



EQUITY IS...

Monthly Newsletter of the SDP Equity Coalition

DIVERSITY SPOTLIGHT

STUDENT LEADER OF SAUL HIGH SCHOOL'S RACE & EQUITY COMMITTEE

After the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent international uprising declaring Black Lives Matter, the administration at WB Saul High School decided to form a Race and Equity Committee. The Student Race and Equity Committee recently chose their President and Vice President. Get to know them and their motivations for doing this work below:

Meet Asjah Thomas (Jay, for short), a Senior at Saul. She is the President of Saul's Race and Equity Committee and after graduating plans to enlist in the Navy, afterwards getting her degree in Marine Biology. According to Jay, the central focus of her work is advocating for a school that practices anti-racism and creating policies and changes to our schools code of conduct to make sure everyone feels comfortable and safe at Saul. Jay states, "I don't think what I'm doing is important, I know it is. In this group we are advocating for the people who don't have a voice or have not yet found their voice of power. There are people in this group who have never opened up to others about their everyday troubles, but once the group began flowing and growing, many beautiful souls emerged. That alone is what makes what I'm doing important. Helping people find their voice in a time where it needs to be heard." She thanks her parents for inspiring and encouraging and motivating her.

Meet Ramiyah Wilson, Sophomore, VP, and current lead of peer mediators. Ramiyah stated, "I feel the committee is important because high school can be a very harsh place, you can feel left out easily, and disparities can be tough to discuss. Being a part of this amazing group I can make sure nobody is feeling left out and everyone is equal." Ramiyah stated that the work she is doing in Saul's committee is just the beginning, she plans on dedicating her future to making a change and has dreams of becoming the first female mayor of Philly.

DEI AWARENESS & CELEBRATIONS FOR FEBRUARY!

February 3rd: Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

- From Mexican-American War, which led to US control over lands that became (in part or whole) Texas, Arizona, California, Utah, New Mexico, Colorado, and Wyoming. Resource [linked here](#).

February 7-13: Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action in Philadelphia

- Nation-wide group organizing for racial justice in education. You can find resources [here](#).
- To learn more about the National BLM@School Week of Action (Feb 1st-5th), click [here](#)

February 11: Black History Month Community Conversations w/the Equity Coalition

- **Black Culture:** Cross Diaspora Heritage and Connections, register to attend [here!](#)

February 12th: Lunar New Year

- One of the most sacred of all traditional Chinese holidays, a time of family reunion and celebration.
- For more information and resources, click [here](#).

February 17th: Equity Committee Town Hall, "**Breathing Life into our Equity Definition**" register to attend [here!](#)

February 18: Black History Month Community Conversations w/the Equity Coalition

- **SuperSoul Thursday:** Black Wellness and Nutrition in the COVID Era, register to attend [here!](#)

February 20: World Day of Social Justice ([link here](#))

February 24: Black History Month Community Conversations w/the Equity Coalition

- **Black Literacy Matters:** Democracy and Civic Engagement in Education, register to attend [here!](#)

February 27: Dominican Republic Independence Day (from Haiti), check out more info [here!](#)



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or if we wait for some time. We are the ones we've been waiting for."

-BARACK OBAMA

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- Group discussions on various issues of inequities in SDP (book studies, video reflections, etc).
- Co-construction of guiding principles of what we need to know/be able to do as outcomes of equity/anti-racism professional learning.
- Co-construction of processes for collecting and analyzing data on the landscape of various professional learning opportunities that already exist in SDP.
- **Next Meeting 2/8/21 at 3:45pm**

RESEARCH/SYSTEMS CHANGE/POLICY

- Review School District procedures for Board Policy Review
- Review Newly Proposed Practice/Procedures for Research System Change, Policy Sub-Committee Program Office Policy review and Guiding Questions.
- Debrief the process.
- **Next Meeting: 2/8/21 at 3:30pm**

EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIPS

- Currently drafting a survey as part of our landscape analysis of current SDP partners.
- First phase will survey a few key Central Office teams to identify partners who are doing racial equity work.
- We're working with our subcommittee to get feedback on the survey and to help us define what 'partners doing equitable work looks like.
- Our goal for February and March is to conduct focus groups with key District stakeholders. The data from our survey will guide our next steps in determining who will participate in those.
- **Next Meeting: 2/18/21 at 3:30pm**

COMMUNICATION & MARKETING

- Create copy and edit March Newsletter, which will keep all Equity Committee members updated on what is going on in every subcommittee and include a student interview for Equity Is Spotlight.
- We are creating and working towards recording an "Equity is" Podcast that will interview those doing equity work in Philly.
- Building and writing the copy for the Equity Committee website.
- **Next Meeting: 2/16/21 at 3:45**

**WANT TO GET INVOLVED OR ADD SOMETHING TO THE UPDATES?
EMAIL EQUITY@PHILASD.ORG**

VOICES MAGNIFIED

Here we can share what books, podcasts, music, articles etc. that is inspiring our equity work. Want to submit a suggestions? Fill out this [google form](#).



Daninia Jordan, a member of the Professional Learning sub-committee, suggested we listen to the podcast (linked below) *The 8 Black Hands Podcast* on Citizen Ed.

The podcast is hosted by Raymond Akrum, Dr. Charles Cole, Sharif El-Mekki and Chris Stewart. All described as, "bold advocates, truth-tellers and education champions" by The Mind Trust.

Daninia writes that this podcast highlights Black voices in the fight for adequate education for our young people.

Citizen Ed states that, "As the public education wars rage on, few warriors show up to fight for the students and families who have waited too long for justice delayed and denied. Yet, there is one small band of freedom fighters bringing sanity to the village. Anyone who threatens the education of our 8 million Black children is likely to catch these eight Black hands."

[Link on Citizen Ed](#)
[Link on Apple Podcast](#)
[Link on Spotify](#)