



**Blue Valley Board of Education Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Committee  
April 7, 2021**

Attendance: Jodie Dietz, Celia Fritz-Watson, Chris Gray, Gina Knapp, Caroline Lubbe, Tonya Merrigan, Nayelli Palazuelos-Bowers, Chad Riley, Fariha Shafi, Rabiya Shoab, Susan Swift, Kelly Wessel, Manal Wiedel

The Blue Valley Board of Education Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee met on Thursday, April 7, 2022. The meeting began with an overview of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) in Blue Valley. Kansas has SEL standards that have been approved by the Kansas State Board of Education similar to all other curricular areas. SEL does not happen separately but rather is incorporated into the academic curriculum so that students have context. Dr. Wessel shared a video around SEL work in Blue Valley which can be found on the district website under the [learning connection](#).

The second half of the meeting included time for the committee to discuss family and community engagement. The goal of the district is to “Expand family and community partnerships to strengthen school connectedness and benefit from the contributions of varied perspectives and experiences gained through these meaningful relationships.” The committee gave feedback on ways to increase our outreach to families to ensure we are hearing all voices when we ask for feedback or members for committees. Below are suggestions that were generated.

- Make personal asks to parents who may be reluctant.
- Be careful that information doesn't get buried in a newsletter.
- Reach out to diverse organizations such as: Crescent Peace, Happy Chinese, Islamic Center of Johnson County, Jewish Community Relations Bureau, etc.
- Work more intentionally to get the student voice. Partner with student groups to push out the information to members or with student newspapers or broadcast programs to notify all students in a school.

- Investigate a Canvas shell to house information.
- Language is a huge barrier. What are we doing for translation services? Should we have translators available? Can we leverage technology to help translate?
- Look at “Parent “clubs” for different languages to get more information on what they need.
- Things can’t be all electronic as some families don’t have access. Is there a way to know who doesn’t have access?
- Anything we try will help families who are not feeling included.

This was the final meeting of the 2021-2022 school year so it ended with thank you’s to the entire committee and a brief celebration for our seniors for their service. Patron members completing their 2 year term are able to reapply for another term later this summer. The Board of Education will appoint members beginning in July for the 2022-2023 school year.