

# NTCD Meeting Notes

New Trier Coalition for Diversity

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# Introduction

We began taking these notes with our 7/16/2020 meeting with the NTHS Winnetka campus principal to promote transparency both within and outside NTCD. We take notes for all major meetings—that is, meetings either with the NT administration or other meetings with five or more people in attendance.

## 07/16/2020, 1:30 pm - 2:15 pm

**Meeting Title:** Proposal Meeting with Dubravec

**Attendees:** Brandon Lee, Nicki Montenegro, Edward Seol, Luke Van Kapff, Erin Lee (NTCD), Denise Dubravec (NTHS Winnetka campus principal)

**Notes by:** Erin Lee

### Proposal Meeting Overall

- Meeting objectives:
  - 1) **Updates** on progress as an origination/committee
  - 2) **Sharing** current annual proposals and research plan
  - 3) **Brainstorm** steps for implementation
- Edward said:
  - NTCD encouraged people to join the committee
  - Many people signed up through a volunteer form submission on our website, will double check that those who have participated are accounted for.

### Updates on NTCD

- Two main proposals:
  - 1) **Annual proposal** that focuses on curriculum (especially in the English department)
  - 2) **Research plan** that provides a qualitative measure of progress and adds transparency in efforts
    - Use surveys to view sentiments and confidence levels
- Growth
  - Presence on social media
    - 72 followers on Facebook
    - 565 followers on Instagram
  - 126 volunteers
  - Collaboration with groups like HEROS and NT Anti-Racism Board

### NTCD Preliminary Research Plan

- Planned in two steps:
  - 1) **Distribution of surveys** to the NT community in order to assess where we are in perceptions of racial issues, how those racial issues are handled at and by NTHS, etc. If possible, would like to have one sent out in the beginning of the year and one at the end of the year to mark progress

- Survey is about 15 questions, and takes about 12 minutes or so
- 2) In attempts to keep the survey short and unburdensome, NTCD would like to gain most of its information from outside sources through **synthesis research**
- Dubravec response to who would've best to ask for feedback, and also improvements on survey:
  - **NTHS already has a research committee** that gets support from Northwestern University, and **recommends a meeting with that committee**. Dubravec is also on the committee.
  - Dubravec will send **Chimille Dillard** (Director of Curriculum and Instruction)'s contact information as well. Dillard will ask for resources such as the proposal presentation.

### **Full Annual Proposal**

- Focus area this year: CURRICULUM
  - English department has an equity plan, so NTCD wishes to work with them to incorporate recommended books
    - Base on alumni and other sources, a wide range of recommended books for specific classes have been chosen
      - Books were chosen based on whether they match the theme based on the course description of the class, and also if it matches the difficulty level of that class
      - Books strive to implement a more diverse group of authors and settings
- FRESHMAN YEAR
  - Luke Van Kapff:
    - Focus: Identity
    - Sets the tone for future English classes
    - Underrepresented groups include Asians, Blacks, Jews, Latinx, Native Americans
    - Wish to incorporate at least three recommended books into the syllabus
- SOPHOMORE YEAR
  - Luke Van Kapff:
    - Focus: British, American, and World Authors
    - Even though the focus was also on world authors, many regions of the world were omitted
- JUNIOR YEAR
  - Nikki Montenegro:
    - Focus: Diversity of American Voices and Themes on Spirituality, Nature, Race, Gender, Sexuality, Politics, and Social Mobility
    - Although the focus is very broad, the English 3 class did not seem to be as diverse as books in American Studies
      - Perhaps English teachers can talk to American Studies teachers for strategies in moving forward
- GLOBAL VOICES (Level 4)
  - Edward Seol:
    - Global Voices should be a **more widely available** class, and a **bigger incentive** should be there for taking the class, as it is an important class that is often cancelled

- Could be added as a **replacement** for English or language classes
- **New levels** of Global Voices should be added: 2E, 2, and 3, and even AP
  - Just the fact that the class has AP credits would be enough to draw students in to taking the class

### **Preliminary Recommendation for Social Studies Department**

- NTCD urges the **Social Studies Department to create an equity plan** like the English Department
- Dubravec Response: **Every department made an equity plan** in the spring of 2019, and it was implemented in the fall, as every kid should be able to see themselves in the curriculum
  - Also will send this information to Peter Tragos (Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction)

