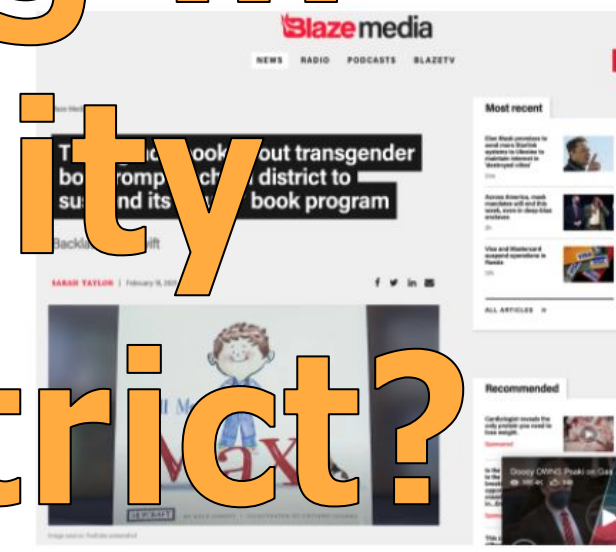
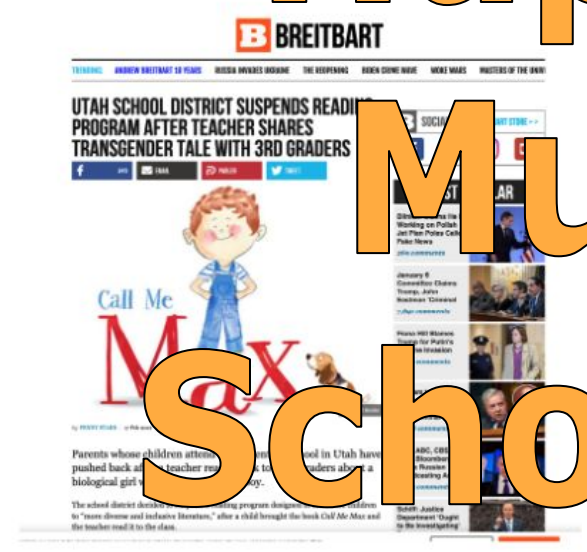
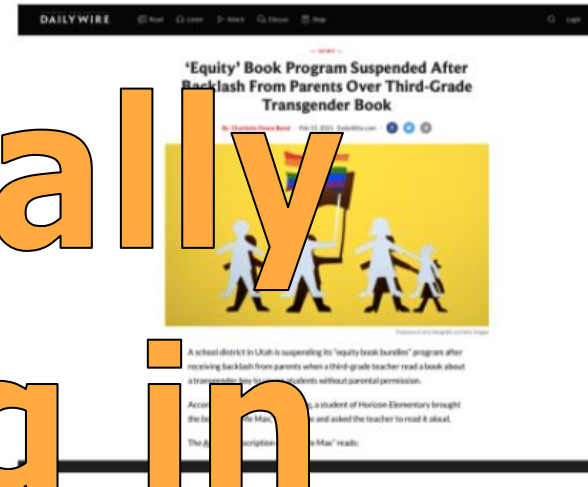
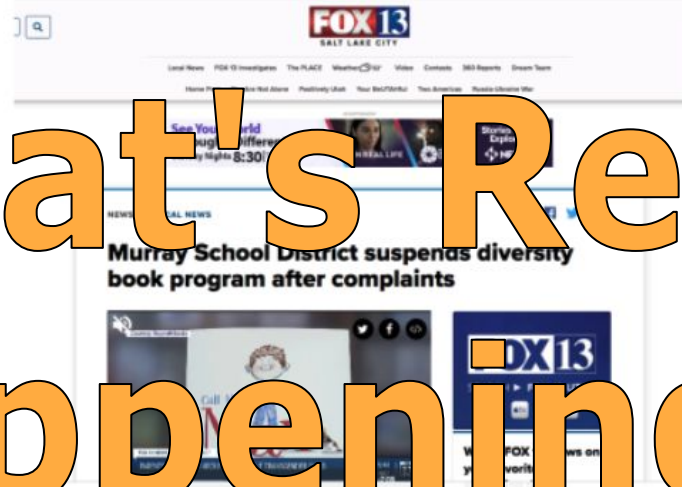
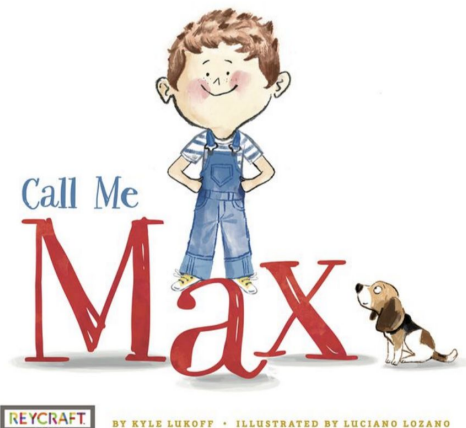


What's Really Happening in Murray City School District?



Utah parents complained after kids were read a story about a transgender boy. Now other diverse books are on hold.

Murray School District has suspended its “equity book bundles.”



(Photo courtesy of Reycraft Books) Pictured is the book cover of "Call Me Max" written by Kyle Lukoff and illustrated by Luciano Lozano. The story is about a transgender boy.

By Courtney Tanner | Feb. 11, 2021, 7:00 a.m. | Updated: 10:14 a.m.

A Murray teacher read a book about a transgender child to a class of third graders last month — which set off a backlash from parents. In response, the school district has now suspended a program aimed at introducing kids to more divers

WEATHER ALERT

Winter Weather Advisory: Eastern Uinta Mountains, La Sal and Abajo Mountains, Salt River and Wyoming Ranges, Southwest Wyoming, Star Valley, Upper ...

1 MORE ALERTS

Shade PRO
BY AWNINGS & ACCESSORIES

**FAST SHIPPING
LOW PRICES**
SHOP NOW

TOP STORIES

Murray City School District 'pauses' its Equity Book Bundle Program and Equity Council

by [Jason Nguyen](#)Posted: Feb 11, 2021 / 10:42 PM MST
Updated: Feb 12, 2021 / 09:55 AM MST

SHARE

MURRAY, Utah (ABC4 News) – A third-grader brought a book to school called, “Call Me Max.” It’s not an approved book by the Murray City School District, but because the teacher read it out loud, the district is questioning and reviewing its Equity Book Bundle Program and its Equity Council. The district says it is suspending both programs, but parents should think of it as a ‘pause.’

[Murray City School District welcomes students back to school](#) >

The MCSD has received a flurry of complaints about suspending the programs.

District officials say they are not canceling the programs, they just want to pause the programs to review them after getting complaints from parents.

“I find it really strange and upsetting, truly upsetting that the Equity Council would be paused because of a book brought in from home. The Equity Council did not bring this book to school. I personally as a parent think it’s a great book, says Murray City District 1 Councilmember Kat

unicef

ALERT
**CHILDREN IN UKRAINE
IN THE CROSSFIRE**

Donate now to support children and families affected by the escalating conflict in Ukraine!

DONATE NOW

UTAH CORONAVIRUS >



ADVERTISEMENT

See Your World
Through a Different Lens
Sunday Nights 8:30 | 7:30C



Stories Worth Exploring
NEWSY

NEWS > LOCAL NEWS



Murray School District suspends diversity book program after complaints



Watch FOX 13 News on your favorite

streaming device

ADVERTISEMENT



Become a leader in one of the nation's fastest-growing careers: nursing.

FIND C

School pulls book about transgender boy after complaints

By COURTNEY TANNER February 13, 2021



Click to copy

RELATED TOPICS

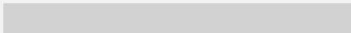
- Salt Lake City
- Race and ethnicity
- UT State Wire

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — A Murray teacher read a book about a transgender child to a class of third graders last month — which set off a backlash from parents. In response, the school district has now suspended a program aimed at introducing kids to more diverse and inclusive literature.

The uproar started when a student at Horizon Elementary brought a copy of “Call Me Max” from home and asked the teacher to read it aloud during story time. The book is an illustrated account of a young transgender boy who educates his own teacher and classmates about his identity.

It starts with the teacher taking attendance. “Can you call me Max?” the boy asks, noting that his name on the roll doesn’t match how he sees himself.

ADVERTISEMENT



As the teacher at Horizon Elementary was reading it, said Murray School District spokesman Doug Perry, students in the class began asking her questions. One was specifically about puberty, Perry noted. The teacher hadn’t read the book before and deflected the questions, for the most part, he said.

But some of the students talked to their parents about the book and the discussion. And a few

— NEWS —

'Equity' Book Program Suspended After Backlash From Parents Over Third-Grade Transgender Book

By [Charlotte Pence Bond](#) · Feb 15, 2021 · [DailyWire.com](#) · [f](#) [t](#) [s](#)



Francesco Carta fotografo via Getty Images

A school district in Utah is suspending its “equity book bundles” program after receiving backlash from parents when a third-grade teacher read a book about a transgender boy to young students without parental permission.

According to [The Salt Lake Tribune](#), a student of Horizon Elementary brought the book, “Call Me Max,” from home and asked the teacher to read it aloud.

The [Amazon](#) description of “Call Me Max” reads:

UTAH SCHOOL DISTRICT SUSPENDS READING PROGRAM AFTER TEACHER SHARES TRANSGENDER TALE WITH 3RD GRADERS

[f](#) 245 [EMAIL](#) [PARLER](#) [TWEET](#)



by PENNY STARR | 17 Feb 2021 | 351

Parents whose children attend an elementary school in Utah have pushed back after a teacher read a book to third graders about a biological girl who wants to live as a boy.

The school district decided to suspend a reading program designed to introduce children to “more diverse and inclusive literature,” after a child brought the book *Call Me Max* and the teacher read it to the class.

B SOCIAL [BREITBART STORE >>](#)

[f](#) [Twitter](#) [Instagram](#) [YouTube](#)


MOST POPULAR

Blinken Claims He Is Working on Polish Jet Plan Poles Called Fake News



[269 comments](#)

January 6 Committee Claims Trump, John Eastman 'Criminal'



[7,691 comments](#)

Fiona Hill Blames Trump for Putin's Ukraine Invasion




[1,022 comments](#)

Graham to Introduce a Resolution Declaring Putin a 'War Criminal'




[6,508 comments](#)

CNN, ABC, CBS, BBC, Bloomberg Cease Russian Broadcasting Arms



[6,333 comments](#)

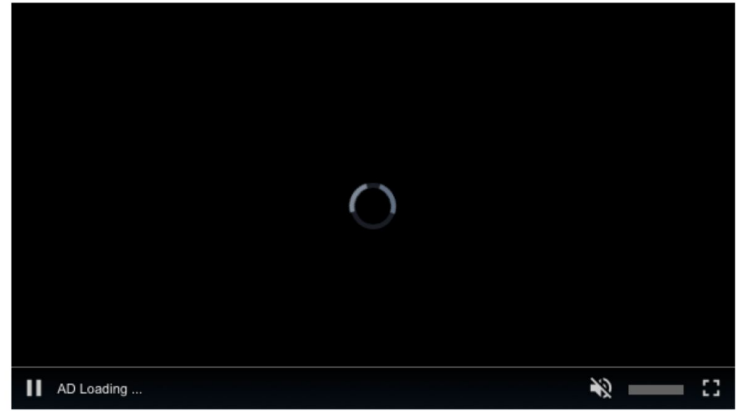
Schiff: Justice Department 'Ought to Be Investigating'



NEWS

Transgender Boy Book Prompts Utah School District to Suspend Reading Program

BY **SAMANTHA LOCK** ON 2/15/21 AT 10:28 AM EST




THE DEBATE

 **It's Time To Change the Way We Celebrate Black History Month**
BY KEITH WYCHE

VS

Black History Month Has Become a Farce
BY ERNEST OWENS 

OPINION

 **Putin is No Chess Master**
BY DANIEL R. DEPETRIS

Blaze Media / News

Third-grade book about transgender boy prompts school district to suspend its 'equity' book program

Backlash was swift

SARAH TAYLOR | February 15, 2021

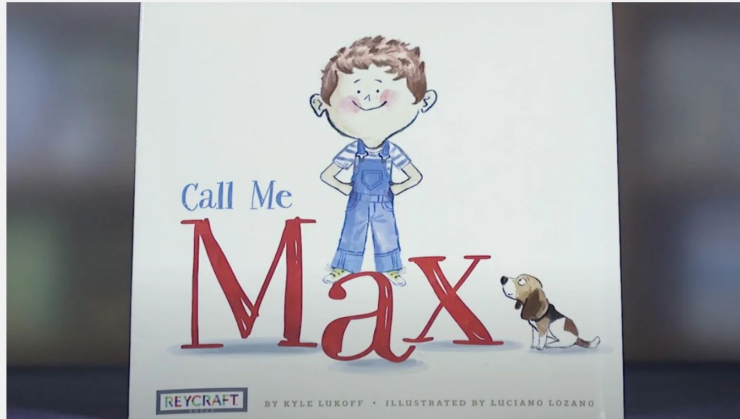


Image source: YouTube screenshot

Most recent

Elon Musk promises to send more Starlink systems to Ukraine to maintain internet in 'destroyed cities'



51m

Across America, mask mandates will end this week, even in deep-blue enclaves



2h

Visa and Mastercard suspend operations in Russia



12h

ALL ARTICLES >>

Recommended

Cardiologist reveals the only protein you need to lose weight.



Sponsored

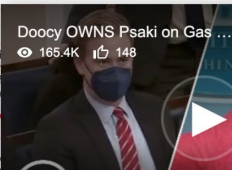
Doocy OWNS Psaki on Gas ...

165.4K 148

Is the break oppo misin in...En

Spons

This c Affe





Wayfair Colville Floral Standard Cotton Fitt...

Wayfair



Wayfair Colville Floral Standard Cotton Fitt...

Wayfair

AdChoices



+ Follow

Texas school calls in counselors after teacher reads book about transgender boy

Lisa Tolin - Mar 12, 2021

React | 15

A teacher in Austin, Texas, came under fire for reading a children's book about a transgender boy to her fourth grade class, prompting the district to call the book inappropriate and offer counseling to students who listened.

Transgender allies defended the teacher and the book, "Call Me Max," by Stonewall Award-winning author [Kyle Lukoff](#). It features a transgender child explaining his identity, and is aimed at children in early elementary school.



Several parents wrote letters complaining to Forest Trail Elementary, with some calling for the teacher to be fired. In response, Eanes Independent School District's chief learning officer, Susan Fambrough, explained in an email to parents that "Call Me Max" had been included on a [list of diverse books](#) circulated among teachers but was "not appropriate to be read aloud to an entire elementary-age class."



We customize. You

SPONSORED BY LIBERTY MUTUAL INSURANCE

YOU MAY LIKE

Bare Home Cotton F Thread Count Fitted Cotton In White, Size

What's the one photo that will forever define the COVID-19 pandemic for you?



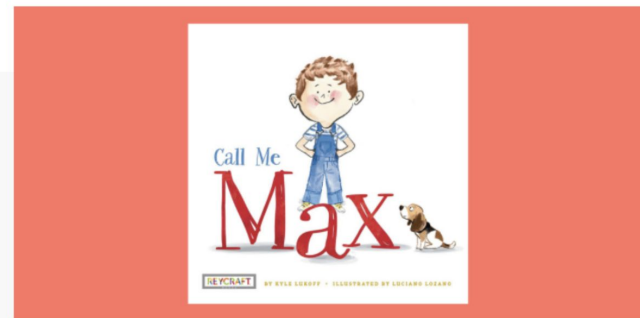
Texas school calls in counselors after teacher reads book about transgender boy

SHARE THIS - Facebook, Email, Print, etc.

PARENTS

Texas school calls in counselors after teacher reads book about transgender boy

"It tells them that they must be invisible, that they can't talk about who they are, that they are unworthy," one mom of a transgender child said.



Amazon

March 12, 2021, 8:43 AM MST / Source: TODAY

By Lisa Tolin

A teacher in Austin, Texas, came under fire for reading a children's book about a transgender boy to her fourth grade class, prompting the district to call the book inappropriate and offer counseling to students who listened.

Transgender allies defended the teacher and the book, "Call Me Max," by Stonewall Award-winning author Kyle Lukoff. It features a transgender child explaining his identity, and is aimed at children in early elementary school.

Several parents wrote letters complaining to Forest Trail Elementary, with some calling for the teacher to be fired. In response, Eanes

Sponsored Stories

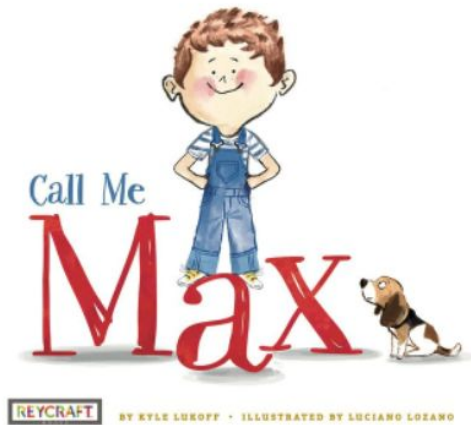
by Taboola



CAPITAL ONE SHOPPING Amazon Has Millions of Prime Subscribers - But Few Know About This Savings Trick



Letter: Murray board's actions tell trans kids they aren't valued



(Photo courtesy of Reycraft Books) Pictured is the book cover of "Call Me Max" written by Kyle Lukoff and illustrated by Luciano Lozano. The story is about a transgender boy.

By New York City students | The Public Forum | Feb. 28, 2021, 6:00 a.m. | Updated: March 1, 2021, 11:54 a.m.

Dear Murray City School District Board of Education:

We are elementary and middle school students who wish to comment on the board's decision to suspend the Murray City School District's Equity Book Bundle Program in response to a third grader's personal copy of the children's book "Call Me Max" by Kyle Lukoff being read aloud in class. Our interest in this is personal; not only are we school children ourselves, we are also the former students of Mr. Lukoff who, in addition to being a writer, is also an elementary school librarian and teacher at our school in New York City.

We aren't sure why "Call Me Max" would cause the board to pause its Equity Book Bundle Program when it wasn't one of the books in the program, but we think these programs are needed to teach children from an early age how to respect people who may be different from them. It is also important for children who may be a little bit different to see themselves represented in the books that they read.

By pausing the program, and doing so on the basis of a children's book about a transgender child, you are telling children who may be a bit different than others, and transgender children especially, that you do not value them, their lives, or their experiences. That is a lesson that no child should have to learn.

Very truly yours,



Bailey, 5th grade, Eva, 6th grade, Michael, 4th grade, Seneca, 5th grade, Josiah, 1st grade, Madeleine, 6th grade, Hal, 3rd grade, Penelope, 5th grade, Jonah, 2nd grade, Sophie, 5th grade, Edith, 2nd grade, Evan, 5th grade, André, 6th grade, Bacey, 2nd grade, Olina, 5th grade, Clementine, 4th grade, Silas, 6th grade, James, 5th grade, Lianie, 5th grade, Stella, 6th grade, Juna, 6th grade, Theo, 5th grade, Rory, 3rd grade, Zelda, 6th grade, Oliver, 7th grade, Julia, 5th grade, Rex, 5th grade, Ailey, 5th grade, Aima, 5th grade

Submit a letter to the editor

In 2021, Murray parents were tried in the court of public opinion through the Salt Lake Tribune and Murray School Board meetings.

**Parents were judged to be...
“masking homophobia,
transphobia, and racism as a
concern for parental rights.”**

**We are now setting the
record straight.**



Laurel Fetzer

and

April Wilde Despain

present...



What's Really Happening in Murray City School District?

1

We support diversity and inclusion in schools, according to the traditional definitions of those words.

2

We believe schools should be focused on academic education, NOT on equity or social emotional learning.

3

Whether or not *Call Me Max* was brought in by a student, it was and is part of a bigger agenda related to equity.

4

Equity is about teaching our children to be “antiracist” (which does not mean simply not being racist) and to embrace LGBTQ+ ideologies through Intersectionality.

Sep 3, 2020 - Horizon Elementary sends picture of equity book boxes

Hello Horizon Parents!

You may notice your students talking about “Book Boxes.” I will attach a picture of the books so you can take a look. Each grade level is working on lessons regarding antiracist education. Antiracist education for Horizon means celebrating and valuing all cultures and families actively. Students and teachers are working in restorative circles, which is a time in the day where they are able to share a space and develop a sense of community and belonging by expressing who they are. We are really excited about this opportunity for our students and teachers to dive deeper into equity work. Thank you parents for all you are doing this year. We truly appreciate you and having your students back in school.

Thank you,

Dr. Jobe, Horizon Vice Principal



Sep 3, 2020
Picture of book
boxes shared with
parents



Horizon Spanish Dual Language Immersion (DLI) Program

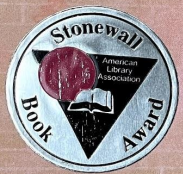
- There are two DLI classrooms in each grade level.
- One classroom starts morning in Spanish, the other classroom starts morning in English.
- After lunchtime -
 - Spanish class switches to English.
 - English class switches to Spanish.
- Both English and Spanish classes are taught the same content.
- However, because of varying time constraints, content may be taught on different days.

Julian is a Mermaid

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Wednesday, Jan 6, 2021 - *Julian is a Mermaid* read to 3rd grade class

JULIÁN IS A MERMAID

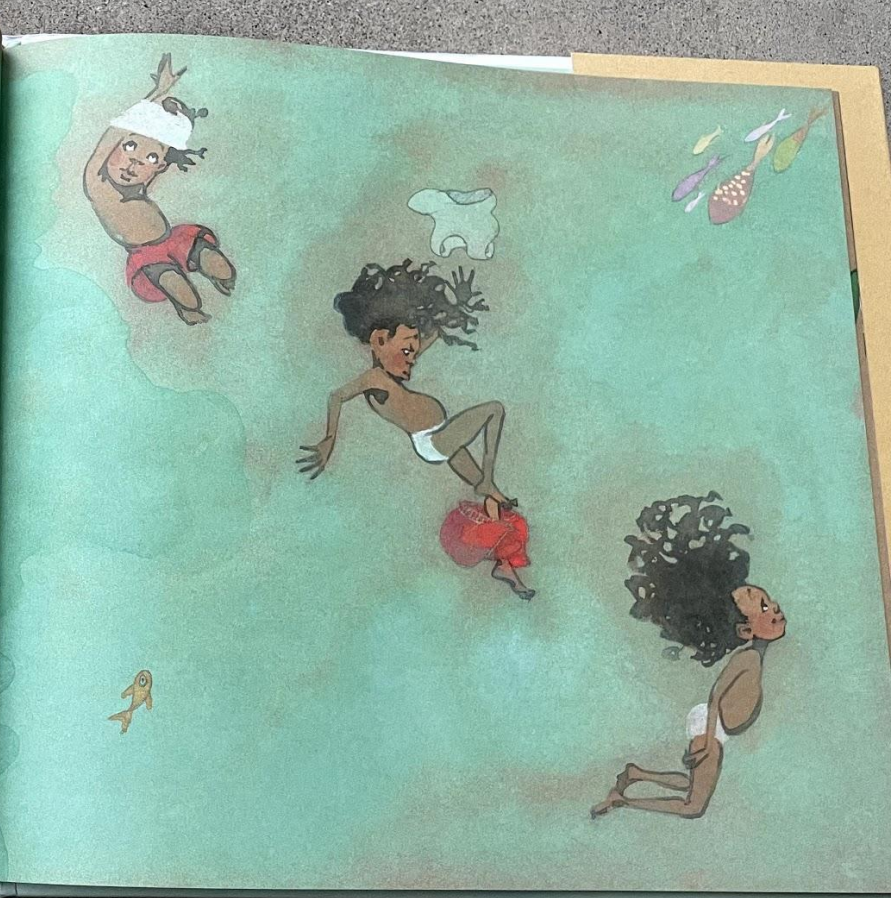


Jessica Love



Julián LOVES mermaids.

ery Satu
l his abu
day Jul
he sub
s entra
their
aid f
lence
can
id
at
r
s
f



Jan 6, 2021 - Julian is a Mermaid

Every Sa
nd his a
he day J
n the st
e is ent
air, the
ermai
nfider
he cr
rmai

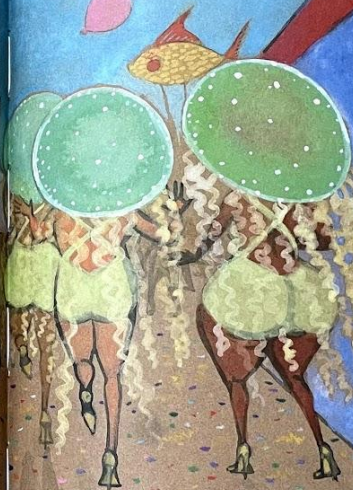
wh

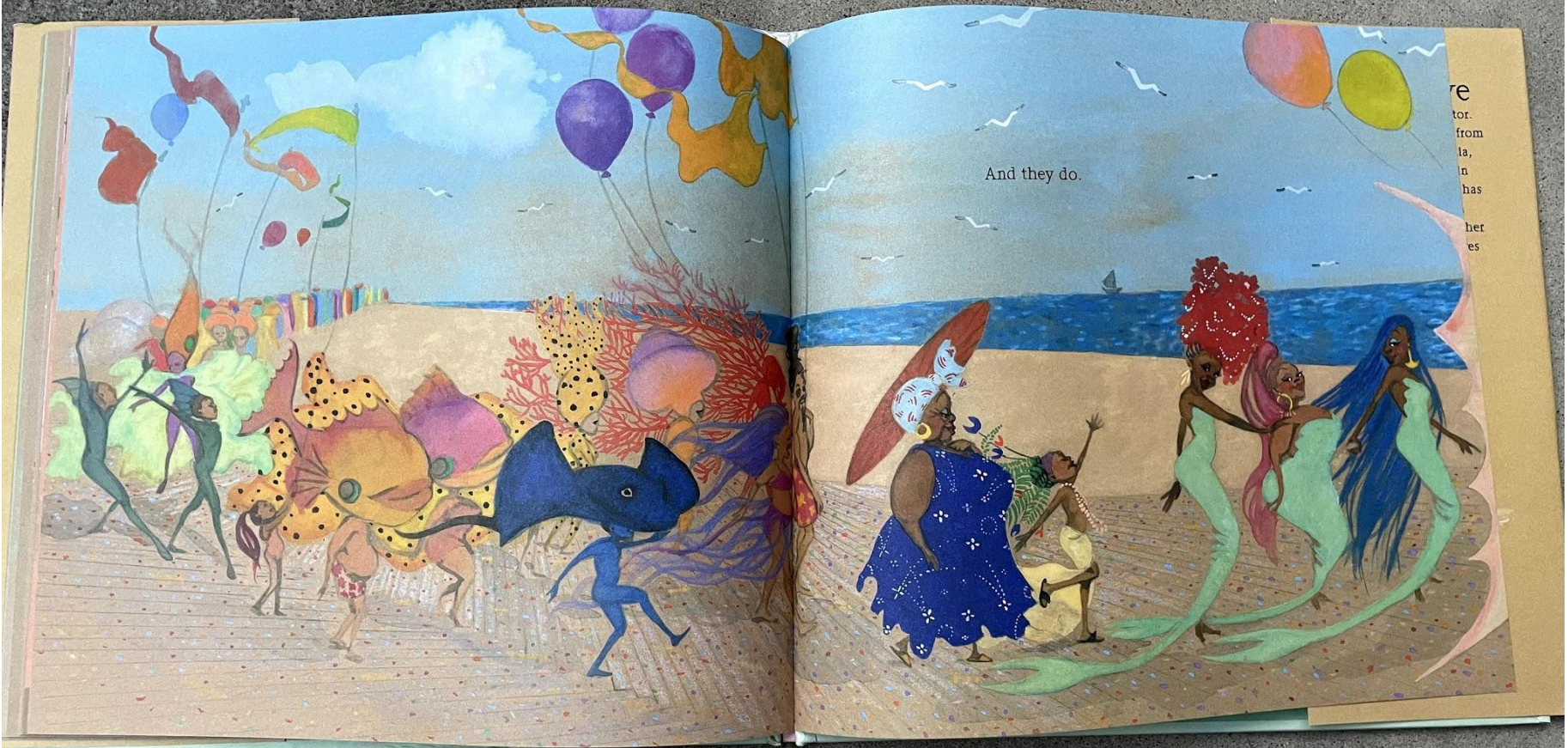
rly
t, J
t i
ic
nc



Jan 6, 2021 - Julian is a Mermaid

"Mermaids," whispers Julián.



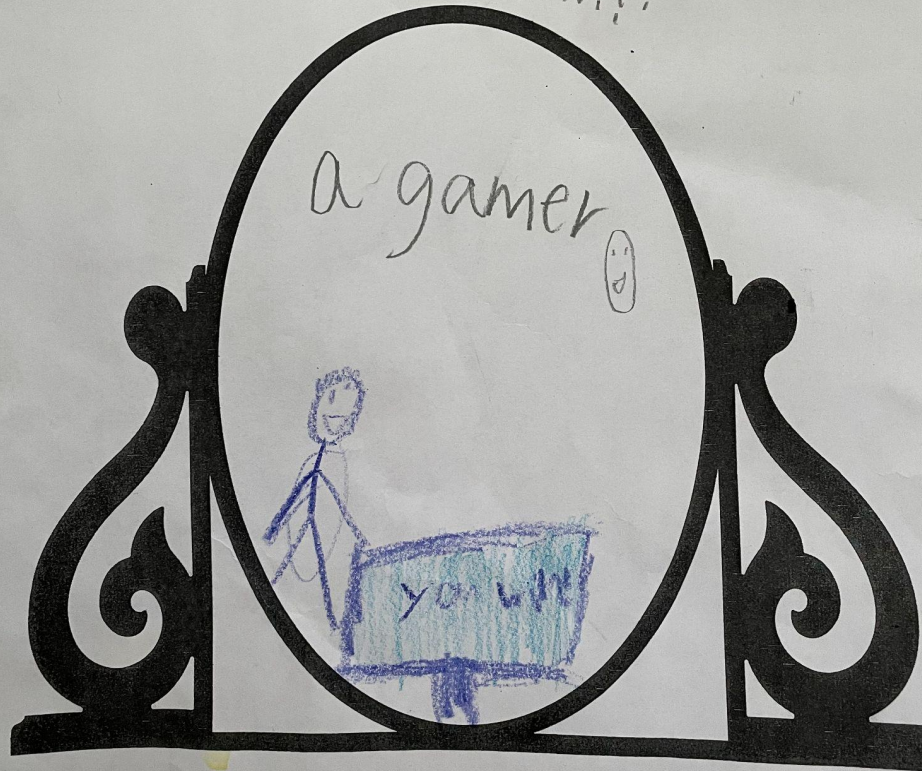


And they do.

re
tor.
from
la,
n
has
her
es

Jan 6, 2021 - Julian is a Mermaid

When I look in the mirror I see...
well I LOVE playing
video games a TON!!!



Julian sees himself as a mermaid in the story. Draw yourself in the mirror as whatever you would like to become.

