

Critical Truth

From: patrick mcreery
Sent: Sunday, April 25, 2021 6:56 PM
To: don grotting
Subject: Ideas for our collective efforts

Categories: Interesting - Review Later

Hi Don-

Hope you got some sleep this weekend, and if you didn't I hope you at least got moments of solace. Amid my concern over the feedback we're getting, I kept reminding myself that this feedback "noise" is a reminder that we're doing good work--and yes, we're stumbling as we do--as people feel empowered to use their voices.

A warning that from here on I might get a little obtusely abstract and philosophical, which I tend to do in moments of stressful cognitive dissonance. Permission granted to stop reading if you're not up for it! 😊

I've been thinking about the role of humility in all of this, and how we might be at a place collectively as a system where we need to be humble and acknowledge that despite the many great things about us as a district and about our individual and collective work within it, we may not have all of the skills and knowledge and tools we need to get to where we want to go. This is the result of my own long-term thinking and of more recent conversations with folks in light of our current reality spurred on by our equity summits and by the Fox media story. Amid the stress of last week, I was overcome repeatedly to the point of tears at the generosity of the community in reaching out to offer help and support. For example...

- Carmen Xiomara Urbina offered some time with a Communications consultant she works with in those moments where the ODE communications department is not able to communicate effectively in the manner she needs (i.e. without the necessary equity lens). I wonder if such consultation could help Shellie and C&CI know how to better employ our own equity lens in our community and district messages?
- Desiree Williams-Rajee offered her expertise--insistently pro bono--to help us better understand how to engage our diverse community. This could include many of our department leaders as we have so many avenues by which we engage with our community, so perhaps we start with a visit to a cabinet meeting?
- Nadia Hasan reached out with an offer of partnership around ways the City and School District can partner to align our efforts in support of our diverse staff and community.
- The name Dori King has popped up repeatedly--in my own mind as well!--as someone with whom we could partner via contract to help our BIPOC staff process and heal from the hurt their feeling after last week. Up until last year she held a position similar to mine at OES, and since retiring has devoted her time and energy to municipal efforts as an active member on the City of Beaverton Human Rights Commission, and she continues to support equity work through her Folks of Color in Schools (FOCIS), which she regularly invites me to join. Full disclosure, I have already reached out to her to see about facilitating an affinity space with compensation from funds available in the OEI cost center. But I wonder if she could also work with Susan and DeMarcus to help our HR department develop even more ways to support our staff of color in support of our efforts to retain and recruit.

All of this in addition to our work with OCEE and CEI--and I know that sounds like a lot. While not at all a business savvy fella', I keep thinking about that maxim of keeping a diverse portfolio, and these efforts help us do that--maintain a focus on and commitment to our equity work, while employing many aligned efforts all aimed at the same goal.

Okay...if you read this far you deserve a break. As always, "great idea!" or "Pat, can it already!" are equally acceptable replies! 😊

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He | Him | His

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