

Meeting of the
School Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) Subcommittee
Monday, April 1, 2024
5:00 PM – 6:30 PM
Remote via Zoom

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) Subcommittee Members present: Valerie Frias (Chair), Steven Ehrenberg, Natalia Linos, and Mariah Nobrega.

Other School Committee Members present: Andreas Liu.

Staff present: Claire Galloway-Jones, Director of Educational Equity; Cristina Hernandez, Assistant Director of Educational Equity; Liza O'Connell, Deputy Superintendent for Student Services; and Betsy Fitzpatrick.

1. Approval of Minutes of the February 5, 2024 Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Subcommittee Meeting

On a motion of Dr. Linos, and seconded by Dr. Ehrenberg, the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) Subcommittee voted, by roll call, with 4 in favor (Ms. Frias, Dr. Ehrenberg, Dr. Linos, and Ms. Nobrega), 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions, to approve the minutes of the February 5, 2024 DEIJ Subcommittee meeting.

2. Presentation of Incident Reporting Data

Ms. Galloway-Jones and Ms. Hernandez presented on Incident Reporting Data (attached), with three goals in mind: to review and understand the PSB definitions of bullying and discrimination; to review and understand newly-developed incident and bullying reporting forms, and pathways for reporting; and to unpack the data and expectations in the Office of Student Services (OSS) and the Office of Educational Equity (OEE). Bullying is defined as repeated, intentional harassment by an aggressor. Discrimination can be any instance of unjust or inequitable treatment on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender identify/expression, sexual orientation, age, disability or medical condition, or any other protected class. There may be incidents where bullying and discrimination overlap. The school district is committed to preventing bullying at every level, to ensure the safety and belonging of every member of the school community. When members of the community need to submit a report, there are two options: the first sends the incident report to the Office of Educational Equity (OEE), the Office of Student Services (OSS), *and* to the school leader (principal) in the school where the incident took place; the second option sends the report only to OEE and OSS. Some members of the community may feel more comfortable with the second option if they fear retaliation. Ms. Galloway-Jones and Ms. Hernandez discussed the various pathways for reporting bullying or discrimination incidents, noting that reports can be filed by students, family members, educators, administrators, or other staff members.

Since the new reporting system was launched in early December, 14 reports of bullying have been received. Of those, 11 are classified as “general bullying”, 2 were based on race/ethnicity, and 1 was based on religion. Fifteen (15) reports of discrimination have been received in the same time period: 7 based on race/ethnicity, 6 based on religion, and 2 categorized as “other”. The breakdown of bullying incidents by school is as follows: 6 at BHS, 3 at Lawrence, and 1 each at Ruffin Ridley, Driscoll, BEEP, Hayes and Runkle. Incidents of discrimination by school are as follows: 11 at BHS, 2 at Runkle, and 1 at BEEP (1 is unknown).

Members expressed appreciation for the new online reporting forms (previously, reporting was only available via paper forms). Removing as many barriers as possible in the reporting process is important, so they suggested the following: 1) be sure the reporting link on the website is easy to find; 2) ensure that all links on the website are correct and point users in the right direction; and 3) once found, make sure the reporting link is easy for the reporter to understand and use. Members asked how verbal complaints, or complaints shared in an email, are handled. Ms. Galloway-Jones noted that school leaders and district administrators who receive such complaints log them onto this online reporting system themselves, so that all incidents are maintained and tracked on the same database. This will ensure no incidents fall through the cracks, and will enable school and district leaders to compare data over time. Members suggested that, while helpful, the pathway chart might be confusing for members of the community who are not trained to distinguish between bullying, harassment and discrimination. Can one form be created for reporting all incidents, such that the work of determining how the incident is categorized (bullying/discrimination/harassment) is left up to staff? Staff will look into this.