Jan 6, 2021 -
Assignment on
Julian is a Mermaid

Sep 3, 2020
Picture of book boxes

Jan 6, 2021
Julian is a Mermaid is
read in class

Call Me Max

Friday, January 8, 2021

Call Me

Max



REYCRAFT
BOOKS

BY KYLE LUKOFF • ILLUSTRATED BY LUCIANO LOZANO

Jan 8, 2021 - Call Me Max is read to 3rd grade class

Chapter 1

When I look in the mirror I see a boy.



I see a boy with spiky brown hair.



I see a boy with white skin that tans in the summer.

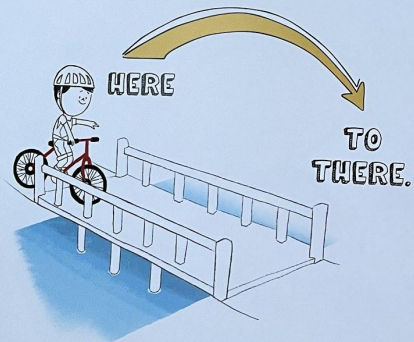


I see a boy with one mom and one dad and two goldfish.

I also see a boy who is transgender.

TRANSGENDER is a long word. But it means something simple.

TRANS means going across. Like how transportation means going from



GENDER means being a boy or a girl.



Or a little of both.



Or not feeling like a boy or a girl.

When

“IT”

If a b some

“S”

Wh who

When a baby is born, a grown-up says,

"IT'S A BOY!" or "IT'S A GIRL!"

If a brand-new baby could talk,
sometimes that baby might say,

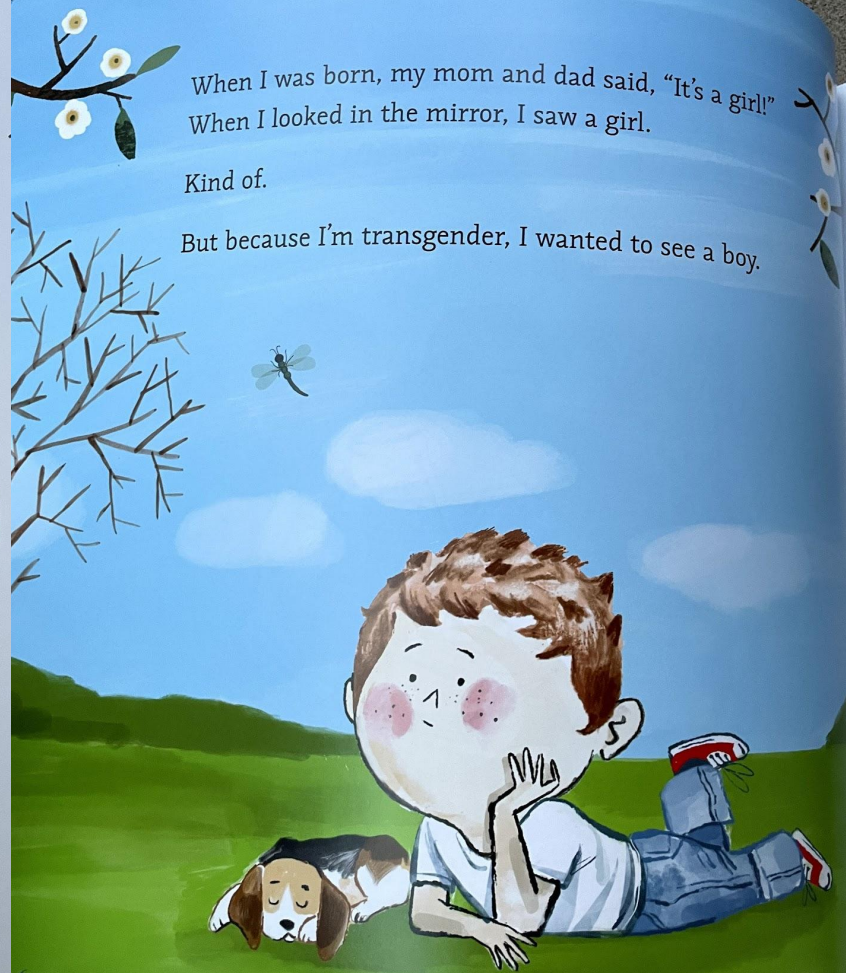


When a baby grows up to be transgender, it means that the grown-up
who said they were a boy or a girl made a mistake.

When I was born, my mom and dad said, "It's a girl!"
When I looked in the mirror, I saw a girl.

Kind of.

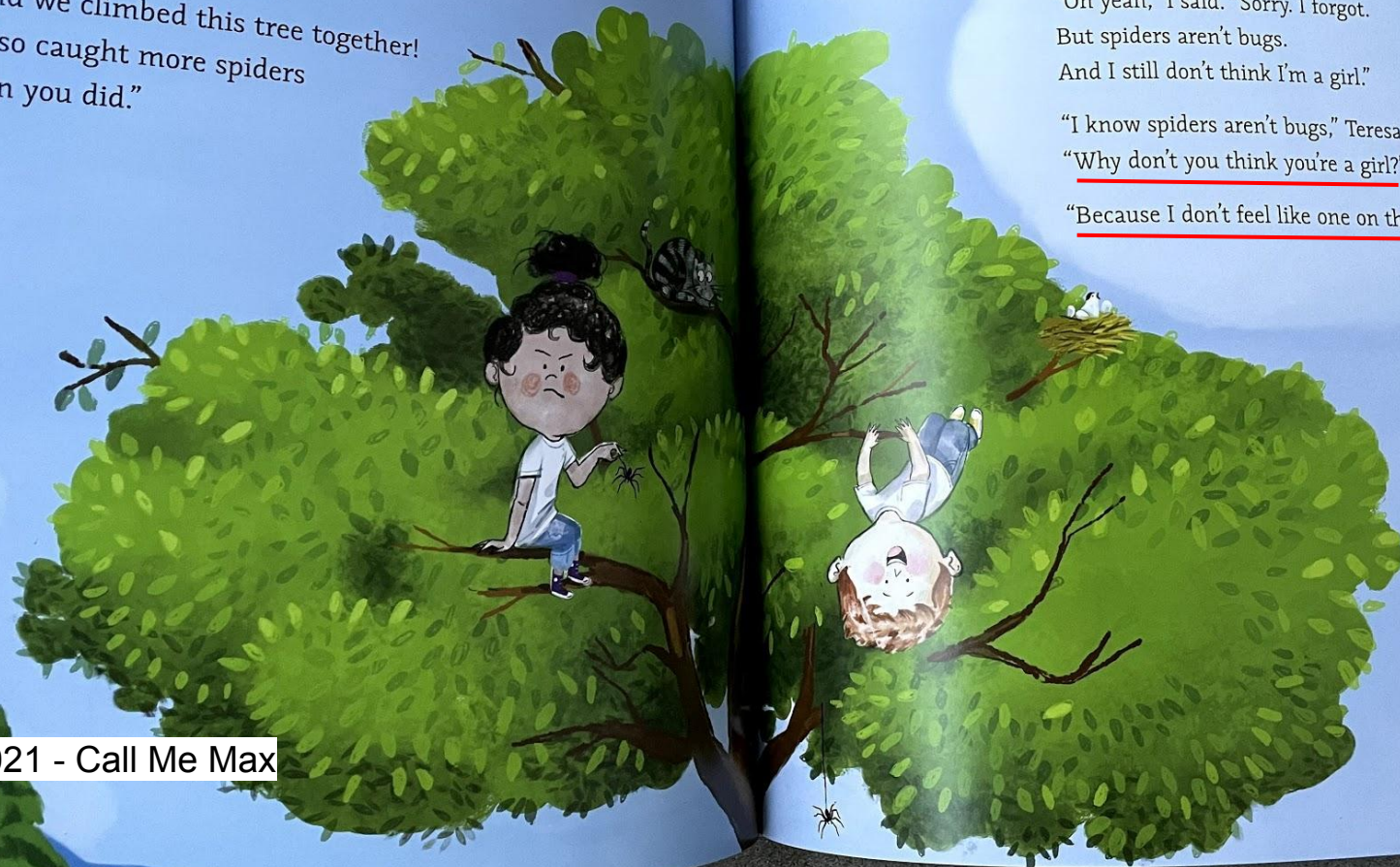
But because I'm transgender, I wanted to see a boy.



She looked mad.

"I'm a girl," she told me.

"And we climbed this tree together!
I also caught more spiders
than you did."



"Oh yeah," I said. "Sorry. I forgot.
But spiders aren't bugs.
And I still don't think I'm a girl."

"I know spiders aren't bugs," Teresa said.
"Why don't you think you're a girl?"

"Because I don't feel like one on the inside."

I told my friend Steven that I might be a boy.
"I can't be a girl," I said.
"I hate wearing dresses."



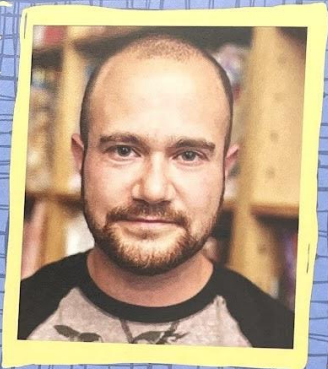
He looked down at his dress, and then glared at me.
"This is my favorite dress. And I like being a boy."



"Oh yeah," I said. "I forgot. I'm sorry. And it's a pretty dress.
But I still know I'm a boy."

“How come?” he asked.
“Because I feel like one,” I told him.
“On the inside.”





Kyle Lukoff has worked at the intersection of books and people for over half his life, first as a bookseller, then as a school librarian, and now as a writer. He is transgender, like Max, and lives in a small Brooklyn apartment with six overflowing bookshelves.



Luciano Lozano was born the same year Man traveled to the Moon. That may be the reason why he has traveled a lot since childhood. When not traveling he lives in Barcelona. His illustrations reflect his

Parents begin talking

Friday, January 8, 2021

Friday, Jan 8, 2021 -
Parent text about Call Me Max

Sorry, you're hearing from me a lot lately. I know [redacted] is in the other class, but did [redacted] happen to mention any books that were read in class today? (Im assuming the teacher read them to both classes)

I understand that there are kids out there who struggle with feeling like they were born the wrong sex, I'm just not sure how I feel about this being talked about with 8/9 year olds. [redacted] told me all about the 2 books in detail and also how the teacher told them if they are a girl, but really feel like a boy they can take medicine to grow a beard. If they're a boy and feel like inside they're really a girl they can take medicine to not grow a beard. I just feel like this is so much for young kids and can cause them to question themselves. Maybe I'm old fashioned, I just hate that this was taught to [redacted] in class today.

Sep 3, 2020
Picture of book boxes

Jan 6, 2021
Julian is a Mermaid



Jan 8, 2021
Call Me Max is
read in class

Parents email teachers and administrators

Sunday, January 10, 2021

Date : 1/8/2021 9:13:36 PM
From : "Sarah Paul"
To : "Vanessa Jobe" , "Whitney Anderson"
Subject : Fwd: Books read for the Equity Class

Not quite sure how to respond to this email. Should I have gotten permission before reading this?

I addressed student questions honestly and tried to sway the conversations to that of just being who you are and what makes you happy and accepting others.

Full disclosure: A student in my homeroom is discovering [redacted] path of being trans and was empowered by this book and asked if [redacted] could bring a book of [redacted] own. I didn't want to discourage [redacted] or make [redacted] feel unsupported so we read [redacted] book today called I am Max which uses child friendly terms to kind of talk about a girl who would like to be a boy. Again I didn't bring anything up, but I answered student questions honestly and tried to steer the conversation to one of acceptance. The students were all very accepting and we had some really great conversations. But, I'm a bit nervous about getting more emails like this.

I'm sorry if this causes any headaches for you. But I'm also not sorry I read the book! I think it's important kids learn about diversity and acceptance.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [redacted]
Date: Fri, Jan 8, 2021 at 8:57 PM
Subject: Books read for the Equity Class
To: <spaul@murrayschools.org>, <mluna@murrayschools.org>, Whitney Anderson <wanderson@murrayschools.org>

Hi there,

It has come to my attention that a book titled Julian is a Mermaid was read to [redacted] in an equity class. I am curious as to why something with this heavy of a subject matter was being taught without us as parents being informed first? Is transgenderism part of their curriculum? I hold this type of conversation up to the same level as the maturation program or sex education. So, please help me understand why this is being read and taught without my knowledge?

[redacted]

Date : 1/10/2021 10:32:32 PM

From [REDACTED]

To : wanderson@murrayschools.org, vjobe@murrayschools.org, spaul@murrayschools.org

Subject : Transgender Books

Helllo,

[REDACTED] came home from school on Friday and told me all about the "puberty" lesson she had at school. She told me in detail about the books that were read last week, "Call Me Max" and "Julian the Mermaid". She also told me she learned from her teacher that when people grow up they can take special medicine to grow or not grow a beard if they really feel on the inside they're supposed to be a boy or a girl. My husband and I are very upset that these things were taught to our child without our permission. I have been in contact with several parents with children in these two classes who are equally upset. We would like to know why this information is being taught without our permission or without being informed first. Is this information new to the third grade curriculum?

[REDACTED]



April Wilde

To: Whitney Anderson, spaul@murrayschools.org,
mluna@murrayschools.org



Sun, Jan 10, 2021 at 10:38 PM



Hi there-

It was brought to my attention this weekend by another parent whose child is in the 3rd grade DLI program that a couple of books on transgender topics have been read and discussed in Ms. Paul's class. I believe these books are "Julian is a Mermaid" and "Call Me Max". I was also told that the students discussed and asked questions about transgender ideas, and the question was asked about how the transgender male grew a beard (in Call Me Max), so Ms. Paul explained that people can take medication to grow a beard or not grow a beard, if they want to change their gender. I'm just paraphrasing what I heard through the grapevine, so if I'm wrong on any of these details, feel free to correct me.

I'm concerned that these books are being read and these discussions are taking place without parents' knowledge. (I heard from several other moms in the class and it was a surprise to each one.) I was aware that our students were reading books about diversity and equality, and I think those are important topics and discussions, and I'm grateful that you teachers are taking them on and helping our kids learn to be kind and accepting of others, no matter our differences. However, I did not realize that these books and discussions would also include LGBTQ+ issues, and I feel that's something that parents should be formally informed about before it happens. I do realize LGBTQ+ issues are important, and I want my son and all my children to be informed, aware, kind and accepting. I am just concerned that topics which involve sexuality are more sensitive, especially for children this young. These are topics I would like to address with my son, and I want to be fully aware of what is being said about them in his classroom, so that I can be involved in the discussion with him and be there to answer his questions and help him understand these issues.

As I've thought about this over the weekend, the ideas I've had is that I would like to have a formal list of all the diversity books being read to our students and the topics these books cover, as well as a basic time frame of when they will be read and discussed. I would like if parents had a form to sign, stating we are aware of what gender/sexuality books and topics will be addressed, so every parent is consciously on board with the program. I would also like to have the option to attend (via zoom or in-person) these discussions, especially on topics that veer into sensitive and/or sexuality issues. That way we, as parents, can be better aware of what is being talked about and more prepared to address these topics with our children when they come home from school. Would these ideas be doable? Please let me know your thoughts.

As always, thank you for all you do for our children. I know all of you teachers work tirelessly, and I appreciate it so much. Thank you also for listening to my concerns as a parent. I look forward to hearing from you.

-April Despain

On Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 12:14 AM [REDACTED] wrote:

Hello,

I would just like to express my concern for the equity lesson that was taught to my 8 year old daughter without my permission. In class the book "Call me Max" was read to the students and the students learned about the author who is now a man. They were curious as to how he was able to grow a beard when he was once a girl. The students were taught that when they are older they can take medicine to grow or not grow a beard if they really feel like a boy or a girl on the inside. How confusing is that for an eight year old?!? I understand times are changing, but I do not understand how it is ok for this information to be taught in class without giving the parents a heads up. The maturation program requires parent permission, why not this lesson? This is something I would have liked to teach my child when I felt the time was right and in my own way. I understand these lessons are intended to teach students confidence in themselves and in accepting others, I do not believe that that book needed to be shared in order to do that.

I have been in contact with my daughter's teacher and she has done a great job explaining her reasoning. It sounds like she has just been following the district's guidelines on equity. I still do not agree with these lessons being taught in the classroom and I know there are other parents who have the same concerns. Are there any changes that can be made? More transparency with the curriculum?

Thank you.

[REDACTED]

Teacher and administrator replies to parents

Monday, January 11, 2021

Third grade teacher's email to parents - Jan 11, 2021

On Monday, Jan 11 at 8:23 AM, Sarah Paul wrote:

Hello,

I understand there are concerns with two of the books read during our equity lessons last week, "Julian is a Mermaid" and "Call me Max". As a school and district, we are focusing on equity and antiracist work. Reading books about all people is part of this. Additionally, we learn about equity during our Wednesday Second Steps curriculum. Learning about transgender, gay and straight people in developmentally appropriate ways is part of our district and school.

Here is a link to Julian is a Mermaid: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E44zjYyxnWg>

Here is a link to Call Me Max: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jcrPnaCbKrY>

Class discussions with these books were intended to teach students to feel confidence in themselves as well as accepting others. We also talked about gender norms like in clothing or colors and how you should be able to like any color or wear any clothes despite your gender. I answered student questions as they arose honestly and in developmentally appropriate ways.

Third grade teacher's email to parents - Jan 11, 2021

I would like to clarify that there was no discussion on puberty. One student asked how they grew a beard. I replied by stating that science has found ways to help them, to which another student replied, "like medicine." I felt the need to clarify with students that this is not something that happens until they are an adult. Again, one student replied, "oh after puberty." A few students began repeating the word puberty because they thought it was funny. I quickly shut that down and we moved on.

Despite the sidetracked conversations, I feel students benefited from these books with a sense of confidence in who they are and an ability to accept others.

I follow state administrative code and guidelines around transgender issues: I attached some of the guidelines below as well as the district's memo on equity.

Principal Anderson and Vice Principal Jobe are happy to answer any further questions or concerns you may have.

Sarah Paul



UTAH STATE BOARD
OF EDUCATION

Mark Huntsman, Chair
Terry J. Warner, First Vice Chair
Britney Cammins, Second Vice Chair
Alan Ellis, Third Vice Chair

Loann Bishop
Michelle Bowler
Janet A. Cannon
Lisa Cummings

Jennifer Cravick
Linda B. Hansen
Carol Barlow Lear
Scott B. Neilson

Kathleen Ritchie
Sponsor T. Stokes
Joel Wright

Sydney Dickson, State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Lorraine Austin, Board Secretary

September 18, 2017

RE: Clarification of Recent Changes to R277-474-3, School Instruction and Human Sexuality, General Provisions

Dear LEA Chairs, Superintendents and Charter School Administrators:

Earlier this year the Utah Legislature passed Senate Bill 196, Health Education Amendments, which revised requirements for the adoption of instructional materials related to human sexuality contained in U.C.A. § 53A-13-101. SB196 eliminated prohibitions related to the advocacy of homosexuality and added a prohibition related to the advocacy of premarital or extramarital sexual activity. As a result, the Utah State Board of Education (Board) revised Administrative Rule 277-474-3 to track the changes to U.C.A. § 53A-13-101. The purpose of this letter is to clarify the Board's intent behind its recent revisions to R277-474-3.

The Utah State Board of Education desires each student in Utah public schools to receive a high quality education free from all manner of discrimination, which can take the form of bullying, based on religion, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and gender identity. Further, we are aware that some local education agencies still maintain old policies that do not reflect the recent changes to U.C.A. § 53A-13-101, R277-474, and federal law. Such outdated policies based on older versions of U.C.A. § 53A-13-101 and R277-474 are invalid. To the extent your district or school maintains outdated policies, these policies should be revised so they align with the current version of U.C.A. § 53A-13-101 and R277-474, and reflect the Board's intent to prohibit discrimination against all Utah's students. Districts and charter schools that fail to follow the Board's rules are subject to further Board action pursuant to R277-114, Corrective Action and Withdrawal or Reduction of Program Funds.

Sincerely,

Mark Huntsman, Chair
Utah State Board of Education

Sydney Dickson, Ed.D.
State Superintendent of Public Instruction



Memorandum

Department of Personnel and Student Services

Murray City School District
Jennifer Covington
Superintendent of Schools

To: All MCSD Personnel
From: Darren Dean, Director of Personnel
Date: November 23, 2020
Re: Clarification on "Addendum Memo First Amendment and Political Speech Issues"

The Murray City School District would like to offer clarification regarding the addendum to the memo on First Amendment and Political Speech Issues sent to employees earlier this year. We recognize the addendum harmed our community and was not in accordance with MCSD values regarding equity. Moreover, clarification on our position is long overdue.

MCSD affirms that Black lives do matter. We condemn racism, sexism, discrimination, hatred or other actions that marginalize our students or employees. This means fully embracing our responsibility for inclusion, belonging, and justice; particularly for People of Color, Indigenous Peoples, People with Disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer People, Immigrants, Refugees, people from low-income households, members of minority religious groups, and people from other marginalized populations.

MCSD supports and encourages all educators to center equity in their daily teaching. Some examples include equity-based curriculum, conversations, dialogue, and displays that emphasize the dismantling of individual and systemic barriers to student achievement. We are committed to prioritizing equity in MCSD. We Are Murray! Every one of us.

● Book List

Yahoo/Inbox ★



● **Vanessa Jobe** <vjobe@murrayschools.org>



Mon, Jan 11, 2021 at 8:39 AM



To: [REDACTED] Whitney Anderson, Sarah Paul

Hi Mrs. Despain!

Thank you for reaching out with your concern. We appreciate all that you do for your child at Horizon and we appreciate your questions.

Ms. Paul teaches second steps and equity work once a week on Wednesdays. You are welcome to zoom in if you would like. The lessons are wonderful and developmentally appropriate. If we film them more often our online students will also have the opportunity to view the lessons. Let us know if this is something you would be interested in.

I have included a schedule of the equity work and second steps below along with the equity books that will be used this year.

Monday, Jan 11, 2021 -
Dr. Jobe's email to April

August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety, Respect and Race
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being Assertive and Language
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Empathy, Sexuality & Gender and Understanding Differences
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Managing Learning Challenges and Ability
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem Solving and Class
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Handling Name Calling and Equity Issue that pertains to your class.
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Black History Month and Being Responsible
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Circle back on whichever topic your class could use more support on
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Circle back on whichever topic your class could use more support on
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Celebrating Cultures

Here is a comprehensive list of the books that 3rd grade reads during their second steps lessons.

Julian is a Mermaid: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E44zjYyxnWg>

Call me Max: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jcrPnaCbKrY>

Fry Bread: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tWdEz0ptvbc>

The Bell Rang: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwbtrVy48qw>

Of thee I sing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldCuEB8gohI>

Little Leaders: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ugjITietvsU&t=378s>

Enemy Pie: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FTM8Cccl1xs>

Thank you,
Dr. Jobe

--

Vanessa Jobe, Ed.D.

Horizon Elementary Assistant Principal

(she/her/ hers)

801.264.7420

Monday, Jan 11, 2021 - Dr. Jobe's email to April

From: Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org>

Date: Mon, Jan 11, 2021, 1:48 PM

Subject: Re: Transparency in the Equity Program

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: Sarah Paul <spaul@murrayschools.org>, Whitney Anderson <wanderson@murrayschools.org>, Jennifer Covington <jcovington@murrayschools.org>

Hi [REDACTED]

Thank you for your message and for working with us to understand. Mrs. Anderson and I are happy to hold a zoom call with you. We want to support you and ensure you are comfortable. Until then, here are some answers for your questions.

"I am Max" was not read in your child's class. That book was brought and discussed in the other class. The book was read in order to help a student feel supported. It was for a specific incident that helped to create a conversation of empathy and understanding.

We agree, we want you and all parents to feel in the loop. In September I sent out a Parent Square message introducing the equity books and the purpose behind the books. I sent the following book list to parents as well. Many parents ordered the books and have a set at home to further conversations. How can we help you feel more in the loop? I have included our second steps and equity themes along with all of the book titles and grade levels.

I included the Fact Sheet on the US Department of Education Policy (Specifically the Letter on Transgender Students). In terms of curriculum, we are working to ensure that all students feel supported and welcomed at our school and that we also follow educational policy. Specific curriculum is not outlined, it is just ensuring non discriminatory practices in schools.

Ms. Paul sends out her weekly calendar, on Wednesdays during the "Equity Lessons" are when these conversations come up. Being welcoming to transgender students was relevant and important for this week.

Listed below are the other topics we have covered this year.

Please let us know when the best time for a Zoom meeting would be. Thank you for your communication.

-Dr. Jobe

Fact Sheet (US Department of Education Policy):

<https://www.transequality.org/sites/default/files/ED-DCL-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

Monday, Jan 11, 2021 - Dr. Jobe's email to another parent

On Tue, Jan 12, 2021 at 1:06 PM Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Hello!

I was thinking this is an appropriate response. Again, it's not really okay to single out trans students in the way [REDACTED] is asking. With the parent squares and the book list and the pacing I am not sure what else we can offer?

Due to the parent feedback we have had this time around, when learning about supporting transgender students we feel confident that our current procedures in place are meeting our school's needs. If you specifically would like a heads up everytime we discuss transgender or LGBTQIA+ support for students we can work with you.

--
Vanessa Jobe, Ed.D.

Horizon Elementary Assistant Principal

(she/her/ hers)

801.264.7420

On Tue, Jan 12, 2021, 10:32 AM Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

We are so sorry you have lost sleep over this and we greatly appreciate your continued communication. As educators we are always working to see how we can continue to improve our practice and our communication. Ms. Paul still sends out the weekly calendars that you received in the beginning of the year. Do you need help accessing those?

This month's equity theme on second steps was: Handling Name Calling and Equity Issue that pertains to your class. The Max book was specifically needed for an incident in the other class. Max was not needed in your son's class. Those books in particular (Julian is a mermaid and Max) are not listed because they are not in the original equity book bundles. I will add those books to the list as well under "additional resources." We used them due to needed support for current transgender students.

All of the other books we have on LGBTQIA+ or trans student support are listed in our book bundles. You will see our pacing guide with the months to see which equity topics will be taught at which time.

We are proud of the equity work and student support that is happening in our school and district and want you to feel that you also have access to the work. We have many students and families that have felt seen, heard and loved through this work. Thank you for supporting everyone as well.

Let us know if there are further steps we can take to ensure your comfort.

Dr. Jobe

Book	Grade Level (SPED-6th)
All Are Welcome- Pengold	Special Education
Daniel's Good Day- Archer	Special Education
Little Legends: Exceptional Black Men in History- Harrison	Special Education
Who Was Frederick Douglass- Prince	Special Education
Who Did it first? -Hart	Special Education/ 1st Grade
Black is a Rainbow Color- Joy	Kinder
Be You! -Reynolds	Kinder
Tiger Days: A Book of Feelings- Clark	Kinder
AntiRacist Baby- Kendi	Kinder
You Matter- Robinson	1st Grade
I am Human- Verde/ Reynolds	1st Grade
La princesa and the Pea- Elya	2nd Grade
Ohana Means Family- Loomis	2nd Grade
The Day You Begin- Woodson	2nd Grade
A Family is a Family is a Family- O'Leary	2nd Grade
Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters- Obama	3rd Grade
Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History- Harrison	3rd Grade
Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story- Millard	3rd Grade
The Bell Rang- Ransome	3rd Grade
Word Collector- Reynolds	3rd Grade
Paper Kingdom- Rhee	3rd Grade
The Oldest Student: How Mary Walker Learned to Read- Hubbard	4th Grade
What Was the March on Washington? -Krull	4th Grade
What Was the Underground Railroad- Mcdonough	4th Grade

What Was the March on Washington? -Krull	4th Grade
What Was the Underground Railroad- Mcdonough	4th Grade
Let's Talk About Race- Lester	4th Grade
The List of Things That Will Not Change- Stead	4th Grade
Frederick's Journey: The Life of Fredrick Douglass- Rappaport	4th Grade
Undefeated- Alexander Nelson	4th Grade
Champions of Change: 25 Women Who Made History- Watkins	5th Grade
This Book is Anti-Racist- Jewell	5th Grade
A Place to Land: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Speech That Inspired a Nation- Wittenstien	5th Grade
Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag- Sanders and Salerno	5th Grade
Equity's Call: The Story of Voting Rights in America	5th Grade
Ghost Boys, Rhodes	6th Grade
Suffragette: The Battle of Equality, Robers	6th Grade
Rainbow Revolutionaries: 50 LGBTQ+ People Who Made History- Prager	6th Grade
Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You- Reynolds	6th Grade
Mananaland- Ryan	6th Grade

Tuesday, Jan 12, 2021 - Dr. Jobe's email to another parent

Tuesday, Jan 12, 2021 -
 Dr. Jobe's email to
 another parent

Second Steps and Equity Themes Schedule:

August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety, Respect and Race
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being Assertive and Language
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Empathy, Sexuality & Gender and Understanding Differences</u>
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Learning Challenges and Ability
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem Solving and Class
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handling Name Calling and <u>Equity Issue that pertains to your class.</u>
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black History Month and Being Responsible
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circle back on whichever topic your class could use more support on
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circle back on whichever topic your class could use more support on
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating Cultures

Equity Book List for all Grades:

Book	Grade Level
All Are Welcome- Pengold	Special Education
Daniel's Good Day- Archer	Special Education
Little Legends: Exceptional Black Men in History- Harrison	Special Education
Who Was Frederick Douglass- Prince	Special Education
Who Did it first? -Hart	Special Education/ 1st Grade
Black is a Rainbow Color- Joy	Kinder
Be You! -Reynolds	Kinder
Tiger Days: A Book of Feelings- Clark	Kinder
AntiRacist Baby- Kendi	Kinder

Book	Grade Level
You Matter- Robinson	1st Grade
I am Human- Verde/ Reynolds	1st Grade
La princesa and the Pea- Elya	2nd Grade
Ohana Means Family- Loomis	2nd Grade
The Day You Begin- Woodson	2nd Grade
A Family is a Family is a Family- O'Leary	2nd Grade

Book	Grade Level
Word Collector- Reynolds	3rd Grade
Paper Kingdom- Rhee	3rd Grade
Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters- Obama	3rd Grade
Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History- Harrison	3rd Grade
Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story- Millard	3rd Grade
The Bell Rang- Ransome	3rd Grade

Book	Grade Level
The Oldest Student: How Mary Walker Learned to Read- Hubbard	4th Grade
What Was the March on Washington? -Krull	4th Grade
What Was the Underground Railroad- Mcdonough	4th Grade
Let's Talk About Race- Lester	4th Grade
The List of Things That Will Not Change- Stead	4th Grade
Frederick's Journey: The Life of Fredrick Douglass- Rappaport	4th Grade
Undefeated- Alexander Nelson	4th Grade

Book	Grade Level
Champions of Change: 25 Women Who Made History- Watkins	5th Grade
This Book is Anti-Racist- Jewell	5th Grade
A Place to Land: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Speech That Inspired a Nation- Wittenstien	5th Grade
Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag- Sanders and Salerno	5th Grade
Equity's Call: The Story of Voting Rights in America	5th Grade

Book	Grade Level
Ghost Boys, Rhodes	6th Grade
Suffragette: The Battle of Equality, Robers	6th Grade
Rainbow Revolutionaries: 50 LGBTQ+ People Who Made History- Prager	6th Grade
Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You- Reynolds	6th Grade
Mananaland- Ryan	6th Grade

Second Steps and Equity Themes Schedule:

August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety, Respect and Race
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being Assertive and Language
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Empathy, Sexuality & Gender and Understanding Differences
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Managing Learning Challenges and Ability
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem Solving and Class

Second Steps and Equity Themes Schedule:

January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Handling Name Calling and Equity Issue that pertains to your class.
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Black History Month and Being Responsible
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Circle back on whichever topic
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Circle back on whichever topic your class could use more support on
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Celebrating Cultures

On Thu, Sep 3, 2020 at 9:29 AM Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Hi Caral

Hey I am so excited to be a part of this group. Thank you so much for what you have done and I would love to help in any way possible.

