

https://www.messenger-inquirer.com/news/ops-continues-to-increase-deib-offerings-in-district/article_57a01b6f-9700-5b7e-add1-c9836a188e1d.html

OPS continues to increase DEIB offerings in district

By Karah Wilson Messenger-Inquirer
Oct 27, 2023



David Phillips

Owensboro Public Schools is continuing to offer more events and programs centered around diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB).

David Phillips, director of DEIB for OPS, said there are several aspects that the district has been expanding when it comes to the initiative.

“The ‘Grow Your Own’ staff program began two years ago with OPS sponsoring classified staff to obtain their masters degree in teaching,” he said. “One of those has completed, two will finish in December, two will finish in May and two are halfway finished.”

Phillips said OPS has agreed to sponsor two more staff in the spring of 2024 through Western Kentucky University.



“We have been working to hire more minority teachers so the student population feels represented,” he said.

The Academic Career Exploration (ACE) program at Owensboro High School is in its third year and has assisted Black students with navigating their paths after high school.

“We have partnered with Owensboro Community & Technical College and the Black Expo for this program,” Phillips said. “The students have toured OCTC, Brescia University, Kentucky Wesleyan College and have participated in Rooster Booster.”

Phillips said other students within OPS have participated in the Western Academy at the H.L. Neblett Center and have become mentors for younger students.

“The mentor students will visit their home elementary schools and work with third to fifth grade students,” he said.

Other program and events include the creation of the NAACP chapter at OHS, a voter registration drive and attending job fairs.

“The OPS night at the Dust Bowl brought out 230 people the first year we were there, and this year we had 360 people,” Phillips said. “We’re also working to celebrate Hispanic Heritage and Black History months.”

Phillips said the increase in DEIB offerings has changed the culture at OPS for the better.

“The board members have been very supportive, along with our chief officers and superintendent,” he said. “We are excited about the programs in place and keeping them going and making them better.”

Upcoming events include the OPS Opportunities Night and the Mental Health Fair.

Karah Wilson, 270-691-7315,

kwilson@messenger-inquirer.com, Twitter: @kawahwilson19

Karah Wilson

