

RESOLUTION:

Advocating for an Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion in Education Policy

Presented to LWPTSA Council general membership for adoption on November 4, 2021

The Lake Washington PTSA Council joins students, families, school professionals and community members in the desire for policy change which ensures an anti-racist, equitable and inclusive education for all students in Lake Washington School District.

Whereas, public schools should provide equitable access and ensure that all students have the knowledge and skills to succeed as contributing members of a rapidly changing, global society, regardless of factors such as race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, English proficiency, immigration status, socioeconomic status, or disability. ⁱ

Whereas, equity is achieved when all students receive the resources they need so they graduate prepared for success after high school. ⁱⁱ

Whereas, Washington State law prohibits discrimination in Washington public schools based on race, creed, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, veteran or military status, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. ⁱⁱⁱ

Whereas, the National PTA believes that across the country, students, families and educators experience vastly different education systems that either support— or hinder—the ability for all children to reach their full potential. These differences are often due to disparities in opportunities, access and financial resources—and whether or not parents are respected as equal partners in their child's education. ^{iv}

Whereas, the National PTA supports the implementation of diverse and inclusive curricula in K-12 public schools nationwide. As the largest child advocacy association in the nation, PTA is committed to the creation of innovative curricula and the necessary accompanying professional development that support culturally and linguistically-responsive teaching and learning so that the history of all students—including but not limited to African American, Latino(a), Native American, Asian and LGBTQ groups—is accurately represented and taught. ^v

Whereas, Lake Washington PTSA Council recognizes that it can either be a racist or anti-racist association – neutrality on this issue does not support our mission. Therefore, we will actively support anti-racist policies, programs, and practices to build strong and inclusive communities. We commit to taking a conscious and active role in dismantling systemic and institutional racism by raising awareness through education and advocacy, working with PTA leaders, and supporting our community so that all children feel safe and welcome. ^{vi}

Whereas, despite the rhetoric of American equality, the school experiences of African American and other minority students in the United States continue to be substantially separate and unequal. Few Americans realize that the U.S. educational system is one of the most unequal in the industrialized world, and that students routinely receive dramatically different learning opportunities based on their social status. ... While the demands for knowledge and skill are growing, the gap in educational opportunity between majority and minority students has been widening. ^{vii}

Whereas, adolescence is a critical period for identity development. Youth are developing a sense of their personal identities in relation to their social contexts and their interactions within them—often becoming more conscious of how

their social identities relate to the ways they are viewed and treated by others. Further, Black youth commonly encounter experiences in school that challenge the meaning and value of their racial identities—such as discrimination in classroom and peer contexts—with deleterious academic impacts. ^{viii}

Whereas, school based racial discrimination is an academic risk factor. For many Black youth, racial discrimination exposures at school are not uncommon, including reported experiences of negative treatment from teachers (e.g., stereotype-based treatment, harsher punishment than for other children) and from peers (e.g., social exclusion, verbal or physical harassment). Furthermore, documented race differences in teacher/administrator disciplinary practices indicate Black adolescents’ likelihood of experiencing racial bias and discrimination in school. ^{ix}

Whereas, our most current OSPI District Report Card shows disproportionate rates based on race and student characteristics related to graduation, drop out rates, discipline, exclusion. ^x

Student Demographics (by percent):

American Indian/Alaskan Native: 0.2; Asian: 34.9; Black/African American: 2.1; Hispanic/Latino: 10.5; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.1; 2 or more races: 8.1; White: 44

Student Demographics by Characteristic (by percent):

Low income: 9.7; Homeless: 0.6; Disability: 10.4

Graduation Rates by Race (drop out rate) (by percent):

Asian: 96.1 (1); Black/African American: 77.1 (11.4) ; Hispanic: 83.8 (8.9); 2 or more races: 93.8 (1.9); White: 95.9 (2)

Graduation Rates by Characteristic (drop out rate) (by percent):

Low income: 80 (9.7); Homeless: 70 (15); Disability: 78 (5.6)

Non low income: 96.4 (1.4); Not Homeless: 94.4 (2.5); No Disability: 95.9 (2.3)

Discipline Rates (by percent):

American Indian/Alaskan Native:<6; Asian: <1; Black/African American: 3.9; Hispanic/Latino: 1.5; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: <9; 2 or more races: 1.2; White: <1

Exclusion Rates (by percent):

American Indian/Alaskan Native: <0; Asian: <0; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: <0; White <0

Black/African American: 17.9 (1 day) 32.1 (2-3 days) 28.6 (4-5 days) 10.7 (6-10+ days)

Hispanic/Latino: 27.8 (1 day) 50 (2-3 days) 11.1 (4-5 days) 11.1 (6-10+ days)

2 or more races: 41.9 (1 day) 22.6 (2-3 days) 9.7 (4-5 days) 12.9 (6-10+ days)

Homeless: 11.8 (1 day) 64.7 (2-3 days) 5.9 (4-5 days) 11.8 (6-10+ days)

Low Income: 27 (1 day) 41 (2-3 days) 13.9 (4-5 days) 12.3 (6-10+ days)

Disability: 37.1 (1 day) 25 (2-3 days) 10.3 (4-5 days) 15.5 (6-10+ days)

Teacher Demographics:

