

**DISTRICT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE**  
*Fostering Discrimination-Free Working and Learning Environments*

**Thursday, June 8, 2017 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm**

**School Board Office - Boardroom**

**MINUTES**



Central Okanagan  
Public Schools  
*Together We Learn*

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Central Okanagan School District	Dr. Rick Oliver, Superintendent	Deb Roseleine, Recording Secretary
Board of Education	Deb Butler	
Community	Latif Kacuri Kelowna Community Resources	Joyce Brinkerhoff Kelowna Inter-Cultural Society
COPVPA	Mike Kormany	
COTA	Leigh-Ann Yanow	April Smith
International Education	Carol Rimmer	
UBCO	Dr. Catherine Broom	

**REGRETS**

Aboriginal Education	Joanne DeGuevara	
Board of Education	Moyra Baxter ( <i>Alternate</i> )	
Community	Rawle James, Kelowna Community Resources	
COPAC	Adam Clarke	Shelley Courtney ( <i>Alternate</i> )
COPVPA	Kathy Weninger	
COTA	Kyle Hamilton	
CUPE	Colleen Elder	
District Student Council	Kendra Peter, GESS	Jenita White, KSS

**1. AGENDA**

***Rick Oliver***

- 1.1 Additions to June 8, 2017 Agenda
- 1.2 Approval of the June 8, 2017 Agenda

**2. PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- 2.1 Adoption of the January 26, 2017 Minutes

***Rick Oliver***

**3. ACTION ITEMS**

**4. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**4.1 The Welcome Centre**

***Rick Oliver***

Donna Garbelya and Carol Davidson have both retired as SWIS workers. They had been working at the Welcome Centre since the beginning of the program, and over the last nine years they did amazing work.

I want people to be aware that the numbers going through The Welcome Centre continue to grow. There is growth there, and it is changing the way that we look at our school system. Any student who is a new arrival isn't necessarily an International student. Not everybody landing in our community is European. So many people come from so many countries. People are being exposed to different cultures and parts of the world, and our system is responding. We have 516 kids from 33 countries. If you add to that what's also happening at the college and the university with their student numbers, the face of Kelowna is changing, and our community is seeing some change. It's a healthy thing and healthy that we are talking about it in this context as well.

**4.2 Harmony Day 2017 – Update*****Leigh-Ann Yanow***

We held a conference this year for middle school students. It went exceptionally well. It was a Living Library, with over twenty-five "books" or presenters that came from all over the community. The students had a choice of three different lunch options and that went very well. For our conference opening, Rawle did his Harmony Day poem and video, "*Calling Forth a Nation*". We decided as a committee to do the conference again next year with middle school students and maybe secondary students. We liked how we did it a few weeks before Harmony Day. Kids took it back and celebrated Harmony Day at their schools. We received lots of press media from radio to Castanet and the Daily Courier. Both papers put out a little article mentioning Harmony Day's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

I think everyone is on board. We have a few new people. One of our mainstays, Darylene is retiring, but she's promised me that she will return to volunteer. The conference went really, really well. Thanks to the Lion Clubs and COTA for their donations to Harmony Day.

**4.3 Harmony Day Video – *Calling Forth A Nation******Leigh-Ann Yanow***

Rawle and Chris have already started talking about a video for next year and again wanting to base it on the poem. The poem is actually not finished. Rawle wants to work with students to continue that.

How are we helping our Aboriginal students succeed?

We've done a lot of work across the system, but we still have a lot of work to be done. The Ministry has been looking at our whole tracking system. At the MBSS equity scan, the students spoke so eloquently about the indigenous academy. The aboriginal academy makes it easier for them to come to school and embrace their culture. There is lots to be proud of, but lots to be done. The Ministry asks us, "*What are we doing to support students?*" We have lots in place – there are advocates, tutors, etc., providing opportunities for kids to go a place to drum and sing. We're focusing attention on each child and determining how we can achieve what they need. Harmony Day is such a nice focus time for us because we can focus on what everybody brings. It's so powerful.

**4.4 Harmony Day 2018 – February 21, 2018*****Leigh-Ann Yanow***

Our District usually schedules Harmony Day a week earlier, but this year it would fall on Valentine's Day, so we've moved it forward one week to Wednesday, February 21, 2018.