We have created a Justice Team of 13 teachers (more are signing up! Our first meeting is today). We are working together to create antiracist lessons. Our lessons are embedded in our second steps program. So equity and second steps are one. We have ordered a book box for each individual teacher that has children books that touch on each equity lesson. Many admin and teachers from other schools are interested as well. Check out the power point. We would love your feedback.

Also: I wrote this with some of my co doc students as a different idea for the memo that was immediately retracted. What do you think? I sent it to Darren and Robin. Robin said it looked good and I havent heard anything from Darren just yet.

The Murray City School District does not show support or non-support for any partisan political viewpoint. We do, however, value and pursue equity and justice in all areas of learning. Educators who struggle separating partisan slogans from non-partisan dialogue about equity and justice may reach out to the equity office for guidance. One example of an equity/justice approach are conversations/signs/posters/displays that emphasize dismantling of individual and systemic barriers to student access and achievement to learning (an example is provided below). We recommend all educators (not just teachers) focus on such an approach that provides access for all learners and their families—regardless of individual partisan positions—to dialogue about issues of equity and social justice that will help our students, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, socioeconomic status, and more to access learning and reach their highest potential.

Again. Thank you and so excited to be helpful in any way I can.

-Dr. Jobe

SECOND STEP® ELEMENTARY

SEL for Today



Discover Our New Digital Program

Children benefit from social-emotional learning (SEL) at any time, but today it's especially important to help them develop the skills they need to connect and thrive. A leading SEL elementary school curriculum, Second Step® Elementary is research-based and easy to teach, adapt, and scale. The program now offers two options: the web-based and teacher-facilitated digital program and our print-based classroom kits supplemented by online resources.



Sep 3, 2020
Picture of book boxes

Jan 6, 2021
Julian is a Mermaid

Jan 8
Call Me Max

Jan 11-12, 2021
**Contradicting book lists and pacing guide
shared with parents**

April responds to Dr. Jobe

Wednesday, January 13, 2021

Transgender discussions at Horizon 3rd grade



April Wilde

To: Whitney Anderson, Vanessa Jobe, Sarah Paul,
mluna@murrayschools.org

Cc: Jennifer Covington



Wed, Jan 13, 2021 at 1:08 AM



Dr. Jobe,

Thank you for getting back to me about this and answering some of the questions I asked. I appreciate the additional information I've received here, and yes, I would like to be able to zoom in or attend in-person during the equity book readings and discussions, so thank you for offering that option from now on. Please let me know how I can get a link to that every week. Or if Ms. Paul could let me know before the next Second Steps lesson, that would be great. I would also like the option offered to every parent in the class, and I believe that option should be available to every parent in every class from now on, especially pertaining to topics that may be sensitive to their children.

I still have a few concerns I would like addressed. In talking with other parents (which discussions have furthered my concerns greatly), I have learned that the comprehensive list you sent me here (which includes "Call Me Max" as one of the books for the 3rd grade Second Steps program) is different from lists that were sent to other parents. That's confusing to me and them. Another parent whose child is in the exact same class as my child was sent a list that did not include "Call Me Max" on it. Why is that? How is it possible that my child's class was going to read that book (as you explicitly listed here) but her child's class was not (as you explicitly told her), when they are in the exact same class? Please clarify this discrepancy.

I noticed on the monthly schedule you sent here, there are several months with open topics (January: Equity issue that pertains to your class, March: Circle back on whichever topic your class could use more support on, April: Circle back on whichever topic your class could use more support on). I think it's great to have some flexibility with the program, however, as a parent I would like and expect more concrete details BEFORE the month of these open topics. Now that I'm aware that this program includes such sensitive topics for young children, I want to be fully aware IN ADVANCE of what will be read and discussed, and I would like to be informed on a regular basis (monthly, if not weekly). And as I mentioned before (and in accordance with Utah law, code § 53E-9-203), I expect a paper to be sent home beforehand that parents will sign any time a sexuality or gender identity subject will be addressed. I think this will be a great benefit to parents feeling informed, and to administrators and teachers as well, since that way there shouldn't be any big surprises like what has happened this past week in Ms. Paul's class.

Overall, as I've considered this situation, I feel that the biggest problem is a lack of transparency with the Second Steps program. From the beginning of the school year, I knew students would be reading books about social equity, and I saw several pictures of books about racism, etc. I was glad to know that my children would be learning about such important topics. However, I was not informed at any time that my children would be learning about anything pertaining to gender or sexual identity. I have since found out that these books (Call Me Max, Julian is a Mermaid) were not even included in the list, because they were part of "additional resources," which was a list NO PARENT RECEIVED. So how could any parents have even been aware that this book (or others with similar sensitive content) might have been read to their children? As a parent this is completely unacceptable to me. I think that, regardless of any possible differences in personal opinions, we can agree that these are incredibly sensitive topics, ESPECIALLY for children. It is simply unacceptable to me that this topic or anything of similar sensitivity would be discussed in any setting with my child without my explicit knowledge and approval. For that reason, I want way more transparency with this program. I want a comprehensive list of EVERY single book (including "additional resources" and ANY others not on the regular list) approved for my children's classrooms. I would like to know each week what books will be read and topics discussed. I want a paper sent home to be signed and approved for any topic regarding any form of gender identity or sexuality. And as I said previously, I want the ability to attend the reading and discussion myself of all of the books associated with this program or any other books/discussions of similar sensitivity.

My final concern, for now, is that I was informed that this book (Call Me Max) was read to the 3rd grade, without parental knowledge, approval or consent, because there was apparently a student in 3rd grade dealing with those issues. I would like to understand the protocol behind that decision. How was it deemed necessary that this book be read to the class? Did teachers decide that the student needed transgender support? Did the parents of this child decide that, or were the parents informed about this decision? Clearly I do not need to know nor do I want to know the details on this 3rd grade student in particular. But I do need to know the protocol for how these decisions are made and how parents are informed when those decisions are made, because if the day comes that this decision is made for one of my children, I want to know exactly how it is done. I would expect to be involved in that decision, should it ever come up. Every parent deserves complete transparency for that process as well, and I would like a PDF or some form of exact protocol for how those decisions are made by staff, especially regarding gender or sexual identity. If there is no exact protocol, then I find this very problematic, and I think it needs to be addressed at a higher level, and I will be taking it to a higher level if this is not addressed here.

I understand that these equity books were read in reference to bullying, and I read the document attached to Ms. Paul's email. I am all for addressing bullying where that happens, but when gender identity and sexuality is involved in the discussion and book topics, teachers and administrators are legally bound to inform parents, and I expect that information, with a written consent form, in advance from now on, in every case.

I think we can clearly agree that topics of gender identity and sexuality require extreme sensitivity with children. And I think we can also agree that this is a very sensitive topic and discussion for most parents and children, regardless of differing personal opinions. That being said, I'm sure you can understand why I want to be 100% aware and involved in those topics and discussions with my children. To be frank, I feel violated and lied to that these discussions took place in my child's classroom without any parental acknowledgement or consent. I have looked up the laws and I know that legal parental rights have been violated in this situation: In accordance with the parameters stated in Utah law (Utah code § 53E-9-203) "sexual behavior, orientation, or attitudes" (1c) are not to be addressed in the curriculum of children in the state of Utah without written parental consent. I will be pursuing this further if I feel that the transparency on this program and these issues is not corrected.

As I stated in my first email, I am all for the support of diversity in ALL its forms, and I WANT my children to learn about and be accepting and kind to everyone. This is very important to me as a parent, and I speak openly about this with my children every single day. If my child's teacher, and you as administrators of this program, had simply come to me in full transparency and honesty, I believe this would have been a non-issue. I would have stated my desires to be involved, and I assume those desires would have been granted, and I would have handled the discussion with my child at home accordingly. But because of how it was done in what felt like a secretive fashion, I now feel distrustful and will be hyper vigilant. I hope this lack of trust can be repaired, because I have always believed and still do believe that you are good teachers and administrators who want the best for my children and all students at Horizon.

I look forward to your response.

Thank you.

-April Despain

Dr. Jobe's initial reaction and draft responses she did not send to April

Wednesday, January 13, 2021

Dr. Jobe's initial drafted response to April's January 13 email:

On Wed, Jan 13, 2021 at 8:19 AM Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Hi [REDACTED]

We are happy to post our equity lessons so all parents can see them. I will include the books about supporting transgender students on our list. Those were not included at first because we did not think they were necessary. As we learned more about our student populations we learned they are necessary.

We are working on setting up our website to list the specifics that you have asked for. We would love to support as much transparency as possible.

Yes we made an informed decision about the two books as an admin and teacher team. This law 53E-9-203 does not include children's books that support transgender students.

We hope that these changes will support you and all families as we continue this work.

Thank you so much for your communication

—

Vanessa Jobe, Ed.D.

Horizon Elementary Assistant Principal

(she/her/ hers)

801.264.7420

Dr. Jobe's initial reaction to April's January 13 email:

I have tried that with her. She too (like [redacted]) wants things "in writing". Also, many of her statements were taken directly from communication with [redacted]

On Wed, Jan 13, 2021 at 8:32 AM Darren Dean <ddean@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Vanessa,

I know that your previous parent wanted to communicate via email, but my preference is always to meet or have a phone conversation when parents are concerned. I would send her an email asking her if you could schedule a time to meet and/or talk with her. That would be my thought.

Darren :)

Darren Dean
Director of Personnel & Student Services
Murray City School District
Office: 801-264-7466
Cell: 801-647-0339



Dr. Jobe's initial reaction to April's January 13 email:

Date : 1/13/2021 8:53:24 AM
From : "Vanessa Jobe"
To : "Sarah Paul"
Subject : Listen

Nooooo worries Sarah. You supported your transgender students. If they do not like that they are welcome to leave Horizon. We do not shift equity practices. We support all students.
Hang tough do not be alarmed!

Vanessa

--

Vanessa Jobe, Ed.D.
Horizon Elementary Assistant Principal
(*she/her/ hers*)
801.264.7420

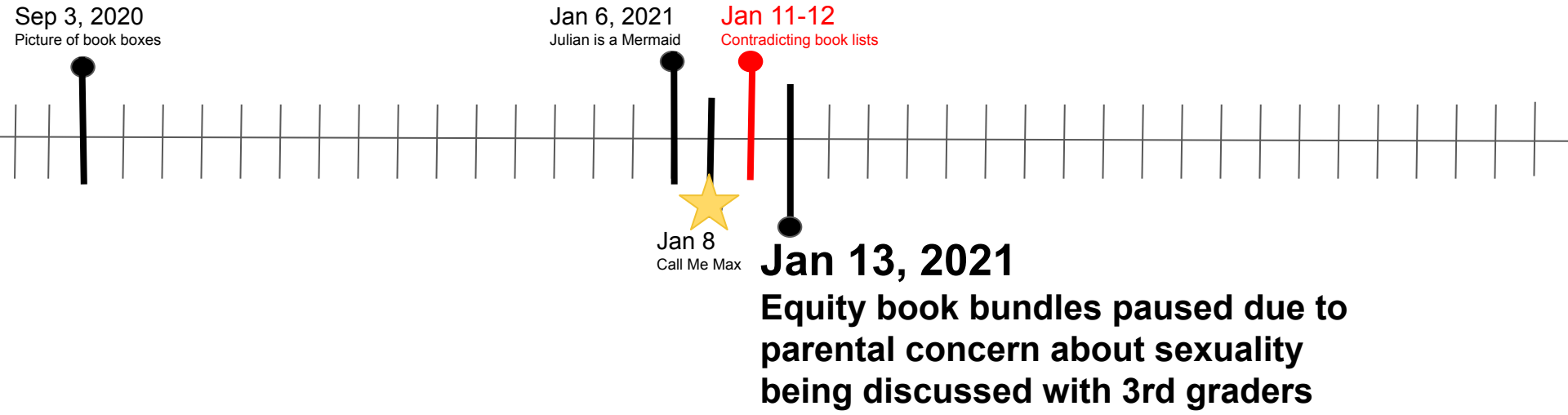
Phone call with April, Whitney Anderson, and Darren Dean

Jan 13, 2021
Parent phone call
with Principal
Whitney Anderson

**team that's made up of an admin
team and some teachers in the
building**

Equity Book Bundles paused.

No claim that a student brought in *Call Me Max*.



Pride, Not Prejudice:

An LGBTQ+ Conference for Utah
Educators, Students, and Caregivers

January 22 - 23, 2021

Pride, Not Prejudice: From the Ground Up: Uniting Educators for Change

Presented by: Murray Equity Council



FRIENDS, ALLIES, AND MENTORS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

Cara Cerise (she, her, they, them) is an out and outspoken LGBTQ+ identified elementary educator. She has a bachelor's degree in Sociology and Spanish from Westminster College and a master's in Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language from the University of Alcalá de Henares. Cara was recognized as the 2021 Utah NAME (National Association for Multicultural Education) Educator of the Year and is deeply committed to creating inclusive and affirming environments for all students to learn, grow, and thrive.



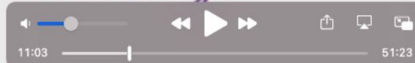
From the Ground Up: Uniting Educators for Change

Cara Cerise, Keri Hohnholt, Dr. Vanessa Jobe, Darren Dean, Morgan Lami, Juliet Reynolds



MURRAY CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

We Are Murray!



Core Beliefs*:

- We believe in fixing the systems that create marginalization, not fixing individuals who are marginalized by the systems.
- We believe in centering those most directly impacted by marginalization in our curriculum, discussions, staffing, policies, and practices. This includes People of Color, People with Disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer People, Immigrants, Refugees, people from low-income households, members of minority religious groups, and other marginalized populations.
- We believe in developing an intersectional approach to create equitable educational environments within a larger inequitable society. An intersectional approach acknowledges the complex way our identities and experiences overlap to influence the prejudices and privileges we face.
- We believe that self-reflection of worldview and personal bias is an ongoing process and essential to engaging in any kind of equity work.

**Adapted from RE·Center Race & Equity in Education.*





Current structure and school representation:

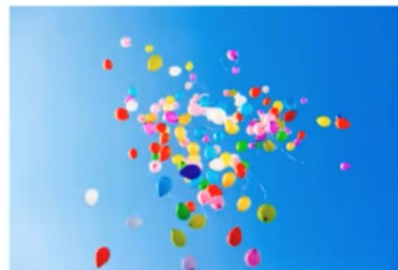
- Leadership team of 7 (meets 2-3 times per month)
- General council of 25 (meets once a month)
- Representation from nearly every school in our district k-12
- Teachers, administrators, district office staff, school psychologists, social workers, parents





Successes:

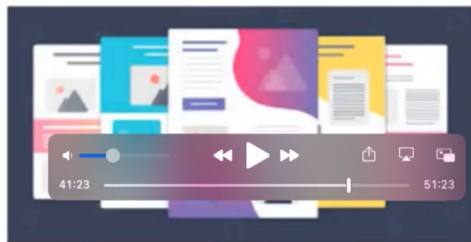
- Council coming to fruition, district office involvement
- Higher employee interest and investment in equity: events, trainings
- Getting conversations started with the school board and district office
- Formally requesting Equity Director
- Equity book bundles at Horizon Elementary (project of Dr. Jobe's)
- Correction of a harmful memo that went out to MCSD staff in late August
- Professional development on LGBTQ+ cultural competency for next school year





Current events, goals, projects:

- Information on district website
- Formal request to superintendent regarding hiring an equity director
- Newsletter with helpful tips and best practices for educators
- Restructuring of council to facilitate greater representation, more action, and sustainability
- Mandatory professional development around diversity and inclusion for next school year



Successes:

- Council coming to fruition, district office involvement
- Higher employee interest and investment in equity: events, trainings
- Getting conversations started with the school board and district office
- Formally requesting Equity Director
- Equity book bundles at Horizon Elementary (project of Dr. Jobe's)
- Correction of a harmful memo that went out to MCSD staff in late August
- Professional development on LGBTQ+ cultural competency for next school year



Pride, Not Prejudice: Captivating Reads

Presented by: Nathan Spofford from Kings English Bookstore

Moderated by: Cara Cerise from FAM



The brain, it seems, does not make much distinction between reading about an experience and encountering it in real life. In each case, the same neurological regions are stimulated.

Tim Parks

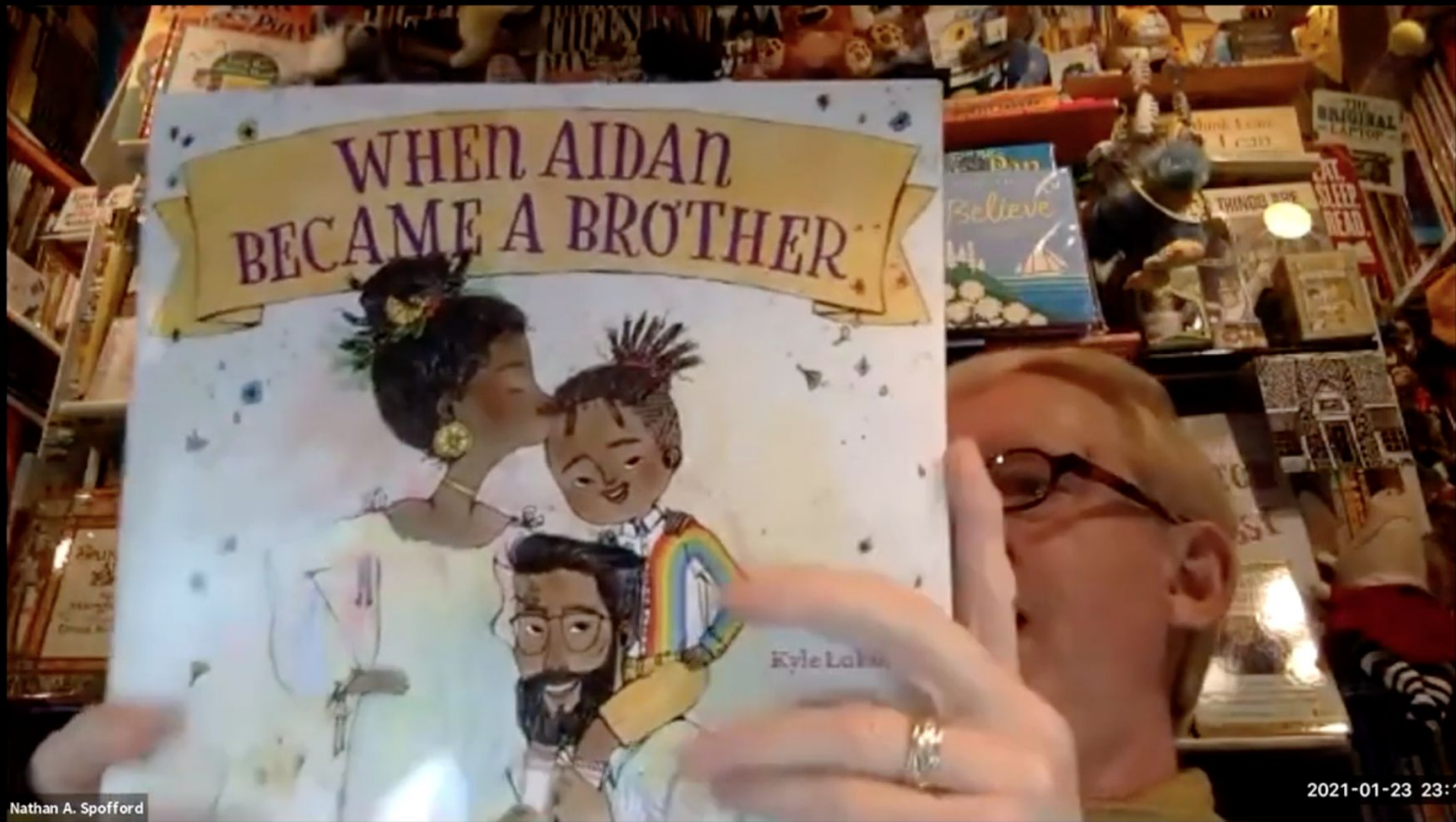


2021-01-23 22:52:13



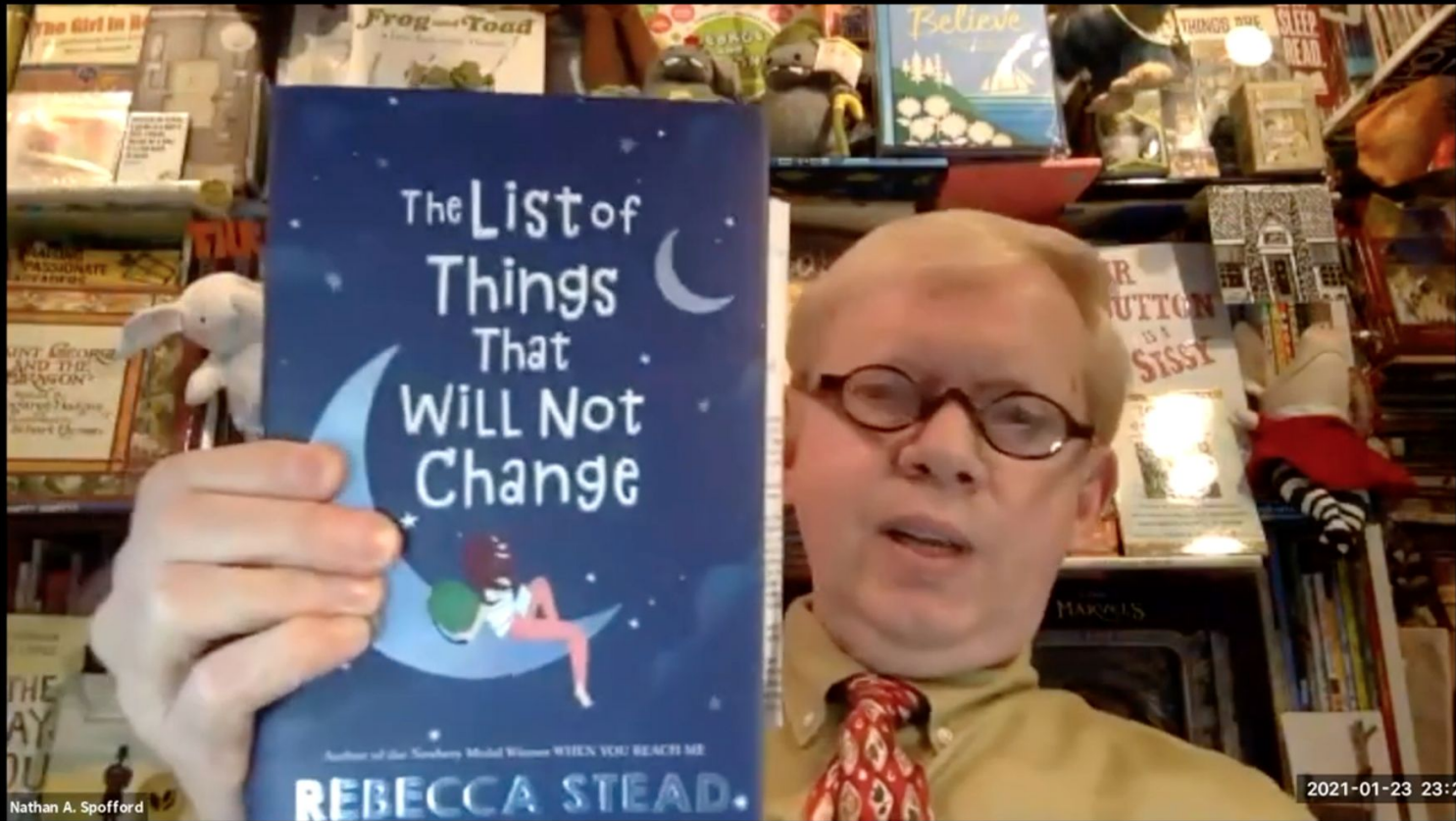
Nathan A. Spofford

2021-01-23 23:07:56



Nathan A. Spofford

2021-01-23 23:10:22



Nathan A. Spofford

2021-01-23 23:21:52



Nathan A. Spofford

2021-01-23 23:05:45



Nathan A. Spofford

2021-01-23 23:16:18



Nathan A. Spofford

2021-01-23 23:15:32



Nathan A. Spofford

2021-01-23 23:1

Pride Not Prejudice conference: “Captivating Reads” by Nathan Spofford of Kings English Bookstore.
Moderated by Cara Cerise of the Murray Equity Council and FAM. **Jan 23, 2021**



Pride, Not Prejudice: Opening Message

Presented by: Amanda Darrow,
from Utah Pride Center and FAM





FRIENDS, ALLIES, AND MENTORS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY



Amanda Darrow (she/her/hers): Amanda holds a master's degree in Education and a bachelor's degree in Clinical and Counseling Psychology, both from Westminster College in Salt Lake City, Utah. She is passionate about inclusion and social justice. Amanda began her advocacy with her research on, "The Effects of a Heteronormative Classroom Environment on LGBTQ+ Students." Before the Utah Pride Center, Amanda worked in higher and elementary education. Amanda works at the Utah Pride Center as the Director of Youth, Family, and Education. She focuses on making homes more accepting and welcoming for our youth and families, schools and community spaces more inclusive for all, and educating the current and future generations about our incredible LGBTQIA+ community.

You are viewing Amanda Darrow (She/Her)'s screen View Options ▾



Amanda Darrow (She/Her)

Getting to Know You/ Orientation Forms

- Name: _____
- Name you want me to call you in class: _____
 - May I use this name **in front of other students**? YES NO
 - May I use this name when I **contact caregivers**? YES NO
 - May I use this name **with other teachers, including substitutes**? YES NO
 - If you answered NO to any of the above, which name should I use instead?

- Pronouns (ex: He/him/his, She/her/hers, They/them/theirs): _____
 - May I use these pronouns **in front of other students**? YES NO
 - May I use these pronouns when I **contact caregivers**? YES NO
 - May I use these pronouns **with other teachers, including substitutes**? YES NO
 - If you answered NO to any of the above, which pronouns should I use instead?

Which name should I use? So.

Leave



- Name: _____
- Name you want me to call you in class: _____
 - May I use this name **in front of other students**? YES NO
 - May I use this name when I **contact caregivers**? YES NO
 - May I use this name **with other teachers, including substitutes**? YES NO
 - If you answered NO to any of the above, **which name should I use instead?**

- Pronouns (ex: He/him/his, She/her/hers, They/them/theirs): _____
 - May I use these pronouns **in front of other students**? YES NO
 - May I use these pronouns when I **contact caregivers**? YES NO
 - May I use these pronouns **with other teachers, including substitutes**? YES NO
 - If you answered NO to any of the above, **which pronouns should I use instead?**

Same thing if you answered no to any of the above.

Pride Not Prejudice: Keynote Speaker

Presented by: Kyl Myers

I'm Dr. Kyl Myers, a PhD-trained sociologist with a background in gender studies. I'm an award-winning educator and a globally-recognized advocate for Gender Creative Parenting. By day, I help people disrupt the intergenerational transmission of sexism. After school, I hang out with a rad little kindergartner named Zoomer, googling questions like "How heavy were dinosaurs?" and playing a game of hide-and-seek that's been going since the Spring of 2019.

A few of my creations that I'm currently most proud of are my [YouTube Channel](#); [my blog RaisingZoomer.com](#); [my TEDx Talk "Want Gender Equality? Let's Get Creative;"](#) [my memoir *Raising Them: Our Adventure in Gender Creative Parenting*](#); and [my essay](#) in TIME. Check out [my CV](#) if you want to see all that I've been up to the last 10 years.

You can find me on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#), and if you're interested in interviewing me or working together, please send an email to chelsea@kylmyers.com.

I'm a genderqueer person, who feels cozy in they/them and she/her pronouns. My partner Brent and I share turns as The Immigrant, as we live, work, and play between the United States and Australia.



Eliminate sexist and gender-based oppression

Cisnormative and heteronormative systems are harmful to people of all genders + sexualities. Stereotypes and bias are learned and inherited through socialization—and can be unlearned and intergenerationally disrupted.



Gender Creative Philosophy

as parents, educators, coworkers, administrators, healthcare providers, as policy makers, as friends...

1. Acknowledges that people may be intersex, transgender, non-binary, cisgender, straight, or queer and that everyone deserves to be seen, be safe, and be celebrated for their self-determined identity and expression.
2. Actively works towards eliminating sexism and gender-based oppression and violence through unlearning binary gender stereotypes and consciously disrupting intergenerational transmission of gender discrimination.



Pride, Not Prejudice: Leading Inclusive Schools: Policies, Practices, and Facing Resistance

Presented by: Alli Martin, from FAM and Human Rights Campaign



FRIENDS, ALLIES, AND MENTORS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

Dr. Allison Martin (she/her/hers): Alli works as an Assistant Principal at Horizonte Instruction and Training Center in Salt Lake City School District. She earned a doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy from the University of Utah. Alli serves as a member of the Board of Governors for the Human Rights Campaign and is a co-founding member of Friends, Allies, and Mentors of the LGBTQ community (FAM). Through her work with FAM, Alli regularly provides professional learning experiences to educators on issues of intersectionality and LGBTQ youth.



