



MSAAC General Body Meeting Minutes

January 27, 2021

7:00-9:00 PM

Virtual

I. Welcome and Introductions

A. Speaker: Ms. Keaira Jennings, MHA, MSAAC Chair

II. MSAAC Business (10 min)

A. Speaker: Ms. Keaira Jennings, MHA, MSAAC Chair

B. Committee Updates

1. Membership (Ms. Morgan Smith, MSAAC Membership)

a) Please email MSAACMember@lcps.org for more details

b) Please reach out to your principal or PTA/PTO President if you are a parent or guardian interested in being a delegate for one of these Loudoun County Public Schools or Education Centers that currently do not have a delegate

Elementary	Elementary Continued	Middle	High
Aldie	Lincoln	Belmont Ridge	Briar Woods
Arcola	Lowes Island	Blue Ridge	Broad Run
Ashburn	Lucketts	Brambleton	Dominion
Banneker	Meadowland	Eagle Ridge	Heritage
Belmont Station	Middleburg	J. Michael Lunsford	Independence
Buffalo Trail	Community Charter School	Mercer	Light Ridge
Cardinal Ridge	Moorfield Station	Seneca Ridge	Loudoun County
Rosa Lee Carter	Mountainview	J.L. Simpson	Loudoun Valley
Cedar Lane	Newton Lee	Sterling	Parkview
Creightons Corner		Stone Hill	Rock Ridge

Discovery	Pinebrook	Trailside	Stonebridge
Dominion Trail	Potowmack		Tuscarora
Evergreen Mill	Frances Hazel Reid		
Forest Grove	Rolling Ridge		
Horizon	Round Hill		
Hutchinson Farm	Sugarland		
Leesburg	Sycolin Creek		
Liberty	Waterford		
	Steuart W. Weller		

2. Awards (Ms. Paulina-Marie Ransom, MBA, MSAAC Vice Chair)

- a) Virtual presentation is in the spring
- b) Help is needed to review, update, fine tune existing award criteria, nominating process, and program details
- c) Please email MSAACViceChair@lcps.org if interested in volunteering on the Awards Committee

3. Equity (Ms. Keaira Jennings, MHA)

- a) All appointments to the equity committee are on an annual basis and expire on December 31st
- b) Member may be nominated to serve for another year
- c) Each of the six board members who do not sit on the equity committee will appoint a member to serve
- d) LGBTQIA+ community will be asked to nominate a member
- e) Members who miss two meetings without contacting the chair will be removed and the stakeholder group will be asked to nominate another member
- f) MSAAC representatives on the equity committee
 - (1) Ms. Truphelia Parker
 - (2) Ms. Kenya Savage
 - (3) Ms. Tonia Bledsoe
 - (4) Ms. Tara Hewan

g) Waterford.org explains the main differences between equity and equality

(1) When it comes to equity vs equality in education, the terms are often used interchangeably. But understanding the distinction between the two is essential for resolving issues faced by disadvantaged students in the classroom. While working towards equity and equality can both do good, equity should be an educator's end goal. The reason lies in the difference between being fair vs equal.

(2) Equality is more commonly associated with social issues, perhaps because more people know what it means. In a nutshell, its definition is as it sounds—the state of being equal. When a group focuses on equality, everyone has the same rights, opportunities, and resources. Equality is beneficial, but it often doesn't address specific needs. Giving each student a take-home laptop, for example, would not address students who don't have Internet in their houses. Even if a school is equal, some students may still struggle.

(3) Equity, on the other hand, provides people with resources that fit their circumstances. The World Health Organization (WHO) definition of social equity is “the absence of avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people.” Schools that prioritize equity versus equality are more in tune to their students' needs and provide resources to overcome their specific challenges.

