



**Corvallis School District
School Renaming Task Force
October 20, 2020
6:30-8:00 p.m.**

Task Force Members Present:

Eliza Barstow, Hannah Briggs, Chris Bueford, Michael Duncan, Sherri Gates, Ruby Hoffman, Ginger McQueen, Jaime Sarabia, Sravya Tadepalli, Jason Thomas, Zeke Thomas, Yan Wang

Others Present:

Eric Beasley, Wildcat Elementary Principal; Julie Catala, Staff Support; Bobby Daniels, Co-Facilitator; Brenda Downum, Communications Coordinator; Anna Marie Gosser, Husky Elementary Principal; Melissa Harder, Assistant Superintendent; Beth Martin, Jaguar Elementary Principal; Melanie Quaempts, Facilitator; Luhui Whitebear, School Board Liaison

I. Welcome & New Participant Introductions

Ms. Quaempts welcomed the group and introduced new attendees.

II. Know Each Other By Name

Task force members shared ideas in which systemic racism shows up in the naming of schools, including:

- Naming of schools is historically from a white construct, which promotes continued white dominant history and perpetuates racism and segregation.
- Names chosen often represent ideas that had been celebrated in the past.
- Changing a name that does not match our values is a start to ending systemic racism.
- History has tended to marginalize those who have immigrated to the US.
- Names are often focused on an individual rather than on a collective effort, such as the civil rights movement.
- Historically, white people have held the positions of power and white men have picked the names.
- Names of schools should model what we want from our students.

Overall, there was agreement that names are important because they say what is valued, create pride, and should be welcoming for all.

III. Engagement Agreements & Supports

Ms. Quaempts gave a brief reminder of the big picture outcomes for the task force's work. She also reviewed the input from members at the last meeting regarding participants' roles, and outlined the process for the evening.

IV. Noticing the Tree (Tonight's Tasks)

Ms. Quaempts outlined the tasks for tonight's meeting.

V. Breakout Small Group Worktime - Developing a Consensus for the Process & Mapping Out Our 5 Week Plan

The task force met in small groups to discuss several topics.

- A. The conditions and considerations that will impact the outcome. Ideas that were offered included:
- Conditions that exist from the board
 - Applying a social and political lens
 - Task force's role is to bring recommendations to the Superintendent rather than making decisions
 - Determining and utilizing a rubric to sift through a lot of community ideas
 - Longevity of suggested names for the buildings (30+ years)
 - Clear timeline for the options and researching background information for each name proposed.
 - Clear and concise way to finalize a definitive decision on the recommendations
- B. What resources are needed for the task force to make decisions. Ideas that were offered included:
- Access to public input
 - Board resolution
 - Board policy
 - Input from SAFE (Students Advocating For Equity)
 - Input from DELTA (District Leadership Equity Team Advisory)
 - School/student participation
 - Articles about process.
 - History/context of school naming process of the 3 schools
 - Tribal histories and/or contact with the tribes themselves
 - Benton County Historical Society and Museum
 - Teacher-led and/or Zoom-hosted classroom conversations
 - Survey students at the stage where name ideas are being considered
 - Colleges and universities
 - Gathering information in a timely manner in order to make informed decisions
 - Google form for gathering input
- C. What the task force members need to know and learn. Ideas that were offered included:
- List of current names of buildings in the District.
 - Opinions and suggestions from the community

- Criteria from the School Board resolution
- Process for tribal consultation.
- Parameters such as:
 - Categories (humans, land, groups, natural) and is there alignment to a theme?
 - Be someone who is currently underrepresented (e.g. BIPOC, gender expansive)
 - Research people/names – both of current names and those that are suggested
 - Values and standards of the people being considered – what should be considered as problematic
 - If it is a last name that is chosen, make sure that it is obvious to whom the name belongs
 - Look outside of political impacts – arts
 - Consideration – the name is easy to say/pronounce
 - Are the mascots able to stay the same or could they change?
- Listen to student voice and what inspires the children – they are our leaders in this effort.
- Make sure the choice is clear for not just students but for all.

The large group then discussed the best approach for the remaining meetings in order to accomplish their charge.

VI. Gather Information – Take Away Tasks To Complete Prior To Mtg. 3

Members of the task force indicated the information they would take the lead in gathering for future meetings.

VII. Reflection and Key Communication

Task force members shared their reflections about the meeting. To help members communicate to their communities, concise key messages are:

- The committee discussed how systemic racism shows up in the naming of schools. There was agreement that names are important; they say what is valued, create pride, and should be welcoming for all.
- The group discussed several considerations that will impact the outcome: public input; each name proposed will need to have background information; these names will be on the buildings for a long time; we need to select names that fit now and 30 years from now.

- Resources will be gathered for task force members to begin utilizing for future meetings, including input from tribal nations; historical background on current school names; articles about other renaming processes; the Benton County Historical Society.

Notes compiled by: Julie Catala