Home Back Forward Print

Pride not prejudice - Alli

Design Transitions Animations Slide Show Review View Tell me

Share Comments

Convert to SmartArt

Picture Drawing Sensitivity Design Ideas

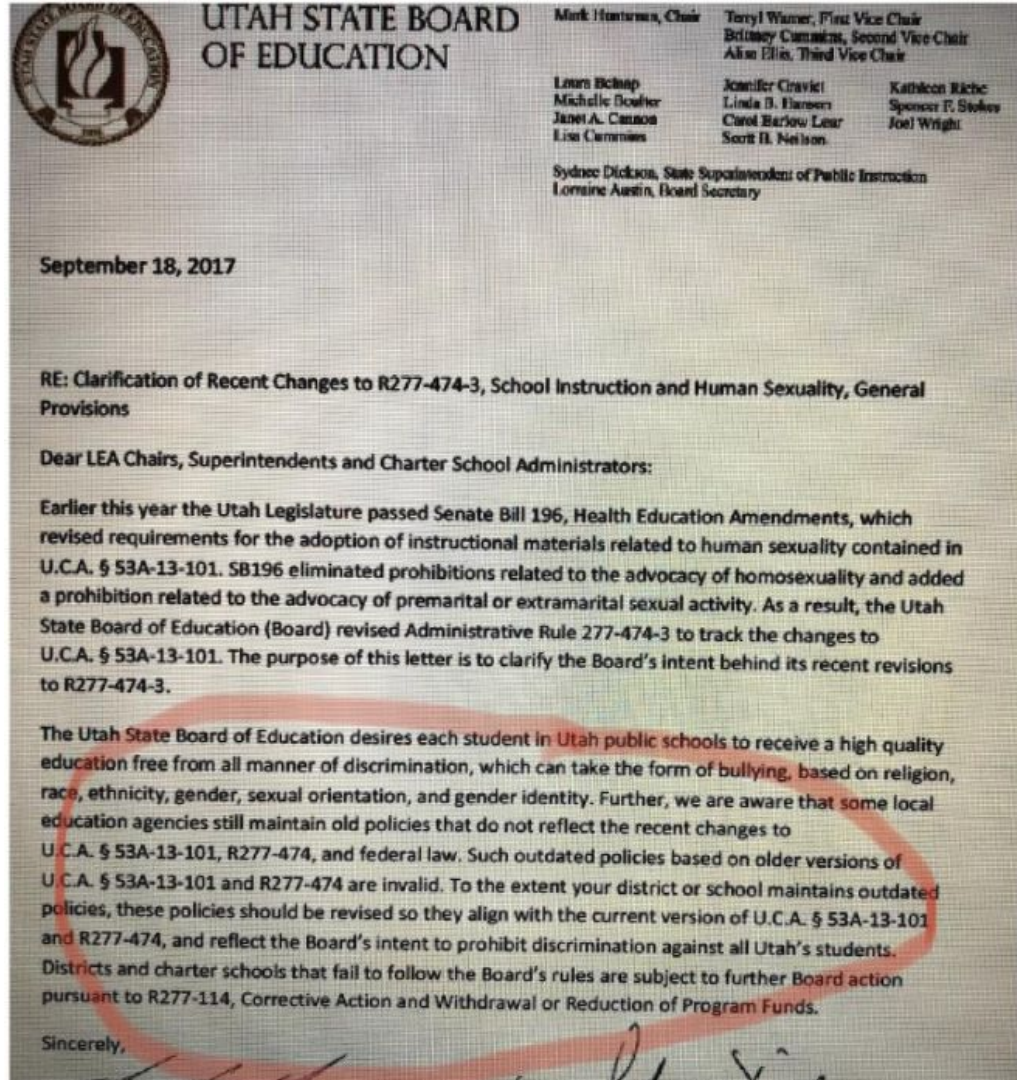
Leading Inclusive Schools: Policies, Practices, and Facing Resistance

Pride, Not Prejudice Conference
January 23, 2021
Dr. Alli Martin



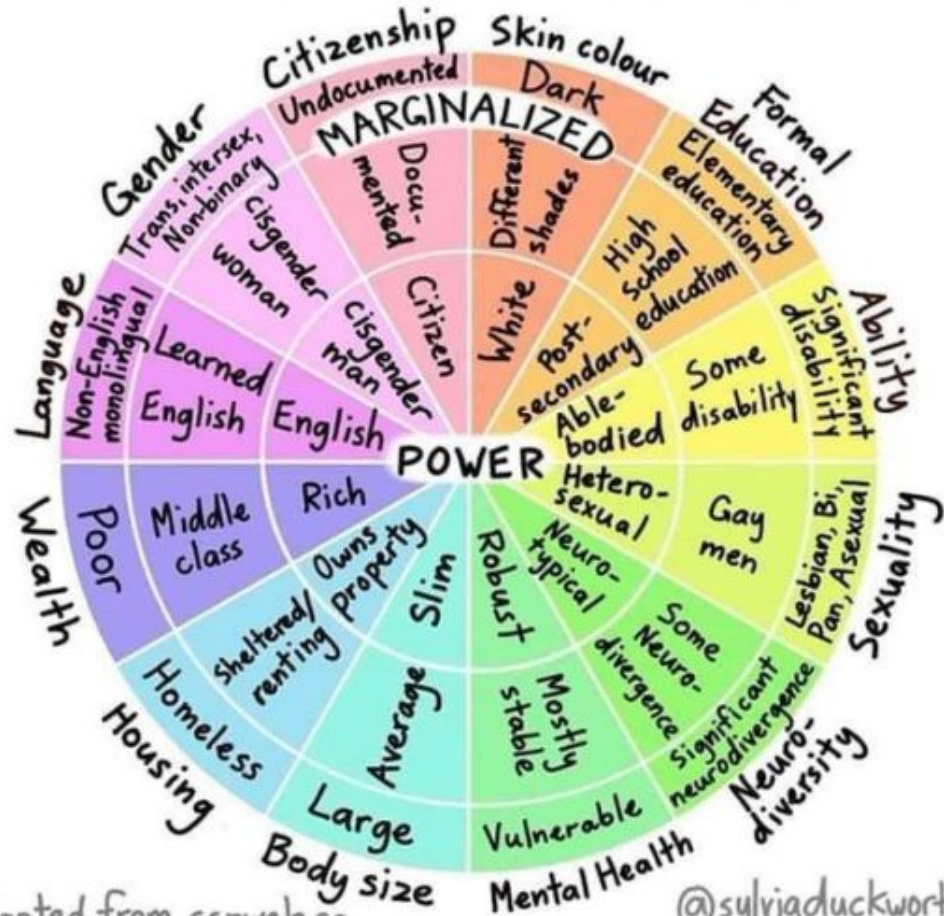
Dr. Alli Martin (she/h...

In her presentation at the Pride Conference, Alli Martin showed the same USBE memo used by Ms. Paul (to excuse the reading of *Call Me Max*). She told teachers it was their “Get-Out-Of-Jail-Free card” to show parents if they push back when LGBTQ topics are taught or discussed.



WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE

Jan 23, 2021-
 Also from Alli Martin's
 presentation -
 Intersectionality.

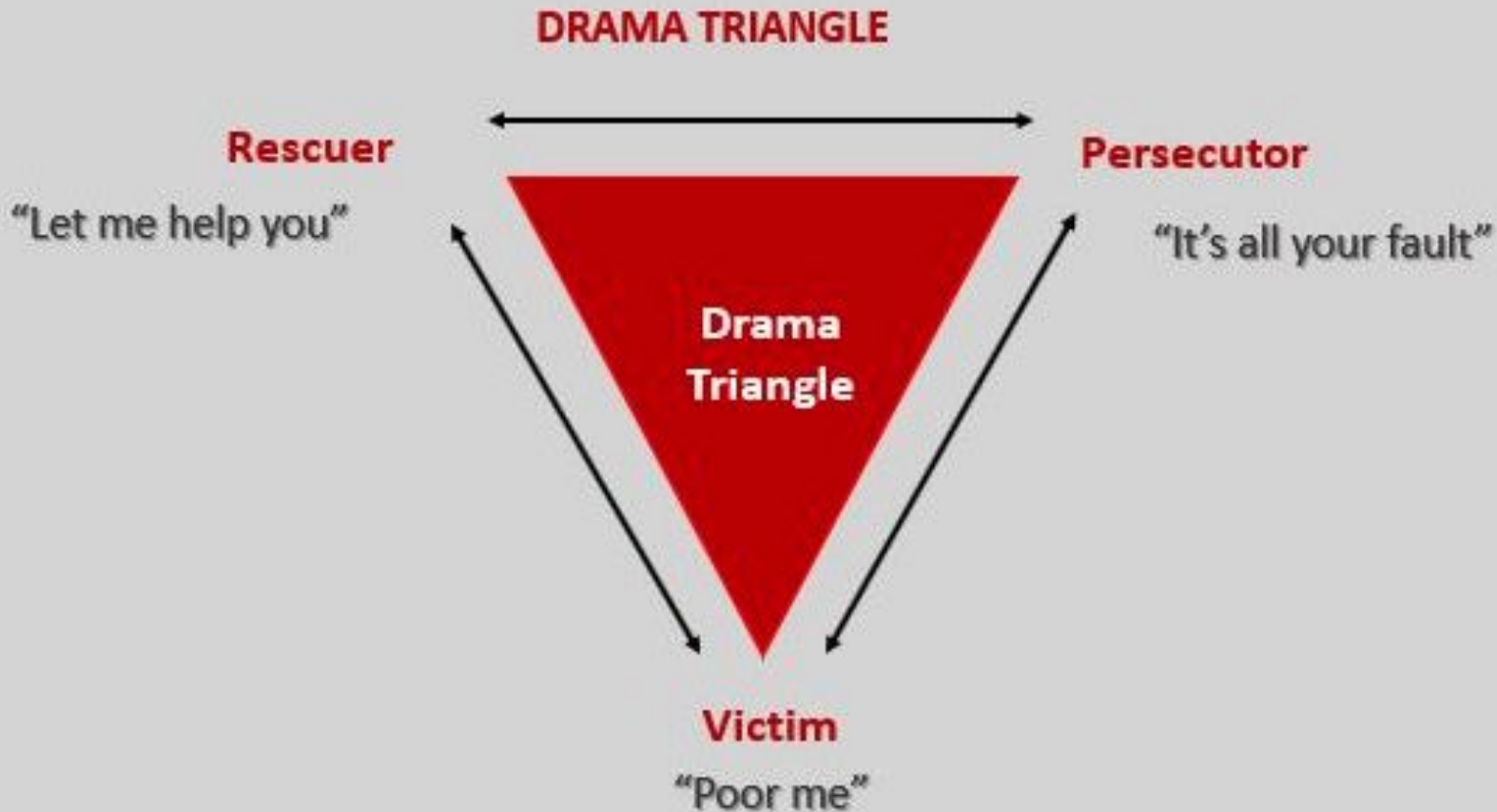


Adapted from ccrweb.ca

@sylvriaduckworth

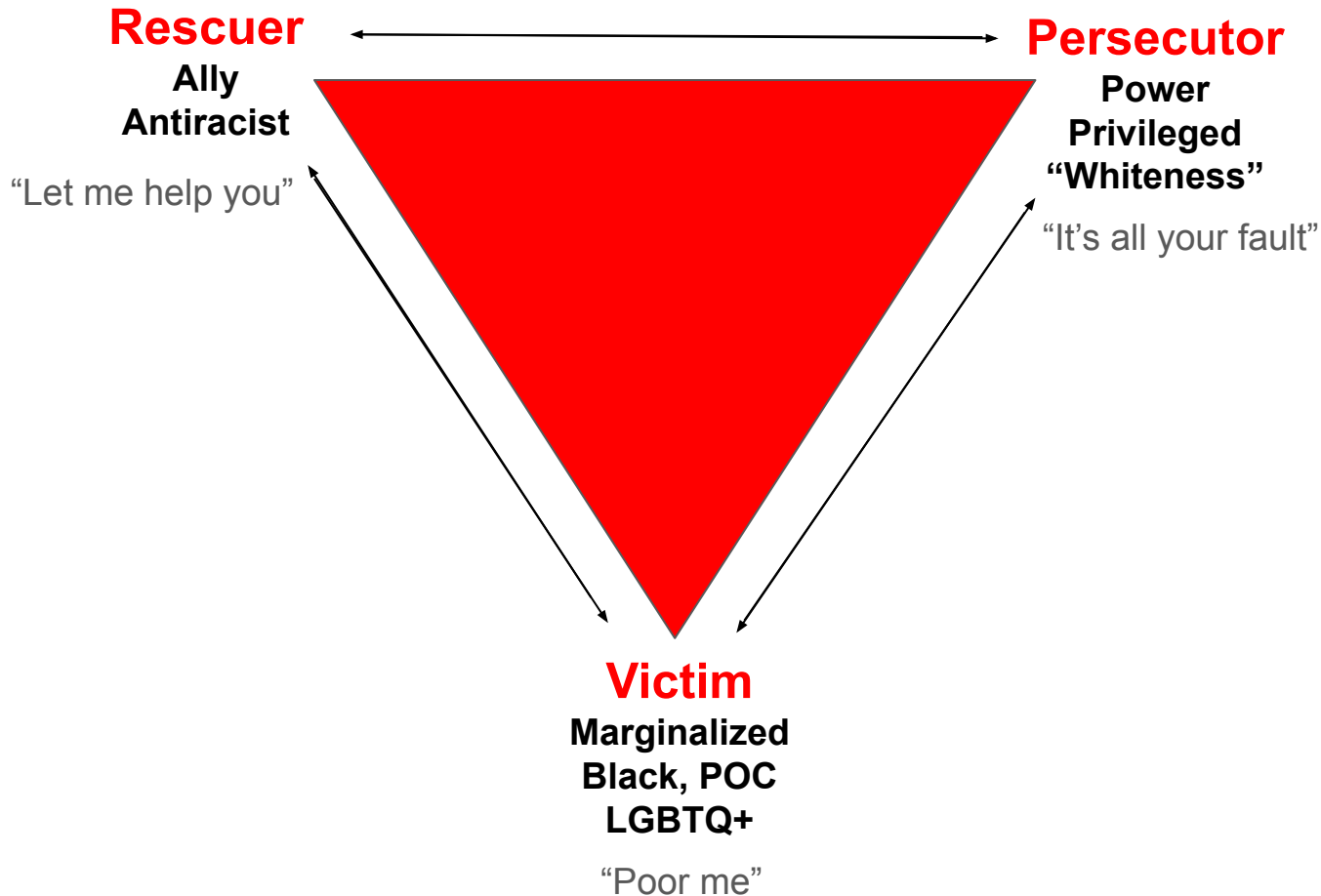
Diagram for dysfunctional and manipulative relationships

Commonly accepted, taught, and used in therapy. Developed by Stephen Karpman, 1960's



Drama Triangle

through CRT and Intersectionality



Why is it called the
“DRAMA”
triangle?

- **Racism and discrimination do exist.**
- **We do not believe they are systemic.**
- **CRT and Intersectionality are not the answer.**

Sep 3, 2020
Picture of book boxes

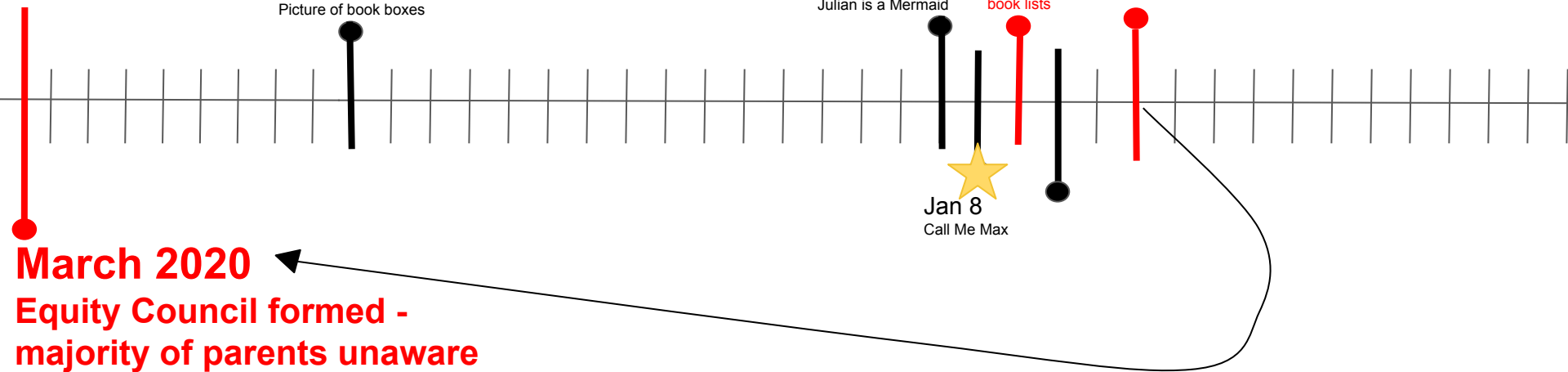
Jan 6, 2021
Julian is a Mermaid

Jan 8
Call Me Max

Jan 11-12
Contradicting
book lists

Jan 13
Equity book
bundles paused

Jan 23, 2021
Equity Council presents
in Pride Not Prejudice
Conference. Alarming
concepts taught by other
presenters.

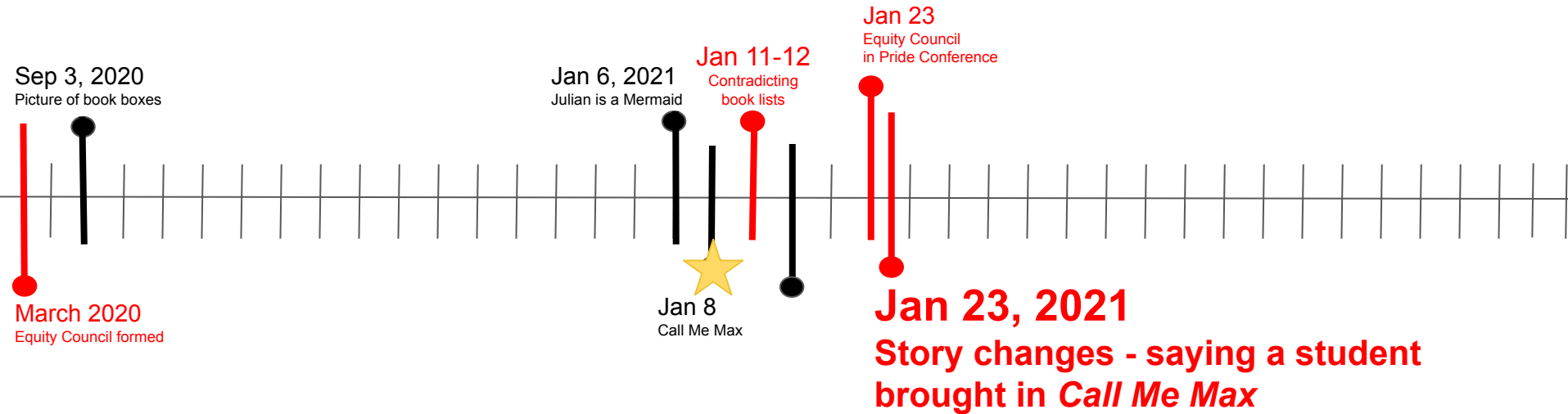


**Receive text stating
a student brought in
*Call Me Max***

Saturday, Jan 23, 2021

Saturday, Jan 23, 2021 - Story changes

The book "Call Me Max" was an isolated incident in one 3rd grade classroom at Horizon Elementary School. It has not been used in any other schools or classrooms. It was not approved by the Murray City School District Board of Education. A Horizon student brought the book in and asked if the teacher would read the book to the class. The teacher read the book to the class and answered the question you mentioned brought up by the students in the class about growing a beard. The administration at Horizon Elementary was not aware of this book being read until it was brought to their attention by parents. The communication that followed with parents was unfortunate in that several different messages were sent with conflicting information. We understand and appreciate that this has caused concerns of trust with parents. This is a personnel matter that we as a district have addressed with the administration at Horizon Elementary to ensure it does not happen in the future. We have also spoken with all of our administrators so they are aware of what occurred.



April requests to join the Equity Council

January 27, 2021

- Murray District Equity Committee



• **April Wilde** [REDACTED]

To: ccerise@murrayschools.org



Wed, Jan 27, 2021 at 3:26 PM



Hello Ms. Cerise,

I've heard recently about this equity committee and that you are the chair. I would like to become a member of this committee. I'm a parent of students who attend Horizon Elementary School. Can you tell me how I go about being added to the committee?

Thank you.

-April Despain

● Re: Murray District Equity Committee



● **Cara Cerise** <ccerise@murrayschools.org>

To: April Wilde



Fri, Jan 29, 2021 at 2:55 PM



Hi April,

Thank you very much for your message. I can definitely provide more information about joining. How did you hear about the Equity Council and what interests you about participating? What are you hoping to bring to the council? What are you hoping to gain by being involved?

The group has a mission, vision, and set of core beliefs, as well as a set of group norms. I will include them attached to this email. These act as the foundation of our work and each council member is expected to adhere to these norms during meetings. If this sounds good to you, we'd be happy to have you join our next meeting. It is on February 11th from 3-4:30 p.m. on zoom (sometimes we end earlier). I will be sending out the invite at the end of next week or on Monday Feb. 8th. We will be discussing our newsletter and information on the district website.

Let me know if you have any specific questions.

Thanks,

Cara

Mission: The mission of the Murray City School District Equity Council is to build a diverse, equitable, and inclusive district by providing all students, families, and employees with a community of care, respect, and belonging.

Vision: The MCSD Equity Council envisions each school in our district as a safe and empowering place to learn and grow for everyone.

Core beliefs*:

- We believe in fixing the systems that create marginalization, not fixing individuals who are marginalized by the systems.

- We believe in centering those most directly impacted by marginalization in our curriculum, discussions, staffing, policies, and practices. This includes People of Color, People with Disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer People, Immigrants, Refugees, people from low-income households, members of minority religious groups, and other marginalized populations.

- We believe in developing an intersectional approach to create equitable educational environments within a larger inequitable society. An intersectional approach acknowledges the complex way our identities and experiences overlap to influence the prejudices and privileges we face.

- We believe that self-reflection of worldview and personal bias is an ongoing process and essential to engaging in any kind of equity work.

*Adapted from RE-Center *Race & Equity in Education*.

Learning about the memos

January 28, 2021



April Wilde <[redacted]>
To: Darren Dean



Wed, Jan 27, 2021 at 3:33 PM



Hi Darren,

I have attached a picture of a memo that was shared with me by my child's 3rd grade teacher in reference to the books and curriculum of his class. I would like to get the background information surrounding this memo. Will you please fill me in?

Thanks.

-April Despain





To: April Wilde

April,

I'll do my best to explain the basics in this email. Also, if a phone call would help for additional clarification I can be available after hours on my cell.

Here are the basics of the memo background. **Note - I have attached three documents as part of this.*

Memo #1 - This memo was sent to all employees of the district at the start of the school year to remind them about First Amendment and political speech issues.

Memo #2 - Due to concerns, this addendum memo was sent out. However, in doing so what is and what isn't political speech became a large concern to and harmed employees. This memo was immediately rescinded with the district indicating it would have additional guidance at a later date.

Memo #3 - This memo was the additional guidance to clarify and to support all employees and students of the Murray City School District. The memo was worked on by the equity committee, reviewed by the district administration, and was presented to the school board prior to sending to all employees.

I hope that this information is helpful. If you have additional questions please don't hesitate to ask. As you know, we are committed to being transparent in our work and we appreciate the trust that you put in the school district as we work to provide a positive learning environment and outstanding educational experience for all students.

Lastly, can you let me know if you still need additional follow-up on the equity books at Horizon? It was my understanding that you had spoke with Principal Anderson, but I'm not sure if you are needing further communication from me regarding this.

Thank you,

Darren Dean
Director of Personnel & Student Services
Title IX Coordinator
Murray City School District

FIRST MEMO

Released August 25, 2020

Memorandum



Department of Personnel and Student Services

Murray City School District

Jennifer Covington
Superintendent of Schools

To: All MCSD Personnel
From: Darren Dean, Director of Personnel
Date: August 25, 2020
Re: First Amendment and Political Speech Issues

In recent months we have all been impacted by the unfolding of both cultural and political events in society. As we begin the 2020-2021 school year, the Murray City School District would like to remind all employees of expectations regarding the First Amendment and Political Speech.

Workplace Communication

All employees have a right to work and all students have a right to learn in a safe and welcoming environment free from discrimination or harassment. That right is protected by federal and state laws and regulations, and that right trumps the free speech rights of public employees in our schools and workplace. Comments about cultural and political issues that are disparaging, sarcastic, or otherwise insensitive have no place at work. This principle also applies to issues of mental and psychological problems, sexual behavior or orientation, religious affiliations or beliefs, and other legally protected subjects (see Utah Code §53E-9-203). Please be thoughtful, kind, considerate, and civil in your communications with your students, parents, patrons, and co-workers. Your example may be the most important lesson you teach.

First Amendment and Political Speech

As private citizens, we all have the right to speak out on issues of public concern in open forums where such speech is unrestricted. However, free speech rights are not absolute, particularly in limited forums such as schools. Employee speech is protected if the employee is speaking as a private citizen on a matter of public concern. However, if an employee is speaking in an official capacity (within the duties of the job), the speech does not have the same protections. For example, a public-school classroom is reserved for its intended purpose of imparting relevant instructions and is not an open forum for employees to engage in their own political speech.

Federal and state laws, as well as state and district rules, limit what a district employee says and how they say it. For example, Utah Administrative Code R277-515-6 Utah Educator Professional Standards provides that an educator “may not promote a personal opinion, personal issue, or political position as part of the instructional process in a manner inconsistent with law.” Educators hold a special position of trust, and therefore, educators should not advocate or encourage acceptance of any particular cultural or political belief or perspective, or any perspective related to the other protected subjects listed above. An employee may respond in an appropriate and restrained manner to spontaneous questions from students regarding the employee’s personal belief or perspective, but a skilled educator will, instead, use the opportunity to expand the conversation, clarify facts, allow students to draw their own conclusions and teach critical thinking skills.

Below is a list of school-related contexts and reminders regarding the First Amendment and political speech:

Classroom Instruction

School Boards have broad discretion in establishing the classroom curriculum and setting teaching methodologies and, therefore, may regulate classroom instruction for legitimate pedagogical purposes. School districts have the authority to control course content and teaching methods. A public school classroom is reserved for its intended purpose of imparting relevant instruction and is not an open forum for employees to engage in political speech. School employees may not use their position to endorse, promote, or disparage a particular political, religious, sectarian, denominational, agnostic, atheistic belief or viewpoint. (See Utah Code §53G-10-202; §53G-10-402).

Classroom Displays with Political Speech

Schools have the authority to control employee political speech and what happens in the classroom. Political speech may include classroom decorations, posters, displays, and personal political expressions, including t-shirts or buttons (e.g., MAGA, Biden 2020, Defund Planned Parenthood, My Body My Choice, etc.). Again, what a teacher says or communicates inside the classroom is considered speech communicated on behalf of the school district. Courts have allowed school districts to require teachers to remove in-class banners and displays with a political message.

Employee Speech on Social Media

In general, an employee's speech outside of school on social media that is not related to an employee's official duties and is a matter of public concern would be protected by the First Amendment. However, if the speech on social media is more of a private grievance with the employer and/or relates to comments about students, co-workers, school, or other work-related matters, or an employee engages in speech that negatively impacts their effectiveness as a school employee and impairs the efficient, disruptive-free workplace, the employee may be disciplined.

If you have additional questions, please contact your building administrator or the Director of Human Resources at 801-264-7400.

Laws cited:

Utah Code §53E-9-203 - Comments about cultural and political issues that are... insensitive have no place at work. This principle also applies to issues of mental and psychological problems, sexual behavior or orientation, religious affiliations or beliefs, and other legally protected subjects.

Utah Administrative Code R277-515-6, Utah Educator Professional Standards - An educator “may not promote a personal opinion, personal issue, or political position as part of the instructional process in a manner inconsistent with law.”

Utah Code §53G-10-202 - A public school classroom is reserved for its intended purpose of imparting relevant instruction and is not an open forum for employees to engage in political speech.

Utah Code §53G-10-402 - School employees may not use their position to endorse, promote, or disparage a particular political, religious, sectarian, denominational, agnostic, atheistic belief or viewpoint.

SECOND MEMO

Addendum to first memo

- Released August 27, 2020
- Rescinded within 2 hours

Memorandum

Department of Personnel and Student Services



Murray City School District

Jennifer Covington
Superintendent of Schools

To: All MCSD Personnel
From: Darren Dean, Director of Personnel
Date: August 27, 2020
Re: First Amendment and Political Speech Issues (Addendum)

To provide additional clarification on the previous memo, First Amendment and Political Speech Issues dated August 25, 2020, we are sending out this additional information.

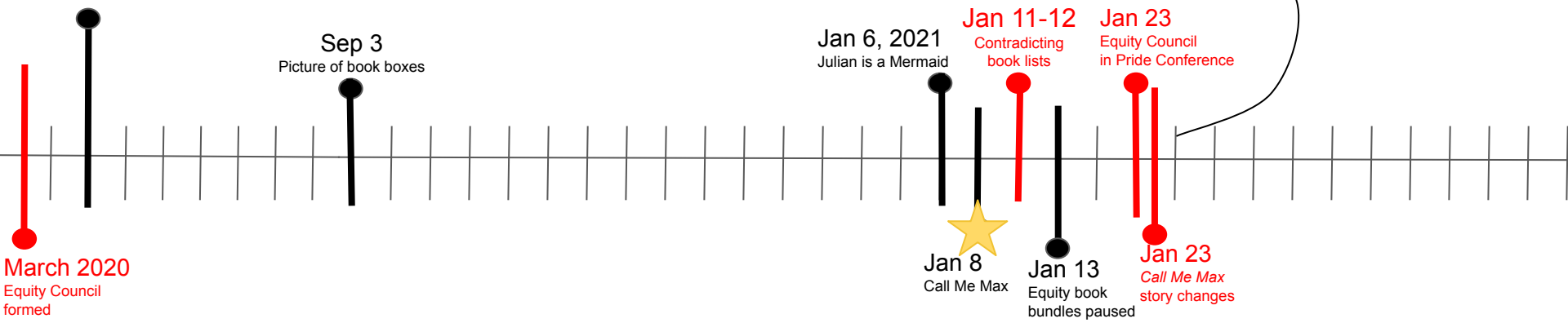
The previous memo states the following. *“Schools have the authority to control employee political speech and what happens in the classroom. Political speech may include classroom decorations, posters, displays, and personal political expressions, including t-shirts or buttons (e.g., MAGA, Biden 2020, Defund Planned Parenthood, My Body My Choice, etc.). Again, what a teacher says or communicates inside the classroom is considered speech communicated on behalf of the school district.”*

To clarify, the Murray City School District does not allow political speech by our employees. Please note that the examples of political speech mentioned above are not all inclusive. Other examples of political speech not allowed would be signs/posters/displays of Black Lives Matter, Blue Lives Matter, All Lives Matter, rainbow flags, confederate flags, border wall, immigration, etc.

The Murray City School District does not show support or non-support for any political viewpoint.

Aug 25-27, 2020

District memos reminding employees of restrictions on political speech in schools released to and rescinded from MCSD staff



THIRD MEMO

Released November 23, 2020

Memorandum

Department of Personnel and Student Services



Murray City School District

Jennifer Covington
Superintendent of Schools

To: All MCSD Personnel
From: Darren Dean, Director of Personnel
Date: November 23, 2020
Re: Clarification on “Addendum Memo First Amendment and Political Speech Issues”

The Murray City School District would like to offer clarification regarding the addendum to the memo on First Amendment and Political Speech Issues sent to employees earlier this year. We recognize the addendum harmed our community and was not in accordance with MCSD values regarding equity. Moreover, clarification on our position is long overdue.

MCSD affirms that Black lives do matter. We condemn racism, sexism, discrimination, hatred or other actions that marginalize our students or employees. This means fully embracing our responsibility for inclusion, belonging, and justice; particularly for People of Color, Indigenous Peoples, People with Disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer People, Immigrants, Refugees, people from low-income households, members of minority religious groups, and people from other marginalized populations.

MCSD supports and encourages all educators to center equity in their daily teaching. Some examples include equity-based curriculum, conversations, dialogue, and displays that emphasize the dismantling of individual and systemic barriers to student achievement. We are committed to prioritizing equity in MCSD. We Are Murray! Every one of us.

