**Thurgood Marshall PTA/EAT Meeting Minutes**

**with Kyana Wheeler**

Tuesday 22 October 2019 | 6:30-8:00 pm | TM Library

**Kathleen Lendvay**, PTA Co-President, introduced Co-President **Venessa Goldberg** and asked PTA Board members to stand up to be introduced. There were three handouts (available on tmlink.org): the district’s proposed 2020-21 Student Assignment Plan, proposed revisions to Policy 2190, and the TAF FAQs which were printed from the SPS website.

* Upcoming general PTA meetings are planned for January 21, March 17, and May 19, all 6:30-8:00 PM. Potential topics are Digital Citizenship with presentations by Mr. Zetterberg and Ms Matsui, a panel of district representatives to discuss differentiation in the classroom, and social emotional learning or fitness. The PTA would love to hear topic ideas from families as well. Please contact your PTA with your ideas by emailing pta@tmlink.org.
* Save the date for Thurgood Marshall Library Fundraiser. Sunday, Nov 3, 12-4 PM at Madison Park Bookstore (4118 E Madison St). 15% of designated sales will be donated to our library. You can also purchase books directly for the library. Just mention Thurgood Marshall Elementary when you make your purchase.

**Principal Katie May** gave a “State of the School “update:

* Thanked everyone for being here. This is one of the best attended PTA meetings. So glad that you’ll have a chance to see and hear from Kyana. Will do a follow-up with Wyeth Jessee regarding changes proposed by the district that affect Thurgood Marshall students who plan to move on to Washington Middle School, and AC scholars students.
* Our school just received a pilot grant in parent academic partnerships to do 3 evening events for parents to come in and learn about important part of the curriculum, e.g. how to help your child with math strategies. For parents in any program at our school. Come and learn about how to help move your child forward at home. First parent night in January. This addresses the issues of why some of our kids going to middle school 3 years below grade level. We want to make sure that’s not happening. We want to make sure that it’s working at home and at school.
* Thurgood Marshall is also applying for a City Levy grant. TM has the highest enrollment of boys of color in K-3. If we are successful in writing our grant, we would receive $240,000-340,000/year for up to 6 years. This would fund a Family Support Worker to connect families to resources and to enhance family engagement, a math intervention specialist, a data coach to track student progress, and help implement academic parent/teacher teams (as described above).
* We are still looking to hire a K/1 teacher to help reduce class sizes. Want to help every child to learn in an environment conducive to learning. Going into 2nd round of hiring with some new applicants. Will let you know.
* “Big toy.” Our school playground is in need of refurbishment. It’s very old and falling apart, so this will be a big endeavor with a lot of time and effort and fundraising. Hoping someone will come forward to drive getting this new big toy. Anyone interested in helping out with fundraising or in any other way should contact either Katie May or the PTA.
* Parent Coffee from 8:40 am to 9:30 am in the TM Library tomorrow with Aaron Smith of Nutrition Services from District. Featured in Seattle Met mag. Came and did a focus group with 3rd grades – kids told him what they want and don’t want. They didn’t know what pot roast was. They wanted sushi. He promised sushi and ice cream! He will bring samples to the Coffee. Always room for improvement and changes in school breakfast and lunch.If you can make it, come give feedback and to learn what new directions food service is heading for.
* Introduction of Kyana Wheeler, who is also working with Thurgood Marshall teachers/staff. As a school community we are actively thinking about what’s best for kids of color, underserved kids, kids with special learning needs…. And want to make sure the needs of all kids are being met. And how can we meet the kids who are furthest from educational justice and move them forward? Equity Action Team has asked Kyana to help us move forward in a concerted way and push our thinking forward. Teachers had a session with Kyana already. Kyana was really well-received by teachers, they loved it, people were open and shared. I’m very excited that Kyana is here.

**APPENDIX: EQUITY ACTION TEAM NOTES FROM KYANA WHEELER WORKSHOP/PRESENTATION**

**ICEBREAKER**

**Kyana -** Stress and trauma that we receive lives in our body and is reproducible to our offspring. Icebreakers are about taking stress out of our lives, gardening is another great stress reliever.

**Exercise** - *find someone you don’t know and say hello, introduce yourself, ask who their students are, take the opportunity to connect and learn about each other.*

**INTRODUCTION**

**Kyana shared a bit about herself.** Consider myself a mother, part of community, a community organizer, a wife, single mother for a long time, a spoken word artist. In my systems job, I work as RSJI Deputy Manager for City of Seattle – equity work in institutions. Undergrad in Ethnic Studies, Master in Public Admin and Organizational Development. Wasn’t looked at as highly capable. Grew up with 4 families of color in Issaquah. Brothers were only men of color in their school. Went to school to prove my worth. Now understand my lived experience is sufficient.

In order for us to do community-building, have to understand how we perceive the community we’re in. Work around our own lived experiences, what our children must be experiencing, here at TM, and when they leave this place. The system we have has been handed down to us, it’s not what we’ve asked for. Our choices are: 1) We can hand it down to our children, or 2) We can seek to change it. If we want to change the system, we have to look at what we have and where we want to go. We’re starting with “what we have.”

