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Racial Equity and Social Justice Action Team

April 10, 2019 12:30 P.M.

Agenda

Attendees: Michael Ballen, Crystal Wynn Lewis, Nikki Lyons, Verna Best, Geraldine Alshamy

- Welcome and approval of March Minutes – Nikki Lyons
- Raise the Age Movement
 - The Raise the Age Movement details changes made in legislation for youth ages 16-17 with misdemeanor charges that won't be tried as an adult. This legislation only impacts class I-J felonies and takes effect December 1, 2019.
 - This is beneficial in that juvenile records may be sealed or expunged as opposed to felony records that follow individuals for the rest of their life. Rather than having long term negative effects, this legislation allows for rehabilitation of youth and an opportunity for parent and child to address the trauma and move forward.
 - Currently NCDOJ is working to construct a tailored presentation to community residents about the details of the Raise the Age movement.
 - With this new legislation comes an increase in allocated funds for staffing, supplies, facilities, etc.
 - Geraldine Alshamy said that the justice system is structured to get free labor from minorities and is systematically designed to hurt minorities.
 - Mr. Ballen explained that the District Attorney's job is to convict. For this reason, they will overcharge individuals with felonies to better guarantee at least a misdemeanor charge in court.
 - Verna suggested a collaborative workshop that provides the community with detailed information on the Raise the Age movement, to inform community residents of their rights and to establish a positive relationship with law enforcement.
 - Geraldine Alshamy added that there is a Restorative Discipline meeting on May 10 that would be the perfect opportunity to engage with community residents.
- Restorative Discipline Update
 - Parents are being pushed to sign a discipline petition with the court for their children or face suspension or expulsion.
 - The Circle Keepers meet on the 4th Saturday of the month. The community Circles are on the 2nd Saturday and open to anyone able to attend. The next interest meeting is April 15th at 2421 Timber Drive. Dinner will be served at 5 and the meetings starts at 6.

- The Kellogg foundation wants to create a logic model and grant fund the Restorative Discipline circles to continue this valuable work in the community.
- Wake County School Board Meetings
 - Nikki suggested having a RESJ representative at the school board meetings. Speakers must sign up online. Sign-up starts at 12:00 pm on the day of the meeting, and ends at 5 pm. Speakers must provide name, city and topic. Find more information here: <https://www.wcpss.net/site/Default.aspx?PageID=3727>. Past meetings are posted here: https://assistive.eboardsolutions.com/SB_Meetings/SB_MeetingListing.aspx?S=920
 - Currently, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights has agreed to close the case against WCPSS by 2021 if the district continues with the changes it has adopted since the investigation began and makes further revisions to decrease the amount suspensions of minority students.
 - Geraldine added that there has only been a change in the way that suspensions are being reported.
- Reentry Council
 - April 22-26 has been declared reentry week in NC and co-hosted by the reentry council. There will be many events and activities in Wake County.
 - Reentry will present at the CAG meeting in May. Verna suggested that an initial Raise the Age movement event can be followed by a series of events that highlight different topics, including reentry. It may be beneficial to collaborate with the Community Leadership action team to host this event at the Wingz meet and greets.
 - The Wake County Crosby website might be a great place to publish information regarding reentry.
- Action Steps
 - Due to the TUM and RESJ action team content overlap as well as the proximity of meeting dates, Verna asks the committee to consider holding these action team meetings on the same day but at different times.

Adjourn

Next meeting: May 8, 12:30 PM