**4.5 Global Schoolhouse Update*****Joyce Brinkerhoff***

We may change the dates of the Global Schoolhouse for next year, we may not. It is usually scheduled for the second week (after the Family Day weekend) because volunteers can use the extra day of that week to create exhibits. We had a lot of positive feedback this year. We worked with David Jefferess. David had come to The Global Schoolhouse – he'd actually never seen it before – he took a look and gave us some ideas, so we incorporated some of the stuff that he had suggested and worked through it.

The response from teachers was very positive, saying that we were on the right track. This year we went down to one day less and we may go back to the schedule we had before. We kind of lose the effect with too large a group. We have more volunteers now, so we may extend it out again, so it could be down to 85 students per session which is more manageable than 150.

We are going to do a high school event to resurrect the Millennium Development Challenge. Doing it as a *Sustainable Development Challenge* is an international goal. Schools could partner with a local charity, whether it be an environmental group, or feeding seniors, or a school project that they are already doing.

Joyce requested a letter of support from Rick to submit with her Federal Grant application.

**4.6 WE Day – Wednesday, October 18, 2017****Rick Oliver**

Next year's WE Day will be held on Wednesday, October 18<sup>th</sup> at Rogers Arena, Vancouver, BC. In a survey we did of our staff after last year's event, they felt that WE Day had made significant changes. 100% of teachers said that they would go again. We will be sending out a letter to the schools to see who will be going to this year's WE Day. The flavor of the group was more middle and elementary schools last year. We will see if there is secondary school interest this year.

Our WE Day Committee met after the event to discuss the positives. The organization has become pretty refined. The possibility of doing something within our own community instead was brought forward. The feeling of the committee is that they aren't able to take that on because to develop a whole program like WE Day here is just too big. The benefits of going to WE Day include social activity and increased social action. The commitment of our WE Day Committee is to check in with the schools year by year to see if we will still be going.

**4.7 "Voices Into Action" and "Choose Your Voice"****Rick Oliver**

*Two resources, "Voices into Action" and "Choose Your Voice" were distributed to committee members.*

These resources have been electronically pushed out to our system by FAST (Fighting Antisemitism Together). There are amazing resources online at [www.voicesintoaction.ca](http://www.voicesintoaction.ca) and [www.chooseyourvoice.ca](http://www.chooseyourvoice.ca). Our Social Studies LSA has looked them over. The resources they have put together are phenomenal and they continue to be developed. The resources distributed to you today are to enable you to see what's going on. To really get into it, you have to go to the website and create a profile. You can go in as a teacher to Utilities and personalize the resources. It's constantly in development and has been for approximately the last 12 years.

There is one other positive that I'll share from meeting with the Ministry this morning. There was a poster on the wall that was noticed during our meeting and special mention was made of our District's decision to include French/English/Okanagan. They really liked the fact that we highlighted different languages on the poster in different colours and quadrants.

**4.8 Human Rights Committee Meeting Dates – 2017-2018****Rick Oliver**

We have three confirmed meetings per year and two other meetings as required. This is a structure that we've developed over the last couple of years. If you have any concerns about this, let me know.

Deb will send you invitations to the meetings.

**Meeting Dates Adopted****4.9 Pink Shirt Day – Bullying Concerns****Rick Oliver**

COPAC brought forward a request for us to dig a little deeper. Their concern was they thought that there may be an increase in bullying after Pink Shirt Day. We said we would have a look at the data. We have talked to our behavior people. – We don't have hard data reports that come to the Board monthly. We receive an annual report. Regarding the concern of the possibility of increased bullying incident reports, our behaviour people have not noticed anything - if anything, the amount of suspensions have decreased. Their feeling is that they've seen less bullying. There are more resources in the system, but again we don't have the numerical data. We have a new system that will change that. We should be able to have a deeper look at data going forward than what we have going back. There is a lot of work to be done in terms of the definition of bullying.

