



Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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TO: The Board of Education

FROM: Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent

SUBJECT: National Equity Project: What Does Powerful Leadership for Equity Look Like at the Board Level?

DATE: September 25, 2018

Last school year, we introduced the concept, "*leading for equity*" to our entire staff, debunking the myth that only leaders with formal administrative titles (e.g., superintendents, principals, central office managers, etc...) could lead for equity. Rather, we believe that every individual in our school community can be a leader for equity from his or her current position, especially school board officials.

During one of our Institute Days last year, we learned an expanded definition of leadership -- *having a willingness to take responsibility for what matters to you*. We also learned that leading for equity is a leader who plays an essential role in solving the problems that prevent school systems from helping every child -- especially those marginalized by race, class, or language background -- to reach his or her highest potential. But we have yet to examine what leading for equity looks like at the board level.

On Sept. 25, we have invited the National Equity Project to facilitate a special 90-minute session that will enable D97 Board of Education members to have this discussion. The session will begin promptly at 7 p.m.

Unlike the traditional format, this session will follow a protocol call Kiva (see attached). In addition to our facilitator, we have also invited the following school officials to join the discussion. Using the Kiva protocol, the facilitator will invite these leaders to share their experiences of leading for equity:

- *Pat Savage-Williams, President, ETHS Board of Education*
- *Jackie Moore, President, Oak Park River Forest Board of Education*
- *Rupa Datta, Member, Oak Park Elementary School District 97 Board of Education*
- *Ralph Martire, President, River Forest District 90 Board of Education*

After each round, D97 BOE members will be asked to discuss what they heard and what their thoughts and feelings are about the questions and what was shared. A note taker will capture the learnings that emerge from the discussion. At the conclusion of the 90-minute session, the whole board will reflect on the major highlights from the discussion, "**What does leading for equity look like at the board level?**"

We look forward to seeing you on Sept. 25 for the conversation, and thank you in advance for being open to having a board level conversation about this key issue.

