

MSAAC: Student Equity Ambassadors

Presented by the LCPS Office of Equity

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The Background

- The Student Equity Ambassador Network originated as action item 15 from the LCPS Plan to Combat Systemic Racism



The Background

SMART Goal and Objective:

- Beginning Fall of 2020, LCPS will create opportunities to **listen to student stories** and **collect anonymous student stories/experiences regarding issues of racism, injustice and inequity**. Stories and experiences will be reviewed and shared by the Supervisor of Equity and LCPS Student Equity Ambassadors during regularly occurring student *Share, Speak-up, Speak-out* meetings via virtual platform or in-person.



The Background

SMART Goal and Objective:

- These opportunities will be used to amplify the voice(s) of Students of Color and those who have experienced or witnessed injustices, marginalization, or discrimination. An **electronic form will be used to anonymously collect student stories** and to ascertain whether or not the student would like their account of the issue investigated and/or if they would like to speak with a member of a LCPS United Mental Health Team for support.



How This Complements Current Practice?

Office of School Administration

- Currently all practices related to Comments and Complaints are driven by Policy 8-10 in the system and are shared with the school board quarterly
- Students, parents/guardians or residents will continue to complete a comment or complaint form about any concerns which will be reviewed by the Office of School Administration (OSA)
- Policy 8-10 is under current revision (update was provided at Discipline Committee and will be reviewed by other committee)

Office of Equity

- Will collect qualitative data regarding racial incidents to amplify student voices; LCPS students to anonymously share their stories regarding issues of racism, injustice and inequity
- Will monitor trends and patterns in qualitative data of stories and incidents reported; will use data to inform next steps in professional learning to better support students in a culturally-responsive manner
- Will collaborate with Office of School Administration on incidents reported specific to bias incidents



The Why

- Discipline policies and practices disproportionately negatively impact students of color, particularly Black/African-American students.
- Many English Learners, Black/African-American, Latino/a/x, and Muslim students have experienced the sting of racial insults/slurs or racially motivated violent actions.
- Need to provide an Identity-affirming, socially-emotionally supportive, and welcoming and inclusive space



The How

- A workgroup met multiple times to discuss the action item and develop the process for student selection.
- A uniform process and criteria for selection was created and shared with principals.
- Each middle and high school selected 2-3 students.
- First virtual meeting held November 23, 2020.



Meeting Format and Support

1. Met twice - November 23 and December 21 and next meeting February 8
2. Whole group with activator and information followed by small groups according to school level
3. Facilitated by Office of Equity, Equity Leads, and additional facilitators from central office and schools
4. Schoology Group
5. February 8 - Collaboration with Student Assistance Services to conduct circles



Sample Meeting Outcomes

1. Build our community of Student Equity Ambassadors.
2. Explore why *Share, Speak Up, Speak Out* meetings occur.
3. Reflect on our own identities.
4. Share experiences we have had related to our identities.



Feedback from Students After First Meeting

“It was amazing, already there was so much good meaningful conversation and I felt really comfortable talking with the leaders. I loved it so much im so excited for the next ones.”

“It went great. I am more excited than I was before we started”



We Asked, Students Said...

- In order to speak openly they value trust, anonymity, open-mindedness.
- To make our time together meaningful they want to work in small groups, create a safe space, and make a difference.
- They want adults to know that students react to discrimination and marginalization differently and don't cover up the truth about racism.



Characteristics of Identity

- Race
- Religion
- Gender
- Age
- First Language
- Socio-economic Class
- Sexual Orientation
- And more...

- Which identity do you think about most often?
- Which identity has the strongest effect on how you see yourself as a person?



Share, Speak Up, Speak Out

RESPECT



Can you remember a time when you were not respected or included or felt unsafe or felt bias or discrimination because of one of your identities?



Moving Forward

- Complete the form to capture student stories/experiences regarding issues of racism, injustice and inequity
- Conduct three additional meetings: February 8, April 7, June 7.
- Continue to gather feedback from ambassadors

