

I am Jim Hansen. I live in District 8, Precinct 18. I have some comments on the scope of work and request for quotes of the proposed Equity Audit.

I reviewed an early form of this document last year and commented at one of the meetings of your subcommittee on equity. At the time I found it completely inadequate because it was not specific enough about the purpose and the expected deliverables. Those thoughts were evidently shared at some point because the school department eventually brought forward the current draft dated June 24th of this year.

I understand that some \$10K was spent on an independent consultant to assist Mr Corazzini with the rewrite. Given that high level of financial commitment and the ongoing time and attention from one of the most highly compensated professionals in the City of Framingham, I had great hopes for this second draft. It is much improved, but there is still work to be done.

It starts off well, using the FPS mission statement for most of the first paragraph. It goes on to acknowledge that “we are aware of disparities”. But then we get to the statement of purpose and it is a long tangled sentence that is hard to understand and reliably interpret, even for a professional in the field of educational assessment.

I suggest that the comma after the word “clearly” be removed, that the words “which are” be inserted before “the drivers”, that a period be placed after the word “achievement”, and that the rest of the paragraph be restated in another sentence speaking of desired future actions based on the results of the audit.

The scope of work section has what appears to be a list of domains of inquiry, but doesn't call them out in an enumerated list, even though it is elliptically referred back to several times later in the document. The 7th bullet point under the deliverables has another list of items which only partially overlap with the first list. These are referred to as “areas of focus”. The distinction between an area of focus and a domain is not clear.

The list of deliverables starts off with a perfect example of a non-specific, non-measurable request which is to “Conduct limited focus groups”. It isn't clear what limits are placed on the activity. It isn't clear who would be invited and if the representation in the groups would suffer from the same disparities which this audit is supposed to look at. In fact if you aren't intentionally ensuring that the people in your focus groups represent all the diversity of the City, you are ensuring that the results will be based on a biased unrepresentative sample.

The 3rd, 4th, and 5th bullet points ask for recommendations, without the clarifying “for something” or “to something” clauses in the following bullet points. The recommendations should all be tied back to the purpose of this audit in one way or another.

The final bullet point ends with two confusing sentences. I believe you meant to write "... recommendations on how to increase the representation of diversity within the curriculum" and "Recommend supports to increase the diversity of student representation..."

On the third page, in the Auditor Solicitation section, it is not clear what the review is for, and who among the listed reviewers will have the authority to determine if an auditor is qualified and if the proposal is properly and completely submitted. Perhaps all of them have veto power. Perhaps Mr Corazzini has the final say.

The section on Auditor requirements should be broken up. Only bullet points 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6 are actually requirements for the Auditor. Bullet points 3, 7, 8, 9, and 11 are really informational items that are required to be part of the proposal. Bullet points 10 and 12 are really terms and process notes.

The 5th bullet point is a fragment sentence and could be interpreted in different ways. It is difficult to understand how this requirement is to be measured.

Finally, the timeline calls for future dates in January 2019, where clearly January 2020 was intended.

While I am very much in favor of getting an equity audit done, and proceeding with the important work toward the FPS mission statement which includes remedies for the acknowledged short-comings around equity, diversity, and inclusion, this draft request for quotes is not ready to be sent out.

If Mr Corazzini can't repair in a timely manner the problems which I have detailed here tonight, I suggest that the next monies, hopefully less than \$10K, be expended under the direct supervision of the subcommittee on equity and furthermore that they be empowered to proceed with the audit under their terms using the already appropriated funds without coming back to either the full committee or the school department.