Members reviewed the data of reported incidents. Ms. Galloway-Jones noted that this data is from the first week of December through today, and represents *reported* incidents (not necessarily *substantiated* incidents). All reported incidents are thoroughly investigated; reporters who share their contact information (that is, don't opt to remain anonymous) are contacted and kept informed. Members asked about the 11 bullying incidents that are categorized as "general". Staff said that this is typically the category selected by the parent/caregiver, for example, if they believe their child was bullied on the playground, but no discriminatory, racial, or gender-based language was used in the incident. Members asked if, at a future meeting, they could see the data on the victims in these 11 incidents (race, ethnicity, disability status); that might help to uncover patterns of bullying. In the 15 discrimination incidents, by school, 1 is categorized as "school unknown"; what does this mean? In this particular case, a hate speech incident was reported by a community member. That community member was subject to hate speech on an online platform. This incident is not within the purview of the school district to address. Members asked why reports of discrimination under Title IX are not included in this data, and asked that Title IX allegations be captured in the data going forward, just like all other reported incidents. Members suggested that more work be done to publicize the new online reporting mechanism to parents/caregivers and students, perhaps even through a direct message from the district, or through video clips/PSAs on the video monitors mounted in school lobbies. Further, to encourage student awareness, it was suggested that a poster – with a noticeable graphic and a single URL – be created and displayed in prominent locations in our schools (hallways, gyms, bathroom stalls) so that students can seek it out if the need arises. Anonymous reporting options are very important for students, who, after being bullied/harassed/discriminated against, may feel particularly vulnerable. Members asked that in future presentations the data be disaggregated by staff/non-staff (student/caregiver), and asked that this data be reviewed more frequently in the future.

Members thanked Ms. Galloway-Jones and Ms. Hernandez for all of the work they have undertaken to create an online reporting system to better serve the school community.

3. Public Comment

Ms. Carolyn Thall, Town Meeting Member, offered public comment. She asked for clarification about one of the discrimination incidents that was discussed earlier. Staff explained that this particular incident was reported by a community member through the district's new

online reporting system. The community member reported that hate speech was directed at them after they posted a petition on the *Change.org* platform. Because the school district has no jurisdiction over the external platform, and the perpetrator of the hateful language was not associated with the school district, it was determined that this is not an incident that school staff can address.

Mr. Jesse Hefter, Town Meeting Member, offered public comment. He thanked Ms. Hernandez and Ms. Galloway-Jones for conducting school residencies. He asked what can be done to ensure students feel comfortable talking about what they are experiencing, such that the data we collect accurately reflects the school culture. Ms. Hernandez spoke about some of OEE's school-based activities, including creation of short videos for use by staff. In these short video clips, Ms. Hernandez presents a hypothetical incident and models an appropriate response. These helpful videos have been well-received by staff.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30pm.



PUBLIC SCHOOLS of **BROOKLINE**

Office of Education Equity - DEIJ Subcommittee 4.1.24

Tonight's Goals

- Review and understand the PSB definition of bullying and discrimination.
- To review and understand newly developed incident and bullying reporting forms and pathways for reporting.
- To unpack data and expectations of OSS and OEE

What is Bullying ? What is Discrimination?

Bullying – repeated intentional harassment by an aggressor

Discrimination – any instance of unjust or inequitable treatment on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, age, disability or medical condition or any other protected class.

**There may be incidents where bullying and discrimination overlap. We invite community members to report such incidents in the way they are most comfortable with and feel best represents their concerns.*

Bullying Prevention

The Public Schools of Brookline is deeply committed to preventing bullying at every level of our community. PSB seeks to protect and ensure the safety and belonging of each community member.