Memorandum

Department of Personnel and Student Services



Murray City School District

Jennifer Covington
Superintendent of Schools

To: All MCSD Personnel
From: Darren Dean, Director of Personnel
Date: November 23, 2020
Re: Clarification on “Addendum Memo First Amendment and Political Speech Issues”

The Murray City School District would like to offer clarification regarding the addendum to the memo on First Amendment and Political Speech Issues sent to employees earlier this year. We recognize the addendum harmed our community and was not in accordance with MCSD values regarding equity. Moreover, clarification on our position is long overdue.

MCSD affirms that Black lives do matter. We condemn racism, sexism, discrimination, hatred or other actions that marginalize our students or employees. This means fully embracing our responsibility for inclusion, belonging, and justice; particularly for People of Color, Indigenous Peoples, People with Disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer People, Immigrants, Refugees, people from low-income households, members of minority religious groups, and people from other marginalized populations.

MCSD supports and encourages all educators to center equity in their daily teaching. Some examples include equity-based curriculum, conversations, dialogue, and displays that emphasize the dismantling of individual and systemic barriers to student achievement. We are committed to prioritizing equity in MCSD. We Are Murray! Every one of us.

Email Quotes regarding Nov 23 memo

Nov 6, 2020: Darren Dean, Director of Personnel to Superintendent, Jen Covington: “I think the council has pretty much landed on what they want to say. There might be a minor tweak or two.”

Nov. 13, 2020 Vanessa Jobe, Asst Principal at Horizon Elementary to Darren Dean and Cara Cerise regarding presenting their new memo to the Board: “Hello Darren! Just so Cara and I are clear. We are presenting the new memo, explaining why this is important to support as a district and showing them Utah administrative code that supports this language? Here is the memo.”

Nov. 13, 2020 Darren Dean to Jen Covington: “Vanessa and Cara are all cued up and ready to present the new memo to the Board.”

Nov. 19, 2020 Cara Cerise: “below is the memo we are trying to get approved. **The Equity Council Leadership Team wrote it.** It has been seen and supported by the district office staff and by every administrator in the district. Just waiting on the board.”

Nov. 20, 2020: Cara Cerise to Darren Dean and Vanessa Jobe: “The fact remains that other school districts have said Black Lives Matter, so we can indeed say it and code and laws support that...I worry about it being insulting if it is not capitalized.”

Nov. 23, 2020: Darren Dean to Vanessa Jobe and Cara Cerise: “The district team has met and determined that the memo should be sent as seen below...The administrative team at the district appreciates the hard work of the equity council leadership in developing this and advising us on what needed to be said. We know this is only a small step and are committed to continuing to move forward.”

Date : 11/6/2020 12:49:32 PM
From : "Darren Dean"
To : "Jennifer Covington"
Subject : Equity council statement to address the memo
Attachment : Response to Addendum Memo - First Amendment and Political Speech Issues.docx;

Jen,

I think the council has pretty much landed on what they want to say. There might be a minor tweak or two, but this is what they have come up (see attached). Let me know what you and the Board think. We might also want to talk about it in staff meeting.

Darren :)

Darren Dean
Director of Personnel & Student Services
Murray City School District
Office: 801-264-7466
Cell: 801-647-0339



Date : 11/19/2020 10:00:41 PM
From : "Cara Cerise"
To : ██████████
Subject : Latest board mtg.

Hi ██████████

I hope you are doing well. No pressure at all to watch. I just wanted to share the video link anyway. We mentioned you several times. :)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJlOukCpKc8>

And below is the memo we are trying to get approved. The Equity Council Leadership Team wrote it. It has been seen and supported by the district office staff and by every administrator in the district. Just waiting on the board.

Have a great weekend! -Cara

The Murray City School District would like to offer clarification regarding the addendum to the memo on First Amendment and Political Speech Issues. We recognize the addendum was a mistake that harmed our community and was not in accordance with MCSD values regarding equity. Moreover, clarification on our position is long overdue.

MCSD believes that Black Lives Matter. We condemn racism, sexism, discrimination, hatred or other actions that marginalize our students or employees. This means fully embracing our responsibility for inclusion, belonging, and justice; particularly for People of Color, Indigenous Peoples, People with Disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer People, Immigrants, Refugees, people from low-income households, members of minority religious groups, and people from other marginalized populations.

MCSD supports and encourages all educators to center equity in their daily teaching. Some examples include equity-based curriculum, conversations, dialogue, and displays that emphasize the dismantling of individual and systemic barriers to student achievement. We are committed to prioritizing equity in MCSD. We Are Murray! Every one of us.

Date : 11/20/2020 8:50:21 AM
From : "Cara Cerise"
To : "Vanessa Jobe"
Cc : "Darren Dean"
Subject : Re: Memo Ideas

Yes, if they are open to these changes, we really need to move forward. Has anyone sent this to them?

On Fri, Nov 20, 2020 at 8:39 AM Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

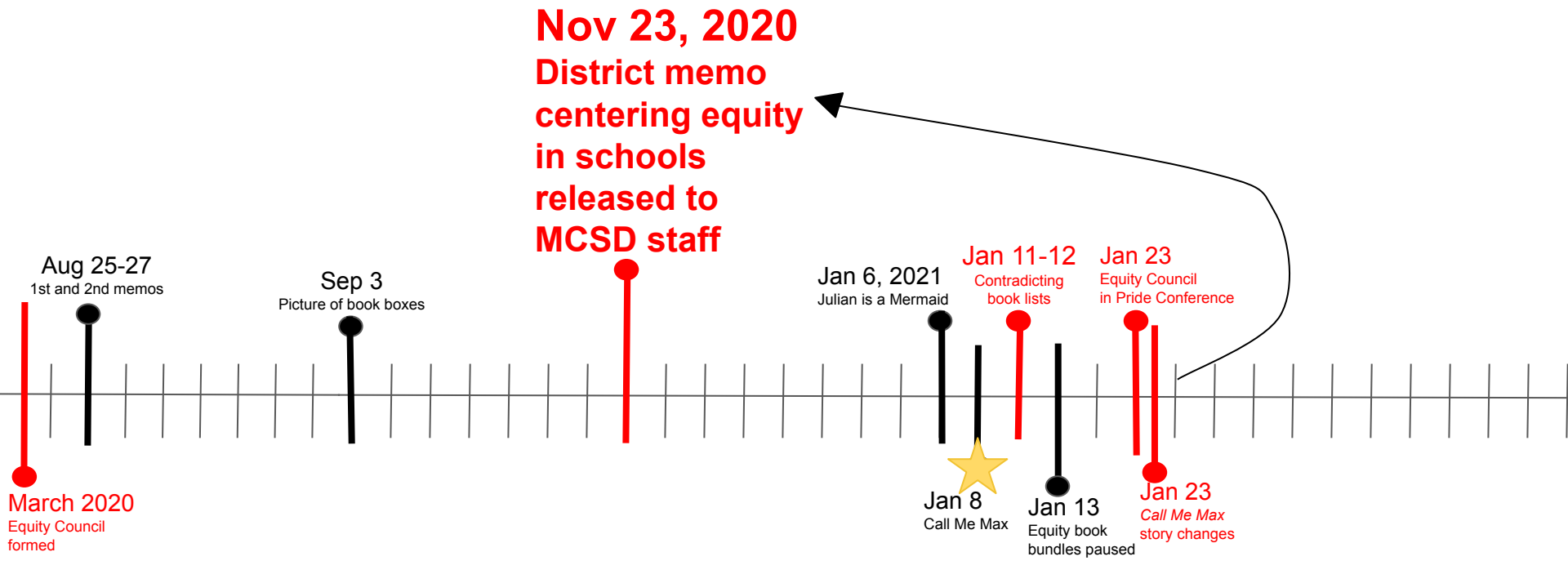
Yes. I think that the uncapitalization would clear up the organizational concerns. I think that getting the memo out would allow us to focus on further equity issues (hiring, professional development ect). Since it has been 3 months of this... I worry if we don't make the corrections the memo won't go out. I do not want to have the un-capitalization to heighten the racism at work that our employees are already experiencing. I agree we will figure this out.

On Fri, Nov 20, 2020 at 8:23 AM Cara Cerise <ccerise@murrayschools.org> wrote:

I am definitely open and willing to consider these changes, but again, I don't necessarily feel comfortable making that decision without the input of the other people who crafted the message. Taking out "mistake" seems fine because harm is still acknowledged.

The fact remains that other school districts have said Black Lives Matter, so we can indeed say it and code and laws support that (we/they are choosing not to). I worry about it being insulting if it is not capitalized. And I also have the feeling that if it is capitalized or uncapitalized, the folks who have a problem with it will still have a problem with it. I think "affirms" is good. Honestly, whatever reasonable measures to get this sent out I am fine with discussing. There just doesn't seem to be much discussion happening outside of just the board members talking amongst themselves... so it's hard to say what they would and wouldn't accept as far as edits and changes go. Thank you both for everything. We will figure this out.

**From FIRST to THIRD memo:
Complete reversal**



Turning Point...

- Memos and Pride videos shared on Facebook.
- Greg Marchant sees memos.
- Watches Pride videos.
- Greg gets involved.

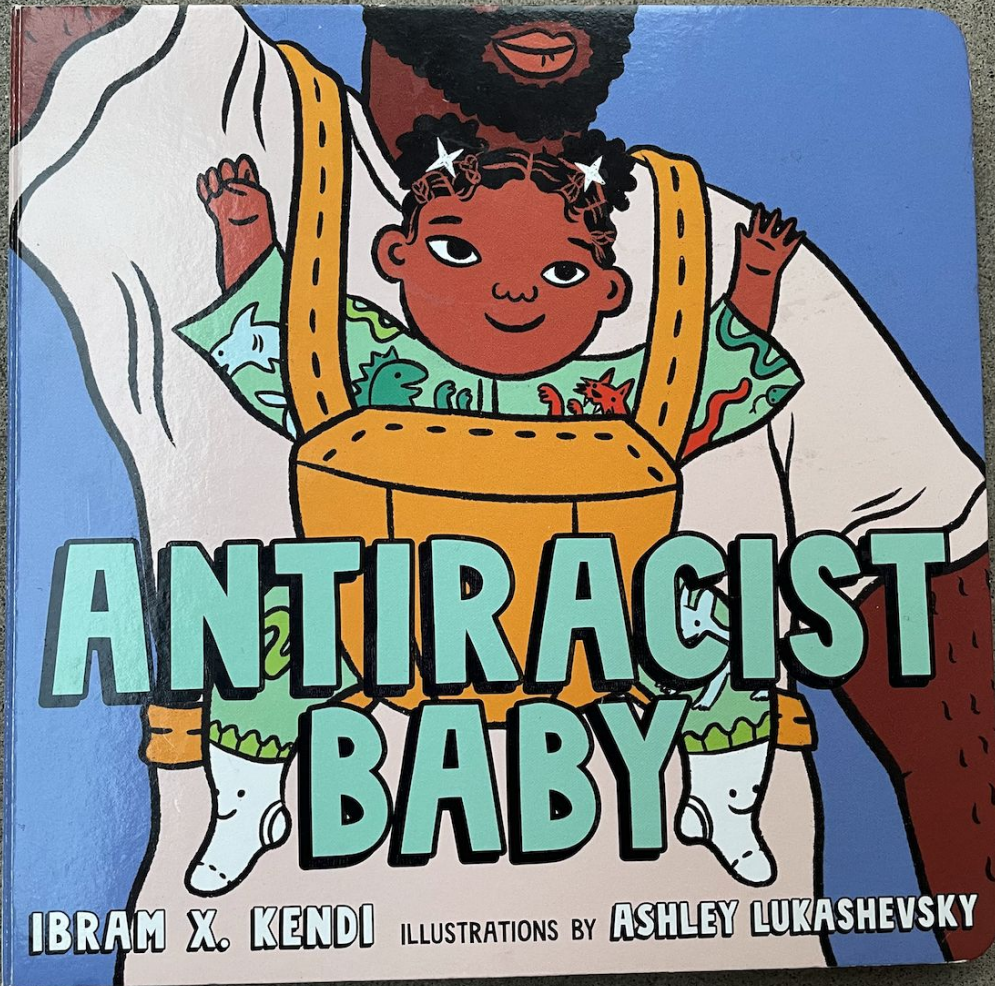
Greg and April begin reviewing books in bundle program

February 2021

Problematic books from Original Equity Book List

This was the ONLY list ever openly shared with parents:





IBRAM X. KENDI ILLUSTRATIONS BY **ASHLEY LUKASHEVSKY**

Babies are taught to be racist or antiracist—
there's no neutrality.

Take these nine steps to make equity a reality.



3 Point at policies as the problem, not people.



Some people get more, while others get less . . .
because policies don't always grant equal access.

6 Knock down the stack of cultural blocks.

Antiracist Baby appreciates how groups speak, dance, and create as they choose. Antiracist Baby welcomes all groups voicing their unique views.





7 Confess when being racist.



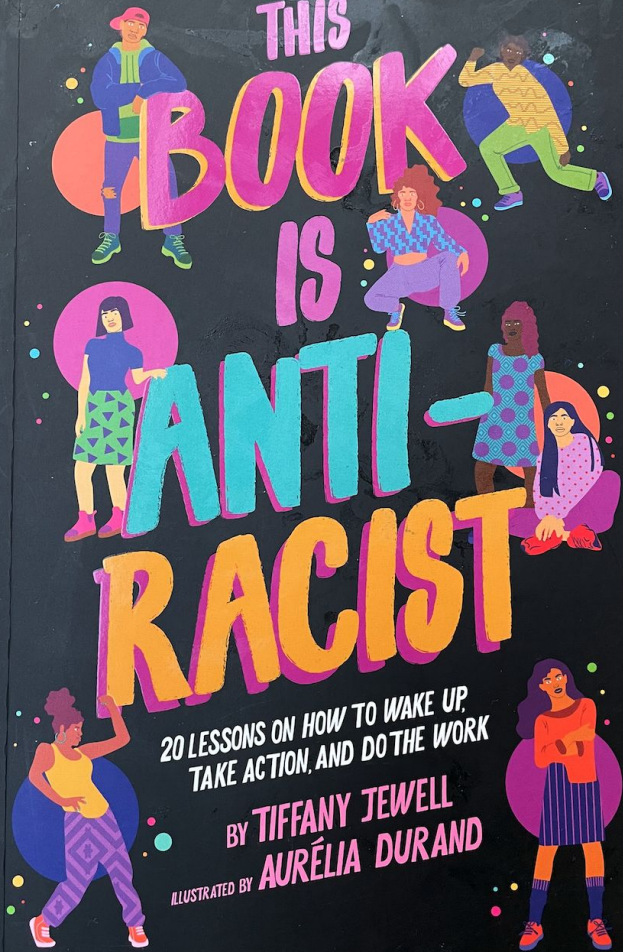
Nothing disrupts racism more than when we confess the racist ideas that we sometimes express.

THIS
BOOK
IS
ANTI-
RACIST

20 LESSONS ON HOW TO WAKE UP,
TAKE ACTION, AND DO THE WORK

BY **TIFFANY JEWELL**

ILLUSTRATED BY **AURÉLIA DURAND**



RESISTANCE IS IN OUR HISTORY TOO.

**BLACK
LIVES
MATTER**



SUPERPOWER 1: INTERRUPTION

Many people around me will probably disagree with me when I share that one of my superpowers is to interrupt others so I can share what's on my mind. They would probably tell you it's annoying, rude, or frustrating. And, I'm sure it is to them. But, here's the thing about this superpower of mine: it is really quite useful. I have to be mindful of how to use it. If I never use this superpower, when it comes time to use my skills of interruption, it may not work because I'm out of practice or folks won't be used to hearing my voice. And if I constantly interrupt, there's the chance no one will listen, that I'll be ignored.

I practice this superpower when I'm in meetings with other adults. It's a really good time to do that because, often, the other adults I'm with will say something that's worth interrupting. If I hear someone share a stereotype or microaggression, I interrupt them!

Here's an example:

I'm meeting with a bunch of other teachers and hear someone say, **"Well, I don't see color. Race isn't really an issue in my classroom."** I could just ignore them but, because I know that's a microaggression AND because my superpower is interrupting, I can take action.

I can go ahead and interject. I don't need to wait for them to finish their monologue. I shouldn't let them go on because other folks might start agreeing with them and they'll all start congratulating one another on not seeing race.

I can say, **"THAT'S NOT OKAY!"**

RACISM IS PERSONAL PREJUDICE AND BIAS AND THE SYSTEMIC MISUSE AND ABUSE OF POWER BY INSTITUTIONS



might say something like, "You're being racist against white people." They might even say something like, "Are you saying I'm racist?" and try to turn the conversation into a discussion on how they couldn't possibly be racist because they're nice. Being racist against white people is not a thing. Remember, racism is personal prejudice AND the systemic misuse and abuse of power by institutions. So, I can have a prejudice against white people, but there is no system that has been put in place for centuries to keep white people oppressed. In our society, **REVERSE RACISM IS NOT REAL.** People will bring it up from time to time and you can remind them that personal prejudice is indeed real. However, institutions continue to misuse power to maintain a racist foundation against Black, Brown, and Indigenous folx. Therefore, the only people who benefit from that are white people. Contrary to the dictionary definition, racism is more than just the "personal prejudice" part of the equation.

"BY NOT ALLOWING YOURSELF TO SEE SOMEONE'S RACE, YOU ARE NOT SEEING THEM AS A WHOLE PERSON. YOU ARE LOOKING AT THEM THROUGH A SKEWED LENS. YOU SEE THEM ONLY HOW YOU WANT TO SEE THEM. YOU ARE LOOKING AT THEM THROUGH YOUR LENS OF COMFORT. YOU ARE NOT SEEING YOUR STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES HOW THEY WANT TO AND NEED TO BE SEEN."

You can address their claim of not being racist with the quote from political activist, scholar, and author Angela Davis: "In a racist society, it's not enough to be nonracist, we must be anti-racist."

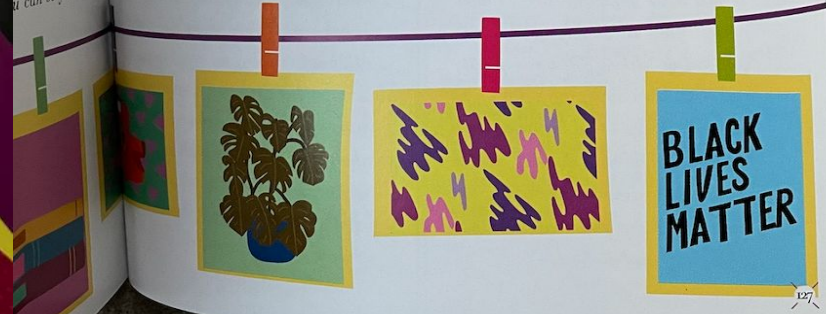
Then you can explain that we live in a racist society. Being nonracist will not change our current situation of racism. It

differen
er to use
mplice and
they remain
in my anti-

oment, and
a good time
r notebook
e things you
accomplish?
be an ally?
ne things I've
on:
cism harms us all.
g. Continue to learn
u can so you can be

a support.
Identify where you and your family hold influence in your spaces. Reni Eddo-Lodge, a British author, writes "White people: have conversations with white people about race." My friend Katie, a white educator from California, works with other white adults and children to dismantle the established culture of whiteness through workshops and lessons. When a white person questions me, Katie will do the work of talking with them so I don't have to. It seems like a small thing and we both know that because she's white, white people are more likely to listen to her. And if you are BIPoC notice where you may hold privilege. (Remember we all have different intersections!)
Listen to Folx of the Global

Majority and believe their stories. We are starting to see more representation in books, movies, and television, and the truth is it's a slow growth. About 7% of all new YA and children's books are written by Authors of the Global Majority.³¹ Black, Indigenous, Asian, and Latinx folx are still greatly underrepresented in movies; close to 75% of speaking roles in films and television are given to white actors.³² Go to movies that are directed by BIPoC, that portray Black and Brown folx in a positive way rather than as a stereotype, and celebrate Actors of the Global Majority. Read books by Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color who are sharing their #OwnVoices.
• Redistribute resources and support the work of BIPoC. You



carry guns and others do not, we do know that they all carry power in their role as law enforcement.) You can see the young Black men are not armed, that they look confused, and that their hands are up.

You've seen the news over and over again; you know history. You think of Eric Garner, Sandra Bland, Philando Castile, Michael Brown, and all the others. You know this happens every day and today can be the day you change that. Here is where you can make a plan so you'll know what you can do if this does come up in your life. **NOTE:** You must make sure YOU are safe and out of harm's way. Talk to a trusted adult BEFORE taking any action.



...ready your notebook.
...observed what's
...You know the
...They don't w
...Black men to
...there are a bunch of
...make a list of eve

Here's my

- Ask the pe
get out an
stand witr

- Record
This is r
UK, and
for re
space
(The
to s

If

First, grab your notebook. Let's start writing!

You've observed what's happening and have examined the situation. You know the folk being held by the police look frightened. They don't want to be there. You don't want these two young Black men to become new hashtags and statistics.

So, there are a bunch of things you can do—take a few minutes and make a list of **every possible outcome** you can think of.

Here's my list:

- Ask the person who is driving the car to stop. We get out and walk over to the situation so we can stand witness.
- Record what is happening with my phone. I can. This is my right to do so. In the United States, the UK, and many other countries I cannot get arrested for recording if I take photos or video of public spaces. The police cannot take my phone from me. (They need a warrant to do so.) They may ask me to stop recording, but I don't have to stop.
- If I am inside a store, private property, etc. the owner sets the rules and it is their choice whether I can record or not. This is not the decision of the police.

- Stay in the car and record.
- Stay in the car and shout out to the two being held by the police, "I see this."
- Standing near the police and the young men, I can ask the two Black men if there's anything I can do... if there's anyone I can call for them. (The adults I'm with can stand with me too.)
- Stop other people walking by and ask them to stand witness too. (There is strength and power in numbers.)
- Ask the adult I'm with to intervene while I stay in the car.
- Ignore this and keep driving



What else?
 Do our lists look similar? What are you missing? What are you missing? There's more we can add and we'll look at this in the next couple of chapters! You can continue to build your plan for taking action.

Some of your choices will require you to take risks. Some may not. Understanding your privilege and the power you have—or do not have—is important. It will determine how you approach everything. This situation with the police is one where, especially if you are white and cisgender, you can use your privilege to speak up. **If you are a Black, Brown, or Indigenous Person of the Global Majority, you will need to decide how each outcome could end for you.** White people, this is not something you need to do because you are at the center of the system: taking a risk with any of these choices will, most likely, not have you end up in jail or harmed.

What else?
 Do our lists look similar? What are you missing? What are you missing? There's more we can add and we'll look at this in the next couple of chapters! You will continue to build your plan for taking action.

my choice

Some of your choices will require you to take risks. Some may not. Understanding your privilege and the power you have—or do not have—is important. It will determine how you approach everything. This situation with the police is one where, especially if you are white and cisgender, you can use your privilege to speak up. **If you are a Black, Brown, or Indigenous Person of the Global Majority, you will need to decide how each outcome could end for you.** White people, this is not something you need to do because you are at the center of the system: taking a risk with any of these choices will, most likely, not have you end up in jail or harmed.

are not alone. Notice when you are appreciating the culture and work of Black, Indigenous, or other Folx of Color and when you are appropriating it (taking it for your own use).

Stand up against anti-immigrant attitudes and actions. You may hear family members or parents at school talk about how they "want their country back" and want to "make it great again," and you can disagree with them and call them out on their racism.

Be mindful of the space you are taking up. Black, Indigenous, and other Folx of the Global Majority are continually silenced, talked over, and pushed aside. If you are BIPOC, take up space! Sit where you like. Go to the head of the line and bring other Black and Brown folx with you. Speak first. If you are white, step aside.

You can help other white people to step aside too by sharing with them why you are not continuing to take up the space that was always given to you. You can also pause before you talk. The world is used to hearing the voices and stories of white people. Change the narrative.

• Check in with the Folx of the Global Majority. Living in a society that does not want you to exist is exhausting.

Being an ally is life long work. As Yassmin Abdel-Magied, Sudanese-Australian presenter and writer, shares, "Allyship is not something you can flick on or off when you have a Brown friend or a Black friend or a female friend. Remember to do it all the time." It's also messy at times and you will probably make mistakes. It happens. The important thing to do is to recognize when you're making a mistake, when you're not being a true accomplice, and shift out of that. The impact of your actions is lasting.

Allyship is not about you. It's not a performance or something you do to get more likes on social media. It's something you are working toward for a more just society.

identities, how privilege, other within us, there us that hold and other parts essed. This is to understand within society, ways examine selves. The fit neatly ary box are es with the agency

able-bodied, heterosexual, handsome, and speaks English has more privilege than a Black transgender woman. Those with privilege have power over others. Not everyone has privilege. Folx who do not benefit from their social identities, who are in the subordinate culture, have little to no privilege and power.

Some of our identities hold privileges and disadvantages at the same time. Because I am cis female, I don't have to think about which restroom I will be able to use. I have agency.

But because I am female, I do not have the same privileges a cis male has. I am more likely to be overlooked for a position of leadership and get paid less for the same amount of work. While many cis heterosexual men can confidently walk alone at night, I cannot without feeling some fear that I may be harmed.

Although I do not have the same privileges as a white cisgender male, I do have privileges trans and nonbinary folx do not have because my cisgender identity is closer to the dominant culture.

INTERSECTIONALITY

Looking at intersectionality helps us to understand how our social identities affect our whole life. Kimberlé Crenshaw, a Black female lawyer, author, scholar, and civil rights activist, used the term intersectionality in 1989 to help us better understand that being a woman AND Black created greater disadvantages than just being a woman.



**Is
Critical Race Theory
in our schools?**



who founded Critical Race Theory



[All](#)

[Images](#)

[News](#)

[Videos](#)

[Shopping](#)

[More](#)

[Tools](#)

In 1989, **Kimberlé Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, and Stephanie Phillips** organized a workshop at the University of Wisconsin-Madison entitled "New Developments in Critical Race Theory". The organizers coined the term "Critical Race Theory" to signify an "intersection of critical theory and race, racism and the law."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical_race_theory

Critical race theory - Wikipedia



About featured snippets



Feedback

<https://www.nytimes.com/article/what-is-critical-race-t...>

Critical Race Theory: A Brief History - The New York Times

Nov 8, 2021 — The person widely credited with coining the term is Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, a law professor at the U.C.L.A. School of Law and Columbia Law ...

Critical race theory



From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

A key CRT concept is intersectionality—the way in which different forms of inequality and identity are affected by interconnections of race, class, gender and disability.^[6] Scholars of CRT view race as a social construct with no biological basis.^{[7][8]} One tenet of CRT is that racism and disparate racial outcomes are the result of complex, changing, and often subtle social and institutional dynamics, rather than explicit and intentional prejudices of individuals.^{[8][9][10]} CRT scholars argue that the social and legal construction of race advances the interests of white people^[7] at the expense of people of color,^{[11][12]} and that the liberal notion of U.S. law as "neutral" plays a significant role in maintaining a racially unjust social order,^[13] where formally color-blind laws continue to have racially discriminatory outcomes.^[14]

CRT began in the United States in the post-civil rights era, as 1960s landmark civil rights laws were being eroded and schools were being re-segregated.^[15] With racial inequalities persisting even after civil rights legislation was enacted, CRT scholars in the 1970s and 1980s began reworking and expanding critical legal studies (CLS) theories on class, economic structure and the law^[16] to examine the role of U.S. law in perpetuating racism.^[17] CRT, a framework of analysis grounded in critical theory,^[18] originated in the mid-1970s in the writings of several American legal scholars, including Derrick Bell, Alan Freeman, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Richard Delgado, Cheryl Harris, Charles R. Lawrence III, Mari Matsuda, and Patricia J. Williams.^[19] CRT draws from the work of thinkers such as Antonio Gramsci, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, and W. E. B. DuBois, as well as the Black Power, Chicano, and radical feminist movements from the 1960s and 1970s.^[19]

Critical race theory



From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Tenets

Scholars of CRT say that race is not "biologically grounded and natural";^{[7][8]} rather, it is a socially constructed category used to oppress and exploit people of color;^[34] and that racism is not an aberration,^[36] but a normalized feature of American society.^[34] According to CRT, negative stereotypes assigned to members of minority groups "benefit white people"^[34] and increase racial oppression.^[37]

Individuals can belong to a number of different identity groups.^[34] The concept of **intersectionality**—one of CRT's main concepts—was introduced by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw.^[38]

Derrick Albert Bell Jr. (1930 – 2011), an American lawyer, professor, and **civil rights activist**, writes that racial equality is "impossible and illusory" and that racism in the U.S. is permanent.^[36] According to Bell, civil-rights legislation will not on its own bring about progress in race relations;^[36] alleged improvements or advantages to people of color "tend to serve the interests of dominant white groups", in what Bell calls "interest convergence".^[34] These changes do not typically affect—and at times even reinforce—racial hierarchies.^[34] This is representative of the shift in the 1970s, in Bell's re-assessment of his earlier desegregation work as a civil rights lawyer. He was responding to the Supreme Court's decisions that had resulted in the re-segregation of schools.^[39]

are not alone. Notice when you are appreciating the culture and work of Black, Indigenous, or other Folx of Color and when you are appropriating it (taking it for your own use).

Stand up against anti-immigrant attitudes and actions. You may hear family members or parents at school talk about how they "want their country back" and want to "make it great again," and you can disagree with them and call them out on their racism.

Be mindful of the space you are taking up. Black, Indigenous, and other Folx of the Global Majority are continually silenced, talked over, and pushed aside. If you are BIPOC, take up space! Sit where you like. Go to the head of the line and bring other Black and Brown folx with you. Speak first. If you are white, step aside.

You can help other white people to step aside too by sharing with them why you are not continuing to take up the space that was always given to you. You can also pause before you talk. The world is used to hearing the voices and stories of white people. Change the narrative.

• Check in with the Folx of the Global Majority. Living in a society that does not want you to exist is exhausting.

Being an ally is life long work. As Yassmin Abdel-Magied, Sudanese-Australian presenter and writer, shares, "Allyship is not something you can flick on or off when you have a Brown friend or a Black friend or a female friend. Remember to do it all the time." It's also messy at times and you will probably make mistakes. It happens. The important thing to do is to recognize when you're making a mistake, when you're not being a true accomplice, and shift out of that. The impact of your actions is lasting.

Allyship is not about you. It's not a performance or something you do to get more likes on social media. It's something you are working toward for a more just society.

able-bodied. **heterosexual**, considered handsome, and speaks English has more privilege than a Black transgender woman. Those with privilege have power over others. Not everyone has privilege. Folx who do not benefit from their social identities, who are in the subordinate culture, have little to no privilege and power.

Some of our identities hold privileges and disadvantages at the same time. Because I am cis female, I don't have to think about which restroom I will be able to use. I have

But because I am female, I do not have the same privileges a **cis male** has. I am more likely to be overlooked for a position of leadership and get paid less for the same amount of work. While many cis heterosexual men can confidently walk alone at night, I cannot without feeling some fear that I may be harmed.

