

Athens Community Relations Commission Meeting Minutes: February 4, 2021

Present: Micah McCarey, Marlene de la Cruz, Laura Black, Rachel Siegel, Raymie McKerrow, Vanessa Morgan, Lacey Rogers, John Schmieding

Anti-Racism Teachings at Athens High School

This is the second semester of teaching the flex credit class on exploring anti-racism and you (paid for by Athens City Schools). This semester has 13 students, spanning grades, with many ninth graders participating. They are reading *Stamped* and discussing cultural identity, current events, and black history. Moving forward, the group will begin to address the topics of microaggressions and implicit bias and designing action projects. Presently, none of the student participants are people of color. We hope to have increasingly diverse groups in the future and are considering the use of panels to diversify perspectives shared during class sessions.

Book Clubs

The four groups will meet over the course of eight weeks. About 22 people (update: 42 participants) have signed up so far.

Book club meeting time options:

Sun. 10:30-noon

Mon. 7-830

Tues. 7-830

Tues 4-530

We do not yet have plans to follow-up on the *Stamped* book club discussions, but Marlene shared the idea of having a more advanced book club opportunity follow the *Stamped* book clubs which can be a topic of future discussion for ACRC. Another topic for future discussion could be identifying funding sources for future book clubs.

Book Club funding request to Athens City for \$1000 in the name of ACRC approved by email, 2-17-2021,

Anti-Racism Leadership Gathering

Some attendees were hoping our event would serve as an advanced training for folks who are deeply engaged with anti-racist efforts. Attendees appreciated having the opportunity to connect to other community members interested in and/or committed to racial equity. The opportunities to engage in small groups (break-out rooms) were also helpful.

Racial Equity Coalition of Athens

Mayor Patterson will join the Racial Equity Coalition with a small group from the City of Athens to help further the City's demonstrated commitment to addressing racism.

Other Community Happenings

Community discussion around the Athens County Fair and the Confederate flag continue.

Recognition of groups and individuals engaged in especially impactful anti-racism work.

A reporting mechanism for tracking anti-racist achievements within our communities? An award?
Receive a mentor or two to help them build on their efforts? A potential monetary award to support their continued efforts?

The Foundation has set aside funds to encourage anti-racist efforts.

We will continue brainstorming and discuss next meeting.

Meeting adjourned