### **Ending Ideas**

- Q: Can we get the green light to talking with the department heads?
- A: Tragos will forward this to the department chairs, and we can decide how we can “mesh” NTCD with the existing committee, or possibly keep the two separate
- Q: What will be different in the future?
- A: The fall syllabus will look different for sure, and New Trier actually wanted to work on diversifying the summer reading plans, but (probably because of COVID-19) it all went too fast
- Edward Seol: This was the content proposal, but we also have students’ opinions on teacher conduct and behavior as we approach more difficult issues.
- Dubravec will send Dillard’s contact to Edward, Edward will send presentations and resources as soon as the meeting is over, Dubravec will send those resources to Dr. Paul Sally (Superintendent), and meet with Mr. Tragos

**07/19/2020, 12:00 pm - 12:45 pm**

**Meeting Title:** Meeting with HEROS (Healing Everyday Racism in our Schools)

**Attendees:** Brandon Lee, Edward Seol, Erin Lee (NTCD), Laurie Goldstein, Miyako Hasegawa, Alan Hatchett, Audrey Moy (HEROS)

**Notes by:** Erin Lee

### **After the Walk**

- Community conversation series around Winnetka, max 100 participants
- SESSION 2
  - Thursday August 13th, 8:00 pm
  - Main focus: What do Winnetka’s kids see that we don’t?
  - Schedule:
    - 1) Background: Why did HEROS do the walk, and how did the movement start?

- 2) Introduction on partners: HEROS introduction, if NTCD decides to partner, then NTCD introduction as well
- 3) Learn about the young panelists and what their experiences were like
  - Panelists are all New Trier alumni, and they have different cultural backgrounds and ages
- 4) Split up into breakout rooms for about 20-25 minutes, have 2 or 3 thought-invoking questions for them to answer
- SESSION 3
  - Thursday August 20th, 8:00 pm
  - Main focus: When Dr. King spoke, did we listen? How did Winnetka come to be predominantly wealthy and white? (Takes a historical perspective)
- SESSION 4
  - Thursday August 27th, 8:00 pm
  - Main focus: What's next? What can we do in the future?

## To Do

- Info dissemination for After the Walk sessions
- Confirm Isaac Thurston as panelist and Edward as an East Asian panelist (session 2)
- Choose someone to join HEROS general meetings
- Tell support group and team about HEROS
- Ask people to sign up for the HEROS mailing list:  
[https://mailchi.mp/b5066d1aefcc/join\\_heros](https://mailchi.mp/b5066d1aefcc/join_heros)
- When Willow (previous name in high school was Lauren) reaches out to NTCD on instagram, give HEROS instagram page a shout out
- Listen to the podcast that Laurie Goldstein talked about: <https://teachingwhilewhite.org/>
- Ask people from Winnetka or Sunset Ridge to be a part of HEROS
- Await connection with Alex Yenkins, who has a good relationship with Zwirner
- Read HEROS 8 recommendations letter:  
[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Yy19FDRIxOUq8AuMuAzHrzJ\\_ZVdkDnCY/view?usp=s\\_haring](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Yy19FDRIxOUq8AuMuAzHrzJ_ZVdkDnCY/view?usp=s_haring)

07/24/2020, 12:30 pm - 1:25 pm

**Meeting Title:** Proposal Meeting with Tragos

**Attendees:** Edward Seol, Erin Lee (NTCD), Peter Tragos (Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction), Lindsay Arado (Social Studies Dept. Faculty), Vanessa Nomura (English Dept. Faculty)

**Notes by:** Erin Lee

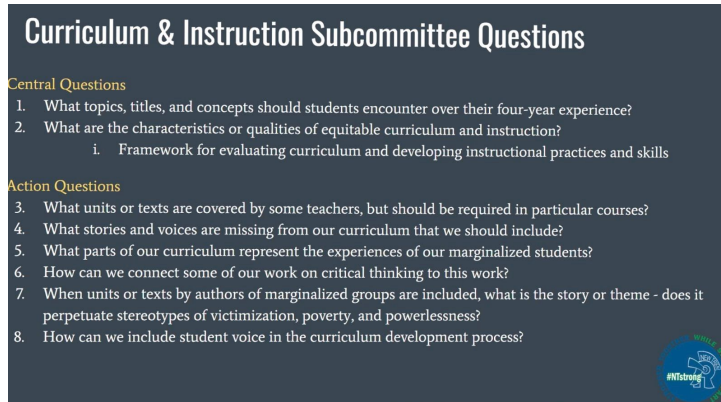
- Edward shows proposal meeting (find overview on first meeting)
  - Find proposal specifics on page 2, 07/16/2020 (Proposal Meeting with Dubravec)

## Questions and Comments

- Tragos: You talked about a tight community, and a support network. Who is in it?

