

LPS District AIDE Stance

Dear Families and Employees,

The Lincoln Public Schools (LPS) community is made up of families who reside in Boston, at Hanscom Air Force Base, and in Lincoln. In addition, employee children who reside in many different towns attend the Lincoln School and Lincoln Preschool. Including all of our employees as members of the LPS community, our district is uniquely diverse and comes together to provide learning environments that are beautifully rich with people of many racial and cultural backgrounds and life experiences. We are all fortunate to be a part of this community.

As public educators who have a professional, moral obligation and human responsibility to educate all students, we strive to ensure that every individual in our district community has access to what they need to grow and thrive. Therefore, we are committed to examining the ways that discrimination presents itself in our district.

One of our district's [core values](#), **Respect for Every Individual** states, *our community strives to embrace our differences and build upon our similarities. We strive to create a safe, inclusive learning environment that values our varied beliefs and differences in race, ethnicity, culture, language, socio-economics, gender identity, sexual orientation, learning differences, and family configurations. We work to engage in conversations that deepen our understanding of our differences and to learn from our collective experience. We acknowledge our biases in order to build empathy and understanding. We strive to develop understanding of world cultures beyond our community to assist our students in becoming contributing members of the global society.*

Our Core Values were created during the 2012-2013 school year with input from all of our stakeholder groups. We recognize that revisions to our core value narratives are needed. We have placed this action item on our AIDE 5-year action plan. This review will include stakeholder input and approval by our School Committee. At this time, please know that the intent of our Core Value, Respect for Every Individual is meant to honor all identities.

In order to authentically embody this core value, and in light of the unrelenting racial injustice that people of color have faced for hundreds of years in the U.S. and continue to face today, we have a sense of urgency to name the focus of our work: Antiracism, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (AIDE). In our Equity Audit Report, we define antiracism as the active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices, and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably. We have consciously placed antiracism first and foremost because race intersects with all of our identities and is the primary way those in the U.S. are afforded advantages or experience inequities. Making antiracism our priority is not intended to minimize the experiences of persons in other marginalized groups. However, there is often not an option for individuals to decide whether or not to share their race as may be the case with other identities such as religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and so forth.

At LPS, it is important that every student, family, staff, faculty, administrator, and community member feels safe, seen, understood, connected, respected, and valued. We recognize the need to better understand the extent to which our organizational structures (including policies, practices, systems, behaviors, and culture) impact inequitable outcomes for students and adults.

Our district is working towards achieving the following outcomes:

- Ensuring a positive, inclusive educational experience for all students on both campuses
- Assisting faculty and staff to be culturally competent and aware of their own privileges and biases
- Assisting teachers in their classrooms to develop and maintain a safe and welcoming atmosphere and to use culturally relevant materials and culturally responsive teaching methods for all students
- Co-creating and defining a school and learning culture where faculty and staff embrace and are accountable for creating a fully equitable, inclusive, and antiracist school environment where all can achieve
- Partnering with and supporting families to help their children achieve success in an inclusive, integrated, antiracist district

In addition, our primary goal this year is to continue our journey towards becoming an antiracist district. This entails that every member of our school community including employees, students, families, and members of our Lincoln, Boston, and Hanscom communities are:

- provided with opportunities to learn and explore their own understandings related to race, racism, and bias;
- able to learn and grow as a part of a collective community while respecting diverse perspectives;
- asked to take steps to improve our individual and collective ability to talk about race with students and other adults; and
- encouraged to actively examine our practices and systems and provide feedback to ensure that our district lives up to the aspirations of our Core Values.

Furthermore, we acknowledge that systemic racism exists not only in our country but in our local communities and schools and we recognize that as a school district we have our own work to do to provide equitable opportunities for all of our students and staff. We are committed to identifying and dismantling systemic racism and oppression that exists within our district as we work to become an antiracist school district.

Districts across the country have received push back from members of their communities about teaching and talking about AIDE-related topics. We understand that parents have a primary responsibility for teaching their children about their identities and culture. And, in order to ensure that our schools and classrooms are welcoming and safe for all students, we must build a common understanding and language amongst our students and employees within our district. All of our teaching and learning is grounded in the Massachusetts state frameworks for History

and Social Studies. **To assist members of our communities in partnering with us, we are providing several resources below the signatures on this AIDE Stance Statement.**

Most importantly, this work is directly informed by the experiences of our community members. Our students, staff, and families have shared feedback with us about their experiences in our schools through focus groups and surveys. Please review our [Equity Audit Report](#) to see what our community had to say and the process we have carried out to understand the strengths and areas of growth in our district. Our [AIDE 5-year Action Plan](#) is a dynamic document which we will build upon and revise as we dive deeper into our work. It outlines the steps we plan to take to meet our goals and outcomes related to AIDE. In addition, our [District Strategic Plan and District and School Strategic Priority Maps](#) provide information about the work being carried out this school year.

Antiracism, Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity work is complex and sometimes uncomfortable for a variety of reasons. However, it is important that we learn to move through the discomfort and get to deeper understanding in order to enable transformative change. Each day that we do not work to grow and improve in this area is a moment where we risk not fully meeting the academic and social/emotional needs of all our students. Our AIDE work is extremely necessary in order to ensure that our schools are safe places where all students can fully access curriculum, engage in authentic learning experiences, and respectfully navigate conversations around race and racism as they evolve into responsible members of a global society. You may have questions about our AIDE work and you should feel comfortable reaching out to your children's teacher, your school principal, and district administrators at any time. We look forward to partnering with you to make our schools a place where all students thrive.