**SOCIALIZATION EXERCISE**

**Kyana -** **What kinds of things socialize us?**

**Brainstorm Exercise** *(contributions from participants): family, education, media/arts, race, colors (red/yellow/green in stoplight – even if it was flipped, we’d still know to stop), religion, political affiliation, gender, language, where you live/geography (for example, streets and property right at this location were used to redline), where you grew up, what type of housing, socio-economic status, neighborhood, personality (speaking up or being quiet- e.g. black woman speaking up is considered angry); masculinity/femininity; trauma/adverse childhood experiences; sports; access to health care; employment; marital status/types of families; physical and mental ability; sexual orientation; your circles of friends (studies show that children are with friends because they didn’t push you away); cliques; dietary; immigrant status; indigeneity*

**Kyana** - This is known by kids from a very young age. They pick up cues from everywhere. Caveat – folks who have immigrated to this country don’t understand the chart, and don’t know how they fit into it.

**Exercise -**  *Talk to neighbor about one of these categories that’s influenced you.*

**Kyana** – What did you realize in this conversation?

**Participant Comments**

– Looking at the difference that sets us apart. **Kyana -** we knew we weren’t like everyone else in this way, had to figure out ways to frame it in a good way. When we’re younger, hate the things that makes us different.

--Immigrant trying to understand the boundaries between neighbors. **Kyana -** Plays on our individualism in the U.S.

**Kyana** – What emotions came up during that exercise? (60 seconds to name emotions that came up.)

All – *Name emotions that came up in the talk with their neighbor.* **Kyana** – In our life, there’s “both/and” and not always “either/or.” We can both be triggered and elated.

**CYCLES OF SOCIALIZATION POWERPOINT**

If it diverts, then it doesn’t fit me – why doesn’t it fit me? Path shows Cycle of liberation.

Example: reversing gender norms. Don’t have to pass along “My socialization.” Kyana uses “they” pronouns until someone tells her they prefer gender pronouns or something different.

**HOW SOCIALIZATION FUNCTIONS AT 4 DIFFERENT LEVELS – see handout**

Interpersonal

Internalized

Institutional- policies and practices upholding socialized norms (e.g. absences, tardies, needing to be on time at work/school)

Structural –society, how multiple institutions uphold norms (e.g. real estate tax funds schools) – pay attention to phrases like “good school” –what it means financially, racially, statistically what are “good schools” – every success will bear out through racial hierarchy (white at the top, black at the bottom, indigenous invisible, Latinx/Asian in the middle). “Good school” has hierarchy that has to do with our history, current context playing out years of history.

**CHART –** 4 levels

How society functions (triangle)

How institutions support it (circle)

How people function within it (individual in triangle)

How we think about/perceive all of it – Internalized (thinking inside)

**Group Discussion regarding the DAVID HORSEY “SEATTLE TIMES” CARTOON**

**Kyana** - I saw the 4 levels above. Name 1 way that each of these levels play out.

**Exercise –** *Discuss with neighbor what it looks like on these levels.*

**Participant -** No ladder at first frame. Looks like white kid earned his way to the top and black kids need a crutch. How about a door instead of a ladder?

**Kyana -** Picture is asking us to see what’s the problem. Our idea of individualism/merit. The structure is the problem. No other things named on the structure as to how white kid got up there. White kid just belongs. Outcome of history, practices and policies got him into that structure. Our assumption is that he should be up there.

The Equality vs. Equity picture of 3 kids looking at a baseball field. They get a stepstool – for equity, shortest kid gets the biggest stool. We don’t talk about the problem with that picture. The fence is the problem – we put barriers up, and try to figure out resources around them. We don’t talk about root problems. We try to resource rather than change. We put the fence (the box) in place.

We don’t even question the place that they’re at. Where are the white women, black men, Asian/Latinx people? They’re all missing in this cartoon.

What would the ladder be considered? The work-around the system. Who does the work-around? We all have to resource it? The educational system has to resource it?

**Participant -** Where did the ladder come from? Brown child has to do extraordinary work to get to where the white kid is. Some of those kids who are at the top of the structure may want his friend there, but never thought to jump down. The kids are trying to make sense of the personal within the system.

**Participant -** Imagine the picture from the perspective of grade levels. Why does the person of color – you should always want to be where white folks are? Messages that folks of color internalize – that some kids deserve to be there, if I want to get there, I need to go there.

**Kyana** – White people are not informed that they need people of color to be complete. People of color always informed that we need white people in order to be complete.

**Participant -** white supremacy teaches white people that they should feel superior. Tells people of color that they are inferior, and saying to white folks that you should feel superior.

**Kyana** – She sees a white savior complex. E.g. Neurotypical people want to fix people with disabilities. People want homeless to get a house, instead of “Does a community support me?” Folks socialized to be in the dominant frame want everyone to get to be in the dominant frame.

She sees in the cartoon the impact of identities that we want to address.

**SOCIAL IDENTITIES AND OPPRESSION CHART – see Handout**

Next steps: A survey was distributed to gather feedback on this workshop and find out what participants would find most valuable in the next one. The Equity Action Team is planning additional workshops for later in the year, please keep your eye out on the EAT page on tmlink.org for a Donors Choose fundraiser to fund this work.