



2010-2011 Seattle Youth Commission year-end report: Race and Social Justice

Race and Social Justice is such a prevalent issue in our society today. Sadly, awareness and discussion around this issue is almost non-existent, especially in our schools. We wanted to create a curriculum that would be implemented in all Seattle Public Schools that would start a discussion about racism and inform our students about what exactly institutionalized racism is. Most importantly however, this curriculum had to be engaging, effective, and sustainable. We met with Glen Harris from the Office of Civil Rights to ensure that we would create the most effective lesson possible.

This year we were able to reach out to two high schools, specifically Roosevelt High School and West Seattle High School. Our curricula varied slightly because we wanted to cater the lesson to the classroom dynamic. However, at both schools we informed students about what institutionalized racism means and we showed a documentary called "Brown Eyes, Blue Eyes" which explored the effects of institutionalized racism more deeply. We noticed that when we first walked into the classrooms, most students had never even heard of the term "institutionalized racism" nor did they believe it was relevant to their lives. After we presented our two day curriculum, students were much more aware of this issue and its effects in our society.

We hope that in the next year we will be able to reach out to more schools and work more closely with teachers around the city so that two days out of every school year can be devoted to in depth and meaningful discussion around the issue of racism.