.

In closing, we welcome your feedback from our first meeting and as we move forward this spring. Please share your thoughts and ideas with us by clicking on this [link](#). We truly appreciate your willingness to partner with us as we continue to improve our school district. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either of us and please continue to stay well.

Sincerely,



Mr. Steven Schels  
Supervisor of Humanities



Dr. Charles R. Miller  
Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment