

# **McFarland School District Anti-Racism and Equity Work Snapshot**

PTO: February 17, 2021

# Overview

## Purpose:

- To provide a brief overview or “snapshot” of the recent (last 3 years) efforts within the schools in the district related to anti-racism and equity. It does not include all that has been done.

## Structure:

- Divided by target population of the activity: students staff, and families

# What is next?

- Implementation of the **Community Impact Grant** to Support the Social Emotional Health of K-12 African American Students through the Natural Circles of Support program (\$1 million over 5 years)
- Finalize and Implement the **District Anti-Racism Resolution Action Plan.**
- Key areas of focus:
  - Develop and implement and more cohesive, intentional, and coordinated district plan
  - EC-12 Anti-racism scope and sequence
  - Implementation of a district professional development framework for ALL staff
  - Delivering a more inclusive curriculum
  - Continued equity audits related to student perceptions and outcomes
  - Parent Equity Council and continued partnership with the McFarland Equity Project
  - Expanding Natural Circles of Support and the Black Student Union to other Schools

# Students

## Curriculum

- **Inclusive curriculum:**
  - Curriculum teams met with student leaders to assess the extent to which our students are represented in our curriculum (Summer 2020).
  - Gathered feedback from students as part of curriculum review (e.g. January 2021, MHS students surveyed about representation/inclusion in the Social Studies curriculum).
- Focus on the use of **multicultural texts** throughout the curriculum and in our libraries.
- **Equity audits** at schools to determine the extent to which our students see their culture and background represented not only in the curriculum but visually in displays and visuals throughout the school.
- **Identity lessons** for students reflecting on their own identities and appreciating the identities of others.
- **Empathy and ally lessons** including teaching students to intervene when others are being bullied and/or harassed.
- **Positive and proactive response to behavior** that teachers, acknowledges, and recognizes positive behavior, while repairing harm that was caused (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, Restorative Practices).
- IMMS **lessons** about our commitment to the district **Anti-Racism Board Resolution**, civil discourse, and the election.

# Students

**Student Presentations**- A few presentations of particular interest include:

- **Spartan Peace Project** at MHS in 2018: Quarterly experiences that deepen the understanding of a variety of perspectives.
- IMMS and MHS hosted NAACP Image Award winning author **Kekla Magoon** in the Spring 2019.
- MHS welcomed **Percy Brown Jr.** in the fall of 2019 a powerful presentation to students about the history of the N-word, the history of successful Black Americans, and what is missing from history books and courses.
- **WIS "POWER of One" assembly** (fall of 2020) with high school student **Laetitia Hollard** sharing how she initiated change with the Anti-Racism School Board Resolution.

# Students

## Student Involvement and Activism:

- IMMS and MHS provide weekly mentoring circles for African American Students called **“Natural Circles of Support.”**
- MHS clubs dedicated to addressing racial injustice including the **Black Student Union, Multicultural Club, and the Social Justice League, and, most recently United Against Hate.** While each of these groups has a unique focus and mission, each group empowers students to create a more equitable and inclusive school and community.
- IMMS created an **“African American History Bowl” Club** in 2018 with students competing with other districts around the state.

# Staff

## Professional Development:

Providing and supporting required and optional professional development (e.g. implicit bias, microaggressions, identity, becoming an equitable educator, creating a multicultural classroom library). A few opportunities to highlight include:

- **Percy Brown Jr.** spoke to the entire district staff on issues of race at the start of the 2019-20 school year.
- **Teacher Study Groups** (TSG) and other learning opportunities have been provided for a growing number of interested staff across the district (**e.g. culturally responsive instruction, multicultural classroom libraries, cultivating genius, becoming an anti-racist educator, El Paso Anti-Racism Course, Institute of Critical Consciousness**).
- Building level examples: identify and respond to **microaggressions**, understanding and addressing our own **implicit bias**, and providing **culturally responsive instruction** (e.g. WIS "Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain book study).

# Staff

## Leadership

- **Building equity leadership teams** that assesses and responds to building level equity related needs including curricular representation of a variety of cultures, hiring practices, handbook policy reviews with an equity lens (e.g. Hate Speech Policy-Fall 2020), student participation on programming across races and other subgroups, and more.
- **The district administrative council** consisting of district staff and building administrators participated in the **Leading for Equity Academy in 2017-18** consisting of a series of professional development sessions and conducting an **equity audit** using data regarding student performance and involvement in various programming (e.g. advance learning, special education).
- Secured 5-year, \$1 million Wisconsin Partnership Project **Community Impact Grant: Supporting the Social Emotional Health of K-12 African American Students**

# Families

- The district has provided an opportunity for parents of students of color to share about their and their child's experiences in the form of the Equity Roundtable. This group consisted of primarily high school students and staff.
- The district is in the process of creating a **EC-12 Parent Equity Council** in conjunction with the McFarland Equity Project.

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# McFarland Equity Project

<https://www.mcfarlandequityproject.org/>

**Mission:** To address racial inequities, create and maintain an inclusive and welcoming village and promote anti-racist practices

**Village:** focus on village government, functioning (DEI committee)

**Community:** focus on learning, inclusivity, housing

**Education:** focus on district equity initiatives, family voice

# Education Group Goals

- We are committed to anti-racist practices;
- We will advocate for learning climates that ultimately support and empower our students of color;
- We support the recruitment and retention of talented staff of color in our schools;
- We will strive to create systems that hold the district and leadership accountable for the resolution and future DEI goals.



The Brandt Family



The Dennis Family

They're not too young  
to talk about race



The McCullough Family

# What has been happening?

Members of the Education Group regularly meet with administration.

Administration will:

1. Communicate with parents/community about equity work occurring in the schools. (Snapshot - forthcoming)
2. Use the Board Resolution as a guide to plan for future work with each component

District-wide Parent Equity Council will be created to provide parents of color or with children of color a venue for providing regular input.

If we are to achieve a richer culture, rich in contrasting values, we must recognize the whole gamut of human potentialities, and so weave a less arbitrary social fabric, one in which each diverse human gift will find a fitting place.

- Margaret Mead

# What are we asking of the Board?

- Continued support of the resolution
- Regular conversations with administrators at Board meetings about the work being done around equity and the resolution.
- Discussion about what work comes next.

**THANK YOU!**

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