(4) <https://www.waterford.org/education/equity-vs-equality-in-education/>

(5) LCPS students are the root and LCPS administration is the tree. The tree is only as strong as its roots, so if one of our roots is weak, it makes the entire root system and the tree weak. Need to ensure our roots and tree are strong for a strong LCPS as a whole.

h) Equity is

(1) Adaptable

(2) Individual-focused

(3) Fair

C. Current Events

1. Academies of Loudoun (AOL)
 - a. 2021 Winter Admissions Cycle closes at noon on February 17th
 - b. The last information session is at 6:30 p.m. on February 8th
 - c. <https://www.lcps.org/admissions#calendar287033/20210129/month>
2. Gifted Evaluations Delay
 - a. 2021 Winter/Spring gifted evaluations have been delayed
 - b. 3rd - 5th grade students
 - c. Parents have a right to refer own child even if the counselor or teacher at the school does not
3. Honors Classes
 - a. Parents have a right to recommend honors classes even if the teacher does not place the student in honors
4. BSA Open Mic Night
 - a. February 22, 2021, 6 – 8 pm, Virtual
 - b. Hosted by Freedom, John Champe, and Riverside
 - c. Make history with how you honor Black history
 - d. All Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) high school students are encouraged to participate
 - e. Send a short 3 – 5 minute video performance
 - f. Register by February 16th
 - g. fhsbsa2247@gmail.com

III. Attorney General (AG) Report (15 min)

- A. Speaker: Ms. Keaira Jennings, MHA, MSAAC Chair
- B. February 2019: Dr. Williams announced a plan to conduct a systemic assessment of equity in LCPS through an outside agency, The Equity Collaborative.
- C. May 22, 2019: The NAACP Loudoun branch filed a formal complaint with the Virginia Office of the Attorney General Division of Human Rights against LCPS for allegations of discriminatory actions, including, but not limited to, discriminatory practices relating to admission to the Academies of Loudoun, in violation of the Virginia Human Rights Act, Constitution of Virginia, Equal Protection Clause of the US Constitution, Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

- D. August 19, 2019: Superintendent Eric Williams issued this statement to clearly outline the LCPS stance on creating an inclusive, safe, caring, and challenging learning environment viewed through an equity lens:

LCPS is committed to providing a safe, empathetic, respectful and supportive learning environment in order to empower every student to make meaningful contributions to the world. When students and staff experience racial insults, slurs, and/or other hate speech, we lack the positive culture and climate that supports students' growth.

LCPS calls for all students, staff, families, and other members of our community to engage in the disruption and dismantling of white supremacy, systemic racism, and hateful language and actions based on race, religion, country of origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, and/or ability. LCPS rejects racist and other hateful behavior and language, recognizing that it encourages discrimination, hatred, oppression, and violence.

Every individual is valued in Loudoun County Public Schools. Let's celebrate the diversity that helps define us as a school division.

Eric Williams, Ed.D.

Division Superintendent

- E. October 2019: LCPS was informed that the Virginia Office of the Attorney General had opened an investigation into allegations “that African-American students enrolled in Loudoun County Public Schools have been denied an equal opportunity to participate in LCPS’ Academies of Loudoun programs” and into incidents described in the June 2019 equity assessment report, which the Superintendent had commissioned earlier in the year.

1. Equity Assessment Report

[https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/files/BCVGK644213C/\\$file/LCPS%20Equity%20Assessment_Ad%20Hoc%20on%20Equity_060619.pdf](https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/files/BCVGK644213C/$file/LCPS%20Equity%20Assessment_Ad%20Hoc%20on%20Equity_060619.pdf)

- F. November 18, 2020: After an extensive independent investigation that included interviews and extensive review of documentation and information provided by the NAACP, LCPS, and LCPS students, families, and employees, the Office of Attorney General Division of Human Rights issued a letter along with their findings in a 63-page document that has been made available to the public.

1. AG Letter and Document

<https://www.lcps.org/cms/lib/VA01000195/Centricity/domain/60/voa>

[g/FINAL DETERMINATION 2020-11-18 NAACP Loudoun Branch v Loudoun County Public Schools .pdf](#)

2. AG Summary

“Having found reasonable cause to believe that LCPS’s policies and practices resulted in a discriminatory impact on Black/African-American and Latinx/Hispanic students, the Division of Human Rights requests that the Charging Party and Respondent engage in a post-determination conciliation process in an effort to resolve this matter. The Final Determination includes reforms and commitments that the Division believes are necessary to address the discriminatory disparate impact identified to help ensure equal opportunity for each student, as well as terms requested by the NAACP in order to resolve this matter.” – Mark R. Herring, VA AG

G. November 20, 2020: LCPS issued the following statement.

On November 18 the Division of Human Rights (DHR) of the Office of the Attorney General of Virginia provided Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS) with a written determination in an investigation into allegations that certain LCPS policies had disparate impact on Black/African-American and Latinx/Hispanic students.