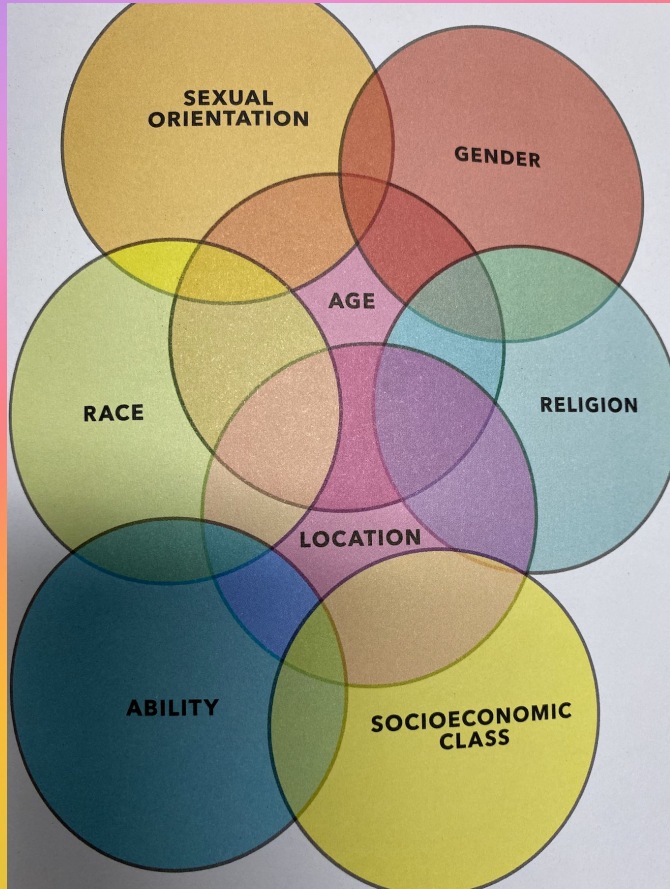
Although I do not have the same privileges as a white cisgender male, I do have privileges trans and nonbinary folx do not have because my **cisgender identity** is closer to the dominant culture.

INTERSECTIONALITY

Looking at intersectionality helps us to understand how our social identities affect our whole life. Kimberlé Crenshaw, a Black female lawyer, author, scholar, and civil rights activist, used the term intersectionality in 1989 to help us better understand that being a woman AND Black created greater disadvantages than just being a woman.



The purpose:



Intersectionality

"In every generation and in every intellectual sphere and in every political movement, there have been African American women who have articulated the need to think and talk about race through a lens that looks at gender, or think and talk about feminism through a lens that looks at race."

DR. KIMBERLÉ CRENSHAW

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

HOW TO
BE AN
ANTIRACIST
IBRAM X.
KENDI

NATIONAL BOOK AWARD-WINNING
AUTHOR OF
STAMPED FROM THE BEGINNING



racial group, they are carrying out a policy or taking advantage of the lack of a protective policy. We all have the power to discriminate. Only an exclusive few have the power to make policy. Focusing on "racial discrimination" takes our eyes off the central agents of racism: racist policy and racist policymakers, or what I call racist power.

Since the 1960s, racist power has commandeered the term "racial discrimination," transforming the act of discriminating on the basis of race into an inherently racist act. But if racial discrimination is defined as treating, considering, or making a distinction in favor or against an individual based on that person's race, then racial discrimination is not inherently racist. The defining question is whether the discrimination is creating equity or inequity. If discrimination is creating equity, then it is antiracist. If discrimination is creating inequity, then it is racist. Someone reproducing inequity through permanently assisting an overrepresented racial group into wealth and power is entirely different than someone challenging that inequity by temporarily assisting an underrepresented racial group into relative wealth and power until equity is reached.

The only remedy to racist discrimination is antiracist discrimination. The only remedy to past discrimination is present discrimination. The only remedy to present discrimination is future discrimination. As President Lyndon B. Johnson said in 1965, "You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, 'You are free to compete with all the others,' and still justly believe that you have been completely fair." As U.S. Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun wrote in 1978, "In order to get beyond racism, we must first take account of race. There is no other way. And in order to treat some persons equally, we must treat them differently."

The racist champions of racist discrimination engineered to

Babies are taught to be racist or antiracist—
there's no neutrality.

Take these nine steps to make equity a reality.

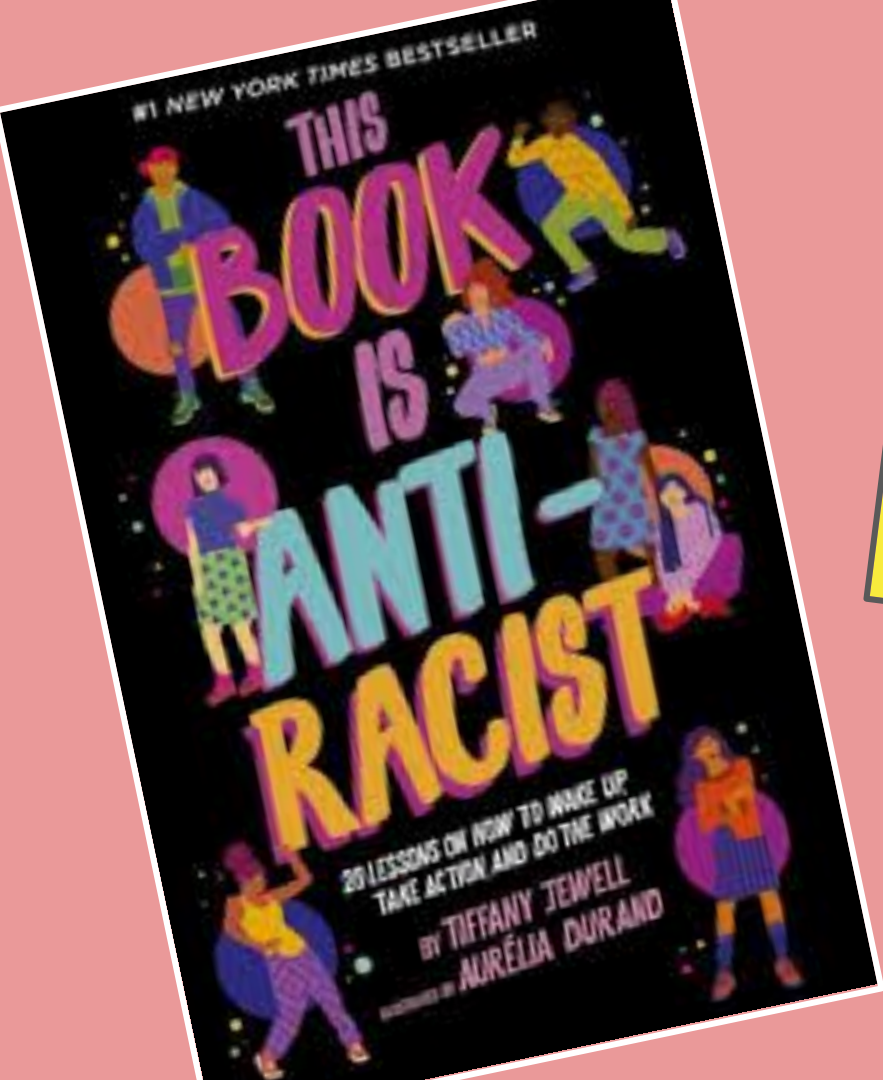


might say something like, "You're being racist against white people." They might even say something like, "Are you saying I'm racist?" and try to turn the conversation into a discussion on how they couldn't possibly be racist because they're nice. Being racist against white people is not a thing. Remember, racism is personal prejudice AND the systemic misuse and abuse of power by institutions. So, I can have a prejudice against white people, but there is no system that has been put in place for centuries to keep white people oppressed. In our society, **REVERSE RACISM IS NOT REAL.** People will bring it up from time to time and you can remind them that personal prejudice is indeed real. However, institutions continue to misuse power to maintain a racist foundation against Black, Brown, and Indigenous folx. Therefore, the only people who benefit from that are white people. Contrary to the dictionary definition, racism is more than just the "personal prejudice" part of the equation.

"BY NOT ALLOWING YOURSELF TO SEE SOMEONE'S RACE, YOU ARE NOT SEEING THEM AS A WHOLE PERSON. YOU ARE LOOKING AT THEM THROUGH A SKEWED LENS. YOU SEE THEM ONLY HOW YOU WANT TO SEE THEM. YOU ARE LOOKING AT THEM THROUGH YOUR LENS OF COMFORT. YOU ARE NOT SEEING YOUR STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES HOW THEY WANT TO AND NEED TO BE SEEN."

You can address their claim of not being racist with the quote from political activist, scholar, and author Angela Davis: "In a racist society, it's not enough to be nonracist, we must be anti-racist."

Then you can explain that we live in a racist society. Being nonracist will not change our current situation of racism. It



Author: Tiffany Jewell

Lesson 1: Anti Racist

What does it mean to be an antiracist?

Ask yourself:

Who am I?

What are my social identities?

What is race?

What is racism?



Waking up: Understanding and Growing into my identities

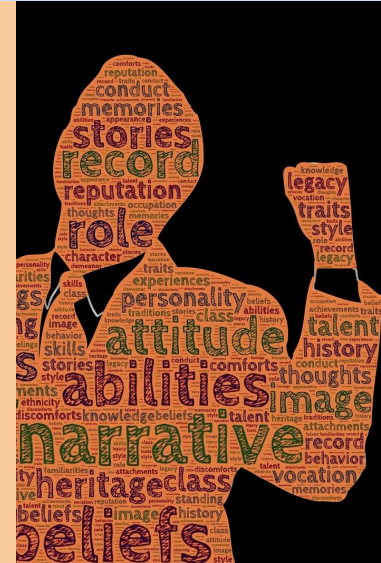
You are everything within you and everything that surrounds you. -Tiffany Jewell

I am...

You're creating a list of your identities!

Activity:

- 1. Pull out a notebook, for the next five minutes write down everything that you can think of that makes you who you are.**
- 2. Grab a piece of plain paper. Write your name in the center and, from there, place your identities all around you. Feel free to illustrate, as this is YOUR map.**



Lesson 2: What are my social identities?

What is the dominant culture where I live?

ACTIVITY: Create a list of social identity categories mentioned in ch. 2. Can you think of more? Now write down your identity within those socially constructed categories.

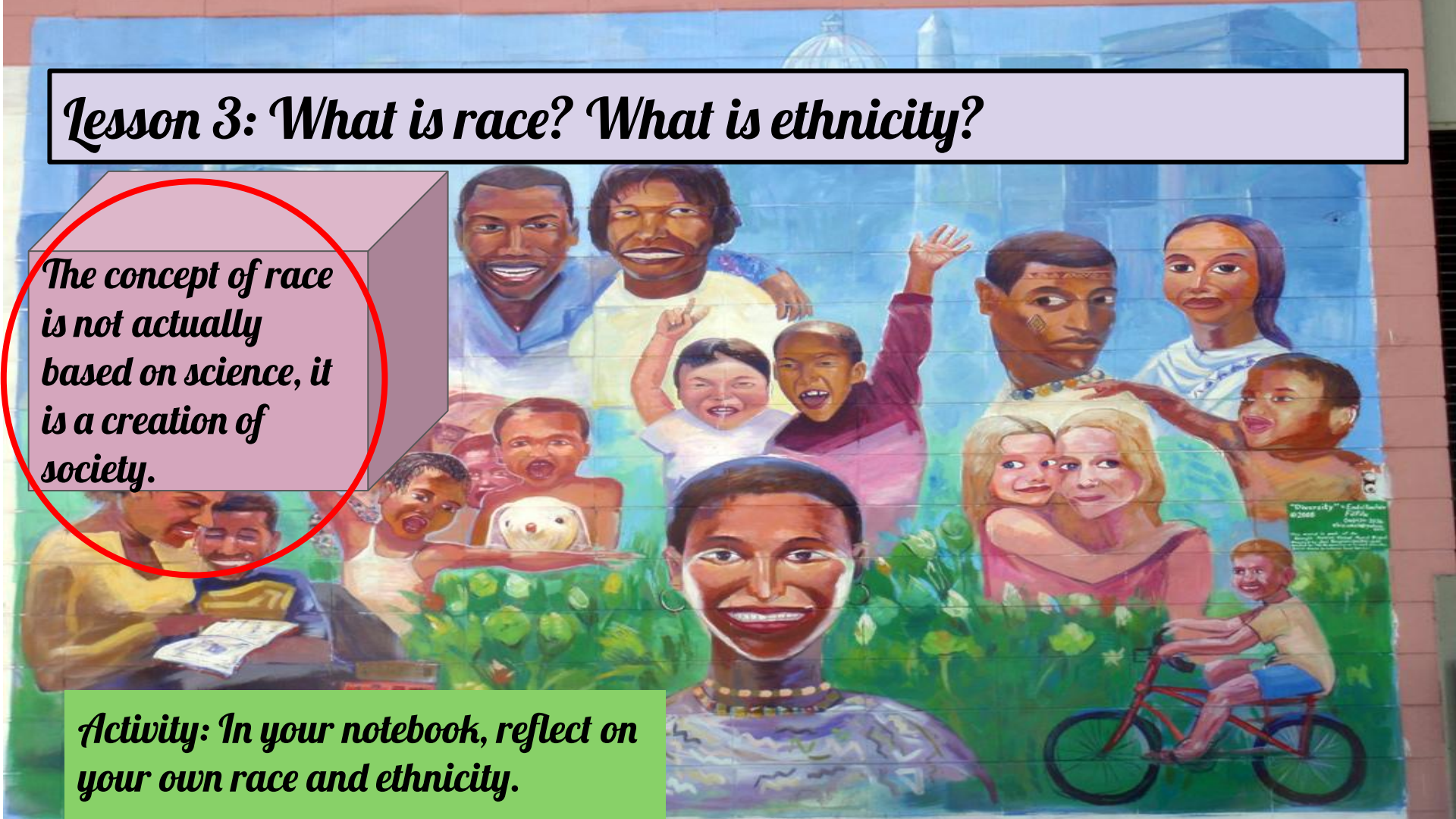
*YOU HAVE
THE ABILITY
TO CREATE A
NEW HISTORY*

Reflect: What do you notice? Are there parts of you that hold power and privilege within your community? Are there parts of your identity that exist outside of the dominant culture?

Lesson 3: What is race? What is ethnicity?

The concept of race is not actually based on science, it is a creation of society.

Activity: In your notebook, reflect on your own race and ethnicity.



Vanessa Jobe sent you a message.

Hi [REDACTED]

First of all, we are so proud of your [REDACTED] What a strong and appropriate way to show support. I am pulling the [REDACTED] to tell them what a good job they did and to also support the other students in understanding how problematic that name calling was. I left you a message and feel free to call back at any time.

We as a school and as a district support Black Lives Matter. At Horizon we are practicing "Equity Book Bundles." Each month we have a focus: (race, ethnicity, gender, ability ect). We offer professional development for teachers and then offer resources for teachers to use in their classrooms to support students in being inclusive and supportive. (Just as your daughter and her friend were). So, all students are receiving lessons on equity and human rights with their Second Steps Curriculum.

Thank you for your e mail. We also agree that this situation was not political. This was human rights issue and we support learning and having the appropriate language around human rights.

Please reach out if you have any questions,

Dr. Jobe
VP Horizon

Questioning Superintendent Covington

- Between Feb 1 - 9
- Greg Marchant and April Despain
- Trying to get conclusive answers

Greg's first email

February 1, 2021

To Members of the Board, Superintendent, and Chairs of Community Councils (at Viewmont, Riverview and Murray High):

My wife and I are parents of 4 students that each attend one of the above-referenced schools - and my wife is a former teacher who often substitute teaches at Viewmont Elementary at teacher's requests. She isn't involved in the drafting of this email and is seeing it for the first time along with you, though she was aware I would be sending it. Our children are good students and the Murray Schools have been a nice fit for our family. Our children are generally shy and sometimes have a hard time making new friends, but we try to help them through that as parents - and they have had good teachers. We would hope that all teachers and staff would look at them as individuals who need help, support, guidance, and skills-training - not because, or in spite of, their gender, sexual orientation, race, religion or any other category.

With that backdrop, I recently learned about the Murray School Equity Council that was apparently created some time ago. I don't believe parents have been told about this Council, have we? If we were, somehow I missed the memo. I watched two of many videos/lectures (that have now been taken down) from the Utah Pride Center's recent conference for Utah Educators. One video that was extremely concerning to me was the Keynote Speaker Dr. Kyl Myers. I also viewed the presentation by the Murray School District's Equity Council. As I said, the videos are no longer able to be viewed, but I did take some notes while watching the presentations. Based on those lectures, I would like to ask you some questions to find out more about the Equity Council, what their goals and objectives are, and how this will affect the children and our family.

1. In the Equity Council's video presentation a question was asked about how it has been received by the parents. The answer was basically that they need to do a better job getting the word out to the parents. I would agree with that. How do we find out about what the Equity Council is doing? Do they have open meetings? Are their agendas shared with the community councils? Are the community councils giving input? Can you please let me know the best way to obtain access to this information?

2. In the Equity Council's video presentation, they mentioned that one of their greatest "Successes" was that the council was able to get the District to rescind a Memorandum that went out to District personnel in August by issuing a revised Memorandum in November. I have now read all these memoranda (see attached) and the first one seemed to communicate that the School District would follow Utah law and could control political speech in the classroom. The last one apologizes for being "harmful to the community" and appears to put "Equity" as the overriding principle governing Educators. Was the council really the body that achieved this "Success"? How did they do it? Should parents have been informed? No one asked me whether the Memorandum was harmful - were other parents asked? A memorandum to personnel regarding what will be allowed in the classroom directly impacts all parents and children in the district. Should we draw any conclusions from the fact that the first memorandum was issued before the election and the last one was three weeks after the election?

3. I have been informed that a book called Call Me Max, dealing with transgenderism, was read in a 3rd grade class in our district without parental consent. When those parents objected, the teacher cited them to the 3rd memorandum that was apparently released due to the Equity Council's successful initiative. Is it true that parents do not need to be informed when subjects regarding sexual orientation, transgenderism, the Black Lives Matter organization, gender issues are taught to our children? We had to sign a consent form for our child to watch "Because of Winn Dixie", but if it is a book on transgenderism is subject matter for the 3rd grade classroom, no parental consent is required?

4. In the introduction to the keynote address at the Utah Pride Center's conference for Utah Educators, the speaker made the point that schools are not about "transferring knowledge," but should be about engaging in discussions that "bring about change." I would like to know what the Murray School District's view is with respect to that comment? Who agrees with that premise and who disagrees? Is Murray School District's primary objective to help our students engage in discussions that bring about change? If so, what change?

5. The Keynote Speaker made the point that she now teaches at a University where she doesn't have to deal with communications from parents. Does Murray School District value and appreciate and incorporate parental input? What is being done to be transparent about what our children are being taught? Does Murray District agree with me that there should be more transparency, not less? Do you agree that parents have a right to know what is being taught in the classroom regarding controversial subjects in society and how those issues are being presented? That we should focus more on educating our students to be productive, qualified, and skilled in the work force and being respectful citizens rather than on social engineering and political indoctrination? What is your stance?

6. The keynote speaker said that all students, parents and staff need to "unlearn all binaries" and to be retrained. In other words, no children should be looked at as male or female without the students first indicating what they want to be called. I assume this would also mean that if a student who is biologically a male says he is a female, he would be allowed to use the girls bathroom. Is this how the Equity Council and Murray School District view the world? If this is the direction we will go, will parental input be considered? An example she gave of improper gender bias was having a "Daddy Daughter Dance" or "Muffins with Mothers". We have had similar events in our children's schools, does the Equity Council aim to cancel these types of things?

7. Have you thought about whether the term "Equity" could really be a code word for opening the door to ignoring the Utah Constitution and the right of parents to have a say in their children's education? Are you in favor of the school system being revolutionized to incorporate political agendas and to replace basic and common sense teachings of mutual respect and courtesy with those political agendas? Are you in favor of using "Equity" to treat people differently based on certain "marginalized" categories with the goal of achieving equal outcomes rather than working toward providing equal opportunities? If yes to these questions, will you please let us know that in a transparent way? The Equity Council said something to the effect that one of their core beliefs is to center those most impacted by "marginalization" in the curriculum, policies, and practices. What does that mean?

8. The Equity Council mentioned some kind of an Equity Book bundle that is available or will become available. Do parents have access to this?
9. The Equity Council mentioned getting an equity director appointed at each school. Will we be informed before this happens? What is the criteria and what will they do? Will it be a paid position?
10. Jordan School District has Culture and Diversity Specialists who have begun doing training in classrooms. Will Murray School District have similar positions? Will parents be informed on what specifics are being taught?

Black Lives Matter and other people are trying to get a State School Board Member removed from the State Board of Education because she shared some of the lectures that were presented at the Utah Pride Center conference, including the two that I mention above, and because she is standing up for Utah families and the right of parents to know what their students are being taught. I'm attaching a copy of a message they sent to the Utah State School Board. To me it sounds anything but tolerant, anything but understanding, and anything but being willing to engage in a dialogue or conversation. Calling someone racist and homophobic because of differences of opinion does not sound like Equity to me, it kind of comes across more like bullying. Another group criticized her because she is advocating for the Golden Rule - doing unto others as we would have done unto us. To them, somehow that principle violates separation of church and state and is white supremacist.

I have not in the past been involved in Community Councils, but I can see that is a mistake because I had no idea that an Equity Council even existed, let alone that they are giving lectures on the changes that need to happen in our school system. Any information or answers you can provide to the questions raised in this email would be greatly appreciated and to each of us as parents going forward. My hope is that you will seek, consider, and appreciate the input of parents instead of only those groups who will scream, intimidate, threaten, and cancel.

Thanks, Greg Marchant

Covington's reply

February 2, 2021

On Tue, Feb 2, 2021 at 4:45 PM Jennifer Covington <jcovington@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Mr. Marchant:

Thank you for your email. We value and appreciate your thoughts. We agree that it is important that students, employees and families in the Murray City School District are able to participate in a school system that values and respects each person. Transparency and communication are also essential to what we do and believe. We are committed to doing our best in both of these areas.

The Equity Council was started a little over a year ago with the mission of building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive district by providing all students, families, and employees with a community of care, respect, and belonging. At present, the council consists of educators, administrators, and parents. At this time, the Equity Council has been suspended while the district and School Board work to put measures in place to ensure the purpose of the council is clear, defined, and communicated to all parents and employees. You are correct that these are complicated issues with no easy answers and it is important that parents have a voice in the work that is being done as we work to support all students.

The Equity Book Bundles have also been placed on hold at this time while we work to put procedures in place to ensure transparency and communication. The district is working on an action plan where educators and then the School Community Council will review all equity materials. Parents will be fully informed of what is being used in the classroom and provided with additional information regarding the materials. Parents will also have the ability to opt their child out of any reading by simply notifying their teacher.

We want to be thoughtful and intentional as we work on both of these areas. All procedures and measures will be shared with our parents as we agree that transparency and communication are vital.

Thank you for your advocacy of not only your students but all students. As a district, we are committed to working to make sure parents are fully informed of what is happening in their child's classroom.

Jennifer Covington - Superintendent

Murray City School District
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107

Greg's second email

February 4, 2021

Dear Ms. Covington and Others:

Thank you for the replies, I appreciate your time and what appears to be your commitment to transparency going forward. I also appreciate that some of these issues are being discussed and re-evaluated. Although most of my questions weren't answered, that's understandable - there were a lot of them. Hopefully at some point they will be. I hate taking your time on this issue and, to be honest, I hate taking so much of my own time on it. But something is happening here in Murray that just doesn't seem right - and is causing many of us deep concern.

Transparency and parental involvement should be the biggest learning lesson. We all want our kids to be safe and for teachers and parents to have resources. But regardless of any parent's opinion on the propriety of teaching some of these things in school, I would think all parents can agree that we deserve to be advised of what sensitive and complicated issues are being taught and how they are being presented IN ADVANCE and be given the opportunity to provide consent and be prepared for questions that arise (for instance, I would assume that a parent with a child experiencing gender identity issues would especially want to know how that topic is being addressed before it happens).

Since my last email to you, I have been receiving information that has left me quite bewildered and confused. Many other parents seem to feel the same way. Conflicting information has been coming from Dr. Jobe and other school personnel regarding how Julian is a Mermaid and Call Me Max ended up being read to a 3rd grade class at Horizon without parental consent. One parent was told that the book was brought by a student or parent and read by the teacher to the class. Dr Jobe said that "Call Me Max" was only read to help a student feel supported for a specific incident and she sent a parent an Equity book list that did not include Call Me Max or Julian is a Mermaid. Dr Jobe also apparently said that she didn't believe LGBTQ+ issues should be discussed until 6th grade.

Another parent was told that those books were part of the curriculum and were part of the school and district's focus on equity work and Second Steps program. The 3rd grade teacher told another parent that reading these books were part of the school and district's focus on equity and antiracist work and she included copies of the school district's memoranda as proof that the materials were approved (inferring that advance notice to parents was not required). She said that the books were part of their equity lessons for the week. Dr. Jobe told another parent that the lessons are wonderful and developmentally appropriate and included a list of the equity books for the year, which DID include both Julian is a Mermaid and Call Me Max. In addition, Dr Jobe apparently told at least one parent that the equity book bundles had been approved by the Murray School Board, but a member of the board has said that was not true. So parents are being told two different things by Dr. Jobe and others. Either it was an isolated incident or it was part of an approved plan. Either the books were approved by the Board or they weren't. Either the books are developmentally appropriate or should wait until 6th grade. It can't be both. So, Number One, there seems to be a problem with getting true and accurate information, and Number Two, parents were never given notice and never provided consent. Utah Code Section 53E-9-203 requires parental consent before topics involving "sexual behavior, orientation or attitudes" are discussed. This was acknowledged by the First Memorandum sent to District personnel, in August, before the Equity Council (as claimed in their video at the Utah Pride conference) successfully persuaded the District to send a revised Memorandum with an apology that substitutes "Equity" in place of Utah Law.

What I have been told is that these two books were part of the Equity Book Bundles program administered by Dr Jobe. Parents became concerned after their children came home and mentioned the teacher had talked to them about how science has made it possible for women who want to become men to grow a beard after going through puberty. If I understand correctly, certain parents received a list from Dr Jobe, after the fact, informing them that "Call Me Max" was part of the curriculum and book list for the 3rd grade equity book bundles program. [See attachments from Dr. Jobe.](#) Apparently, she provided the parents with a list of monthly topics and the October 2020 topic was Sexuality and Gender, so the books and topics appear to have been intentionally part of the 3rd grade curriculum from the outset of the school year, without parents' knowledge or consent. Moreover, Call Me Max was apparently incorporated into teacher trainings last summer.

Prior to Call Me Max, the 3rd Graders read and did an assignment on Julian is a Mermaid. The author Jessica Love says about this book that "As a genderfluid person, I didn't see this as a transgender book, but more about the freedom of gender expression," and originally it was about how Julian wanted to be a drag queen, but the author changed it to a mermaid because "there's something magical about how mermaids have no genitalia." Remember, this is for 3rd grade. The students then did an assignment where the worksheet says that Julian sees himself as a mermaid in the story, and asks them to draw a picture in a mirror of what they would like to become. Could it be that Julian is a Mermaid was preparing them for Call Me Max? Here is a link to Call Me Max where you can see that a child is looking in a mirror (like the assignment in Julian is a Mermaid) and sees herself as a boy who is transgender. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jcrPnaCbKrY>. The book goes on to state that when a baby is born and parents call the baby a boy or girl, if the baby could talk the baby might say "NO I'M NOT" because the **parents made a mistake**. So without parents' consent or knowledge, the children are being taught at school that their parents may have made a mistake in calling them a boy or a girl. Again this is in 3rd grade.

So can you please clear this up? Were the books and Equity Bundles approved by the School District, only approved by Dr. Jobe, or implemented by the Equity Council? If the Equity Council, who formed the Equity Council and where does it derive its authority? I was sent a document with the Mission of the Equity Council. It is attached. One of the core beliefs is centering those impacted by marginalization in the curriculum. According to the document, marginalized include people of color, disabled, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer people, immigrants, etc. When I think of centering, it sounds like the curriculum and teaching will place these categories in the center, or the focus, or top priority. It also talks about an intersectional approach, which from the Utah Pride Center lectures we watched, means "unlearning all binaries" such as male and female. Based on Call Me Max and Dr Jobe's involvement with the Equity Council, this centering and these teachings have been happening at least as early as 3rd grade. Nowhere in the document is there anything about seeking parental input, buy-in, or consent; instead, the "group norm" is to "call others out". Apparently, at least one parent has been told the Equity Council doesn't want any more "white-identifying" people on the council. Is that accurate?

I am not the only one seeking additional information. Many parents are concerned and many more than I realized. Can you please provide us with the real story on what has been happening and what the goals are going forward? I agree that those who may be "marginalized" may have unique challenges that need to be addressed in a sensitive manner. That is all the more reason to involve us in the process. At the same time, I am learning that according to the "Equity" agenda, Equity is not about "Equality". According to Ten Commitments for Equity-Literate Educators: "Equity is not about valuing every perspective. An equity view does not value heteronormativity," and "educational outcome disparities are the result of structural inequities and have nothing to do with students' grittiness, mindsets..." I fundamentally disagree with a philosophy that elevates victimhood and ignores individual choice and accountability.

Perhaps an in-person meeting with parents would be helpful - one that is calm and involves transparent discourse and explanations. The more transparency, the more understanding. Maybe then fewer bridges will be burned and more bridges can be built. We all want what is best for the kids, even if we see things from different perspectives. To find common ground we need to be able to trust that our rights as parents will be valued and respected. When things are hidden, it feels like we are somehow the enemy. We want to work together, PLEASE work with us and not in secret or behind our backs. You might ask, why do you care so much, your kids don't go to Horizon?? I watched the video from the Utah Pride Center conference and Dr. Jobe made it very clear that this is meant to be incorporated District-wide.

Thanks, Greg Marchant

Covington's reply

February 5, 2021

Mr. Marchant: Thank you for the follow up questions. I am happy to address them in hopes of providing the clarity you are asking for. Please know that we do value parents and parental input and never want anything to feel like it is being done in secret.

The book "Call Me Max" was an isolated incident in one 3rd grade classroom at Horizon Elementary School. It has not been used in any other schools or classrooms. It was not approved by the Murray City School District Board of Education. A Horizon student brought the book in and asked if the teacher would read the book to the class. The teacher read the book to the class and answered the question you mentioned brought up by the students in the class about growing a beard. The administration at Horizon Elementary was not aware of this book being read until it was brought to their attention by parents. The communication that followed with parents was unfortunate in that several different messages were sent with conflicting information. We understand and appreciate that this has caused concerns of trust with parents. This is a personnel matter that we as a district have addressed with the administration at Horizon Elementary to ensure it does not happen in the future. We have also spoken with all of our administrators so they are aware of what occurred.

With regard to the equity book bundles, a presentation was made to the school board by Dr. Jobe in the fall that listed the books the school would be using throughout the year. The board did not review or approve these - it was simply part of a presentation that was made to the board. Horizon Elementary is the only school that has implemented these equity book bundles at this time. As mentioned in my last email, all equity book bundle books have been suspended while we work to put a process in place where these books will be reviewed by educators and approved by the School Community Council. We are committed to being fully transparent with this process and ensure our parents are fully informed.