**4.10 Status of Gender Neutral Washrooms**

A report was sent to the board asking for some direction with regard to our District accommodating the need for gender neutral washrooms, and the positive response was overwhelming from both the gallery and the Board. Our request was passed unanimously, so when we are building a new school, gender neutral washrooms will be a consideration in the plan and we will continue to go forward as we renovate buildings. We currently are making adjustments where we can. We do not have a huge operations budget, but we do need to be responsive to the students. A lot of it has to do with how schools are using washrooms, including inviting students to use those washrooms.

## 5. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

### 5.1 Criteria for Outside Groups

*Rick Oliver*

It was suggested at our last meeting that we look at some of the criteria for outside groups. Part of it is working with our senior staff and our Board to determine some parameters. If groups are being invited into the District, we have to determine what some of the "must haves" are.

### 5.2 Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity Training

Jim was going to deal with this, but he retired. We have a new person who will be starting in this position and we will explore it with him.

### 5.3 Word of the Week, Holiday Information

Leigh-Ann Yanow said that she was chatting with her ELL teacher and talking about getting a message out to our schools and community. "We don't have a way of doing that, so whether it's going to be through me or someone else, they would do a quick shout out to recognize their Muslim student's Ramadan holiday. We need to recognize as many of these holidays as we can, to create awareness of diversity. I've bought resources and books that I've been sharing with schools that have Muslim students, but it just hasn't been done before. We are trying to get as many different cultures recognized and try not to leave anyone out."

April Smith: "I like the idea of having it as more than just a day on the calendar because I don't even know what to say. Is it "Happy Ramadan", etc? What would be appropriate to say in the classroom? Those things are important."

Deb Butler: I'm thinking we could do some fun act-out snippets that go out to staff, so it's short but it's got that learning piece and tips for teachers.

The AB Ed group has distributed some info to administrators. COTA has distributed info to teachers as well. It's a great suggestion.

There used to be a "Word of the Day". Are those still being distributed far and wide? At the Superintendent's meeting, it's provided to admin, but not necessarily going out through the system. Information about special days could also go in the newsletter that goes out to all the schools.

- **Action Item:** Snippets to go out through the system to give people some information on multi-cultural holidays and some speaking points and tips for teachers.

## 6. ADJOURNMENT

Rick presented a good-bye gift to April Smith, thanking her for all her work on the committee.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Next Meeting: Thursday, September 28, 2017

**ACTION ITEMS SUMMARY**

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Person(s) Responsible</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>Word of the Week:</b> Snippets to go out through the system to give people some information on multi-cultural holidays and some speaking points and tips for teachers.	TBD	Ongoing
<b>Letter of Support re: Joyce Brinkerhoff's Sustainable Development Challenge funding application</b> Joyce requested a Letter of Support from Rick Oliver to include with her Federal Grant application.	Rick Oliver	Completed
<b>Collective Agreement – Article E.1.3 Non-Sexist Environment</b> What are other districts doing to address the language? Research by consulting with other districts and/or BCPSEA.	Kyle Cormier <i>on behalf of District Human Rights Committee</i>	Ongoing

**Next District Human Rights Committee Meeting – Thursday, September 28, 2017**

## Central Okanagan Public Schools DISTRICT HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

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<b>2017–2018 MEETING SCHEDULE SBO BOARD ROOM</b>
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<b>Thursday, <u>September 28</u>, 2017</b>	<b>4:00 pm – 5:30 pm</b>	<b>SBO - Board Room</b>
<b>Thursday, <u>November 23</u>, 2017</b> Optional Meeting Date <i>(Only if needed)</i>	<b>4:00 pm – 5:30 pm</b>	<b>SBO - Board Room</b>
<b>Thursday, <u>January 25</u>, 2018</b>	<b>4:00 pm – 5:30 pm</b>	<b>SBO - Board Room</b>
<b>Thursday, <u>April 26</u>, 2018</b> Optional Meeting Date <i>(Only if needed)</i>	<b>4:00 pm – 5:30 pm</b>	<b>SBO - Board Room</b>
<b>Thursday, <u>June 7</u>, 2018</b>	<b>4:00 pm – 5:30 pm</b>	<b>SBO - Board Room</b>

