

Sent: 1/12/2021 7:36:15 AM
From: Dan Snowberger <dsnowberger@durangoschools.org>
To: "Mick Souder" <msouder@durangoschools.org>
Cc:
Bcc:
Importance: Normal
Subject: Re: Equity Resolution - Concern
Attachments: [DEI Resolution - DS Recommendations.docx](#)

Hi Mick,

Thanks for sharing your perspective. The district is in turmoil right now over this as it is very accusatory and fails to recognize that efforts have been made in the past - albeit - not enough. Here are my edits. I may need to take personal leave to address my personal issues, while I continue to support Olga and my dad. It's been two hellacious years for me personally. I may need to address some of my own challenges. I'll be speaking with Kristin about that this morning.

Here are my suggested edits. I will turn this over and let you all decide.

Dan

On Mon, Jan 11, 2021 at 8:29 PM Mick Souder <msouder@durangoschools.org> wrote:
Hi Dan:

I started to write a long note but I can net out what I want to say in a few points.

- 1) For 2 and half years the Board has tried to put more focus on results in different populations not just viewing that of a grade level or a cadre of students at a school is doing well, we are good (your 1/3, 1/3 and 1/3 concept aligns with the concept that everyone needs to be at grade level).
- 2) The pandemic and the need to go to remote learning has blown to hell the idea that any group is going to make grade level. But the pain has been unequal and if we look at who gets hurt most, it ain't going to be upper middle class white folks like me who have worked from home for over 20 years.
- 3) Who has to choose between working to put food on the table or playing teacher's aide has been unequal too (my daughter has been making pretty good coin supplementing Denver Public Schools remote learning for a pod of doctors' kids). Access to the technology has been unequal also.
- 4) The Board of Education needs to acknowledge these inequalities and ask that our resources work to mitigate them as well as acknowledge that the district is working in these areas.
- 5) To the repeated points in your markup (Should the district staff share this commitment?) , I do expect that district staff share in whatever commitment we make in the resolution. But my expectation isn't based on the Board or the Superintendent compelling them to do so, it's because whatever we finally approve will be the right thing to do by our community that includes everybody.
- 5) Rather than object to what the resolution says at the meeting tomorrow night, why don't you recommend something that gets this to be an acknowledgement/approach/vision that all of 9R can be proud of? Recommending stuff for your Board to consider is something you have done your entire time I've been involved with the district.

I look forward to working with you on this matter.

Thanks.

(you should have seen what the long version of this email looked like)

On Mon, Jan 11, 2021 at 2:43 PM Dan Snowberger <dsnowberger@durangoschools.org> wrote:

I feel it is my responsibility to point out that a large number of 9-R staff members are highly insulted by the wording of your equity resolution. My day has been spent on the phone with leaders from across the district expressing

deep concern. It contains information that is not factual, it clearly condemns the employees of the district as being the culprits of this inequity, fails to acknowledge the work that has been done in the district to address the issue of opportunity and achievement gaps, and elevates the BOARD as the body that is intending to fix it. If that is the message you wish to send to our community and our staff, please feel free to proceed with passing it as written.

I am unsure who the board wishes to satisfy by doing so, but your statement clearly is pandering to an element of our community who wants you to admit something that is not supported by fact. It is clear that we can always do more and I - as well as every member of the district - is more than willing to partner in doing so. If your point is to somehow paint me as a racist since I - as the leader of the district - have allowed all of these injustices during my 8 1/2 years of leading the district, I'd rather you pass a resolution that targets me instead of pointing the finger at all of our employees who will remain. That would be unfactual, but at least the great people who remain will not feel as if they are being painted in a light undeserved.

Since 2016, we've been recognized among all 178 school district for the following:

- 2016 - One of the top five districts with the highest growth in English Language Arts for students who are Hispanic/Latino
- 2016 - One of the top five districts with the highest growth in English Language Arts for Multiracial students
- 2016 - One of the top ten districts for improved growth in graduation rates over a four year period
- 2018 - One of the top five districts with the highest matriculation rates in post secondary education for students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.
- 2020 –“The districts we highlight in this section on college access and readiness are: Cheyenne Mountain 12, Douglas County, Durango 9-R, and Lamar RE-2. All of these districts had a comparatively high share of students going to college, and most students did not need to take remedial coursework once there.

I do feel I owe you the respect to notify you of my intent to object tomorrow evening publicly and present facts that cast doubt on your resolution. The district administration and school administration would welcome a partnership in truly defining the facts around this issue and passing a resolution that is representative of the team atmosphere that should exist if we truly hope to achieve a change.

Thanks for reading,
Dan

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Mick Souder
Treasurer, Durango School District 9-R Board of Education
msouder@durangoschools.org

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Dan Snowberger
Superintendent

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