All the best,

Central Office Administrators

Becky McFall, Superintendent

Jess Rose, Assistant Superintendent

Mary Emmons, Administrator for Student Services

Rob Ford, Director of Educational Operations and Technology

Mary Ellen Normen, Administrator for Business and Finance

School Based Administrators

Sarah Collmer, Principal Lincoln School K-4

Lynn Fagan, Principal of Early Childhood Programs

Marika Hamilton, METCO Director and AIDE Coordinator

Sharon Hobbs, Principal Lincoln School 5-8

Naomi Konikoff, Student Services Coordinator, Lincoln

Erich Ledebuhr, Principal Hanscom Middle School

Denise Oldham, Student Services Coordinator, Hanscom

Julie Vincentsen, Principal Hanscom Middle School

Resources

Antiracism Inclusion Diversity Equity work is expected and supported by the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Below you will find information pertaining to regulations and Learning Standards that address the expectations that all districts in MA carry out AIDE work in schools and classrooms in developmentally appropriate ways. Throughout the school year, we will be working to improve our communication to families keeping them informed about how our AIDE work is carried out in our schools and classrooms. Our instructional goals are to provide students with learning experiences where they see themselves and their identities represented. We want students to have opportunities to learn about others who may have different cultures, beliefs, and identities to broaden their awareness and perspectives about the people in our country and the world. We believe that this work helps all students to see that they can achieve their goals and aspirations.

Honoring the experiences that all students bring to school benefits all students. Developing understanding and deep appreciation for both our commonalities and differences leads to strong communities where everyone is valued and respected for who they are. These beliefs and actions increase our students' sense of belonging in our schools and lead to increased academic success.

I. Resources for Self-guided Learning

Our [Resources for Antiracism Learning and Action](#) is one small step, but reflects our commitment as a district to help individuals embark on a self-initiated journey of self-exploration and learning with the hope that each of us grows to better understand the lived experiences of those who are marginalized within our society and learn to take action as needed. We hope that you will take some time to look at some of the resources in the Just Starting section of the resource site and occasionally check back as we plan to continually add resources as we grow in our work.

II. MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Regulations and Resources Related to AIDE in Schools

- a. [Massachusetts Learning Standards and Curriculum Frameworks](#): The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks provide teachers, students and families with clear and shared expectations for what all students should know and be able to do at the end of each year. They represent a promise of equitable education for all students. They formalize the expectation that all students in the Commonwealth have access to the same academic content, regardless of their zip code, background, or abilities.
- b. [Race, Racism and Culturally Responsive Teaching in History and Social Science in Massachusetts: Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- c. [Culturally Responsive Teaching & Leading](#)
- d. [Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Students](#)

e. [Position Statement of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents](#)

f. [Education Law and Regulation: 603 CMR 26.05: Curricula](#)

(1) All public school systems shall, through their curricula, encourage respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

(2) Teachers shall review all instructional and educational materials for simplistic and demeaning generalizations, lacking intellectual merit, on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. Appropriate activities, discussions and/or supplementary materials shall be used to provide balance and context for any such stereotypes depicted in such materials.

Schools, through their curricula, shall encourage respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals, including LGBTQ individuals. Research shows that inclusion of LGBTQ topics in curricula corresponds to all students reporting that they feel safer in school, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. Curricula should reflect issues of sexual orientation and gender identity, as relevant, to be inclusive across subject areas, including, but not limited to, health, social science, language arts, and family life curricula.

Schools are encouraged to provide age-appropriate information about LGBTQ issues in school libraries and in student and faculty resource centers. School libraries should include a selection of high interest LGBTQ books and media. In addition, computer-filtering software should not inhibit age-appropriate access to medical and social information. Schools are encouraged to review the computer filtering protocol to ensure that LGBTQ students and other school community members can access information related to LGBTQ youth, local and national resources, and LGBTQ health information.

g. [MA Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework, Standard 7.7](#)

Recognize the positive contributions of character traits (such as tolerance, honesty, self-discipline, respectfulness, and kindness) to relationships, the benefit to relationships which include understanding and respecting individual differences, and the detrimental effect of prejudice (such as prejudice on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, class, or religion) on individual relationships and society as a whole.

h. [MA Educator Evaluation Indicators of Proficient Performance related to AIDE](#)

Indicator II-D. Cultural Proficiency--II-D-1. Creates and Maintains a Respectful Environment: Establishes an environment in which students demonstrate respect for and affirm their own (self-awareness) and others' (social awareness)

differences related to background, identity, language, strengths, and challenges, and responds appropriately if/when conflicts or misunderstandings arise related to such differences.

III. Department of Defense Education Activity Resources Related to AIDE in Schools

- a. [Mission statement for Department of Defense office for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion](#) (DEI)--the Special Features section specifies the two main objectives for DEI: a demographically diverse leadership that reflects the public and the force it leads and; a broader approach to diversity including backgrounds, skills, and personal attributes.
- b. [DoDEA Diversity, Equity, Inclusion website](#)
- c. [This story](#) of the new Chief of Staff of the Air Force and the Sgt. Major for the Army
- d. [Secretary Austin – Race in the ranks](#): this is an excerpt, though the entire version is viewable on Paramount+
- e. [General Mark Milley Defends Military’s Response to Racism and Extremism, C-SPAN](#)