

USD 415 board hears patrons concerns

(KNZA)--Several school district patrons addressed the Hiawatha School Board at their July 12 meeting.

The meeting saw a return of the public comment portion of the meeting, which had been absent for some time due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Addressing the board during the public comment session were Virgil Hallauer, Larry Stover, Annette Hoskins and Jason Dvorak . In addition, on the agenda to speak to the board was Stuart Aller.

Dvorak expressed concerns about bullying and the lack of discipline in the schools. Hallauer, Stover, Hoskins and Aller voiced concerns about critical race theory and the district's Diversity Council.

The Diversity Council, which was discussed in the district's May newsletter, was formed in late 2019. The article said the Diversity Council was formed to encourage inclusion and equality for all district stakeholders.

Its members, who were selected by Superintendent Lonnie Moser, include educators, board of education members, parents and community leaders.

Moser said he expects the Diversity Council to make a presentation to the board sometime this fall.

Editor's note: USD 415 Superintendent Lonnie Moser issued the following statement Friday:

Greetings, Red Hawks.

You have likely heard of the controversy surrounding critical race theory and concerns that it would become part of schools in Kansas and across the country. The concept of critical race theory has existed for over 40 years but has only recently become a controversial topic in K-12 schools. The controversy is now on our doorstep and we wish to address it.

We want to be clear in stating that USD 415 schools do not teach critical race theory. Hiawatha Schools rightfully strive to ensure the best education and learning experience for all students so they may be successful in an increasingly diverse future. Acknowledging and embracing the diversity of our own students does not equate to the teaching of critical race theory.

The 2021-22 school year promises to be a crucial year as we continue to address learning loss related to the pandemic while refocusing on pre-pandemic goals for student learning. This--not the debate of critical race theory-- is the crucial task at hand and it is our focus.

Thank you.

Lonnie D. Moser, Superintendent

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