



*Forward in Excellence*

# SEEAT

## Meeting Highlights

*Date:*

*Time: 4:00 – 5:30 PM*

*Location: Somers Middle School Library*

### **Attendance**

Parent/Community Members	A. Harper, H. Lieb, D. Santos, Dr. Mesidor, E. Wright, L. Calderon, V. Arboleda, J. Silverstein, J. Pizzimenti, R. Gallino, K. Young-Wright
Board Of Ed Members	H. Cambareri
Student Members	C. Soriano, E. Joseph, A. Sheridan, K. DeRosa, N. Todo
Administrators	Dr. Blanch, C. Comerford, K. Guidotti, M. Benedetto, L. Belger, J. Getman, P. Rodrigues, K. Flores
District Faculty/Staff	K. Brill, B. O’Shea, D. Miller, J. Santos, K. Castaldo, M. Bangash, R. Kaishian, S. McClary, T. Kearns, G. Wanderlingh, R. Myint, B. Buerle

### **Introduction**

- Dr. Blanch welcomed everyone and thanked attendees for their time and dedication to educational equity work for our district. All attendees introduced themselves and welcomed new members to the group.

### **Mission/Vision/Values and Goal Areas for 2020-2021**

- **Mission:** The SCSD Educational Equity Advisory Team provides direction and leadership in Anti-Bias/Anti-Racist district practices by serving as the “educational equity lens” to provide positive change for **all**.
  - The group discussed the revised mission statement and reiterated that our work is not just related to our community, but the work is global as well. All agreed that the mission needs to be clear in its words and all encompassing—ALL means ALL. Mrs. Young-Wright suggested a change to the statement to read, “provide a positive educational experience and environment for all.”

- **Vision and Values:** The SEEAT Vision/Values statement was reviewed and discussion revolved around providing direction and leadership to instill social justice into collaboration and curriculum leaning opportunities to elevate our student's voices.
- **Goal Areas:** The SEEAT committee reviewed the three main goals areas of focus for the 2020-2021: Curriculum, Organizational Structures, and Learning Opportunities for All (Faculty/Families/Children/Community). The goals are intended to embrace all.

### ***Shared Learning***

- The poem "Invitation to Brave Space" by Micky ScottBey Jones was shared with the group and discussion around lines and ideas that resonated with participants was discussed. S. McClary shared that it is our responsibility to question everything so we can move forward. There was agreement that growth happens in discomfort and that "safe space" can inhibit growth, but brave space can bring forward motion.
- In addition, the member of SEEAT dissected some statements from a Privilege Walk activity to share thoughts on the use of this activity with students/staff and explore what this experience could provide if used in schools or for professional learning opportunities. Discussion also focused around whether this activity could have the potential of negative self-reflection on the part of students based on the negative connotations of the statements used in the walk to show privilege or non-privilege. Considerations about the overall outcome that is desired as well as avoidance of the exceptionalism approach were also pondered.

### ***District Learning***

- **Insight into Excellence Equity Report:** The Learning Office and Dr. Corliss Thompson have begun to develop an Insights into Equity Plan that will be shared with the SEEAT members in late October/early November. As part of a curriculum renewal process in SCSD, Dr. Thompson is working with the learning office to create a framework and research design for looking at curriculum to ensure curriculum is viewed using an equity lens that is inclusive of an anti-bias/anti-racist perspective. The Learning Office will be looking at the impacts of building activities and how to continue to grow, improve and add to our work all the while celebrating the tools our children come to us with.

### ***SMART Goal Development Work***

- SMART goals and action plans have been developed to address the three main focal goal areas for the 2020-2021 school year.
  - The ABAR Curriculum subcommittee will explore at least one unit in a content area per school utilizing the equity framework to drive positive change in addressing anti-racist/anti-bias through curriculum.
  - In the area of organizational structure, the Code of Conduct will be reviewed by the Organizational Structure subcommittee to ensure it is reflective of the current times as well as values an anti-bias/anti-racist environment.

- The Learning Opportunities subcommittees will be exploring providing at least 2 school-based learning opportunities for “stakeholders,” to provide an outlet and opportunity for student voice, as well as 2 district/regional learning opportunities.

## **Other**

### **“Invitation to Brave Space”**

Together we will create brave space  
Because there is no such thing as a “safe space”  
We exist in the real world  
We all carry scars and we have all caused wounds.  
In this space  
We seek to turn down the volume of the outside world,  
We amplify voices that fight to be heard elsewhere,  
We call each other to more truth and love  
We have the right to start somewhere and continue to grow.  
We have the responsibility to examine what we think we know.  
We will not be perfect.  
This space will not be perfect.  
It will not always be what we wish it to be.  
But it will be our brave space together,  
And we will work on it side by side.

**Invitation to  
Brave Space**

by  
Micky ScottBey Jones



## **Reading Recommendations**

- [“Beyond the Privilege Walk”](https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/beyond-the-privilege-walk) by Jey Ehrenhalt  
<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/beyond-the-privilege-walk>

## **Relevant Links**

## **Community Event**

The next SEEAT Committee Meeting is on October 28, 2020 at 4:00 PM. If you are interested in participating in the committee, please contact Nancy Corrado: [NCorrado@somersschools.org](mailto:NCorrado@somersschools.org).