LCPS is reviewing the 61-page document to fully understand the asserted reasoning, conclusions and recommendations it contains.

Every individual is valued in Loudoun County Public Schools, and LCPS remains committed to creating a safe, empathetic, respectful and supportive learning environment in order to empower every student to make meaningful contributions to the world.

While further evaluation of the DHR report is required, LCPS will continue its ongoing engagement with stakeholders, including the NAACP Loudoun Branch, in an effort to address concerns and resolve differences.

LCPS also will continue to implement its Action Plan to Combat Racism and other affirmative initiatives already underway across the division. These efforts include:

Implementing the revised admissions process for the Academies of Loudoun that was developed by staff and approved by the Loudoun County School Board in August 2020.

Developing intervention and prevention strategies to address discipline policies and practices that may negatively impact students of color, particularly

Black/African-American students, including workshops, meetings, and follow-up sessions with school-based administrators.

Continuing to take affirmative steps to address a voluntary, division-sponsored equity assessment's findings relating to students' experiences regarding being targets of racist comments and acts of violence; improving the level of racial consciousness and literacy among LCPS employees; and improving the division's efforts to attract and retain teachers of color through enhanced marketing, recruitment, mentoring and support.

LCPS will continue to provide information about its progress on these issues to the public. More information about LCPS' efforts is available on the [LCPS Equity Overview](#) webpage. The [full report](#) is available on the [Virginia Attorney General's Inquiry](#) webpage.

H. Questions regarding this complaint, the findings, and/or the mitigation steps that will follow can be directed to the following individuals.

1. Mr. Stephen Devita
Division Counsel
Loudoun County Public Schools
Stephen.Devita@lcps.org
2. Ms. Robin Burke
Chair, Education Committee
NAACP, Loudoun Branch #7084
703-678-5346
education@naacploudoun.org

IV. Student Equity Ambassador Network (20 min)

- A. Speaker: Dr. Traci Townsend, EdD Supervisor of Equity
- B. The Student Equity Ambassador Network originated as action item 15 from the LCPS Plan to Combat Systemic Racism
- C. SMART Goal and Objective
 1. 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
 2. 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

3. 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
4. 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

D. How This Complements Current Practice

1. Office of School Administration

- a) 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
- b) 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)
- c) Policy 8-10 is under current revision (update was provided at Discipline Committee and will be reviewed by other committee)

2. Office of Equity

- a) 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
- b) 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
- c) Will collaborate with Office of School Administration on incidents reported specific to bias incidents

E. The Why

1. Discipline policies and practices disproportionately negatively impact students of color, particularly Black/African-American students.
2. 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.

3. Need to provide an Identity-affirming, socially-emotionally supportive, and welcoming and inclusive space

F. The How

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

G. 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

H. 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

I. Feedback from Students After First Meeting

1. "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."
2. "It went great. I am more excited than I was before we started"

J. We Asked, Students Said...

1. In order to speak openly they value trust, anonymity, open-mindedness

2. To make our time together meaningful they want to work in small groups, create a safe space, and make a difference
3. They want adults to know that students react to discrimination and marginalization differently and don't cover up the truth about racism

K. Characteristics of Identity: race, religion, gender, age, first language, socio-economic class, sexual orientation, and more

1. Which identity do you think about most?
2. Which identity has the strongest effect on how you see yourself as a person?
3. Race, gender, and religion are the top identities that have the strongest effect on how students see themselves as a person.

L. Share, Speak Up, Speak Out

1. Respect, Safe, Equity
2. Think about the identities just discussed.
3. Our goal as a school division is to ensure a welcoming, affirming, and inclusive environment.
4. Can you remember a time when you were not respected or included and felt unsafe or felt bias or discrimination because of one of your identities?
5. This is one of the favorite parts for the students.

