



LOUDOUN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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Eric Williams, Ed.D.
Superintendent

**Statement of Loudoun County Public Schools Superintendent Eric Williams
In Partnership with
The Minority Student Achievement Advisory Committee (MSAAC),
Loudoun County Chapter of the NAACP, and
The Loudoun Freedom Center**

Recently, a lesson on the Underground Railroad at Madison's Trust Elementary School came to light as inappropriate and culturally insensitive. As a result, Madison's Trust administrators and Division leaders have worked together, with support from the Loudoun Freedom Center, to specifically address the issue and reteach the intended learning outcomes.

We acknowledge that this incident at Madison's Trust is a symptom of a broader issue. The diversity in Loudoun County is one of our greatest strengths, but Loudoun County is also a place where equity has proven a challenge for many decades. We have struggled with inequities in student achievement gaps, discipline disproportionality, underrepresentation of minority students in advanced programs and courses, and the lack of a diversified teacher workforce.

A systemic approach and community partnerships are critical in addressing racism, cultural insensitivity, and inequity throughout the school division. We are committed to working together to address these issues until they no longer exist in our schools or community. LCPS has started to implement some systemic changes in addressing these issues:

- A Diversity Recruiter was created in FY17 the Department of Human Resources and Talent Development to focus on diversifying our teacher workforce.
- Hiring managers have participated in unconscious bias training through the Department of Human Resources and Talent Development.
- The Department of Instruction continues to audit the curriculum to make certain that issues of inclusion and cultural awareness are explicitly incorporated. Teachers will continue to be provided professional development and support on implementation of the curriculum.
- LCPS has reduced discipline disproportionality between African Americans and White students, while also decreasing suspension rates for African American and Hispanic students.
- LCPS has created a new Equity and Cultural Competence Specialist position within the Department of Instruction for FY20. This person will organize cultural competence and implicit bias training for all teachers and administrators. Previously, this training had been optional for teachers and administrators, and it will now be required.

- An equity audit will be conducted in spring of 2019 by an outside expert to gather multiple perspectives on racial and cultural insensitivity. Audit results will provide strategic direction for a long-term, equity plan.
- The FY20 School Board Adopted Budget funded a divisionwide position dedicated to equity in education. This individual will be responsible for aligning all the equity efforts throughout LCPS.
- The School Board is in the process of creating a group to address equity in education.
- LCPS and The Loudoun Freedom Center are updating their memorandum of understanding and continue to collaborate and engage in ongoing work related to equity.

While these are all positive steps forward, our community partnerships are crucial to addressing and eradicating issues of inequity. LCPS embraces the work with its partners including the Minority Student Achievement Advisory Committee (MSAAC), the Loudoun Chapter of the NAACP, and the Loudoun Freedom Center. MSAAC serves as an advisory group to the LCPS School Board regarding fair and equitable learning experiences for all students. The Loudoun County Chapter of the NAACP, under the leadership of Pastor Michelle Thomas, continues to be invaluable in guiding and advising school leaders on sensitive issues. The Loudoun Freedom Center (LFC) provides consulting services on curriculum related to African American History, offers field trips to students and teachers to historic slave cemeteries and preserved African American communities, and partners on the design and delivery of training related to equity.

Loudoun County Public Schools is committed to dedicating the resources necessary to address issues of equity now and in the future. We pledge ongoing communication and transparency to our community as we make progress. Together, we can have a lasting impact on the lives of ALL our students and truly honor the diversity that defines us.