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Kevin Chase

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ESD 105
Educational Service District

April 24, 2017

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
c/o Kailyn.Oconnell@k12.wa.us

Dear OSPI Colleagues:

It's my pleasure to recommend that the weeklong UnityWorks Diversity Training Institute, organized by Dr. Randie Gottlieb and held annually in Yakima, WA, be recognized as one option for satisfying the HB 1541 requirement for professional development in Multicultural Education.

I am well acquainted with Dr. Gottlieb and the excellent work of her organization, and have spoken personally with a number of school principals and other educators who have participated in the UnityWorks Training. Each one has described the experience in glowing terms.

This highly relevant, well-organized, in-depth training is appropriate for K-12 teachers, administrators, superintendents and school boards. The content is fully aligned with PESB cultural competency standards. It is already building local capacity to increase student and family engagement, to reduce incidents of bias, to increase acceptance, to raise critical awareness among staff and faculty, and to address other equity and diversity issues in our local schools.

As you know, ESDs were created by the Washington State legislature for the express purpose of assuring equal educational opportunities and quality education for all. If we want to make significant and sustainable improvements in school culture and student learning, we will need to enhance the capacity of school district leadership and our teaching force, so that all are well prepared to effectively serve the diverse population in our public schools. I am confident that the UnityWorks Training responds to that need, and hope to see such an excellent program expand to additional schools and districts around our state.

Please feel free to contact me should you need more information or wish to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Kevin Chase
Superintendent

33 South Second Avenue
Yakima, WA 98902
(509) 575-2885
Fax (509) 575-2918
www.esd105.org

ESD 105 is an Equal Opportunity Employer

YAKIMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
YAKIMA SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER 7

104 N. FOURTH AVENUE
YAKIMA, WASHINGTON 98902-2636
(509) 573-7000

May 31, 2017

To: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

I am pleased to be able to share with you this letter of support for the UnityWorks program and the work of Dr. Randie Gottlieb. I unequivocally recommend the UnityWorks training as an option for satisfying the HB 1541 requirement for professional development in Multicultural Education.

The Yakima School District is very diverse – ethnically, culturally, linguistically, and socio-economically. In schools as diverse as ours, the likelihood of misunderstandings and tensions could make for unsafe learning spaces for students and staff.

However, we have seen those misunderstandings and tensions melt away in the schools that have taken part in the UnityWorks training. We are fortunate to have the UnityWorks program in 11 of our schools and by this time next year we anticipate the program will be in an additional eight schools. As the School Board President, I have had multiple opportunities to hear from staff members about the quality of this training and the differences it has made at their schools.

Students and their families have become more engaged. Staff reports an increase in the awareness of equity and diversity issues within their schools. Data demonstrates that there is a significant reduction in harassment, bullying, incidents of bias and student referrals. These schools are becoming more cohesive units and are safer learning spaces for our students and staff members.

This training is aligned with the Cultural Competence Development Matrix designed by the Professional Educator Standards Board and is appropriate for all levels of K-12 staff and support personnel.

Please feel free to contact me at 509-910-0708 with any questions you may have about this recommendation.

Sincerely,

Martha Rice

Martha Rice, President
Board of Directors
Yakima School District

YAKIMA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
YAKIMA SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER 7

104 N. FOURTH AVENUE
YAKIMA, WASHINGTON 98902-2636
(509) 573-7000

May 9, 2017

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

To whom it may concern:

It is my pleasure to write a letter of support for UnityWorks and Dr. Randie Gottlieb. I have been working with Dr. Gottlieb for about three years. The UnityWorks program was brought to the Yakima School District to educate staff and students about living in a diverse society, improve race relations, and promote culturally responsive teaching.

As the Director of Health and Student Services, it is my responsibility and passionate commitment to children to bring programs of significance to our 16,000 students and our staff. It is because of this commitment that I wholeheartedly recommend this training as an option for satisfying the HB 1541 requirement.