M. Moving Forward

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

N. Question posted on Facebook: MSAAC Incident Reports should not be sent to schools directly due to retaliation issues. Is there a new protocol to address incident reports, so individuals who report are not targeted due to information leaks?

1. Response from Dr. Townsend: Equity Office creates a form for students to share experiences anonymously. Formal complaints continue to be conducted by the Office of School Administration.

V. Superintendent Search and Continued Focus on Equity (15 min)

- A. Speakers: Ms. Leslee King, School Board Member / Dr. Scott Ziegler, Interim Superintendent
- B. Meeting with Superintendent search firm was rescheduled from Tuesday to Thursday due to weather, but School Board will update and take input from MSAAC and SEAC
- C. Board is very tuned into equity and making certain that students are helped and not tolerate racism
- D. Proclamation was made that February is Black History Month
- E. Loudoun has maintained low number of cases through safety precautions and about 70% of staff have been vaccinated, so progress is being made to bring students back to schools
- F. Equity is extremely important and first priority
- G. Education team is working hard to help teachers on how to respond to events like the one on January 6th and racist remarks
- H. Both the School Board and Dr. Scott Zeigler have assured a continued focus on equity, discipline disparity, and combating systemic racism including corrective actions while identifying a new Superintendent
- I. Dr. Zeigler and team have been working to expand opportunities for teachers of color and diverse backgrounds and lifestyles
- J. Interim Chief of Staff will work with Office of Equity on mechanism to report incidents

VI. Responsive Race Circles Student and Parent Feedback 2020 (10 min)

- A. Speakers: Ms. Amy Iliffe and Mr. Darren Madison, Student Assistance Services Specialists
- B. Piloted last spring 2020 and then rolled out across the student body in fall
- C. Email was sent to all families, 122 families registered and screened and then 54 participated from K – 12
- D. Students then connected back to school about their experience and continued the discussion.
- E. 50% of the students who participated are from middle school
- F. Different age-appropriate questions were posed by two co-facilitators
- G. Student Feedback (33 responses)
 - 1. Before the circle, I felt ___ discussing the topic of race with other students.

- a) 30.3% Very Comfortable
 - b) 18.2% Somewhat Comfortable
 - c) 36.4% Neutral
 - d) 15.2% Somewhat Uncomfortable
2. After the circle, I feel ___ discussing the topic of race with other students.
- a) 57.6% Very Comfortable
 - b) 30.3% Somewhat Comfortable
 - c) 9.1% Neutral
 - d) 3% Very Uncomfortable
3. Did you feel that your voice was heard and respected?
- a) 100% Yes
 - b) "I felt that everyone heard me [and] that I was able voice out my thoughts too"
 - c) "I felt very respected and I never felt rushed either. The questions that were asked really had my brain going and I felt heard and understood from where I was coming from. Once again I wish other people would give this race circle a chance because it could really help their voices be heard in the future."
4. What suggestions do you have?
- a) "I wish there were more classes. Everything else was great and opened my eyes up, to where I know I'm not the only one feeling this way."
 - b) "I don't have any suggestions because I just felt very comfortable of how the class went.
 - c) "Don't stop doing the circles"
5. Would you like to participate in more circles?
- a) 97% Yes
 - b) 3% No

H. Parent Feedback (23 responses)

1. How would you describe your child's experience participating in the Responsive Race Circle?

- a) 69.6% Very Positive
 - b) 26.1% Somewhat Positive
 - c) 4.3% Neutral
2. Would you like your child to participate in more Responsive Race Circles?
- a) 95.7% Yes
 - b) 4.3% Maybe
- I. Questions and Answers (Q&A)
1. Ms. Leslee King: Why did some not respond to the survey?
- a) Response: The reasons are uncertain, but it could be that parents and students are overwhelmed with email and such. Some did not respond and it appears that many young students were signed up by parents and did not seem to be interested in participating when prescreened
2. Mr. Harris Mahedavi: How many questions listed were more qualitative, open-ended? How do you analyze the data? Was demographic data gathered?
- a) Response
 - (1) The data is majority qualitative and open-ended, 4 or 5 questions after an icebreaker
 - (2) Students then connected back with their schools to share the experience with others to start the dialogue
 - (3) Demographic data was collected like special education students and 60 – 70% students of color
 - (4) Plan is to work more closely with Equity Leads and Equity Ambassadors
 - b) Mr. Mahevadi also recommended QLIQ for data analysis and benchmark data to measure progress

