

Education and Health Work Group Meeting Notes

ANC Task Force on Racism

Friday, August 7, 2020 4pm-5pm EST

- **Member Roles for this work group**
 - Facilitator = Michael Gibbons
 - Organizer/Recorder = Chris Ott
 - Data Group = Peter Lynch (in absentia)
 - Archivist/Docs share = Google Drive/Docs
- **Schedule for future Work Group Zoom dates**
 - 08/14/20 from 4-5:00pm EST
 - 08/21/20 from 4-5:00pm EST
- **Scope for Work Group Goals**
 - Group consensus that E&H frame our issues and Action Items specific to Chevy Chase, DC (Wards 3 and 4), but agree that what we do in our community may also be of benefit to broader communities in the District
 - Agreed also to start with “issues” – a racial justice problem to address; then identify and discuss/prioritize optional actions to address the issue, so we build a clear rationale for each action we recommend

Work Group Issues/Ideas that may become Action Items

EDUCATION

- **Judy Mays** – Issue – inequalities of funding exacerbated by parent association fund-raising in wealthier neighborhoods like CC. Proposed actions to consider - Explore ways to get PTAs/HSAs of Chevy Chase public schools to share benefits/resources/money with other schools in the system; for example, join program like School to School Program started by Lafayette parent Diana Ross, or set up a foundation to allow cross-school resource sharing, etc (2) Issue - disparities in learning outcomes across DC schools also related to income disparity. Proposed actions to consider - Would like to identify barriers to academic success for those students who attend DCPS that do not receive the same amount of resources as Chevy Chase DCPS students receive, and work at local and DCPS level on remedies.

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- **Jerry Malitz:** Issue #1 – information and understanding gap among residents of the neighborhood regarding the issue of inequalities in funding that are exacerbated by parent associations at wealthier schools. Actions proposed - Jerry emailed the Work Group several hyperlinks to articles published over the last two years
 - <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2019/11/pta-fundraising-schools/601435/>
 - <https://ny.chalkbeat.org/2019/11/27/21109350/with-glaring-pta-fundraising-inequities-some-manhattan-parents-want-solutions-but-money-can-be-a-tou>
 - https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/magazine/parents-raise-massive-amounts-of-money-at-some-public-schools-should-they-share-it/2018/03/16/e3a53eb0-1650-11e8-b681-2d4d462a1921_story.html

This is an example of sharing information which could feed into discussions with HSA, school parents, neighbors about this issue, so that better informed consideration of the impacts of fund-raising policies could result.

Issue #2 – information and understanding gap among residents about our shared racial history. Actions proposed – Jerry mentioned that the President and Vice-President of the Historic Chevy Chase DC who are on this Task Force on Racism started the petition that got the ball rolling to get the park renamed to **Lafayette-Pointer Park** to acknowledge the (Black) Pointer family's role in our history. Jerry pointed out that on the Historic Chevy Chase DC website there are numerous "lessons" on local history which could feed into awareness raising with neighbors and learning by children in Lafayette school.

NOTE: Both of Jerry's suggestions could feed into the Community working group in the "community education and awareness-raising about racial history and justice" category.

- **Aaron Gorman** – Issue: lack of substantive information about local and US racial history in school curriculum. Possible actions: Curriculum changes to include racist history of our neighborhoods and how Black families and citizens have historically been robbed of their land and resources by White families and citizens, to accommodate the priorities of White citizens. (See Subrat's comments below.)
- **Subrat Biswal** – Issue – building on Aaron reference to lack of racial justice history content in school, Subrat mentioned that Lafayette has a Peace studies teacher (paid by HSA funding) that developed learning activities with her students in 2020 to enhance and invigorate the opportunities that arise during "Black History Month" to include classroom discussions about racial history and justice, and encouraged involvement in petitions to rename parks and other historical public sites. This

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Lafayette teacher could benefit from support from the community to advance her curriculum and involve the community more widely.

- **Chris Ott** – Issue – disconnect between parents with children in Lafayette school and community members not involved in the school. Proposed actions: how to link and connect all community members to create opportunities for neighbors to engage in discussions, share information, learn and engage about reform and curriculum enrichment efforts and other ways to close equity gaps in education.

HEALTH

- **Judy Mays** – Issue: COVID related risks and challenges of re-opening schools and how these risks play out unequally with regard to income disparity and other family and community factors in our neighborhood and across the city; we did not explore any specific action options about this as yet.
- **Subrat Biswal** – Issue: The social-emotional learning gap is increasing, especially due to anxieties related to Covid-19, both economically as well as health and wellness of this pandemic. Actions proposed: Subrat mentioned the Lafayette peace studies teacher is charged with addressing this in school, so what can wider community do to support this?