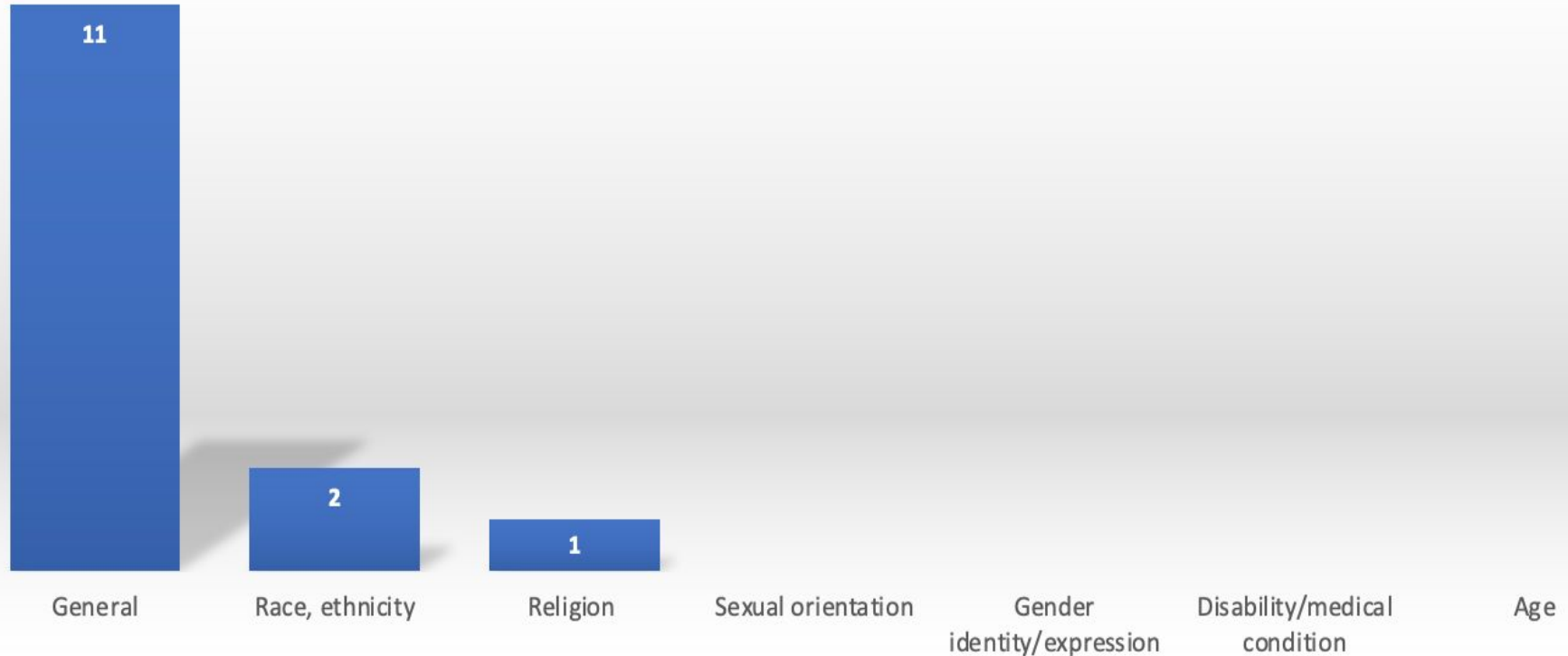
To protect all reporters and honor their interests, we offer two reporting options. Reporters may select whether they would like to report an incident to 1) the **PSB Office of Educational Equity, the PSB Office of Student Services, AND school administration** of school(s) associated with the incident or 2) to the **PSB Office of Educational Equity and PSB Office of Student Services ONLY**. We invite reporters to choose the option they are most comfortable with.

Bullying Prevention and Pathways for Reporting

Who do I want to report?	Where do I want to report?	Who will receive this form?	Who can report?
Repeated intentional harassment by an aggressor	Reporters, please choose the option you are most comfortable with:		Students, families, educators, administrators, staff members, etc.
	1. Report to School Administration, OEE & OSS Form	School Administrators, PSB Office of Educational Equity, and Office of Student Services	PSB Employees may utilize this form to report incidents in which they were targeted.
	2. Report to OEE & OSS only Form	PSB Office of Educational Equity and Office of Student Services ONLY	
Unjust or inequitable treatment on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, age, disability or medical condition or any other protected class	Incident Reporting Form – OEE only Form	PSB Office of Educational Equity ONLY	Students, families, educators, administrators, staff members, etc. PSB Employees may utilize this form to report incidents in which you were targeted.

