



November 6, 2020

Mr. William F. Marshall
Judicial Watch, Inc.
bmarshall@judicialwatch.org

Dear Mr. Marshall:

I have received your Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA) request seeking records related to the social justice class taught at Thomas Pyle Middle School. You specifically requested all handouts, course outlines, syllabi, audio/visual presentations, PowerPoints, and records of assigned textbooks used, as well as copies of any documents that students are asked to sign.

I am responding on behalf of the superintendent of schools who, as official custodian of records for the school system, is responsible for replies under the Maryland Public Information Act, Title 4 of the General Provisions (GP) Article.

Please find the enclosed responsive documents and the information below.

"Reading and Taking Action for Social Justice," was a one-week elective course offered as a Summer Boost class at Thomas Pyle Middle School. The class took place July 13 through July 17, 2020 and met for 50 minutes each day. No grades were given and no actual work was due.

The course description was as follows: "We will look at the fields of sociology and psychology to gain insights into current events and movements like anti-racism and social justice."

Each class generally followed the following format:

- Check in on social-emotional well-being
- A prompt was presented to start a class discussion
- There was a lesson of the day
- 5-7 slides were shared with students
- A subject was presented to give students something to journal about during or after class

Students who attended this class were not required to sign any special documents to attend or participate. (General forms were used during the registration process in accordance with MCPS practices for summer course registration.)

The enclosed materials were prepared to include in the class; however, many of the materials were not shared with students. Further, the PowerPoint presentations reference additional resources and materials. Please see the list below and the corresponding links to access these additional resources (one link allows access to multiple resources):

Page 8—"My History" by Daniela Gonyoe: <https://youtu.be/F2UTTWT6U0>

Page 17—Socialization-MCPS Resources: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/QuJQwInRIBWPC/>

Page 19—“Systemic Racism,” article and video: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/QuJQwInRIBWPC/>

Pages 25 and 53—“Diversity in Media”: <https://spark.adobe.com/page/QuJQwInRIBWPC/>

Information shared with students was also obtained from the Anti-Defamation League website, TED Talks, and other equity recommended textbooks as resources, as well as Project Implicit resources at the following link: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>.

If you believe you have been wrongly denied a public record, you are entitled to seek judicial review of this decision pursuant to GP § 4-362. In addition, pursuant to GP § 4-1B-01 et seq., you also have the option to express any concerns about this decision to the Public Access Ombudsman.

With regards,



Derek G. Turner

Chief of Innovation, Engagement and Operations

DGT:vem

Enclosures

Copy to:

Dr. Wilson

Ms. Ahn