The UnityWorks program is currently in 11 of our schools in the district. The UnityWorks training has been offered to our staff over the past three summers. It is comprehensive and provides real-life examples, hands-on learning, insight and world changing knowledge. It has been described as "truly transformational."

I am comforted that by bringing this amazing program to our school district, we have inspired students and staff to see and act through a different lens. Those who have gone through the training stated that by the end, they felt "empowered and hopeful."

Please feel free to contact me at 509-573-7004 with any questions you may have about this tremendous training and organization.

Sincerely,

Nancy L. McHenry

Dr. Nancy L. McHenry
Director of Health and Student Services
Yakima School District

"The Yakima School District encourages workforce diversity and complies with all state and federal laws prohibiting unlawful discrimination."

HOOVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

400 W. Viola
Yakima, WA 98902
509.573.5900

Mrs. Luz Juarez Stump
Principal

Mrs. Alejandra Rodriguez
Assistant Principal

May 4, 2017

Dear Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction:

It is with great pleasure and true conviction that I recommend the UnityWorks Diversity Training Institute as one aligned with HB1541, and one that has positively affected the culture at Hoover Elementary.

Our UnityWorks school based team attended the five-day diversity training, came away with an effective Diversity Action Plan that was easy to implement, and immediately influenced the culture within our school. Our discipline data has reflected a decline in racially motivated incidents and a deeper understanding of what culturally responsive teaching should look like. Our team was given the tools and allowed the opportunity to design an action plan that would get results based upon our needs. We have been supported throughout the year by the UnityWorks Foundation and we look forward to what year two will bring!

Below is a perfect example of our UnityWorks team modeling "the colors that we are" as we started our UnityWorks journey:

This one activity alone has done more for our staff and students in terms of acceptance, understanding, and unity!

Please consider recognizing the UnityWorks Diversity Institute under the HB 1541 umbrella. The professional development in cultural competence is unlike anything we have ever experienced. UnityWorks has been key to providing us the vehicle that will enable us to get closer to closing the achievement gap and understanding that we are all part of one race-the human race.

Should you require any more information, please feel free to contact me at (509)573-5901 or via email at Juarez-stump.luz@yakimaschools.org.

Respectfully,

Luz Juarez-Stump, Principal
Hoover Elementary School

A.C. Davis High School
212 South 6th Avenue
Yakima, Washington 98902
509-573-2700

International Baccalaureate

May 9, 2017

Dear Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction,

It is with great pleasure that I recommend the Unity Works Diversity Training Institute be recognized as one option for satisfying the HB 1541 requirement for professional development in Multicultural Education.

I am a building administrator at Davis High School, the board president for the Yakima Unity Works Committee and have been a presenter at multiple summer institutes. Without question, the training is addressing issues that exist in and out of public education. It is a topic that continues to require attention and there is not better attention to this very sensitive topic than Randie Gottlieb's professional development trainings. She is gifted at helping individual buildings address concerns unique to their own needs and then allowing them to share so others can learn from their experiences.

The Unity Works Diversity Institute is a comprehensive training that helps accentuate the oneness of humanity. The training helps schools and their surrounding communities celebrate diversity, resulting in a learning environment that leads to increased academic achievement. Schools and the district are more family friendly and parents' participation and support in our schools and district continue grow. In my opinion, without question, this program should be one option for satisfying the HB 1541 requirement.

Please feel free to contact me for more information at (509) 573-2504 or via email at alvarado.lorenzo@yakimaschools.org.

Respectfully,

Lorenzo Alvarado, Assistant Principal
Davis High School

"Yakima School District encourages workforce diversity and complies with all state and federal laws prohibiting unlawful discrimination."

Garfield Elementary School

612 N. Sixth Avenue Yakima, WA 98902 573-5700

April 19, 2017

Dear OSPI colleagues,

I am writing this letter to show my resounding support for Unity Works. As part of helping schools throughout the state be more prepared, as well as in compliance with HB 1541, the Unity Works program can be a fundamental part of improving the culture of our schools and communities throughout Washington state.

