

May 19, 2021

Dear HBCSD Families:

During the May 12 Board meeting, some Hermosa Beach residents and parents raised concern over the school district hiring a consultant, Dr. Sheri Atwater, to work with our faculty to support diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices. This consultant work was the recommendation of the Equity Task Force (ETF).

This year, the ETF met every two weeks to work on a vision for DEI in our school district to build on DEI professional development that began in 2019-2020. ETF members included staff, parents, community members, students, administrators, and Board members. To culminate their work, they provided recommendations for action. [CLICK HERE](#) to review these recommendations.

While much of the concern centered on DEI practices about race, I would also like to mention that this work includes ethnicity, ancestry, national origin, citizenship status, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, language, religion, medical history, ability, economic status, family model, sexual orientation, marital status, and parental status. DEI practices help every child have an equal chance for success. For example, [universal design for learning](#) or [teaching social justice](#) are DEI practices that make for better learning environments.

Our goal as educators, and I believe as a school community, is to ensure that school is a place where opportunities are available for all students, regardless of label. History and data tells us that if you want that statement to be true, you have to work at it. Believing school is equitable is simply not enough to make it so. It takes intentional, hard work to ensure that education is accessible to all students.

Dr. Atwater is working with staff to support our goal to meet the needs of all students. We have a great staff, the best staff, and every year, we want to get better. If you want to learn more about her (our) approach, [CLICK HERE](#) to watch a clip of her presentation to the Board of Education.

We will continue to post resources and updates on our [Equity and Inclusion webpage](#) where you can find meeting agendas, the final report, and ongoing information.

Additionally, I am presenting the district's plan of action to the Board of Education on Wednesday, June 9. I encourage you to watch and learn more.

Still curious? Give me a call at 310-937-5877. I am available and excited to talk about the work that makes our little beach school the best one in town.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JJ' with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jason Johnson, Ed.D.
Superintendent