

# Equity/Minority Recruitment Teams Meeting | 8.4.20

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## Beginning of the Meeting



**Combing through PLC practices to identify a rubric that we can review, reflect and discuss as a way to begin to recognize individuals and groups for great work they are doing related to promoting and realizing equity in their circles of influence and in the community.**

Opportunity: Creating awareness

Barrier: Sustainability

Report back

- Highlight teachers/schools embracing diversity
  - Make them visible

- Get rid of labels; be careful in our word choice
  - Special ed, GATE
- Considering naming our group something less clinical?
  - All In: Diversity in Fort Smith
  - I would like to give it some thought, not fond of the word diversity because it seems to imply letting people in that were excluded before
  - Recognizing individual differences
  - Do we need a process by which we can identify a name to come to consensus on? How do we refer to ourselves until we do that?
  - Using a doodle poll or google form with different names, allow people to vote that way. In the meantime, continue with the current name knowing we need to move forward rather quickly.
  - Google form set up like a voting ballot.
  - Minority recruitment language concern
  - That verbiage is language we use with the state, nothing to do with this committee.
  - 10 minutes in, discussing group names. Submit names, follow up with the names, based on the mission and vision of the committee, recommends this direction, all about the fruit vs. the name
  - Name Ideas
    - For now, how about the Equity "All In" Team
    - Education for All
    - I like both of those options above

## Painting

- Has significant value, \$20,000 at time of appraisal
- The Board of Education would have to make this decision
- We have placed it into storage, UVC approached about returning it
- What is the question on the table?
  - What the group thinks to do with it, and the mechanism/timing
- We wouldn't be able to sell it, would we?
  - Not sure, it was a donation we believe, not a loan. Gave it to us without any agreement.
- School district doing a history section, including this painting rather than just returning it to them. Believes all history is important, safe environment to learn about it
  - Presses in storage, we don't have the capacity or organize and put up those kinds of pieces that would allow us to reflect
  - Fort Smith Museum of History
  - They would have to accept it, board would still have to act
  - Maybe less backlash to give it to the Museum of History
  - US Marshall Museum?

- Always a level of backlash, need to hear from you
- Daughters don't want it in storage, right?
- Yes
- I support the FS Historical Museum idea.
- Get rid of it asap, I recommend we ask the board to get rid of it asap
- I agree that placing the painting into the right hands is imperative. I do not believe that returning it to the donor at this time and place is not being a proper steward for the community
- Can we put it in our city without it being a negative?
- Painting was given for displaying at the school
- Timing on purpose, feels weird? Considering it? Feels like it's the wrong time to address it.
- Shouldn't wait on a decision to do what is right, knowing potential backlash, could take away from all the balls we're juggling at this time
- How vocal has the organization been?
- Might have until August 2021 to decide
- Hold onto it, negative response no matter what, delay to reopening
- Agree with taking time, suggest to reach out to experts to give us direction. The state, federal archives, etc.
- Numerous donations made by this organization. This won't go away. Likely have a taskforce.
- Ladies did say they might put it in the old state house in Little Rock
- See what's in their minutes and run it past council. This has been helpful for me. We've talked about other options that are valuable.
- Cannot control what you hang beside it - hang with essays, offer students to tell both sides of the Robert E Lee story that truly tells what you need to know about the man and his legacy
- Any precedent in place for other artifacts we have given back?
- No precedent
- Can be done strategically, because verbiage is ambiguous

## Education Week Article

Albert Pike is one of six schools in Arkansas to hold the name of a confederate figure.

This is a topic that has been brought to me as a school board member - not a new discussion for the community. Brought to the attention of the media outside of our community.

- Back to the same point, being proud of history, telling our full history
- It was destroyed a few weeks ago (the statue)
- Don't want to see history erased, education being taught

- Education in its totality, there is imbalance, we don't have that both sides of the story, can't be done overnight. Figure out for all history to be told. If we keep it, can't have it one sided.
- I wouldn't want any family member or child to feel uncomfortable because of the school name
- Opportunity to create more balance
- I see it as an opportunity as well
- Me too.
- Definitely a notation and why it changed, how have others handled this issue? Do we have any understanding?
- Strategic about how we do this as well would be helpful, and how it's been handled by others in the country. Ample discussion, school board input and discussion with the community at large.
- Virginia has done work with this in recent years, Arlington, Fairfax county.
  - Lengthy period of time for process to unfold
  - Community discussion with those who go to the school
  - Nothing yet in Arkansas
- Law school was renamed. Now it's time to integrate the discussion. Will trickle to the street name as well.
- Let's be the first in AR!
- Amen!
- Now is the time to do it. Will get some backlash. Do it now while the movement is still going on.
- Well said, sir.
- Good job!
- All these other things about him, would need to do more research to have an informed opinion on which way I would go.
- Have to come back to the kids, want kids to feel valued, equity for all which includes learning environment
- This is an elementary school. The school's name should be relatable and inspiring
- Great point!
- Can we get the ball rolling?
- How do we start the process?
- We are in an environment of change. Be united and stand up for it together. Because there will be backlash. As long as we know we're doing what's right for kids.
- make one move, then another move about the street. Anything can be done tactfully and strategically, what's the next step?
- Relatable to children at the forefront of our decision and If Pike doesn't reflect that, then it seems then the change needs to be made.
- Who was Trusty?
- That it sticks and it stays, some value in checking the boxes, and working through it
- Any other buildings in fort smith that are controversial?
- We have buildings that have KKK on them

- I was honestly shocked about SHS Rebels
- Are there more fort smith school buildings?
- Pike also advocated against the federal govt on behalf of the native americans
- Having grown up in area with little or no diversity, my arrival at Tilles Elementary 20+ years ago allowed me to learn that kids are kids. And I never want to see us do anything or continue to do anything that inhibits or disrupts any child's comfort level and ability to achieve all they can. Nor do I want their family to be uncomfortable. They are our partners in this business. With that said, whatever is best for our students is the right decision and I support any change or decision that positively impacts our kids. Kids are kids and they all need every help they can be given to make us not just better but the best!
- Is this going to prompt the move to change the name of North/South side?
- Naming things after people, feel good about Peak
- Must think about it in conjunction with other organizations, with us or without us
- Ed Ballman was a significant influence on the furniture manufacturing in Ft. Smith.
- Is it time now to approach the board?
- No time like the present...
- Don't see the value in waiting
- 2021-2022 school year? Moving towards it? Would a year be enough time to ask for?
- Get a handle on how fast or slow others are moving
- So a new name would be considered for the next school year....
- Time is now, wheels are moving within the city, time to strike is now
- Like the timeline idea
- It will take a lot of time for the school to transition everything to a new name. I think it could be voted on now, and the actual change take place at the beginning of next school year.
- We want this to work
- I believe in going forward with it