VII. Equity at J Michael Lunsford (JML) Middle School (20 min)

A. Speaker: Ms. Carrie Simms, JML Principal

1. Ms. Carrie Simms is the proud principal of J. Michael Lunsford Middle School in South Riding.

B. Ms. Simms opened the presentation by sharing a story.

Whenever I am in a conversation about equity, I'm asked about my "why"- what is my purpose in my actions? Before coming to Loudoun, my very first teaching job was in 1997 at Thurgood Marshall 171 on the corner of Moravia and Sinclair in Northeast Baltimore. I taught 8th grade English, and one of my classes had 47 kids. One day, I asked them to write a journal response to the prompt, "Describe your life in 20 years- where are you, what are you doing, who are you with". I could not understand why they were having so much difficulty with it, as each student had similar responses- they all predicted that they would be dead within 20 years, so they didn't think about it. No one had ever asked them that question before. It struck me, and has stayed with me for over two decades, that these kids, at age 14, believed that the system was broken, and their only path was prison or death. At 22 years old, I didn't have the lived experience of my students, nor did I have the resources to help shift either their mindset or change the system they felt was broken. That's my why- I never want any student who walks through our doors to feel as if their path or their fate has already been chosen for them. And in my position as a principal, I now have the resources, and the influences, to help change systems of practice.

C. While Ms. Simms specifically presented efforts of J Michael Lunsford Middle School, amazing steps are being taken across many LCPS schools, so it is encouraged that people speak with their principals to learn what is happening at their schools

D. J Michael Lunsford Middle School ensures student achievement through positive relationships, collaboration, and equitable practice

1. Relationships: We will be the models of integrity
2. Collaboration: We will work together to create a sense of community and an environment of positive exchange
3. Equity: It is our responsibility to provide every opportunity for all students to succeed and reach their potential

E. Demographics of students and staff just under 1500 students

1. 2020 Fall Membership by Subgroup: Racial and Ethnic Groups
 - a) 42.6% White
 - b) 38.1% Asian
 - c) 7.9% Hispanic
 - d) 5.5% Black
 - e) 5.1% Mixed Races
 - f) 0.8% American Indian

2. 2019-2020 Licensed Staff, Classified Staff, Students
 - a) White: 90.40% Licensed Staff, 52.17% Classified Staff, 44.70% Students
 - b) Asian: 0.80% Licensed Staff, 17.39% Classified Staff, 36.36% Students (over 35% point difference!)
 - c) Hispanic: 3.20% Licensed Staff, 23.91% Classified Staff, 7.59% Students
 - d) Black: 4.80% Licensed Staff, 4.35% Classified Staff, 5.96% Students
 - e) Two or More: 0.80% Licensed Staff, 2.17% Classified Staff, 4.83% Students
 - f) American Indian: 0.00% Licensed Staff, 0.00% Classified Staff, 0.50% Students
 - g) Pacific Islander: 0.00% Licensed Staff, 0.00% Classified Staff, 0.06% Students
3. Goal is to have the demographics of staff mirror that of students

F. Equity

1. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS): Ensuring that disciplinary practices are implemented without implicit bias
2. Advisory: Supporting strategic ways to build relationships through conversations about race & differences
3. United Mental Health Team: Supporting/meeting the needs of students who may have experienced trauma due to racial and discriminatory events
4. Personalized Learning (PL): Ensuring that instruction is culturally responsive for every student

G. Equity – complex, yet simple?

1. School processes and procedures
2. Daily, intentional conversations
3. Questions! (Looking through an equity lens)
 - a) What voices are missing?
 - b) How are all kids accessing this information?
 - c) Do I see myself represented?