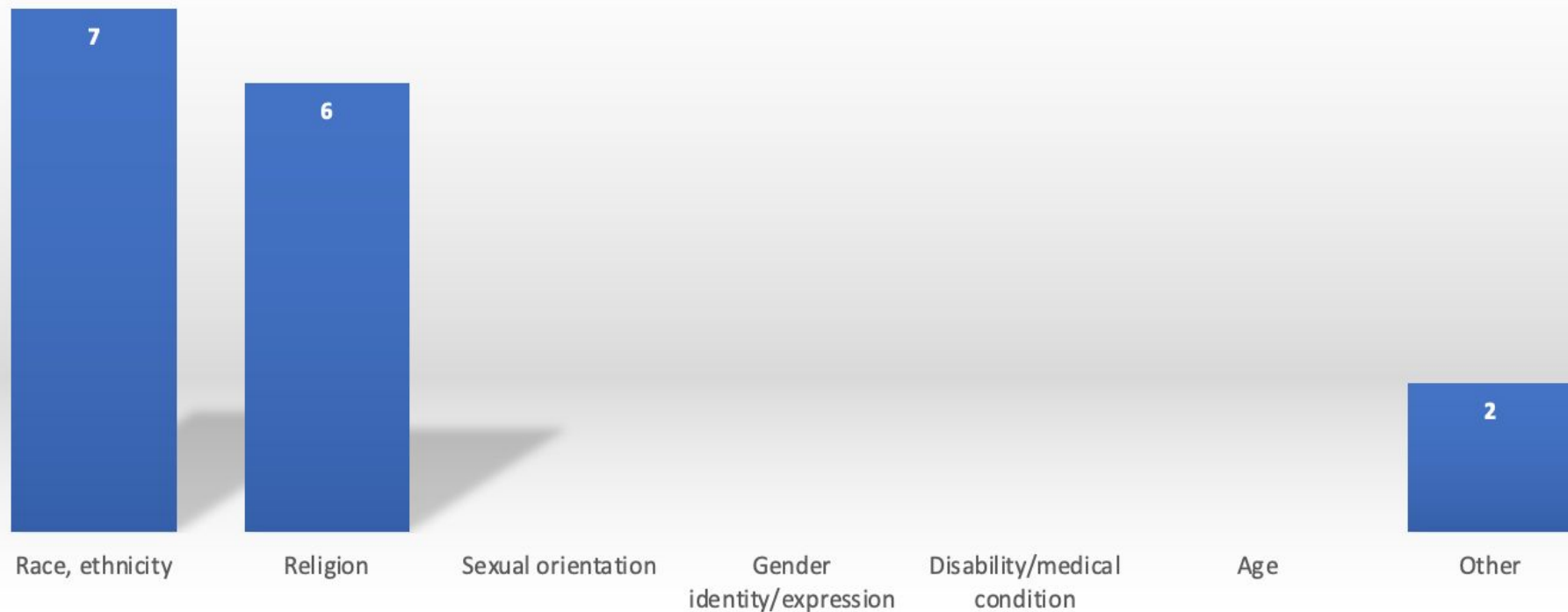
PSB Bullying Incident Reports Received = 14

Bullying Incident Reports Received



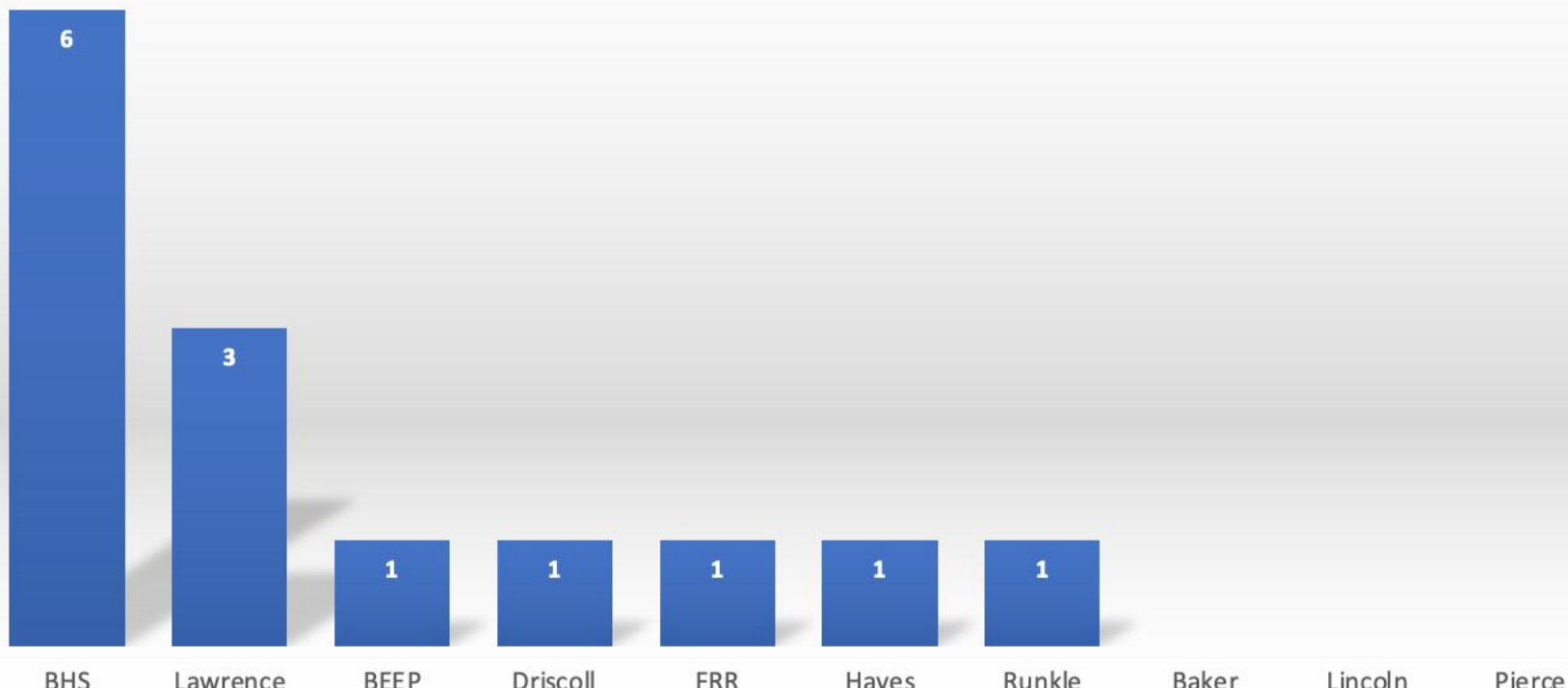
PSB Discrimination Incident Reports Received = 15