*June 8, 2017*



***The Harmony Day poem***  
***By Rawle James***

We are high 5'in  
fist bumping  
high 10 for harmony day  
But harmony day is not just one day  
Its spirit lives 365  
Harmony is how we choose to live with each other  
Harmony isn't being colour blind  
it's being humanity sighted  
Harmony is looking out for your friends and for those you barely know  
Harmony is using words that inspire and uplift not tear down or ridicule  
Harmony is choosing to be of service in your class, school and community  
It is helping others in achieving their goals and dreams  
Harmony is supporting others with their abilities knowing it does not take away from your  
Harmony is knowing it's okay to cry or its okay when others cry  
It's the smile you have for your friends or those you don't know well  
for it comes from your heart  
Harmony is saying hello to the kid you normally don't talk with  
It's reaching out to the student that feels left out  
Harmony is standing up with the student that's been picked on  
It's a pat on the back to the math whiz or the computer geek  
Harmony is snapping fingers for the poet, cheering for the athlete, loud applause for the actor, a high 5 for the school band  
it's helping others with their schoolwork  
Harmony is saying well done to those who pick up litter  
It's a thank you to your teachers for the love they show you each day, for the custodian, nurse, counsellor and support staff that makes your school run  
Harmony is for when you feel sad or angry, for when you are feeling scared or unsure  
Harmony is asking for help and knowing it's okay to do so  
Harmony is being the best you are 24 7  
It is being gentle with yourself so you can be gentle with others  
Harmony is your family, the people you love and those who love you  
Harmony is your school your community  
Live Harmony  
Be Harmony  
Harmony is life  
Harmony is you



***Calling Forth A Nation***  
***By Rawle James***

Our hopes and dreams soar on the wings of the great eagle  
as she lays witness to our collective spirit  
running wild and free  
like the mighty herds of buffalo and caribou  
wisdom sits on the branch of the old birch tree  
in the form of a snow owl as she stands watch  
perched with guarded optimism  
of what lies around the bend

we are a people forged from the courage of the original newcomers  
who sought refuge fueled by a vision quest of a new beginning  
we stand on the backs of mighty people from many nations  
like the Inuit, Haida, Okanagan, Nakota, Algonquian, Innu,  
who's sacrifice of living as strangers upon their own land  
laid the foundation the for French, British, Dutch, Metis  
memories of their blood sweat and tears flow from all the waters  
as All our ancestors await our awakening  
their voices echo across every valley and inlet, from every shoreline  
to the highest mountaintops  
across the bountiful prairies  
their spirit can be seen in the magnanimous colours  
of the seasons to remind the people  
of our rich heritage that embraces the good...the bad  
whispers carry seeds of change  
voiced like the cold fog breathe of howling wolves  
whose cries haunt our memories of days gone by

Today, I call forth a nation  
one where the practice is of being human  
where the status quo is empathy not fear  
a new nation whose super natural beauty  
is beyond mere flesh and bones  
for all existence is birth from the labour of Love  
of our great Mother

Today, I call forth a nation  
whose ebb in flow with the energies  
of acceptance and respect



our potential to live in harmony with the land  
lies with our ability to live  
in harmony with each other  
to live let live harm no other

Today, I call forth a nation  
who is worthy of a better tomorrow  
Now  
a people ready to fulfil their potential  
knowing the wisdom we seek  
lies in our past  
when looked upon with Love  
the promise that is Canada  
lies not perched on a pedestal  
for we are the pedestal  
of which her foundation is built

Today, I call forth a nation  
whose diversity of landscapes  
is reflected by the diversity of her people  
the dreams and hopes that is Canada  
fuels the warrior poet to battle injustice  
with words of inclusion and equity  
let us venture beyond time and space  
to see that the needs and wants of our ancestors  
do not differ from Us today  
and the truth of their day  
connects to the truth of our day  
for we are not separate from life  
we are Life

let us dance, sing and rejoice  
as we reframe the conditioning  
let the light of our Love  
create a new affirmation of peace and prosperity  
worry not of our legacy  
for it will be written based on what we do  
Now  
and in this Now  
let us remember the greatest of a country  
lies not in her government but with her people  
and as a people  
let us be mindful, humble and inviting  
be patient, kind, generous, gentle, joyous  
choose to be of service  
let us embrace in this moment of Us  
our native land is Mother Earth  
Oh Canada our chosen home  
We stand on guard for me, you, Us  
this is where we live  
Today, I call forth a new nation