

Diversity & Inclusivity in SCS

Staunton City Schools' plan for fostering
a culture of respect and acceptance

Presented by Dr. Garrett Smith, Superintendent

OUR APPROACH: SOME HISTORY

FALL 2016

Administrators and board members had talks with community leaders and groups about increased need to focus on diversity and inclusion in SCS.

WINTER 2016

SCS began discussions with diversity training consultants regarding comprehensive diversity and inclusion training for SCS faculty, staff and administrators.

SPRING 2017

SCS put out RFP for training and selected the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (VCIC), a Richmond-based nonprofit. Training began Sept. 1.

OUR APPROACH: PARTNER WITH VCIC

- Works with schools, businesses, and communities to achieve success by addressing prejudices, in all forms, in order to improve academic achievement, increase workplace productivity, and enhance local trust.
- VCIC is widely recognized locally, regionally, and nationally with awards from groups including the Virginia General Assembly and GreatNonprofits.



VIRGINIA CENTER FOR
INCLUSIVE
COMMUNITIES

OUR APPROACH: THIS IS A PROCESS

- Approach through an educator's lens.
- Listen carefully.
- Encourage respectful, reasonable discourse.
- Engage community partners to facilitate intentional and productive discussions.
- Follow the process until the end, wherever it leads.
- Develop a well considered strategic plan.
- Be a shining example for other communities.

LISTEN



LEARN



RESPECT



THE PROCESS: PUT CHILDREN FIRST

Most importantly, this is about the success of our students.

- Student voices will be front and center
- Give students ample opportunities to tell us how they feel about their schools and their place in them
- Opportunity to teach, learn and grow together



THE PROCESS: PHASE I

FALL 2017

Employee Training

All SCS employees will receive diversity and inclusion training through VCIC.

WINTER 2018

Equity Team Summits

VCIC will empower a selected group of personnel from each school with the tools to provide diversity training to school staff on an ongoing basis.

SPRING 2018

Evaluation

Administrators will evaluate the training process with VCIC and conclude the training.

THE PROCESS: PHASE II

SPRING 2018

Student Focus Groups

Focus group discussions with students of various backgrounds to discuss experiences and opinions on school issues.

SUMMER 2018

Adult Focus Groups & Listening Sessions

Individual, focus group discussions with school staff and community organizations, plus public community listening sessions.

FALL 2018

Strategic Planning

Develop a thoughtful, long-term plan based on community input and outcomes of listening and training processes.

THE PROCESS: PHASE II

- The Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge intends to issue a \$10,000 grant to VCIC for their facilitation of the focus group discussions and community listening sessions.
- This grant is a reflection of the Foundation's commitment to engaging residents in the future of our community.



THE PROCESS: BIG PICTURE

1

Employee Training

A deep dive into diversity and inclusion training for the entire school division.

2

Focus Groups

Separate conversations with students, adults and community groups with expressed interest in school issues.

3

Listening Sessions

Community discussions facilitated by VCIC to capture community sentiment on any topic related to SCS.

4

Strategic Planning

Develop a long-term plan for diversity & inclusion based on the input of all constituencies.

CONCLUSION

The best laid plans ...

*“Everybody has a plan, till they
get punched in the mouth.”*

- Mike Tyson