The Equity Council was formed by educators, who were feeling unsafe as employees in our school system, as a place where we could look at policy to ensure equal employment opportunity for all. When Trayvon Martin was killed and tensions in our state and country rose, the equity committee broadened their focus to ensure all of our students felt safe and welcomed in our schools. Another individual did let me know that a parent had been told that the Equity Council did not want any more 'white-identifying' people on the council. Our Director of Human Services and Student Services serves on this council and was not aware of anyone being told this. I asked that parent who told me this to please have that individual, or any individual who was told that, to please contact me personally so I could hear their story and address it appropriately. At this time, all work with the equity council has been suspended while we work to ensure a solid direction and framework moving forward that will have many voices.

Our goals moving forward are to put policy and measures in place to ensure that we are open and transparent with books that are being read in the classroom and the mission, purpose and vision of Equity Council. We respect the rights and values of parents and do want to work together. As an education community, we want to show respect by acknowledging differences, looking for the good in everyone, and showing due regard for others' feelings, rights, cultures, and traditions. Our actions as educators and parents will demonstrate our belief that we are better when we are working together on behalf of every child.

Jennifer Covington - Superintendent

Murray City School District
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107

Greg's third email

February 8, 2021

On Monday, February 8, 2021, 10:09:05 AM MST, Greg <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Ms. Covington -

Thank you for the reply. I am glad that the materials will be re-evaluated, hopefully parents will be included in that conversation and that our input will be considered when deciding which materials are "developmentally appropriate". As parents, we sincerely seek a safe, tolerant, inclusive and understanding environment for every child in the classroom and to build and maintain trust between parents and administration. Bottom line is that hopefully we all can agree on the necessity of working together from here on out as a partnership and with full disclosure and transparency. To be blunt, it feels like parental rights have been secretly undermined. Regarding the incident at Horizon, I have forwarded your reply to parents at Horizon who can respond directly to that. They are more familiar with the specific facts of the *Call Me Max* incident and can better speak to the conversations, emails, and conflicting information received from teacher, principal, Dr. Jobe, Dr. Dean, etc.

That said, I do have some ongoing concerns: You have expressed a commitment to be "open and transparent." However, you didn't respond to my request for a parent meeting - can you tell me if that is on the table? Moreover, the Equity Council's presentation has been blocked from viewing: https://www.youtube.com/watch?fbclid=IwAR13qj_9L3lnJS0l_JpQ_FRLRnh-WdkR96Evpc0cV-0F2T-JLcWluayzNbw&v=P29NAz2RH-4&feature=youtu.be. This does not seem to be moving toward transparency? I did take notes and Dr. Jobe specifically said the books on the Equity Books Bundle had been approved by the School Board. Dr. Dean was part of that video presentation and he did not dispute her statement and has not replied to my emails. Parents were also told the Bundle had been approved and that the Book Bundles have been distributed to other schools in the District. In the interests of transparency, if this "personnel issue" is affecting our children and rights as parents, I think we deserve some additional explanation and clarification. In the interests of transparency, is Dr. Dean willing to explain why the Equity Council (that we did not know existed) was able to pressure him into apologizing for a memorandum that explained that pursuant to Utah law "a public-school classroom is reserved for its intended purpose of importing relevant instructions and is not an open forum for employees to engage in their own political speech" and instead approved "equity-based curriculum, conversations, dialogue, and displays" without any notice to parents of this change in philosophy and approach. Before the Equity Council resumes full operation, will we be fully informed about its purposes, goals, and objectives and how our students' curriculum will be affected by its "core beliefs". Will parental involvement be permitted or will participants continue to be hand-picked?

Even if the Board did not approve the books on the Equity Books Bundle List, in the interests of transparency, why were parents not provided with the full book list and why was it not posted on the school or district website? If it was a student who brought in *Call Me Max*, did that student also bring in *Julian is a Mermaid* and the written assignment that went along with it? *Julian is a Mermaid* touches on gender-fluidity and was not on the Equity Book Bundles list sent to parents.

As part of the Equity Council's presentation, Dr. Dean said that the Equity Council was a grassroots movement. It was such a grassroots movement, that none of us knew about it. There is a grassroots movement of parents who are very concerned about what has happened and making sure it gets fixed. I am aware of dozens of parents who are concerned. It is not just me - as I am sure you are becoming aware. We look forward to a more open dialogue and that as "we show due regard" for teachers and students "feelings, rights, cultures, and traditions," there can also be due regard for parents' rights.

Most appreciately, Greg

April's email

February 9, 2021

Date: Tuesday, February 9, 2021, 01:21 AM MST

Hello Ms. Covington-

Thank you for your reply and for the work being done surrounding these issues. As a Horizon parent who has more information about the Call Me Max incident, and having spoken with several other Horizon parents about it (as well as other community members and parents from other elementary schools), I am replying to your message to Greg and the others. (I hope I got everyone who was on the first message - I just hit "Reply All.") Greg did respond to some of these issues already, but I may repeat some of what he's addressed since these questions and concerns are coming from multiple sources.

We're glad things are being investigated, but many parents don't feel satisfied with the answers (or lack of answers) we have received so far. We still don't understand why the Equity Council has power to correct district memos which state Utah law. The corrected memo came out from MCSD in November 2020 (nearly 3 months ago), so we can reasonably assume that as a district you would already know why the Equity Council was given that power at that time. We would like to understand how and why that happened. Additionally, parents and other community members have received no explanation as to why we weren't alerted of or invited to be part of the Equity Council from the beginning of its formation. We've received no explanation for why MCSD presented in the Utah Pride Center conference, which was advertised as being for all Utah educators, students, and caregivers, but no MCSD parents were informed by the district of that beforehand so that we could take part in viewing it. We would all appreciate direct answers to these questions.

We have heard the information from PTA meetings and the explanations principals were told to give parents about Call Me Max. According to them, the book was brought in by a student, and the teacher mistakenly read it to the whole class. Many parents do not believe this story, which is understandable considering that for 2 weeks they were told by the Horizon teacher and administrators that the book was part of the intended 3rd grade equity and Second Steps curriculum. We feel MCSD needs to explain why conflicting accounts were given to parents. We have been told the incident is currently under investigation and is now a "personnel issue," so that's why we can't have answers. But at the same time, administrators are conclusively telling all other district members that the book was brought in by a student and mistakenly read by the teacher, as if that is the factual conclusion before the investigation has apparently even been finished. That does not make sense to us, and it does not feel honest. Additionally, we would like an explanation for why that same book was seen in MCSD teacher trainings for other elementary schools back in Summer 2020. Honestly, it seems incredibly coincidental that the student at Horizon just happened to have that same book. But regardless of which version is true about how the book appeared, parents were told two different stories by the teacher and administrators, so we feel we deserve factual resolution on what is the real truth.

Furthermore, in the interest of full transparency, parents would like access to the "Additional Resources" list for the Book Bundles. In January, some Horizon parents were told of this list and that possibly it was a list of resource books for school counselors, but no parent ever received it. Some parents were told that Call Me Max and other books of similar topics were found on this list, and it was taken from there to be read in the 3rd grade classroom. We are guessing these "Additional Resources" are probably in all the elementary schools, since at least one of the books found on that list was seen in teacher trainings last summer for other elementary schools.

We've been told by a parent who saw the full Book Bundles list that they have seen these books in their principal's office (in another elementary school besides Horizon). So we're suspecting this same book list was set to be used in all MCSD elementary schools soon. If any of these books are moved from the Book Bundles program, where will they go? Will they be allocated to elementary school libraries? Will they remain in our schools to be read independently by children? What about ALL books (not just Book Bundles or program-specific books) of similar topics and content? Will parents be made aware of these topics and books being brought into our children's schools, no matter the destination (library, counselor's office, etc.)? As stated previously, these books may bring up sensitive discussions, and parents want to (and have the legal right to) be informed about these topics being addressed with their children in schools, no matter how that may happen. Parents of all backgrounds and of all opinions and viewpoints want to feel prepared to cover these discussions with their children when they come home from school. We are all better prepared when we have complete transparency.

We are grateful for the district's help in working through these issues. We're glad the Equity Council and any corresponding programs, including the Book Bundles, will move forward with more transparency and more parent input from now on. We hope future parent meetings will help everyone to get more of their questions answered and will help ensure inclusivity for all. We feel it is important for our children to learn about and be kind and inclusive to all, and because those are such important issues and topics, as parents we want to be fully included in them. We want ALL students and employees to feel welcomed, loved, and safe in MCSD. We hope all members of the district can have a voice in how to best implement these programs and practices for everyone.

In summary, our questions are:

1. Why were parents not informed of or invited to be on the Equity Council?
2. How and why did the Equity Council have power to correct district memos and Utah law?
3. Why didn't the district invite parents to view the Equity Council's presentation in the Utah Pride conference?
4. Why were Horizon parents given conflicting accounts of how Call Me Max appeared in the classroom?
5. If the Call Me Max incident is still under investigation, why is the rest of the district receiving a conclusive answer while Horizon parents are not?
6. Will Horizon parents be given factual resolution on which story is true out of what the teacher and administrators told us?
7. If Call Me Max is not a district or school book, why was it seen in MCSD elementary trainings in Summer 2020?
8. How do parents access the "Additional Resources" list?
9. Where will Book Bundles books be moved if they don't remain in the program?
10. Will parents be made aware of all books of similar content and topics being brought into our schools, regardless of destination?

We look forward to receiving answers to these questions soon.

Thanks for all your help,

April and other MCSD Concerned Parents

Covington's reply

February 9, 2021

Ms. DeSpain:

Below are the answers to your questions.

1. Why were parents not informed of or invited to be on the Equity Council?

The Equity Council was formed by MCSD educators in mid-2019 to address and review policies and practices that ensure our educators feel safe in our school system. When George Floyd was killed a year later, tensions were elevated and the Equity Council broadened their focus to that of an advisory role to also ensure all students feel safe and welcome in our schools. The council has only met a half-dozen times since its inception and is still very new and evolving as a fixture at the district. There has never been any intent not to have parents as part of the council. The council just never made it to the point where we could actively engage employees and parents in equity work to benefit the district. We have shared information on our website and social media about the Equity Committee in the past year. We have pushed pause on the Council at this time so that its mission, vision, and participants are better defined, inclusive, and representative.

2. How and why did the Equity Council have power to correct district memos and Utah law?

The first memo was sent to employees to remind them of the First Amendment and Political Speech. The second memo sought to clarify the first memo by specifically attempting to identify political speech. After this memo was sent, concern was immediately expressed to the district by many employees that some of the examples of political speech that were outlined were viewed by others as human rights. This memo also, unfortunately, served to disenfranchise marginalized employee groups within the district. The district determined it was prudent to retract this second memo at the time and work on more clarification for employees. At this point in time, the Equity Council became involved in helping craft a memo that would recognize and support all employees and students. This final memo was worked on in collaboration with district administration and was reviewed by the school board before being sent. We regret that assumptions about the Council's role and responsibility at the district have been misunderstood. This is why we have pushed pause on the Council at this time so that its mission, vision, and participants are better defined, inclusive, and representative.

3. Why didn't the district invite parents to view the Equity Council's presentation in the Utah Pride conference?

Representatives from Murray City School District were invited to present information about the work of the Equity Council at the Utah Pride Conference. Educators from the Murray City School District have been invited to share and participate at a wide range of educational conferences over the years. The district has not made it a practice to invite parents to participate in conferences geared for educators.

4. Why were Horizon parents given conflicting accounts of how Call Me Max appeared in the classroom?

Unfortunately, there was a lot of confusion in the days and weeks that followed the incident at Horizon Elementary School. That means different people (both in the district and outside the district) were told different things and that is something we as a district regret and will work to improve as we train our teachers and administrators districtwide. The administration of Horizon Elementary will be sending a letter to all third grade parents with further clarification. Parents are also encouraged to contact Horizon Principal Whitney Anderson to discuss concerns they have.

5. If the Call Me Max incident is still under investigation, why is the rest of the district receiving a conclusive answer while Horizon parents are not?

The incident surrounding the book Call Me Max is not still under investigation. The following information has been provided to parents who have inquired. This information has also been shared with all school principals and our school board. The 'personnel' matter referenced in this message is in regards to the district working with the administration of Horizon Elementary to ensure complete transparency when communicating with parents.

Information Sent in Email on February 5, 2021 in response to email from Greg Marchant:

The book "Call Me Max" was an isolated incident in one 3rd grade classroom at Horizon Elementary School. It has not been used in any other schools or classrooms. It was not approved by the Murray City School District Board of Education. A Horizon student brought the book in and asked if the teacher would read the book to the class. The teacher read the book to the class and answered the question you mentioned brought up by the students in the class about growing a beard. The administration at Horizon Elementary was not aware of this book being read until it was brought to their attention by parents. The communication that followed with parents was unfortunate in that several different messages were sent with conflicting information. We understand and appreciate that this has caused concerns of trust with parents. This is a personnel matter that we as a district have addressed with the administration at Horizon Elementary to ensure it does not happen in the future. We have also spoken with all of our administrators so they are aware of what occurred.

6. Will Horizon parents be given factual resolution on which story is true out of what the teacher and administrators told us?

The information we have shared as a district with you has been factual. We acknowledge that things were not handled as well as they could or should have been. The administration of Horizon Elementary will be sending a letter to all third grade parents with the factual information. Parents are also encouraged to contact Horizon Principal Whitney Anderson to discuss concerns they have.

7. If Call Me Max is not a district or school book, why was it seen in MCSD elementary trainings in Summer 2020?

Educators are given all kinds of training so we would need to know specifically which training this is in reference to. Please have the employees who have shared this with you contact Superintendent Covington so that we can further look into what took place and the context of the training.

8. How do parents access the "Additional Resources" list?

If this question is in reference to additional resources lists at Horizon Elementary, the school administration will address that in their forthcoming letter. We are unaware of any other school having an additional resource list. Exhaustive lists of teacher resources used in a classroom are not commonly posted publicly. However, we are happy to provide resource lists and other content upon request. We would ask that you reach out to your school principal to facilitate this.

9. Where will Book Bundles books be moved if they don't remain in the program?

We have pushed pause on the Book Bundle program at the moment to assess protocols and policies around it. We need more time to evaluate the processes and how to best communicate with parents. It is untenable for us to answer this question until that work has been completed.

10. Will parents be made aware of all books of similar content and topics being brought into our schools, regardless of destination?

As we have pushed pause on the Book Bundle program, we recognize we need to review and evaluate our book selection and approval process. We also need to understand the best manner in which to communicate this information to parents to avoid the recent confusion. As we work through these considerations and reach conclusions we will inform parents.

Jennifer Covington - Superintendent

Murray City School District
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107

Answers did not add up.

- February 6, 2021
- Compose 13-point email
- Send it out to many parents
- Encourage parents to get involved
- Laurel Fetzner reads email

13-point Email

• MCSD parents' concerns, PLEASE READ



• April Wilde <[REDACTED]>

To: [REDACTED]



Sat, Feb 6, 2021 at 9:43 PM



Dear MCSD parents and caregivers,

You may have heard in the news recently about some issues going on in Murray City School District. As fellow parents in Murray, and knowing that the news does not always represent topics accurately, we wanted to share some of the information we have received from parents and the district about these issues:

1. Last year MCSD formed an Equity Council. The majority of parents were not informed about the formation of this council nor invited to join. Attached to this email is the Council's mission, goals, and group norms. We encourage you to look into the words or phrases you may not understand on this sheet, such as "equity" (it does NOT mean equality) and "intersectional approach," etc. (See attached: MCSD Equity Council.)
2. In August 2020, MCSD sent out two district memos reminding all educators of Utah laws, code § 53E-9-203, regarding political speech. The MCSD Equity Council found these memos to be harmful and requested that the district apologize and write a new memo updating their stance. (See attached: Memos 1 and 2.)
3. As a result of the Equity Council's request, MCSD did write a new memo which was released in November 2020. In this memo, MCSD claimed that the first two memos harmed the community and were not in line with MCSD equity values. This new memo then encouraged educators to center equity in their daily teaching, with equity-based curriculum, dialogue and displays. (See attached: Memo 3.)

4. As a result of this corrected memo, political speech and signs in classrooms have been deemed appropriate and acceptable in all Murray schools, and the Utah laws, cited in the first two memos, which prohibited such speech and signs were deemed outdated and irrelevant.

5. As part of the new equity-centered curriculum encouraged by MCSD, an "Equity Book Bundles" program was started at Horizon Elementary School in conjunction with their Second Steps program. This Book Bundles program focused on marginalized groups and contained books accordingly. However, at no time was a full book list sent out to parents, nor was it posted on the school or district website.

6. On January 8, 2021, at Horizon Elementary School, a 3rd grade teacher read a transgender children's book titled "Call Me Max" to her entire class, without informing parents nor seeking their approval or consent. The author of this book, Kyle Lukoff, is a transgender male. The back of the book contains an "About the Author" section with a photograph of the author, which was read to the students. This prompted discussion on how Lukoff grew a beard since he used to be a girl. The teacher informed students that science has provided a way for this to be done, and students began discussing taking medicine after puberty if they want to change their gender. Here is a link to a video of this book (the "About the Author" section is not read in this video): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jcrPnaCbKrY>

7. When parents found out this book was read and discussed with their children (who came home after school and told them), some parents expressed concern about why they were not informed and why consent was not needed. In addition, parents asked where this book was found on the district or school's website or on any book list sent home.

8. In reply to concerned parents, the 3rd grade teacher and the administrators of Horizon Elementary sent a copy of the Equity Council's MCSD revised memo (Memo 3) stating that curriculum was to be equity-centered, inferring that as a result of this memo they did not need parental approval to read and discuss the book with 3rd grade classes. They also told parents the book was "wonderful and developmentally appropriate" for 3rd graders.

9. Also in reply to concerned parents, Horizon administrators acknowledged that the book bundles list was not posted anywhere for parents to access. Concerned parents were then sent several book lists with different books on different lists. Some parents were told of an "Additional Resources" list, where the transgender children books could be found, but no parents ever received that list. All of this prompted parents to involve the superintendent and Murray School Board in trying to figure out the facts. (See attached: Book Bundles List.)

10. As administrator of the Equity Book Bundles program and co-chair of the MCSD Equity Council, Dr. Vanessa Jobe (vice-principal at Horizon Elementary) claimed in a Utah Pride Center conference video, on Jan 23, 2020, that the Murray School Board approved the entire book list for the Book Bundles Program. When parents who viewed this conference went to their representatives on the school board, they were told that, in fact, that was misinformation and the school board had not seen or approved any list of books. Horizon's principal, Mrs. Whitney Anderson, then informed parents that Dr. Jobe had actually chosen the books herself from her personal friend's bookstore in SLC. (If you would like to view the MCSD Equity Council's presentation in "[Pride, Not Prejudice: An LGBTQIA+ Conference for Utah Educators, Students, and Caregivers](#)," we encourage you to contact the Utah Pride Center on Facebook, as they informed attendees that all videos would be available until April 1st, but for unclear reasons have since removed the videos so no one can access them.)

11. For two weeks, parents were told by both the teacher and administrators that these books and topics were part of Horizon's 3rd grade curriculum. Parents were even sent a topic calendar for the Equity/Second Steps program which showed "Sexuality and Gender" as the October 2020 topic for all grades, which was three months prior to this incident. (Parents still do not know what was taught or discussed in October 2020 regarding that topic.) However, as the issue was pressed further, suddenly MCSD began telling parents that "Call Me Max" was never part of the curriculum, and "Sexuality and Gender" were not intended to be 3rd grade equity topics, and in fact "Call Me Max" was brought into the classroom by a student, not the teacher or administrators. (See attached: Horizon Elementary Equity Topics.)

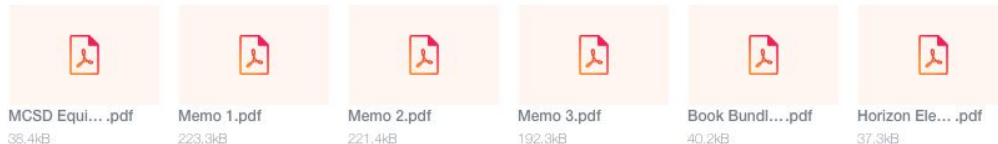
12. This new story is confusing to parents, since on January 6, 2021, Horizon 3rd graders also read and discussed "Julian is a Mermaid" (a children's book about gender-fluidity) and completed an assignment in conjunction with that book, which assignment was brought home to parents. "Julian is a Mermaid" was also not found on the Equity Book Bundles list sent to parents. No teacher or administrator has explained what list "Julian is a Mermaid" came from. Did the student who brought in "Call Me Max" also bring in "Julian?" Did the student also bring in the assignments for "Julian?" In addition, why was "Sexuality and Gender" found on the October 2020 topics list for 3rd grade (and all grades) if this was not intended to be part of the curriculum? Utah law, code § 53E-9-203, states that these topics are not to be in the curriculum of children without explicit parental consent. Why was "Sexuality and Gender" included in the Equity book topics without parental consent? Why won't MCSD answer these questions clearly and directly?

13. As members of MCSD, please be aware that the Equity Book Bundles program is set to roll out in all elementary schools district wide in the near future.

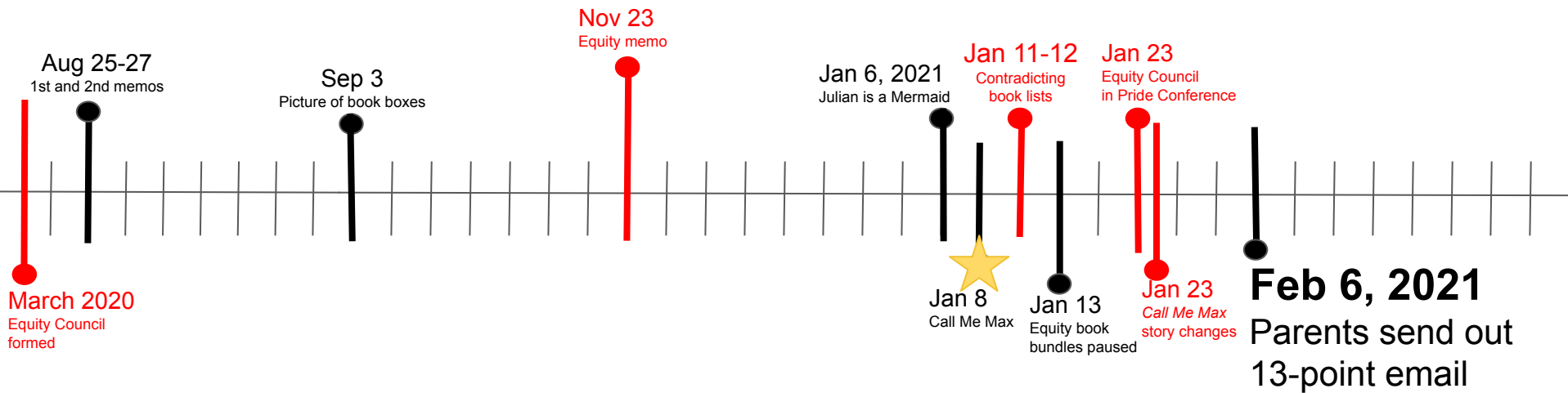
In summary, parents are still trying to find answers to these questions and others. We have asked the superintendent and other MCSD representatives about these issues, and most of our questions have gone unanswered. We have requested a public parent meeting with Superintendent Jen Covington regarding these issues, but she did not respond.

We feel these are important topics to be addressed publicly by MCSD with ALL parents. We want EVERY student in MCSD to feel welcomed and loved. We want to be involved in these equity discussions with our children. As parents, we have the legal right to be involved in the choices of these books, discussions, and curricula. We encourage all parents to get involved in these issues if they are important to you. Please look through the Book Bundles book list (attached to this email), find the books on YouTube and read all of them, and see for yourselves if you feel they are "developmentally appropriate" for your children. There are many books on this list (not just the ones discussed in this email) that are considered political and highly controversial. We feel that topics found in the Equity Book Bundles program would be considered sensitive to most parents and students, regardless of differing opinions on those topics. For this reason, we believe parents deserve complete honesty and full transparency from Murray City School District regarding all of these books and issues. If you feel the same, please get involved. Please start asking questions to your teachers, administrators, and MCSD about the Equity Council and its corresponding programs. Please feel free to forward this email (and all attachments) to anyone who may have a vested interest.

Thank you,
Concerned Parents



 [Download all attachments as a zip file](#)



Superintendent asks questions

February 7, 2021

On Tue, Jan 12, 2021 at 4:04 PM Vanessa Jobe <viobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Perfect! I sent that second response. Thank you Jen and Darren for your support and equity focus. We will find a good way to communicate weekly equity practices to parents. SSC is great and through our district website. Thanks so much everyone.

On Tue, Jan 12, 2021 at 3:52 PM Jennifer Covington <jcovington@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Thank you for pointing that out Vanessa. I absolutely see your point. I think that some parents are further along in this process than others. I am thankful for you and Whitney's work on this and know that our students (and their parents) will be so much better because of it.

On Tue, Jan 12, 2021 at 3:48 PM Vanessa Jobe <viobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Okay! I think that including the equity topic on weekly communication is a good idea. I just am a little worried about referring to trans students as "touchy subjects."

How does this sound instead:

Yes it is a great idea to have equity topic announced on teacher's weekly communication. We appreciate the support of all of our students and furthering these conversations at home.

On Tue, Jan 12, 2021 at 3:43 PM Jennifer Covington <jcovington@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Hi Vanessa. Perhaps I am reading the last parent response through a different lense. To me, she is asking for parents to have information when different equity topics are being discussed. Perhaps this is something teachers could include in their weekly communication? As I mentioned when we talked today, this could be beneficial for parents so they would be better able to have discussions in the home as well.

Jennifer Covington - Superintendent
Murray City School District
5102 S. Commerce Drive

Covington did not even ask where Julian is a Mermaid came from until AFTER parents sent 13-point email.

On Sun, Feb 7, 2021 at 2:56 PM Vanessa Jobe <viobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

I believe that book was read in a 4th grade classroom as well. I had that book in my office. I did not put that book on the equity book bundles and it was not a part of the original list.

Also, I do not know the owner of the Kings English Book shop. I know someone who has their masters in children's literature. I met him once. He helped with the book list.

-Vanessa

On Sun, Feb 7, 2021 at 12:39 PM Jennifer Covington <jcovington@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Hi Vanessa. Could you please let me know how the book 'Julian is a Mermaid' came into the classroom? I did not see this on the original book bundle list that was sent out. Was this read in Ms. Paul's classroom or was it read in other classrooms as well? This information will help me to answer parental questions regarding this book.

Jennifer Covington - Superintendent
Murray City School District
5102 S. Commerce Drive



Nathan A. Spofford

2021-01-23 23:07:56

Covington did not even ask where Julian is a Mermaid came from until AFTER parents sent 13-point email.

On Mon, Feb 8, 2021 at 7:39 AM Jennifer Covington <jcovington@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Thank you Vanessa for explaining this. If I am reading your message right, the reading of Julian is Mermaid was a teacher decision. Is that correct? I am not necessarily concerned with the assignment if that is the case. However, I am concerned that you state these are not part of the equity book bundles and yet emails were sent by you to parents after this book and Call Me Max were read showing these two books as part of a comprehensive list of the books that 3rd grade reads during their second steps lessons. They were not on the original list and then were emailed to parents as a list of books that are read in 3rd grade. This indeed is sending mixed messages. I hope you can see that the different messages that were sent are one of the root causes of the concern of parents. If they were read by a teacher and there was concern, that should have been handled on a classroom basis.

Jennifer Covington - Superintendent
Murray City School District
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107
801.264.7400



On Sun, Feb 7, 2021 at 7:34 PM Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Cortney (4th) has her own copy and Sarah (3rd) borrowed it. I have not had any teachers see the book in my office and ask to read it in their classes.

Could you (Darren and Whitney) meet tomorrow at 9:00 or 1:00? Or whenever else is good for your schedules to answer the question on assignments? I am not clear about what assignments are being referenced here since the book was not a part of the bundles.

On Sun, Feb 7, 2021 at 4:07 PM Jennifer Covington <jcovington@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Thank you Vanessa. Could you please clarify with me how the book got into the 3rd and it sounds like 4th grade classes? Did teachers come to you, see it in your office and ask to read it to their class? Who was responsible for creating the assignment that went along with it?

Equity Council paused

February 8, 2021



February 8, 2021

MCSD Parents and Families:

Recently, concerns were brought forward regarding books read aloud in a classroom at one of our elementary schools along with questions regarding our District Equity Council.

As a district, we recognize and acknowledge the concerns. Since these concerns have been brought forward, we have taken the following steps:

- Suspended the equity book bundles in order to review further.
- Placed a hold on the District Equity council until the mission, vision, and participants are better defined and to ensure it is inclusive and representative.
- Reviewing of policy, procedures, and practices.
- Reviewing of transparency and communication related to books that are being used outside of the adopted curriculum.

We value and embrace full student, family, and employee participation at MCSD to ensure our schools are safe, transparent, and welcoming. We are committed to learning from this experience and doing better. The district and School Board are committed to listening to our stakeholders as we move forward and to taking the time for the thoughtful consideration that is needed.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Covington, Superintendent of Schools

Jaren Cooper, MCSD Board of Education President

Belinda Johnson, MCSD Board of Education Vice-President

Date : 2/9/2021 7:56:54 AM

From : "Darren Dean"

To : "Keri Hohnholt" , "Darren Dean" , "Mikaele Shields" , "Kendal Poole" , "Victoria Bean" , "Morgan Lami" , "Tanya Wadley" , "Vanessa Jobe" , "Nicole Wintch" , "Shawn Johnson" , "Cyndi Ralston" , "Rebecca Te'o" , "Wendy Sanders" , "Haley Binggeli" , "Hilary Moore" , "Issachar Beh" , "Cynthia Berry" , "Jennie LaFortune" , "Juliet Reynolds" , "Cara Cerise" , "Alison Jacobson" , "Rachel Macchiarola" , "Brittany Lund" , "Lilbeth Tapia" , "Laura Olson" , "Jennifer King" , "April Johnson" , "Hannah Dolata"

Subject : Equity Council Meetings

Dear Equity Council Members,

As you saw in the message sent from Doug Perry via Parent Square yesterday, the Equity Council has currently been put on hold and our Thursday meeting this week has been canceled. As you may or may not have heard, some parents have expressed concerns regarding a book that was read in a classroom featuring a transgender character, as well as concerns about our recent presentation at the Utah Pride Center's Educator's Conference. These two separate situations have been brought to the attention of the superintendent and school board. The district is taking these concerns, like all parent concerns, seriously. As the Parent Square message indicated, one of the steps being taken is a review of the Equity Council procedures.

I do not have any information about when our meetings can resume. However, I am confident that we will all continue to ensure welcoming and inclusive schools for our students, families, and employees. If you have any questions, please direct them to Darren Dean or Superintendent Jen Covington. They will be providing more information and next steps sometime in the near future.

