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Bristol schools plan "Community Conversation II" for May 30



By DON STACOM

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Bristol Central High School (Don Stacom)

Bristol's schools are inviting local residents to "Community Conversation II," a discussion May 30 about education and community issues.

Topics will include equity, inclusiveness and excellence, educators said.

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The session will run from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at the Bristol Central High School cafeteria. A light dinner will be available from 5:30 to 6 p.m.

Bristol educators hosted a similar session at the start of the year at Bristol Eastern High School.

[Bristol invites parents, other residents to community talk about diversity »](#)

The city's population has become more diverse during the past 20 years, and the school system is trying to help long-time residents and arriving young families find common ground despite different cultural traditions and backgrounds.

Compared to the overall community, for instance, families of school-age children in the city are less affluent and are more likely to be Hispanic or African-American.

Roughly half of Bristol's 8,000 students qualify for free or reduced-price lunches, a common measure of poverty. But citywide, the poverty rate is far lower; the U.S. Census Bureau's most recent data shows put it just below 11 percent. Roughly 40 percent of the student body is non-white, but more than 76 percent of the city's 60,000 residents are white.

The January discussion centered on ways to promote acceptance and encourage educational success for everyone.

educational success for every child.

Kerry Lord of the Connecticut Center for School Change will facilitate the May 30 talk, and community leaders and school employees will serve as table captains.

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The funding for the event comes from the Tom and Melanie Barnes Family Fund at Main Street Community Foundation, the Barnes Group Foundation/Money in Motion Fund at Main Street Community Foundation, ESSA Title IV Student Support and Academic Enrichment and from the mayor's office.

Attendees must RSVP to susaneverett@bristol12.org by May 28.

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Don Stacom



Don Stacom is a reporter for The Courant covering New Britain, Bristol and transportation. He has previously reported on Enfield, Torrington, the Farmington Valley and Somers, and is a former editor at The Register-Citizen in Torrington and former assistant city editor at The Republican-American in Waterbury.
