

Concord Quarter/Delaware Valley Friends School Care Relationship Committee Minutes May 3, 2021 Via Zoom

Present: David Calamaro (DVFS), Christa Harp (DVFS), Gray Goodman (DVFS), Susan Brodesser (Clerk, Birmingham), Steve Kupferschmid (Willistown), Ginny Sutton (Westtown), Lynne Piersol (CQ Coordinator)

1. Worship
2. Agenda: approved.
3. December 14th minutes: approved with the addition of Lynne being present.
4. Committee members/attendees shared how they and their institutions (school, Quarter, jobs) are faring: Our meeting buildings are now open and worship is hybrid, with in person attendance growing. Westtown is starting monthly dialogs on racism jointly with Westtown School. The Board continues virtually, working on supporting teachers, administration, and the strategic planning process. They are doing some events for teachers. Administration and faculty agree it has been a hard year, but the community has not suffered, and in some ways it has improved. Faculty feel the Administration has supported them well. It has made a difference to have everyone back in person. They are getting ready to launch the seniors. Students from the Diversity Committee met with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator and have been making presentations on various aspects of identity. There has been “required” fun - kickball games between student groups and between students and faculty. There was a prom outside; it was a real community event, including a food truck, games. One last meeting for worship will be held with the entire high school, or maybe the whole school, the only one this year in such a large group. They are in process of vaccinating students aged 16 and over. Susan shared about West Chester’s vigil during the jury deliberation at the Chauvin trial.
5. Sharing of students’ experiences at the Quaker Youth Leadership Conference; Update on Quaker Life Committee: The Conference was online this year and attended by some students and chaperones. Students were excited at meeting students from other Friends Schools. The Quaker Life Committee may have new leaders (students reapply each year for roles). Susan attends the Quaker Life Committee and asked if others from the Care Committee could attend if they wanted (yes). She is struck by how thoughtfully the students are considering the Quaker identity of the school and their role there. Ginny is interested. Students have regretted missing in person worship and meeting for business.
6. Effort to have Quarter members attend a DV Meeting for Worship: The worships have been small and lackluster this year. They have had the whole school together on zoom in the mornings, with a bit of silence and announcements, but otherwise it has been smaller groups, so there hasn’t been the opportunity for others to join.

7. What will school look like in the fall? David anticipates they will be in person full-time, with perhaps less than 6 feet of social distancing, which might mean they can use their classrooms. They will follow CDC guidelines, and probably wear masks. They have had some cases of COVID, but they did not see much, if any, person to person transmission in school. They might still have a tent and do daily screening. Plans are not finalized.
8. Update on senior presentations; Quaker Studies classes: May 11 is last day of class for seniors. Then they do a program on careers for 3 days, and more career orientation after that. They give speeches (1-2 minutes) for English class. Quakerism education with the lower school is informal (for example, having a circle time versus calling it worship sharing). They are still developing this.
9. Susan attended the Strategic Planning meeting in April and noted that Kirk emphasized the Quaker identity of the school. She notes that the Quaker identity is important to the students too. How do parents pick the school? They may not be picking it because it is Quaker... David notes they are empowering students who are often not feeling empowered in other settings. They do want to be sure that the school is a safe place for various viewpoints, which has been a struggle sometimes with more conservative students and families present. Gray notes that the admissions department is careful to write about Friends' testimonies in a balanced way (not too religious and not too secular), but the testimonies are in the publicity and there is a spiritual foundation for the care of students. He also spoke of the challenges of encouraging students to listen to others with their hearts, especially when the other person has different values. The DEI Coordinator has done workshops on white privilege/supremacy/structural racism for staff who are on various levels of understanding and growth in these areas. Christa, as a parent, liked the idea of a religious school. Lots of people do come in spite of the Quakerism; they just want an LD school. Others do come because it is Quaker and they like the Quaker values. There are a small number of Quaker students. They will be opening a 1st-2nd grade classroom in 2021.
10. Other - function of Coordinator going forward, in person or Zoom meetings? Lynne shared that currently she publicizes DV events that are open to us, as well as sharing Quarter events with the school. The Coordinator duties include communication, publicity and minutes for the Committee. Lynne will be writing up a "How to" document for the coordinator support of the committee since she is retiring. She also noted that Ginny was approved for 3 more years by Concord Quarterly Meeting for Business on April 25, 2021. The Committee appreciated the work of the Coordinator.
11. Next meeting: Monday, September 27, 3:15pm. There can be consultation ahead of time about whether it will be hybrid or zoom or in person.

Minutes by Lynne Piersol, CQ Coordinator.