H. What does it “look like”? What does it “sound like”?

1. PE Muscle Model kit pick up

Back in December, our 7th grade PE teachers wanted kids to be able to complete a hands on activity- they were trying to be mindful of the screen time of our students, especially in a class like PE, which is meant to be active. During a health unit, they decided to have students create models of muscles using household items. They created a list of materials needed, and the majority of kids were easily able to find these in their homes. The teachers also created kits containing the items that families could pick up at the school in case they did not have them in their homes. When we looked at the times for curbside pickup, which were 12-2 Monday, Wednesday or Friday- we asked ourselves the questions from earlier- what voices are missing? Can all kids access this information, and is my voice heard? We thought about which students in our school would not have these items readily available in their homes, and determined that these were the same kids whose parents have jobs that require them to work outside the home and therefore, could not run over to JML in the middle of the day. We also knew many of these kids had parents without cars. So we enlisted the help of our parent liaison, who personally delivered some of the kits, and we added nighttime and a weekend pick up date for the kits. This allowed every student to have access to complete this project.

2. Virtual door decorating icons

Right before winter break, each of our advisory classes collaborates on a theme for their door, decorate it, and we spend the day before break walking around and voting on our favorites- the famous Wayde Byard has even been a guest judge. Obviously, this year, it had to go virtual. So our advisory team put together a bank of icons and pictures for students to choose from when decorating their virtual door. Our equity leads, who attend advisory committee meetings, asked the questions- what voices are missing and do I see myself represented? The team determined that the answer was no- and went on a deeper search for images that allowed each child to contribute to the door. What you see here is a door from a 6th grade advisory class, and we can see a Christian manger scene, a Jewish family celebrating Hannukah, a black Santa, images of Diwali, and non religious symbols for our students who don't connect with a specific religion.

3. “When are we going to talk about what’s REALLY going on?”

We are in our third year of having advisory in our building, so our 8th graders are the first group to go through the full experience- they stay in a small group of around 15 with the same kids and teacher. This year, because we are virtual and have advisory every day, we purchased the Positivity Project curriculum. During the second week of school, I

received an email from an 8th grader. In part, she said, "Mrs. Simms-advisory is great and all, and I get that we learn about character education then, but when are we going to talk about what's REALLY going on at our school and our country?" Immediately, I needed to know more. So I arranged a Google Meet with her, and asked her what she meant by her question. She proceeded to tell me that as an Indian student at JML, she often hears comments in class like "Wait, you got a B on that test? You're Asian, aren't you supposed to be a genius?" She also felt that we should be talking about issues like racism and social justice because as 8th graders, they see and hear what's happening in their world, and want the opportunity to talk through it and learn how to take action. And from there, the JML Young Activists Club was born. By listening to the needs of our kids, we are able to give them a safe space and voice to talk about the things they feel are important, and the incidents that happen inside our building.

I. A larger perspective

1. Equity in all places

a) English CLT book choices

In English, when selecting book titles for book clubs, they are purposeful in their choices- if the main character in the first novel is a white boy, their next selection may feature a Chinese girl as the protagonist. They've purchased titles with main characters who use wheelchairs, have autism, come from divorced parents, etc. Why? Because they asked themselves if each of their students could see themselves represented in literature.

b) HBCU virtual college visits

c) Advisory lessons on equity

d) Counselors/admin teams analyzing data for rigorous classes

Our counselors spend a great deal of time with our admin team, analyzing data points- they look at grades, MAP data, personal interests, and compare them with the students we see taking rigorous courses. They are looking for discrepancies between teacher recommendations and data showing students capable of success in demanding classes. They balance interdisciplinary teams for gender and race.

2. After school clubs

Our after school clubs offer safe spaces for all students. In addition to our traditional clubs like drama and art club, we also offer affinity groups like Excellent Options and PRIDE. We are the first middle school in the county to offer a Unified Sports Team, which partners special needs

students with typical peers to participate in basketball tournaments through Special Olympics.

- a) JML Young Activists Club
- b) Excellent Options
- c) PRIDE club
- d) Team FIERCE- Unified Sports Team

3. Whole school

As principals and assistant principals, we received training from HRTD in moving towards behavioral based interviews to truly determine a candidate's ability for teaching success in LCPS. All of our interviews have panels, and we hold each other accountable when someone may show an implicit bias towards a candidate. At JML, we now give every candidate the interview questions in advance. This seems simple, but it has made a world of difference in the quality of the conversations we have with our candidates, who have processing time to think about their responses and allow us to see more of their experiences.

