

# **Edwardsville School Board Discusses Equity Task Force, Facility Improvements, New Policies**

by Leanne Guthrie, Reporter  
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Edwardsville School District #7 School Board meeting discussed the equity task force, improvements of facilities, and new policies.

During Dr. Jason Henderson's Superintendent Report, he discussed two items. The first being the progress of the new Equity Task Force and the successful first meeting held on the topic.

"Last week we had our first meeting of the equity task force. I really felt like it was an excellent meeting and we had a packed agenda. One of the first things we talked about was how we can utilize the people who wanted to be apart of the committee but were unable to due to because we just had such an overwhelming number of people that applied to be on it. We've got some ideas and in fact we've got a community member that presented an idea for an outside group. That would help continue to keep the conversation going with community members as well. So he talked to us and we are providing a list of names of people that might be willing to be apart of his group. And within our tables we shared ideas about other ways we can utilize those people that want to serve and keep that conversation about equity going," said Dr. Henderson.

Students were also present at the Equity Task Force meeting, they spoke and provided insight to the board.

"We talked about different types of data we might want to collect to help us with the decisions we have going forward. We talked about the need to get more looks in our classrooms and libraries that represent our students. We had students on this committee, they were unbelievably valuable. When they spoke, that room listened to what those students had to say. It was great and I hope that they continue to be active in this. They spoke on the need for additional teachers. That's something that they want to make sure we know, is they want teachers that look like them teaching at all of our levels. So we need to talk about recruiting and that's gonna be one of the areas we're talking about as well," said Dr. Henderson.

The second topic of the Superintendent's Report was about progress within strategic planning surveys.

"The other thing I wanted to talk about was updates on our strategic planning process. Our survey that went within our staff has been closed out. We got very good feedback on that and we're still working on looking at the data, looking at all the comments and hoping it to drive where we're going. The survey that was given out to our parents and community went out on Friday. And we got a report today that said even since Friday we've had over 700 responses. That is really good for the first few days of doing that. We'll work over these next few days of trying to get that number even a little higher," said Dr. Henderson.

Also briefly mentioned was updates coming to many of the buildings, including Leclaire, Lincoln, Edwardsville High School, Liberty, and Nelson. Starting May 1st,

with plans of being done by the end of summer. More information of what those renovations entail should be released soon.

The board also passed new policy reviews, required by the state of Illinois. An ethics and gift ban, along with prohibiting workplace harassment.

Lincoln Middle School Principal Steve Stuart took a moment to recognize the Lincoln and Liberty Cheerleaders. Both teams participated in the IESA competitions over the weekend. Liberty took home first place in the Large Team Routine Division, Liberty took second place. The board plans to bring the girls in and further recognize them in a future meeting.