As a classroom teacher at Davis High School and an Instructional Facilitator at Garfield Elementary, I have seen the importance of the work. In my humble opinion, this is THE most important work we can be doing in society. It's been an honor and privilege to be at the grassroots level of being part of the solution.

By committing to embrace intensely reflective work of doing deep and meaningful multicultural education, schools can get the help and guidance they need. Dr. Gottlieb has created, shared, and lead through some of the trickiest waters we must navigate as educators and adults. She is a leader in the field who has the wisdom, experience, maturity and grace to help lead this work at the state level.

The highly engaging, deeply reflective, and meaningful introspection of the Unity works program should be a top option that OSPI considers choosing to support Washington state's students, families, and teaching communities.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further inquiries,

Sincerely,

Jessica M. Karstetter

Jessica Karstetter

Classroom teacher and Instructional Facilitator
Yakima Public Schools

(509) 731-0286

YAKIMA
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

We're the closest thing to home.

Yakima Valley Community Foundation

June 8, 2017

To: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Old Capitol Building
PO Box 47200
Olympia, WA 98504-7200

RE: Letter of support for UnityWorks Foundation

We are pleased to submit this letter of support for the UnityWorks Foundation School Program as an excellent option for professional development in Multicultural Education, satisfying HB 1541 requirements.

The UnityWorks Foundation is one of our strategic grantees and they are in their second year of a three-year grant from us. The wisdom of funding their work is reinforced every time we have the opportunity to participate in their trainings and see the transformative effects of their work. Our grant program is highly competitive and a three-year investment from our board is indicative of our belief in the promise and quality of their work.

YVCF's mission is to connect people, resources, and ideas so that people and communities thrive with particular attention to those who are frequently left out or left behind. We know that our communities thrive when diversity, equity, and inclusion are meaningfully and deliberately included in our everyday lives.

The UnityWorks Foundation School Program does this in a way that empowers individual schools to devise the solution that meets the students and families where they are while creating a common understanding across all participating schools. The Yakima Valley has no shortage of challenges, and it also has an abundance of tenacity and grit, which are harnessed through this program.

Please feel free to contact myself or our Program Officer for Education, Lindsay Boswell, with any questions you may have about this recommendation.

Sincerely,

Linda Moore
President | CEO
lgmoore@yakimavalleycf.org

Lindsay Boswell
Program Officer, Education
lindsayb@yakimavalleycf.org

GREATER YAKIMA
Chamber of Commerce

March 29, 2018

Unity Works Foundation
www.unityworks.org

To Whom It May Concern:

Unity-Works says it all! In the five plus years that we have been highly engaged with presenting a condensed version of this program to our Leadership Yakima group. Dr. Randi Gottlieb and the Unity-Works presentation have become one of the key elements of our Leadership Yakima program.

This program should be in every school, work place, and organization serving the community. It brings value, learning, reflection, and change. It challenges us to confront our views on diversity and how we see others. Unity Works can enlighten even those of us who think we are ok and have embraced all that's needed to understand different cultures, diversity, and how we interact with others.

Please consider this program if you have not! Change starts with knowledge and how we perceive others. Our perceptions are sometimes hidden or programmed in us. Unity-Works unique approach and training will make you, me, and the world a better place. They have done a wonderful job throughout the Yakima Valley!

Unity Works!

Sincerely,

Verlynn K. Best, CEO / President

Post Office Box 1490 • 10 North 9th Street, Yakima, Washington, 98907 • Phone (509) 248-2021 • Fax (509) 248-0601

Hello, My name is Bella and I am writing this letter to thank you for what you are doing. I have gone through prejudice at ~~Skool~~ school and it has gotten so bad I did not want too go to school any more. I have had a friend go through bulling the whole year and she kept telling the teachers what was happening to her but they called her a drama maker and problem student while she was crying in the bathroom. I have also experied my friends not allowed to be my friend because I am not a Chrishin or a mormon. I am truly thankful what your doing and I really appreciate.

Srom: Bella [redacted]

(Excuse the Spelling and messy handwriting)