- a) Interviewing/hiring practices
- b) Staff book clubs
- c) Staff using equity in their goal setting

J. How have we been able to accomplish all of this?

1. The role of the equity lead!
2. JML equity leads are Kim and Mike
3. Equity lead role is new to LCPS this year
4. Each school has autonomy in the way equity leads are utilized
5. JML equity leads attend all leadership team meetings
6. They consider how choices affect kids
7. Equity leads enabled the staff to dive deeper into uncomfortable conversations while creating spaces to listen as well as speak to understand each other's perspectives in new ways

K. JML Goals

1. 2020-2021: Develop and support literacy and awareness of the historical factors contributing to racial inequities; be intentional regarding culturally responsive instruction and student needs
2. 2021-2022: Under construction

3. 2022-2023: Under construction
 4. Next steps are dependent on whether current year's goals to learn and be purposeful in all actions are accomplished
 5. What is known is that work must always continue, so that kids know that the system at JML has no barriers for their success
- L. Ms. Keaira Jennings shared a story that when her son was in 6th grade, he was given a history assignment to act as a slave and talk about the characteristics of a slave, which was offensive to several. Ms. Simms responded by offering for Ms. Jennings to meet with her, the entire dean staff, the entire history department, and two other parents to reflect on the impact and what to do differently. The assignment was pulled. The history teacher apologized and asked how to do better.

VIII. Civil Rights and Equity in Education (20 min)

- A. Speaker: Ms. Lisa Cylar Barrett, Director of Policy, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Legal Defense & Educational Fund
- B. Ms. Barrett expressed encouragement in the equity actions presented by previous speakers during the MSAAC general meeting
- C. NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc (LDF)
 1. Founded in 1940 under the leadership of Thurgood Marshall, who subsequently became the first African-American U.S. Supreme Court Justice
 2. LDF's mission to achieve racial justice, equality, and an inclusive society
 3. Four Impact Areas of LDF: Criminal Justice, Economic Justice, Political Participation, and Education
 4. LDF as legal arm of the civil rights movement, wholly separate from NAACP since 1957
 5. Brown v. Board of Education the landmark Supreme Court decision in 1954
- D. U.S. Department of the Office of Civil Rights (OCR)
 1. Federal civil rights enforcement agency, part of the U.S. Department of Education

2. OCR ensures that recipients of federal financial assistance and certain public entities comply with the civil rights statutes that it is authorized to enforce
3. OCR addresses civil rights issues through enforcement (34 CFR Section 100.7) and technical assistance activities

E. OCR Across the Country

1. www.ed.gov/ocr
2. Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C. (headquarters and regional office), Atlanta, Cleveland, Chicago, Kansas City, Dallas, Denver, Seattle, San Francisco

F. OCR's Jurisdiction

1. OCR enforces six civil rights laws
2. Together, these laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age, as well as discrimination against certain patriotic youth groups that wish to meet at public schools
3. OCR has jurisdiction over programs and activities that receive financial assistance from the Department of Education
4. These may include: state education agencies, elementary and secondary school systems, colleges and universities, and state vocational rehabilitation agencies
5. OCR also has jurisdiction over certain public entities under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which prohibits disability discrimination by public entities whether or not they receive federal financial assistance

G. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

1. Prohibits discrimination on the basis of Race, Color, or National Origin

H. Title VI Protections

1. Depending on the specific facts of the case, examples of prohibited discrimination may include:
 - a) Disciplining students differently on the basis of race, color or national origin

- b) Assigning a student to an educational program or class on the basis of the student's race
- c) Harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin
- d) Providing inadequate educational resources to limited English proficient students

I. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

- 1. Prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex

J. Title IX Protections

- 1. Depending on the specific facts of the case, examples of prohibited discrimination may include:
 - a) Discrimination on the basis of sex in providing opportunities to participate in interscholastic or intercollegiate athletics
 - b) Sexual harassment

K. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 & Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

- 1. Prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability

L. Definition of Disability

- 1. A physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, or
- 2. A record of such impairment, or
- 3. Being regarded as having such impairment

