

Anti-Bias Task Force Meeting Minutes

Syosset Central School District

January 18, 2024 - 8:30 to 10:30pm

I. Opening

The second meeting of the Syosset Anti-Bias Task Force took place at South Woods Middle School on January 18th, 2024. Two members joined virtually.

II. Attendees

The following individuals were present at the meeting:

Chair persons

Rabbi Jaimee Shalhevet, *North Shore Synagogue*

Pastor Rebecca Sheridan, *Faith Lutheran Church*

Dr. Uzma Syed, *Muslim Community Leader*

Members

Taiisha Calbert-Foster, *Syosset Teachers Association*

Mikey Goodman, *Jewish Community of Syosset*

David Steinberg, *Syosset Principals Association*

Asma Malik, *Muslim American Community of Syosset*

Hafsa Mercan, *South Woods Middle School*

Zehran Muqtadi, *Syosset High School*

Tina Ng, *High School PTA*

Sharmin Panjvani, *Middle School PTA*

Chase Pendrick, *HBT Middle School*

Inna Ryu-Choi, *Korean American Friends of Syosset*

Aruneesh Salhotra, *Indian Parents of Syosset*

Kelly Zhang, *Chineses American Association of Syosset*

Imam Tanweer Ahmed, *Al Kawthar Institute*, Rabbi Jason Fruithandler, *Woodbury Jewish Center*, and Hilary Lucadamo, *Elementary School PTA*, were unable to attend the meeting.

Syosset Administration & Staff

Dr. Thomas Rogers, *Superintendent of Schools*

Dr. Theresa Curry, *Deputy Superintendent of Schools*

Adam Kuranishi, *Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources*

Philomena Hefferon, *Public Information Officer*

III. Objectives and Agenda

The objective of the meeting was for the members of the task force to become more comfortable speaking with each other about sensitive subjects, and help the group cohere. The other priority was to solidify categories of working groups to begin doing critical work across different areas, and agree on public rules for conducting a community forum.

IV. Proceedings

The meeting was held at South Woods Middle School. Two members participated virtually.

The meeting began with an ice breaker. Each individual was asked to bring an object that represented their religion, culture, or background – and describe its importance. This led to an open and honest exchange of ideas as the meeting continued.

The next item on the agenda was a discussion about hosting a community forum. The purpose of the forum would be to give interested members of the community an opportunity to share constructive ideas with the Task Force as it pursues its charge. The group discussed details including potential dates, live streaming, seating arrangements, communication, and determined guidelines that would govern the community forum.

Those guidelines include:

- Each community member will have two (2) minutes to present their idea(s)
- Participants may not engage in crosstalk, and all comments should be directed to the co-chairs, not the audience
- Speakers should refrain from sharing personal stories. Reports of bias in the schools should be communicated to the appropriate school administrator as per the District's Code of Conduct.
- The forum should be fully utilized for idea sharing specifically related to the school district. All other matters related to the school district should be directed to the administration and/or Board of Education.

The group also discussed the formation of working groups, and identified titles for those groups.

V. Closing

The task force determined they would meet again on Wednesday, January 24th, with the goal of breaking up into sub-groups to begin working on specific initiatives. They will also finalize the date of the community forum.