- Edward: Alumni, parents, partners like HEROS, the Anti-Racism Board, and other organizations are getting involved
- Tragos: What began this group?
- Edward: The George Floyd incident was a big instigator, and also my own background—never having read an Asian text. I’ve also heard Jewish kids saying that they rarely go over the holocaust. George Floyd was a catalyst for, not just black communities being represented, but all communities
- Tragos: After having spoken to alumni, current students, or even students from other schools, what has been striking to you, what has been an “aha” moment in looking back at New Trier?
- Edward: Having a diverse student body is certainly an experience. Some say that New Trier is impossible to improve on because it is not diverse, so it can’t make change, but, by changing the curriculum to be more inclusive, we can still make an effort
- Schools change slowly, so it could be frustrating for students to see change happening only after they are gone

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- Tragos shares screen (1 page slide), showing work from sub communities
    - Some of these questions are similar to what NTCD is doing. For example, the first central question asks what we can do to the curriculum.



## Questions and Comments

- Edward: What are some concrete steps that you will be taking this year?
- Tragos:
  - 1) We will be creating a student curriculum committee (name is not set), and current students will talk about their current experiences in order to best strategize how to make changes to the curriculum, perhaps during the X block
  - 2) We will be looking at topics and titles, and, this year, we will see differences in English and perhaps the Social Studies courses for next year
- Edward: What do you envision the relationship for NTCD and New Trier to be?

- Tragos:
  - 1) We would like to invite students to be part of a focus group
  - 2) We don't want to reporting progress to each other, but, instead, would like to move forward together
- Tragos: I would like to emphasize these two areas: "collaboration" and "bridging" (NTCD will be a bridge for New Trier and the students/community)

### To do

- (Maybe, was talked about but never concrete) give NT a shoutout, let the community know that NT is moving forward, publicize the equity plans
- Right after meeting: Edward sends names of people who are on the committee to Tragos so that he knows who to put in the focus group

## 07/24/2020, 7:45 pm -8:15 pm

**Meeting Title:** Meeting with New Trier Anti-Racism Board

**Attendees:** Edward Seol, Lucas Balon, Erin Lee (NTCD), Ryan Cason, Mira Becker, Xariah Chase (NT Anti-Racism Board, all alumni)

**Notes by:** Erin Lee

- meant to start at 7:30, but there was a delay
- Ryan
  - NTARB focuses more on people's experiences and their stories, so collecting anecdotes is a big part of the survey, whereas NTCD is more quantitative (number of people, progress, how many people have taken this class, etc.)
  - Perhaps merge, or make the surveys two sides of a pole — one is very qualitative and one is very quantitative
  - Send survey so that we know which ones to take out, so that the surveys are not repetitive
- Edward:
  - Will link surveys so that we can use each other's data
- NTARB has a website that is unfinished, but will include:
  - the history and legacy of racism in the Northshore
  - Contact for local representatives (town, mayor, all the way up to congressman and senator)
- Planning to make website first, then move on to social media because NTARB doesn't have much to show yet

### Questions and Comments

- Xariah: How is NTCD tracking sentiments?
- Edward: We will be filtering out the random, unhelpful answers, asking people to rate things on a scale, and making the questions diverse.

- Xariah: What are NTCD's goals?
- Lucas: Right now, we are communicating with Principal Dubravec to try and get out the survey
- Xariah: What is going on with NTCD and the English department?
- Edward: We are currently having talks with Tragos, who is heading the curriculum. They seem like they are willing to talk about it, but implementation will be difficult this current year. It also seems like they are trying to make some sort of current student group

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- Lucas: The research team is in contact with Ms. Dillard, the director of curriculum and instruction, and are currently working on the form, which has been submitted. We are requesting the ability to distribute as of now. We have an initial version, but it is a fluid one, susceptible to change if needed.
  - Overview of survey by Lucas

### Questions and Comments

- Xariah: The surveys in general seem to be pretty similar
- Lucas: Since it is the addressing the same topic, there is an inherent risk of similarity
- Lucas: Are your questions responses or multiple choice?
- Ryan: A combination – for example,
  - 1) How often do you think about your skin color? (Multiple times a day, multiple times a week, etc.)
  - 2) Followed by a response (When do you think about it)
- (Comment) Ryan: We're not just trying to change New Trier; we're trying to change the New Trier community.

### To do

- Send our survey to NTARB (Lucas is doing right after meeting)
- Take a look at NTARB survey (Brandon has it)