



Oregon School Activities Association

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Equity and Diversity Advisory Committee- Summary Thursday, January 20, 2022 1-2pm Zoom

The OSAA Equity and Diversity Committee met via zoom beginning at 1pm on Thursday, January 20. The OSAA staff reviewed the agenda for the day and welcomed committee members.

The committee discussed some possible processes and procedures that could be implemented to strengthen both the complaint process follow through and communication of the Association.

Student listening sessions: There was a discussion about how to best implement student listening sessions when both an incident of discriminatory harassment occurs as well as in common practice for ensuring student voice is heard within the Association's structures. The feedback from the committee has follows:

- Student Listening Sessions when an incident of discriminatory harassment occurs: The feedback from the committee specified how this process would need to be done with each specific instance that occurs. Student voices need to be heard through the complaint process but ensuring that there is not further harm done in the process needs to be considered. Maintaining confidentiality and ensuring that students who share their perspectives are supported throughout the process is also important. Possibility of needing to allow the inclusion of parents or supporting adults for the students should be considered. In these listening sessions, primarily ones involving a discriminatory act, the committee felt it was important to have a professional who deals with harassment/counseling/family services who can structure the conversation appropriately. It's vitally important to have the student feel heard, their voice accepted and not placated.
- Student listening sessions for student voice on policy and procedures of the Association: Through the Student Advisory Council this would be a great opportunity to find ways to help students understand the processes and policies of the Association. Ensuring that students' voices are heard beyond just the students on the SAC would be important.

When a complaint is filed with the OSAA, the investigations that occur often fall within the responsibilities of the schools involved. Those investigations sometimes lead to differing perspectives of the events that occurred. There have been times when the OSAA has used a third-party investigator to help the schools examine the events of what occurred. The investigator also assists the OSAA in understanding of best practices for further work or follow through needed by the schools involved in the incident.

The committee expressed their general support of having a third-party investigator when the investigation process of schools is inconclusive. A third-party investigator should be an unbiased person with a professional process for working through questioning strategies and ways to help perspectives and voices to be heard. The third-party investigator also helps to recognize the importance of the necessary follow through and the impact of the events that occurred.

The committee also addressed the necessity of transparency in the process, as this can help rebuild and affirm the relationship of those harmed. With a third-party investigator, in a highly facilitated process, you may have more voices willing to come to the table to discuss the incidents that occurred. Sometimes, even with a third-party investigator, there may still be inconclusive details that do not allow for closure. However, with required follow through by the school that was alleged to do harm, that can create a space for future justice through education.

The committee reviewed the S.T.A.R. Initiative roll out. The concept of a "hospitality person" for schools to designate when hosting a game at their facilities. There were concerns expressed from smaller schools due to the multiple roles that many staff already fill in their schools. Often administrators greet the bus because the athletic director may be teaching a class at the time the bus arrives. However, the concept of having a person who greets the students and coaches arriving on campus, shows them the facilities, and reminds them who they should speak to if an incident occurs that needs immediate attention or follow through was welcomed by the committee. The OSAA discussed the idea of encouraging this practice throughout the year for all events hosted at schools but emphasizing the necessity of this role to be filled during playoff competitions. Playoffs can bring communities together who don't often compete against one another, and they may not have common agreements or consistent collaboration in place like when competing against league schools.

The committee recommended putting together a document that OSAA would send to all schools explaining what is recommended for host schools providing a person in a “greeter” role. Schools need to be intentional and hospitable, so participants and spectators feel welcomed into their facilities for competitions.

Lastly the committee discussed the development of the Student Advisory Council. The representation of students on the SAC was discussed, as well as the excitement about the application process. Applications are due by February 4 and the first meeting is planned for March 2022.

Future meeting dates for the Equity and Diversity Committee:

- a. March 29, 2022 @ 1pm
- b. June 16, 2022 @ 1pm