American Indian/Alaskan Native: 0.4; Asian: 4.7; Black/African American: 0.8; Hispanic/Latino: 3.7; 2 or more races: 3.3;

White: 86.1

Whereas, many students have not been afforded equitable learning opportunities, average reading scores and math scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress have been lower for students of color than their white peers since 1992. ^{xi}

Whereas, many educators are not aware of their own identities and privileges and how they impact their work with students. They receive little training on how to identify and actively support solutions that will prevent racial injustice and increase educational equity. A survey conducted by *Education Week* found that 82 percent of educators had not received anti-racist training in their preparation programs and 59 percent do not have the training or resources to support an anti-racist curriculum. Most school leaders reported taking only one or two courses on equity or culturally responsive leadership in their principal preparation programs.^{xii}

Whereas, Black students who'd had just one Black teacher by third grade were 13% more likely to enroll in college; those who'd had two were 32% more likely.^{xiii}

Therefore, be it resolved that the Lake Washington PTSA Council calls upon the Lake Washington School District and Superintendent Jon Holmen to interpret the Anti-Racism, Anti-Discrimination, Equity, and Inclusion in Education Resolution No. 2318 to create a strong policy that:

- Addresses the current systemic racism within our district and creates policy and procedure to dismantle it.
- Provides district-wide direction, support, oversight, and shared accountability to advance equity within LWSD.
- Develops criteria and a procedure for all new and existing policies, plans, budgets and curriculum materials that are transparent and ensure representation and inclusivity. Establish required timelines for policy review, guidelines for updating existing policies that no longer meet the required criteria and an ongoing review schedule.
- Adopts curriculum, teaching and learning that include and acknowledge the lived experiences, learning differences and cultural, race, gender, LGBTQ+ and linguistic backgrounds of our students.
- Ensures that all students have equitable access to resources, programs, activities, teaching and learning based on their unique needs.
- Ensures all communication coming from the Superintendent and District reflects true equity, transparency and includes next steps toward resolutions of issues.
- Addresses current disciplinary actions that are biased and disproportionate and establishes policy and procedure to dismantle this with ongoing review to revise as needed based on current community needs.
- Ensures LWSD policies directly address racism and occurrences of racial tension in ways that both provide positive guidelines, swift resolve, established expectations and immediate outcomes.
- Provides annual reporting by LWSD on the progress of these commitments in serving every student measured by student and staff input, graduation rates, failing grades, disciplinary action and exclusion reports and special education reporting.
- Requires professional development for all LWSD employees that addresses implicit bias, anti-discrimination, and inclusion. Provides ongoing learning opportunities around inequities that impact the students and staff in our community and teaches effective strategies for addressing them.

- Implements a hiring process that supports and retains a qualified, diverse employee base. This should include an exit interview process for every employee, particularly employees of color.
- Enacts an accountability policy and procedure for discriminatory actions taken by LWSD employees and/or students which are clearly communicated, immediately investigated, with individuals held accountable for their actions.

Therefore, be it further resolved that this policy must be centered on those who are underserved and marginalized. This work must include building strong relationships with diverse groups of families, increasing direct engagement and utilizing qualified stakeholders and experts in creating this policy.

Therefore, be it further resolved that this policy will bring about such change that creates an inclusive and equitable culture where all students have a sense of belonging, navigate a safe learning environment and are equipped to succeed.

Yumna Green & Brandi Comstock, Council Co-presidents
Sequoia Lange, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Chair
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Date: October 21, 2021

Adopted on November 4, 2021, by a vote of the LWPTSA Council Membership.

End Notes:

ⁱ [cpe-educational-equity-research-brief-january-2016.pdf \(nsba.org\)](#)

ⁱⁱ [cpe-educational-equity-research-brief-january-2016.pdf \(nsba.org\)](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ [Nondiscrimination Law & Policy | OSPI \(www.k12.wa.us\)](#)

^{iv} [Inclusive Curricula in K-12 Education - Position Statement | National PTA](#)

^v [Inclusive Curricula in K-12 Education - Position Statement | National PTA](#)

^{vi} [LWPTSA Council Anti-Racism Statement – Lake Washington PTSA Council 2.8](#)

^{vii} [Inequality in Teaching and Schooling: How Opportunity Is Rationed to Students of Color in America - The Right Thing to Do, The Smart Thing to Do - NCBI Bookshelf \(nih.gov\)](#)

^{viii} [Racial Identity, Racial Discrimination, and Classroom Engagement Outcomes Among Black Girls and Boys in Predominantly Black and Predominantly White School Districts - Seanna Leath, Channing Mathews, Asya Harrison, Tabbye Chavous, 2019 \(sagepub.com\)](#)

^{ix} [Racial Identity, Racial Discrimination, and Classroom Engagement Outcomes Among Black Girls and Boys in Predominantly Black and Predominantly White School Districts - Seanna Leath, Channing Mathews, Asya Harrison, Tabbye Chavous, 2019 \(sagepub.com\)](#)

^x [Report Card - Washington State Report Card \(ospi.k12.wa.us\)](#)

^{xi} [Racial Justice and Educational Equity | NASSP](#)

^{xii} [Racial Justice and Educational Equity | NASSP](#)

^{xiii} [Black Students Who Have One Black Teacher More Likely to Go to College « News from The Johns Hopkins University \(jhu.edu\)](#)