

LCPS Banner



March 19, 2021

Dear LCPS Community,

Today, I am releasing the **Interim Superintendent's Update: Rumors Concerning LCPS Equity Work**. I hope this statement will help to clarify many of the misperceptions being reported by certain media outlets and social media and reemphasize our commitment to equity for all LCPS students and staff.

Interim Superintendent's Update: Rumors Concerning LCPS Equity Work

In recent days, media reports and social media posts have sought to distort the equity work by Loudoun County Public Schools. Misconceptions and misinformation persist. I want to take a moment to clarify LCPS' efforts to ensure every student, employee and member of the community is treated in an equitable, respectful manner.

In explaining LCPS' equity priorities, it might be helpful to state what they are not. They are not an effort to indoctrinate students and staff into a particular philosophy or theory. What they are is an effort to provide a welcoming, inclusive, affirming environment for all students.

LCPS' equity plan is outlined on the [Equity webpage](#) on the LCPS website.

LCPS is not alone in this work. The [Virginia Department of Education](#) and school divisions across the Commonwealth and America are engaged in similar efforts.

To start the process to improve its learning environment, LCPS hired The Equity Collaborative in 2019 to perform a Systemic Equity Assessment. This assessment asked students, parents and educators about their experiences with LCPS based on social and cultural factors and their race. The assessment, submitted to the school division in June 2019, identified five barriers that could prevent students from attaining the world-class education LCPS strives to provide. These barriers included race, poverty, learning disabilities, academic expectations and discipline practices. Of these five factors, the assessment identified race as the most prevalent problem.

Areas where LCPS was found to need improvement included accountability, hiring practices and professional development. The Equity Collaborative recommended professional development for staff in the area of recognizing the social and cultural differences in our diverse student body. Professional development was undertaken using both nationally recognized consultants and LCPS staff trained to facilitate such work. The goal of this work was to raise the racial consciousness and equity literacy of LCPS' staff.

The professional development offered to LCPS employees explores issues that have traditionally been ignored in professional development. It asks employees to examine their own personal biases and how they might affect student instruction and interactions with the community. Concepts such as white supremacy and systemic racism are discussed during professional development. LCPS has not adopted Critical Race Theory as a framework for staff to adhere to. Social media rumors that staff members have been disciplined or fired for not adhering to the tenets of Critical Race Theory or for refusing to teach this theory are not true.

It should be noted that students do not receive equity training. LCPS has not adopted a uniform equity curriculum, but does have a Culturally Responsive Framework. This framework speaks to providing a welcoming, affirming environment and developing cultural competence through culturally responsive instruction, deeper learning, equitable classroom practices and social-emotional needs for a focus on the whole child. Individual schools incorporate these best practices to meet the needs of their school community. This framework is in-line with emerging guidance from the Commonwealth of Virginia and Virginia Department of Education.

LCPS' work on equity is a journey that requires the commitment of staff at all levels. I feel the staffs' work, which has been sustained, honest and undertaken in good faith, has been misrepresented recently by some members of the public.

It has come to my attention that individuals, including some identifying themselves as LCPS employees, have made statements across social media about parents and their thoughts about the school division's equity work. LCPS recognizes the right of its employees to free speech, but does not condone anyone targeting members of the community for their viewpoint.

LCPS remains committed to its equity work. At the outset, we knew this work would create many hard, but necessary, conversations. I ask only that these conversations be based in fact. In the near future, LCPS will be sharing more communications about our equity work so that our community has a deeper understanding of the journey we are on to provide the best education for all of our students.

Best wishes,

Scott A. Ziegler, Ed.D.
Interim Superintendent