M. ADA Amendments Act of 2008

- 1. Provided a non-exhaustive list of "major life activities"
- 2. Requires "disability" to be construed broadly
- 3. Mitigating measures are not considered in determining whether an individual has a disability

N. OCR Enforcement

- 1. An important responsibility of OCR is to investigate and resolve complaints of discrimination and other proactive investigations

O. Filing a Complaint

1. A complaint may be filed by mail or fax with an OCR office or by using OCR's electronic complaint form at www.ed.gov/ocr/complaintintro.html
2. How OCR Handles Complaints (overview)
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaints-how.html>
3. OCR's Case Processing Manual (CPM)
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/ocrcpm.pdf>

P. Complaint Resolution Types

1. Facilitated Resolution Between the Parties (FRBP)
2. Resolution before the conclusion of an investigation (Section 302, Case Processing Manual)
3. Resolution after investigation (Sections 303(a) and (b), Case Processing Manual)

Q. Technical Assistance

1. OCR provides technical assistance to help institutions, parents and students understand their rights and responsibilities
2. Types of technical assistance
 - a) Presentations
 - b) Responses to telephone and written inquiries
 - c) Workshops

R. How to Reach OCR

1. Website: www.ed.gov/ocr
2. Contact your regional office directly
<https://ocrcas.ed.gov/contact-ocr>

S. The OCR Office for Virginia

1. Washington DC (Metro)
Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-1475
2. Telephone: 202-453-6020
FAX: 202-453-6021; TDD: 800-877-8339
Email: OCR.DC@ed.gov

T. LDF Defend Educate Empower: Lessons Learned from Filing OCR Disparate Impact Complaint

U. Complaint filed by LDF: Byron ISD Complaint (2013)

1. Complaint filed against school district in Texas for its use of misdemeanor tickets for “Disruption of Class” and “Disorderly Conduct”
2. Black students at the time made up less than 25% of the students in Bryan ISD, but accounted for more than half of the Class C ticketing
3. Serious consequences for minor misbehavior
4. Practice violates Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 because it disproportionately harms Black students; does not support the school district’s educational mission; and could be replaced by less discriminatory alternatives
5. Complaint parameters and status shifted with changes in the administration
6. Ticketing practices changed during pendency of complaint
7. Complaint closed in October 2017

V. Engage for Education Equity: A Toolkit for School Communities on the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

1. <https://www.naacpldf.org/wp-content/uploads/Engage-for-Equity-ESSA-Full-Toolkit.pdf>

W. Question and Answers (Q&A)

1. Mr. Harris Mahedavi: Regarding the complaint filed against school district in Texas, were there School Resource Officers (SROs) and was there discipline disparity?
 - a) LDF wrote another paper on this topic and does not feel that SROs need to be in school and feeding the criminal justice system with students of color.
2. Ms. Morgan Smith: How is a case like that brought to your attention?
 - a) Cases are reported through many different sources like community organizations that are local partners.

3. Ms. Keaira Jennings: Do parents file a formal complaint after exhausting LCPS resources?
 - a) Parents can initiate complaints either with LCPS or OCR.
4. Ms. Lisa Cylar Barrett: Please feel free to engage LDF as new administration joins LCPS.

IX. Closing Remarks and Announcements (10 min)

A. Closing Remarks

1. Ms. Keaira Jennings expressed appreciation for all the speakers
2. Mr. Harris Mahedavi requested feedback from MSAAC on upcoming search and seizure language
3. Ms. Leslee King shared gratitude for all the education
4. Ms. Denise Corbo was thankful as well

B. Next Meeting

1. Diversity
2. February 17, 2021, 7-9 PM

General Meeting Dates	Topics
16 SEP 2020	Annual Theme: Advancing Equity Through Action
21 OCT 2020	Anti-Racism
18 NOV 2020	Social Determinants (Mental Health)
20 JAN 2021	Equity
17 FEB 2021	Diversity
17 MAR 2021	Inclusion
21 APR 2021	Belonging
19 MAY 2021	Year-in-Review/Awards/Elections

MSAAC Leadership

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Vice Chair	Paulina-Marie Ransom, MBA	MSAACViceChair@lcps.org
Secretary	Claudia Matteo, PsyM	MSAACSecretary@lcps.org
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