Discrimination Incident Reports Received



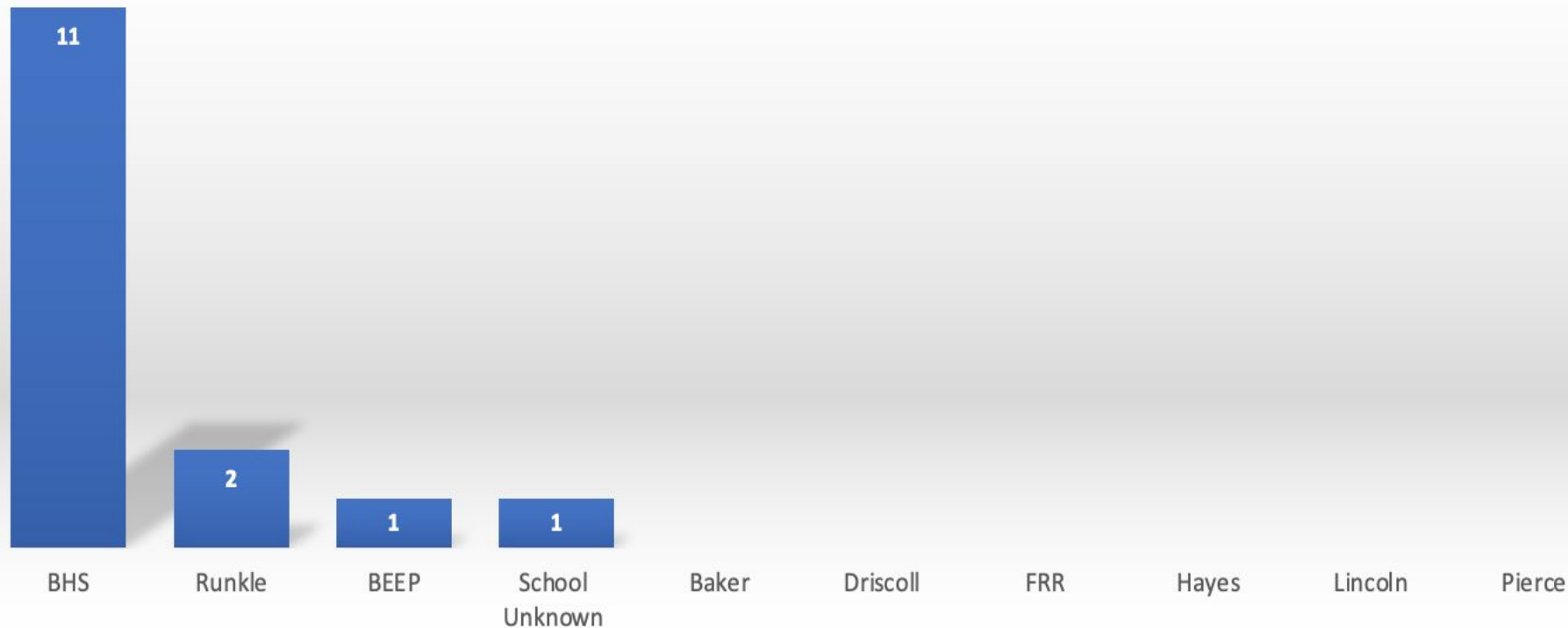
PSB Bullying Incidents by School = 14

Bullying Incidents by School



PSB Discrimination Incidents by School = 15

Discrimination Incidents by School



Reporting

Bullying	Total
Non-anonymous	13
Anonymous	1

Discrimination	Total
Non-anonymous	10
Anonymous	5



QUESTIONS