

Q: Why do schools not teach the histories of People of Color as they teach white history?

A: Institutional racism in schools has meant devaluing and erasure of the histories of People of Color. White people maintain power and leadership roles in schools, deciding what counts as history and what language will be valued (English).

Q: Why do police mistreat communities of color?

A: Metz pointed to the history of our city to explain police violence ... “there has always been a division.” He said there are individuals (police) who don’t do the right thing. More training is needed. More voices piped up about how racism is more than individual: it’s baked into our institutions, meaning the whole institution has to change.

Q: Why does immigration status bar students from receiving college financial aid (aka, from going to college!)

A: It shouldn’t. There’s work to change this: check out [The Dream Act](#)

Q: Why does the city and county spend so much money to lock up People of Color instead of providing jobs and opportunities?

A: Our Juvenile Justice system is messed up. King County is 5.8% Black, but 40-50% of the youth incarcerated are Black. In the last 10 years, they have managed to cut the number of youth incarcerated in half—yet the incarcerated population has become even more disproportionately youth of color incarcerated than it was before!

Q: Who keeps the police accountable to communities of color and how?

A: Communities of color. Communicating is key.

Q: Why aren’t individual teachers and police officers evaluated on their understanding of institutional racism?

A: That would be great... there isn’t enough teacher/ police accountability. What would it look like?

Q: Why are tests prioritized over other types of evaluation?

A: We looking at other ways to evaluate student performance not using standardized tests! It’s a slow process to change institutions, but it’s happening!

Q: What if the teenage girl who got punched in the face was white instead of Black? How would the response have been different?

A: Metz says that the lesson to everyone was this: do what police says, no matter if you think it’s right or wrong: it’s the legal thing to do. He thinks the situation could have been handled better, and is reviewing the case himself. He talked about officers needing to be more approachable and friendly, calling it cultural competency. A young person called that manipulation. Metz said better manipulation than someone getting hurt. Sili pointed out that people in institutions behave because of institutional policies (i.e. what is legal and following procedure/ policy). In contrast, people from the community follow family and human values (i.e. cultural values like respect). This is the disconnect that has shown up in police-young people of color interactions.

Q: Why does the “gang contract” unfairly target youth of color?

A: An important hidden piece of info: your parents can pull out negative comments in your student file after elementary school! But parents don’t know it. They can remove the flags that track and follow their kids. Parents have legal rights, and the info comes home in newsletters, but it gets lost in the mass of papers, and it’s English-only as well. We need better parents-rights trainings, so families know their legal rights.