



**New Albany Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) Implementation Panel
May 14, 2026 Minutes**

The IDEA Implementation Panel met for the panel’s regularly scheduled session at Water’s Edge, 7815 Walton Parkway, New Albany, Ohio and was called to order by Panel Chair Alvarado at 7:11 p.m. Those answering roll call:

Panel Chair Marie Alvarado	Present
Panel Vice-Chair Courtney Nixon	Present
Panel Secretary Brianna Johnson	Present
Panel Member Taru Saigal	Present
Panel Member Alex Bilchak	Absent
Panel Member Antonio Pestana	Absent
Panel Member Matt Freedman	Present
Council Member Marlene Brisk	Absent
Council Member Andrea Wilttrout	Present

Staff members present: Abbey Brooks, Community Program Administrator

Action of Minutes:

Panel Chair Alvarado asked if there were any corrections to the minutes from the March 12, 2026 IDEA Panel meeting minutes. Seeing none, Panel Member Saigal moved to approve the meeting minutes from the March 12, 2026, IDEA Implementation Panel meeting. Seconded by Panel Member Freedman and the IDEA Implementation Panel voted with 4 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 1 abstentions to approve the meeting minutes.

Hearing of Visitors for Items Not on Tonight’s Agenda: Panel Chair Alvarado asked if there were any visitors requesting to speak on items not on tonight’s agenda. Seeing none, Panel Chair Alvarado closed the hearing of visitors.

Business:

The Far Out, Awesome, Lit, Fire Intergenerational Event Recap

- 46 registered participants. Staff felt turnout was a good number based on when event took place (the week after spring break, on a Tuesday evening). Ages 9 through 90 participated.
- 25/30 participants gained a new perspective.
- Comment highlights:
 - "It was both educational and entertaining, definitely pushed my comfort zone. "
 - "It was showing crucial yet fun ways to collaboratively problem solve and build relationships. "
 - "Fun ice breakers, good energy. "
- Did you learn anything new?
 - "Collaborating across generations leads to new ideas "
 - "Be willing to be vulnerable. "
 - "Definitely learned more about the value of diverse perspectives and learning through play."

Community Connectors Update

- Staff Member Brooks showed the new postcards that have been mailed out to all residents in neighborhoods without a Connector. She also showed the Community Connector yard signs that are available.

Juneteenth Update

- Juneteenth started as an IDEA panel initiative.
- Juneteenth is Friday June 19, 2026, 6pm-9pm at Hinson Amphitheater.
- 15 registered vendors (6 food trucks, 11 vendors).
- Entertainment includes student vocalist, roller skating group, spoken word, gospel choir, step team, GOREE drum and dance, DJ, roller rink, kids' area.
- \$1,500 sponsorship – Kemba Financial, \$3,000 sponsorship – Amgen.
- T-Shirt pre-sale open online.
- **619 Club** – Sponsorship club for Juneteenth. \$50 entry level to join. 619 Club members get exclusive perks including name recognition on a 619 Club sign at Juneteenth Celebration, onstage photo opportunity at Juneteenth Celebration with other 619 Club members, and Free t-shirt customization at Juneteenth Celebration.

Community Connectors

Reviewed 2 new applications for Community Connectors.

- Panel Member Saigal asked if we require background checks for Community Connectors for safety issues? Staff Member Brooks will find out.
- Panel Chair Alvarado moved to approve the applications of the 2 new Community Connectors and Panel Member Nixon seconded and the IDEA Implementation Panel voted with 5 yes votes and 0 no votes to approve the new Community Connector applicants.
- There are now 17 Community Connectors in 15 neighborhoods.

Other Business: None

Poll Members for Comment: None

Adjournment: Panel Chair Alvarado adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:01 p.m. All panel members were in favor.