



Center for Educational Equity & Social Justice at **DUTCHESS BOCES**

Designing Equitable Schools: A Youth and Adult Leadership Conference

May 12, 2021

Cora Stempel
Deputy Superintendent

Jenny Schinella
Director of Educational Resources

Amya West
Student

How did we get here?

Introduction to Jevon Hunter at SCDN in 2018

Year I: Spring Student Showcase gave students the opportunity to present social justice projects they completed in their classrooms.

The Showcase resulted in discussions about how to expand the work, with an emphasis on student voice and empowerment.

Discussions with Superintendents regarding their interest in equity work revealed common needs.

The new Center was announced in 2021.



Designing Equitable Schools: A Youth and Adult Leadership Conference



Erik Sweet
NYSED Curriculum and
Instruction Supervisor



Cornelius Minor
Brooklyn based educator
Author



Dr. Jevon Hunter
Woods-Beals Endowed Chair
SUNY Buffalo State



Designing Equitable Schools: A Youth and Adult Leadership Conference - Adult Focused Sessions

Teacher Facilitated Sessions:

- **Elementary**
 - The ABC Project
 - Youth Led Racial Book Audit
 - The Covid-19 Blues: Elementary Band Students Express Joy, Suffering, Resilience, and Hope Through a World-Wide Pandemic
 - Look into a Book
- **Middle**
 - Students as Teachers: Posters, Presentations, and PSAs

- **High School**
 - Nutritional Equity in our Community
 - Food Deserts/Food Insecurity- What Can We Do?
 - Modern Day Enslavement
 - The Pandemic Impact: A Students' Story
 - Confronting Critical Issues

District Leader Facilitated Sessions:

- Getting Started with Systemic Culturally Responsive School Leadership



Designing Equitable Schools: A Youth and Adult Leadership Conference - Student Focused Sessions

Cornelius Minor

- Who We Be: Navigating Gender, Race, Class & Ability in School and Community Spaces
- Being Nice Ain't Enough: Building real solidarity and unity at school
- Understanding & Action: What it Means to Be An Activist

Student Focus Groups:

- Curriculum and Course Offerings
- Culture and Discipline Policy
- Instructional Practices and Student Engagement

Student Panel - Social Justice Read Alouds - Urban Teacher Academy

Differences Through Similarities:

- Examining Power & Privilege
- Examining Race
- Examining Gender Identity and Expression

Design Challenge:

- How do we create safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments in schools?
- How do we determine who and what is represented in school curriculum?



Student Findings: Curriculum + Course Offerings

- **Courses that offer collaboration, diversity of opportunity and creativity were peak moments vs. courses that followed a traditional curriculum.**
- **Most students shared that there is little to no diversity in what they learn about outside of key events that offer one experience of a marginalized group.**
- **Students reported little to no choice in selecting or being offered opportunities to be a part of selecting curriculum, classes or lessons to learn about.**
- **Students named the tension between wanting to learn other perspectives and talking about sensitive topics and those same topics being politicized.**

Student Findings: **Culture and Discipline Policy**

- **Students reported inconsistent experiences in the types of behaviors that are punished or reprimanded.**
- **Students overwhelmingly shared negative impacts of policies based on race, gender or socioeconomic status.**
- **Students reported limited opportunities to provide feedback at school on culture or policy.**



Student Findings: **Instructional Practices + Student Engagement**

- **Students shared different levels of engagement in their classes (including virtual).**
- **There are differing expectations across classes and teachers.**



Amya West - Senior Poughkeepsie High School



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