Thank you for all your hard work and dedication as educators,

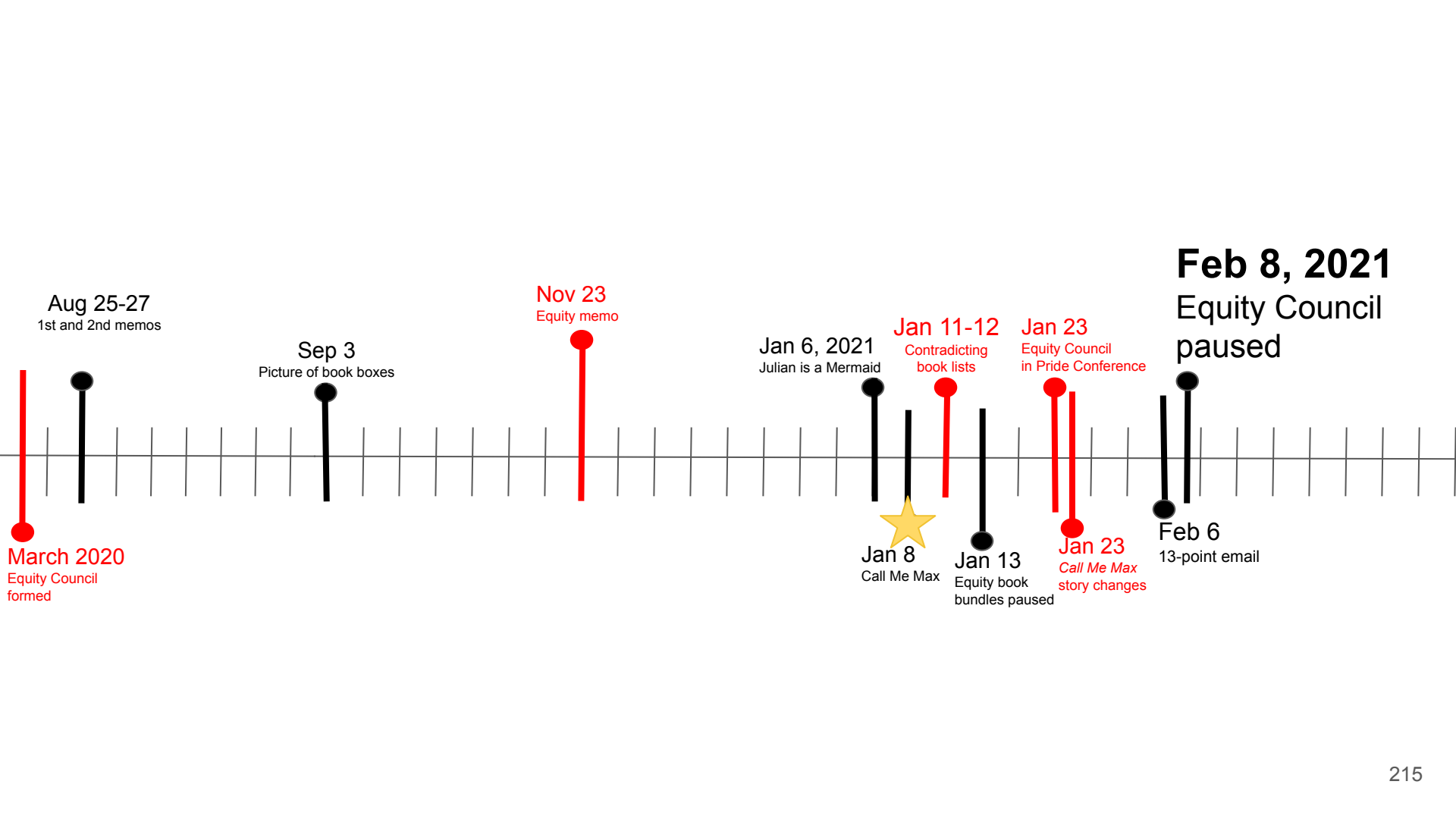
Cara Cerise and Darren Dean

Darren Dean

Director of Personnel & Student Services

Title IX Coordinator

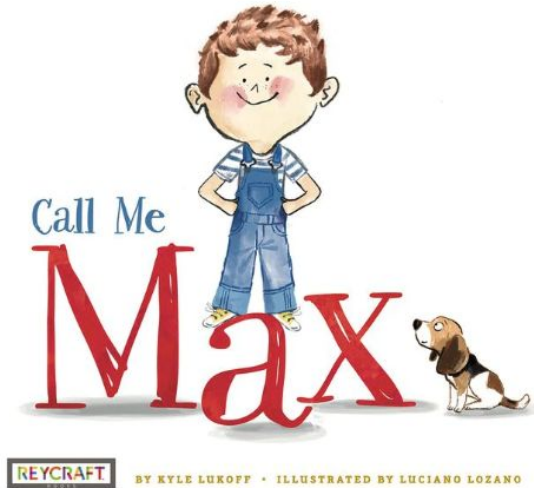
Murray City School District



**Salt Lake Tribune
releases one-sided article
February 11, 2021**

Utah parents complained after kids were read a story about a transgender boy. Now other diverse books are on hold.

Murray School District has suspended its “equity book bundles.”



(Photo courtesy of Reycraft Books) Pictured is the book cover of “Call Me Max” written by Kyle Lukoff and illustrated by Luciano Lozano. The story is about a transgender boy.

By Courtney Tanner | Feb. 11, 2021, 7:00 a.m. | Updated: Feb. 12, 2021, 1:16 p.m.

A Murray teacher read a book about a transgender child to a class of third graders last month — which set off a backlash from parents. In response, the school district has now suspended a program aimed at introducing kids to more diverse and inclusive literature.

The uproar started when a student at Horizon Elementary brought a copy of “[Call Me Max](#)” from home and asked the teacher to read it aloud during story time. The book is an illustrated account of a young transgender boy who educates his own teacher and classmates about his identity.

It starts with the teacher taking attendance. “Can you call me Max?” the boy asks, noting that his name on the roll doesn’t match how he sees himself.

As the teacher at Horizon Elementary was reading it, said Murray School District spokesman Doug Perry, students in the class began asking her questions. One was specifically about puberty, Perry noted. The teacher hadn’t read the book before and deflected the questions, for the most part, he said.

But some of the students talked to their parents about the book and the discussion. And a few families then called the district, angry that the book was shared with their kids without permission.

‘Unfortunate’ timing

It’s not the first time there’s been concern about Utah schools having LGBTQ books. In 2012, a picture book about a lesbian couple raising a child was removed from the shelves of elementary school libraries in Davis County after a group of parents there raised objections.

But Murray School District is taking its response a step further, now reviewing all of the literature in its “equity book bundles” program — even though “Call Me Max” is not part of that initiative and is not in any of the district’s libraries. It was only in the classroom because the student had a copy.

Perry said the goal is to examine all of the books to see if any are similar to “Call Me Max” in topic or might otherwise cause concern.

But, while it includes the LGBTQ community, the equity book program overall is more focused on addressing race and racism and introducing students to more authors of color. And the decision to suspend it falls at the start of Black History Month.

Perry acknowledged Wednesday that the timing of that is unfortunate but said it was unintentional. “That is purely coincidental,” he said. “We certainly honor and revere Black History Month as an important part of our education.”

The move also comes after a separate Montessori school in North Ogden was allowing parents to “opt out” of the curriculum around Black History Month, but later reversed that decision after facing community pushback.

Perry said that many books by Black authors and about people of color will still be available for teachers and kids to read, including “Of Thee I Sing” by former President Barack Obama, as well as picture books about Rosa Parks and Frederick Douglass.

Some of those also appear on the equity book bundle lists and will remain on the shelves even with the program temporarily suspended, Perry added. Nothing will be pulled until the review is completed.

“Anything in our libraries is fair game for teachers to use right now, including many books that are in the bundle program,” Perry added. “In fact, the bundle program is by no means an exhaustive list of books on equity. Our libraries have many others.”

Encouraging diverse reading

The equity book bundles effort began this fall. Under it, an elementary school is given a copy of the 38 books on the district's list. The list was curated by Vanessa Jobe, a vice principal at Horizon Elementary where the program started. It includes works by diverse authors, including Ibram Kendi, and on diverse topics, such as what it means to grow up in a Latino family or to live with a disability. It's meant to encourage educators to incorporate the stories into their lessons.

The books are divided by grade level, with second graders, for instance, reading "Ohana Means Family" and fifth graders reading "This Book Is Anti-Racist."

Only two books on the list appear to be directly about the LGBTQ community. One of those is for fifth graders about the work of Harvey Milk, one of the first openly gay elected officials in the United States. The other is for sixth graders and titled "Rainbow Revolutionaries: 50 LGBTQ+ People Who Made History."

Even though "Call Me Max" isn't included, that's where the concern has been focused and the book that prompted the expansive review.

In addition to parents, a conservative member of the Utah Board of Education also criticized the school district for allowing that book to be read in the classroom. Natalie Cline said on social media that it was inappropriate to share "books about gender-confused children" — a label that many have found offensive and [led some to start a petition asking for her to resign](#).

Cline also called out the district for participating in a conference last month at the Utah Pride Center about accepting all identities in the classroom. Murray School District administrators specifically talked about their experience with the “equity book bundles,” Perry confirmed.

“Most schools don’t have them,” he added, “and that’s why our principal was invited to speak.”

Perry said the small district in Salt Lake County stands by the book program overall — despite wanting to review it further — as well as participating in the Utah Pride conference. But he said the district does not support having “Call Me Max” in the classroom and is not defending the teacher who read it.

“She just flat out made a mistake,” Perry said. “That book is not appropriate at the grade level it was being shared.”

Writing to challenge stereotypes

The author disagrees.

Kyle Lukoff, who wrote “Call Me Max,” told The Salt Lake Tribune on Wednesday that the picture book was written for a kindergarten to third grade audience. And he believes it’s important for young students to see transgender characters and how those individuals are just like anyone else — with their own likes and dislikes and personalities. They’re a part of the community, he said.



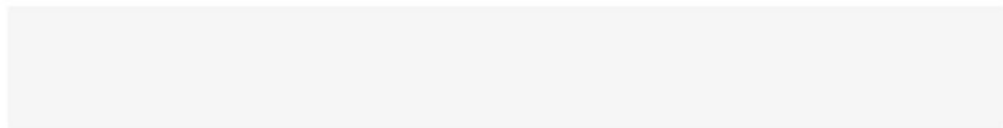
“I find in my experience that adults think that term unlocks a lot of confusion in children when it really doesn’t,” said Lukoff, who is transgender.

He said he read the story to a first grade class recently. One girl asked him what “transgender” meant and when he explained, “she just said, ‘OK,’ and moved on.’”

“It’s only a problem if you think that being transgender is itself wrong,” Lukoff said. “And it’s not. That’s something the parent then has to work through.”

Something important to Lukoff in writing it, too, was to challenge stereotypes. At one point the character Max says that he’s transgender because he doesn’t like dresses. At the same time, a boy in his class is wearing a dress and says that he likes them. Max then says he’s transgender because he likes climbing trees. A girl in the class is climbing a tree with him.

“I try to write books about trans kids that don’t reinforce misogyny and gender binaries or the concept that your body or being trans is a problem,” Lukoff said.



Some kids, he said, might be transgender and appreciate the book for representing them. But, for many, he added, it’s just about being accepting and understanding.

The author said he hasn’t faced much pushback for his writing before. He has written more than a dozen books, including “When Aidan Became a Brother,” about another transgender boy coming out and becoming a big brother. His books are printed by [Reycraft Books](#), an imprint that [highlights underrepresented communities](#).

Mostly, Lukoff said, he’s gone to read at schools and been told that a parent has quietly pulled their kid from the class for that time. “But that’s been the worst of it.”

Learning from this experience

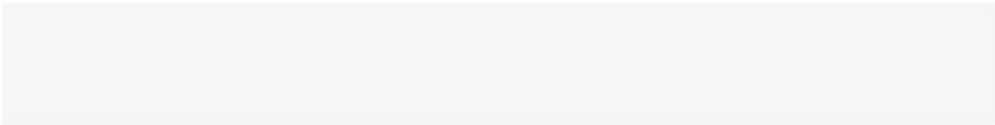
The news that the equity books program would be put on hold was shared in a letter sent to families Monday.

Murray School District will also be suspending its Diversity Equity Council, which worked on the equity book bundles, to examine the mission and work of the group. It was formed in 2019 to address issues of employee equity and complaints of mistreatment.

It was expanded this summer — in respond to nationwide protests after [the death of George Floyd, a Black man killed by police in Minneapolis](#) — to also include reports from students on their experiences.

“As a district, we recognize and acknowledge the concerns,” the letter states. “We are committed to learning from this experience and doing better.”


Perry said he does not anticipate that the district will dissolve the equity council or the book bundles program.



But the hold on the program will mean that no more book bundles will be distributed. And the district said it plans to talk to teachers about what they should be reading to students.



A full list of the books in Murray's "equity book bundles":

"Equity book bundles" list by Courtney on Scribd

 **SCRIBD** Millions of books, audiobooks, magazines, documents, sheet music, and more for free.

Equity Book List for all Grades:

Book	Grade Level
All Are Welcome- Pengold	Special Education
Daniel's Good Day- Archer	Special Education
Little Legends: Exceptional Black Men in History- Harrison	Special Education
Who Was Frederick Douglass- Prince	Special Education
Who Did it first? -Hart	Special Education/ 1st Grade
Black is a Rainbow Color- Joy	Kinder
Be You! -Reynolds	Kinder
Tiger Days: A Book of Feelings- Clark	Kinder
AntiRacist Baby- Kendi	Kinder
You Matter- Robinson	1st Grade

[Download this PDF](#) 1 of 3  



ctanner@sltrib.com

 Follow @CourtneyLTanner

[Donate to the newsroom now.](#) The Salt Lake Tribune, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) public charity and contributions are tax deductible

13 FOX COMMUNITY

SPORTS Good Things Utah THERE YOU ARE Community

FAST SHIPPING LOW PRICES

Murray City School District 'pauses' its Equity Book Bundle Program and Equity Council

TOP STORES

SHARE

MURKOV, Utah JARCA News) — A third grader brought a book to school called, "Call Me Max." It's not an approved book by the Murray City School District, but because the teacher read the book, the district is questioning and reviewing its Equity Book Bundle Program and its Equity Council. The district says it is suspending both programs, but parents should think of it as a 'pause'.

Murray City School District welcomes students back to school.

The MCD has received a flurry of complaints about suspending the programs.

District officials say they are not cancelling the programs, they just want to pause the programs to review them after getting complaints from parents.

"It had a really strange and upsetting, truly upsetting that the Equity Council would be paused because of a book brought in from home. The Equity Council did not bring the book to school. I personally as a parent think it's a great book, says Murray City District 1 Councilmember Kat



FOX 13 SALT LAKE CITY

Local News FOX 13 Investigations The PLACE Weather 32° Video Contacts 360 Reports Dream Team

Home Press You Are Not Alone Positively Utah Your BeUTAHful Two Americas Russia-Ukraine War

See Your World Through a Different Lens Sunday Nights 8:30

Stories Worth Exploring IN REAL LIFE BOOKS NEWSY

NEWS LOCAL NEWS

Murray School District suspends diversity book program after complaints

Parents' Complaint About Book About Transgender Child

FOX 13 SEARCH FOX 13 UTAH

Watch FOX 13 News on your favorite

DAILY WIRE Read Listen Watch Discuss Shop

'Equity' Book Program Suspended After Backlash From Parents Over Third-Grade Transgender Book

By Charlene Peck-Bair Feb 15, 2021 DailyWire.com



A school district in Utah is suspending its "equity book bundles" program after receiving backlash from parents when a third-grade teacher read a book about a transgender boy to young students without parental permission.

According to [The Salt Lake Tribune](#), a student of Horizon Elementary brought the book, "Call Me Max," from home and asked the teacher to read it aloud.

The Amazon description of "Call Me Max" reads:



BREITBART

TRENDING: ANDREW BREITBART 10 YEARS RUSSIA INVADES UKRAINE THE REOPENING BIDEN CRIME WAVE WORK WARS MASTERS OF THE UNIV

UTAH SCHOOL DISTRICT SUSPENDS READING PROGRAM AFTER TEACHER SHARES TRANSGENDER TALE WITH 3RD GRADERS

Call Me Max

Parents whose children attend an elementary school in Utah have pushed back after a teacher read a book to third graders about a biological girl who wants to live as a boy.

The school district decided to suspend a reading program designed to introduce children to "more diverse and inclusive literature," after a child brought the book Call Me Max and the teacher read it to the class.

MOST POPULAR

Siobhan Chimes He Is Working on Polish Jet Plan Poles Call Fake News

January 6 Committee Claims Trump, John Eastman 'Criminal'

Fiona Hill Blames Trump for Putin's Ukraine Invasion

Graham to Introduce a Resolution Declaring Putin a 'War Criminal'

CHN, ABC, CBS, BBC, Bloomberg Censor Russian Broadcasting Arms

Schiff: Justice Department 'Ought to Be Investigating'

newsweek

Sun Mar 08, 2021 LOGIN SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1

U.S. World Business Tech & Science Culture Autos Sports Health Opinion Experts Education Podcasts Search

NEWS

Transgender Boy Book Prompts Utah School District to Suspend Reading Program

BY SARANTHA LOCK ON 2/15/21 AT 10:26 AM EST

THE DEBATE

It's Time To Change the Way We Celebrate Black History Month

Black History Month Has

blaze media

NEWS RADIO PODCASTS BLAZETV

Blaze Media / News

Third-grade book about transgender boy prompts school district to suspend its 'equity' book program

Backlash was swift

SARAH TAYLOR | February 15, 2021

Call Me Max

MOST RECENT

Elon Musk promises to send more Starlink satellites to Ukraine to counter Russian 'satellite threat'

Across America, mask mandates will end this week, even in deep-blue enclaves

Vias and Mastercard suspend operations in Russia

ALL ARTICLES

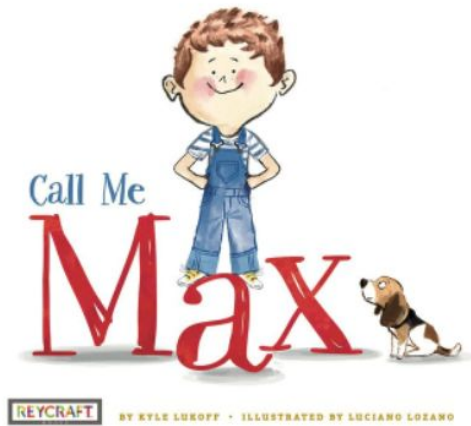
RECOMMENDED

CreditCard reveals the only product you need to save money

Doocy OWNS Paski on Gas

February 11 - 16, 2021

Letter: Murray board's actions tell trans kids they aren't valued



(Photo courtesy of Reycraft Books) Pictured is the book cover of "Call Me Max" written by Kyle Lukoff and illustrated by Luciano Lozano. The story is about a transgender boy.

By New York City students | The Public Forum | Feb. 28, 2021, 6:00 a.m. | Updated: March 1, 2021, 11:54 a.m.

Dear Murray City School District Board of Education:

We are elementary and middle school students who wish to comment on the board's decision to suspend the Murray City School District's Equity Book Bundle Program in response to a third grader's personal copy of the children's book "Call Me Max" by Kyle Lukoff being read aloud in class. Our interest in this is personal; not only are we school children ourselves, we are also the former students of Mr. Lukoff who, in addition to being a writer, is also an elementary school librarian and teacher at our school in New York City.

We aren't sure why "Call Me Max" would cause the board to pause its Equity Book Bundle Program when it wasn't one of the books in the program, but we think these programs are needed to teach children from an early age how to respect people who may be different from them. It is also important for children who may be a little bit different to see themselves represented in the books that they read.

By pausing the program, and doing so on the basis of a children's book about a transgender child, you are telling children who may be a bit different than others, and transgender children especially, that you do not value them, their lives, or their experiences. That is a lesson that no child should have to learn.

Very truly yours,



Bailey, 5th grade, Eva, 6th grade, Michael, 4th grade, Seneca, 5th grade, Josiah, 1st grade, Madeleine, 6th grade, Hal, 3rd grade, Penelope, 5th grade, Jonah, 2nd grade, Sophie, 5th grade, Edith, 2nd grade, Evan, 5th grade, André, 6th grade, Bacey, 2nd grade, Olina, 5th grade, Clementine, 4th grade, Silas, 6th grade, James, 5th grade, Lianie, 5th grade, Stella, 6th grade, Juna, 6th grade, Theo, 5th grade, Rory, 3rd grade, Zelda, 6th grade, Oliver, 7th grade, Julia, 5th grade, Rex, 5th grade, Ailey, 5th grade, Aima, 5th grade

Submit a letter to the editor

**Was there a page on
the district website
explaining the Equity
Program?**

Date: February 11, 2021 at 9:10:46 PM MST

To: j.covington@murrayschools.org

Subject: SL Tribune Article

Hi Ms. Covington,

I don't know if you will remember me, but I was a student in your computer class, longer ago than I would care to admit.

I have heard from many parents on the issue of the book bundles and Equity Council and have stayed silent. I am all for my 1st Grader hearing about people different from her limited view. I was not aware of the Equity Council and asked to join when I learned of it, as it seemed like an opportunity to be involved. I also didn't know about the book bundles and felt like that wasn't clearly communicated, but was okay with the intent.

I'm now finding myself reaching out, not due to that situation, but to the District's response from Doug Perry in the SL Tribune article today. As I mentioned, I've heard from parents and was aware of the communications with the teacher and Horizon administrators, and after hearing this in January, I searched the school's and district's sites for a mention of the book bundles or Equity Council and found neither. Imagine my surprise in reading the article today and they mentioned that there was a page for them. There are archival sites that show no page existed as well, so I was very bothered by this lie. What was the purpose in this article? To try concerned parents in the court of public opinion?

Educators aren't being asked to house sit or borrow a car, they are being given charge, for a significant portion of the day, with our children's physical, emotional, and mental care. Parents who are concerned with one or all those categories are not bigots or transphobic, they are parents who care about their children. While I might not be bothered by the book bundles or council, what will happen to me in the future, if I did have a concern? Another article? Painting me in a negative light?

So I guess my overall question is, what is the District going to do moving forward to repair the trust with everyone? Will there be more transparency with those asking for it? Are they going to give a correction to the Tribune? Can equity be approached from a viewpoint of engaging all students?

I would love to talk about this further via phone. I am available all day tomorrow or can make time the following week.

Thank you,

Ms. Covington made no reply to this parent's email. But the link on the Tribune article disappeared with no explanation or update to the article on that change.

Learning from this experience

The news that the equity books program would be put on hold was shared in a letter sent to families Monday. The district has removed the page on its website explaining the program.

Murray School District will also be suspending its Diversity Equity Council, which worked on the equity book bundles, to examine the mission and work of the group. It was formed in 2019 to address issues of employee equity and complaints of mistreatment.

It was expanded this summer — in respond to nationwide protests after [the death of George Floyd, a Black man killed by police in Minneapolis](#) — to also include reports from students on their experiences.

“As a district, we recognize and acknowledge the concerns,” the letter states. “We are committed to learning from this experience and doing better.”

Perry said he does not anticipate that the district will dissolve the equity council or the book bundles program.



- Grant Elementary
- Horizon Elementary
- Liberty Elementary
- Longview Elementary
- McMillan Elementary
- Parkside Elementary
- Viewmont Elementary
- ECEC
- Hillcrest Jr. High
- Riverview Jr. High
- Murray High
- Community Education

Calendar

Memorial Day Holiday – No School
May 30

Last Day of School 21-22 SY
June 2

First Day of School 7th Grade Only
August 12

First Day of School Grades 1-6, 8-12

Error 404 - Page Not Found

The page you are looking for could not be found.

Search...

Search

Browse Categories

- Awards (1)
- MEF-PTA-groups (1)
- Notices (58)
- Uncategorized (80)

Monthly Archives



MCSD on Face



Learning from this experience

The news that the equity books program would be put on hold was shared in a letter sent to families Monday.

Murray School District will also be suspending its Diversity Equity Council, which worked on the equity book bundles, to examine the mission and work of the group. It was formed in 2019 to address issues of employee equity and complaints of mistreatment.

It was expanded this summer — in respond to nationwide protests after [the death of George Floyd, a Black man killed by police in Minneapolis](#) — to also include reports from students on their experiences.

“As a district, we recognize and acknowledge the concerns,” the letter states. “We are committed to learning from this experience and doing better.”

Perry said he does not anticipate that the district will dissolve the equity council or the book bundles program.

Feb 11, 2021

The Salt Lake Tribune

Learning from this experience

The news that the equity books program would be put on hold was shared in a letter sent to families Monday. The district has removed the page on its website explaining the program.

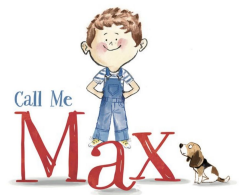
Feb 12, 2021

The Salt Lake Tribune

Learning from this experience

The news that the equity books program would be put on hold was shared in a letter sent to families Monday. _____

Utah parents complained after kids were read a story about a transgender boy. Now other diverse books are on hold. Murray School District has suspended its "equity book bundles."



(Photo courtesy of Reycraft Books) Pictured is the book cover of "Call Me Max" written by Kyle Lukoff and illustrated by Luciano Lozano. The story is about a transgender boy.

By Courtney Tanner | Feb. 11, 2021, 7:00 a.m. | Updated: 10:54 a.m. A Murray teacher read a book about a transgender child to a class of third graders last month — which set off a backlash from parents. In response, the school district has now suspended a program aimed at introducing kids to more diverse

Learning from this experience

The news that the equity books program would be put on hold was shared in a letter sent to families Monday. The district has removed the page on its website explaining the program.

Murray School District will also be suspending its Diversity Equity Council, which worked on the equity book bundles, to examine the mission and work of the group. It was formed in 2019 to address issues of employee equity and complaints of mistreatment.

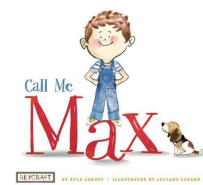
It was expanded this summer — in respond to nationwide protests after the death of George Floyd, a Black man killed by police in Minneapolis — to also include reports from students on their experiences.

"As a district, we recognize and acknowledge the concerns," the letter states. "We are committed to learning from this experience and doing better."

Perry said he does not anticipate that the district will dissolve the equity council or the book bundles program.



book bundles."



(Photo courtesy of Reycraft Books) Pictured is the book cover of "Call Me Max" written by Kyle Lukoff and illustrated by Luciano Lozano. The story is about a transgender boy.

By Courtney Tanner | Feb. 11, 2021, 7:00 a.m. | Updated: Feb. 12, 2021, 1:16 p.m.

A Murray teacher read a book about a transgender child to a class of third graders last month — which set off a backlash from parents. In response, the school district has now suspended a program aimed at introducing kids to more diverse and inclusive literature.

The uproar started when a student at Horizon Elementary brought a copy of "Call Me Max" from home and asked the teacher

Learning from this experience

The news that the equity books program would be put on hold was shared in a letter sent to families Monday.

Murray School District will also be suspending its Diversity Equity Council, which worked on the equity book bundles, to examine the mission and work of the group. It was formed in 2019 to address issues of employee equity and complaints of mistreatment.

It was expanded this summer — in respond to nationwide protests after the death of George Floyd, a Black man killed by police in Minneapolis — to also include reports from students on their experiences.

"As a district, we recognize and acknowledge the concerns," the letter states. "We are committed to learning from this experience and doing better."

February 11 - 12, 2021

Parent reaction to Tribune article

Greg Marchant's email to Superintendent Jen Covington

February 11, 2021

Feb 11, 2021 - Greg Marchant's email after Trib article

Subject : Re: Murray School District Equity Council

I am the one writing this email, but on behalf of many parents. We were advised of the Trib article this morning. I can't express how betrayed we feel. This is inexcusable and incredibly HARMFUL (ironic considering that was the reason you gave for rescinding the memorandum). The District did a one-sided, false, and self-preserving article with the Tribune WITHOUT ANY WARNING. The last thing I heard from Ms. Covington was that mistakes had been made, the District would acknowledge the mistakes and do better. We were told that our concerns would be considered and addressed - and you would work toward restoring trust. We were promised more transparency, we were promised parental input. We were promised parent meetings. For two days now, it has been radio silence.

Then you send your email below stating that you will handle the personnel issue, but only to ensure transparency in communications despite written email evidence that it was not only lack of transparency, they were FALSEHOODS. Next, a message goes out district-wide saying a committee will be formed to review materials, we aren't given any information about whether parents will have any input on that Committee.

Then you don't even give us any heads up that there will be an article in the paper and parents are given no voice in that article, just like they were given NO voice or even notice before Call Me Max was read in a 3rd Grade Classroom. You told YOUR side to protect YOURSELF. The article also hides and twists the facts to make the District look good and portrays and characterizes us as parents (and it's not just me, it's many of us) as racists and homophobes. Why? Utah law states that parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their children and requires that we have notice and consent before these types of things are taught. How you have handled this is NOT ok! Your expressed reason for rescinding Memorandum 1 was because some had communicated they didn't feel safe either because of the Trayvon Martin or George Floyd incidents (one email said the former and one the latter). Apparently you don't care whether we or our children feel SAFE or STRESSED. The fact is that you were willing to hang us out to dry to protect yourselves, while we were merely seeking answers, transparency and for our rights as parents to be protected.

Feb 11, 2021 - Greg Marchant's email after Trib article

There is nothing in the article explaining that for 2 weeks when parents asked why Call Me Max was read in the classroom without their consent, they were told that it was because the District and Equity Council had approved it via the Memoranda and did NOT tell the parents it was because a student had brought the book in. No mention of the fact that Call Me Max and the Equity Book Bundles had been delivered to other schools. No mention of the fact that no investigation was ever done despite parents having emails proving they were not being told the truth. No mention that Dr. Jobe sent an email, after the books had already been read and discussed, to parents specifically listing Julian is a Mermaid and Call Me Max as part of the Equity Book Bundle List. No mention that some parents were told that Julian is a Mermaid and Call Me Max were part of an Additional Resources list, but no parent ever saw that list. No mention of the District deciding, without parental consent or notice, to rescind a memorandum requiring staff to follow Utah law and provide consent and notice to parents before reading sensitive materials. In fact, at the Conference when someone asked if there had been any pushback, the answer was no (Dr Jobe and Dr Dean knew that was not true). No mention of the fact that Julian is a Mermaid was read in the classroom before Call Me Max (again without parental notice or consent) was introduced. No mention of the fact that Julian is a Mermaid was not on the Equity Book Bundles List either. Was Julian is a Mermaid also brought in by a student??? No mention that the students were given an assignment regarding Julian is a Mermaid by their teacher. No mention that the Julian is a Mermaid assignment served to prepare the students for Call Me Max by having the students draw a picture of what they want to be in a mirror and Call Me Max opens up with a transgender boy looking in the mirror. No mention of how coincidental it is that the student brought in the same book that Dr. Jobe said was on the Equity Book Bundles List. No mention that Call Me Max specifically tells 3rd Graders that their parents may have made a mistake when they called them a boy or a girl - and parents had no notice or ability to prepare for that type of discussion. No mention of parents' rights being completely undermined. Mr. Perry says in the article that the student's questions were about puberty. There is no mention that the students read the About the Author Section which led to the students asking how the author was able to grow a beard or the discussion that followed regarding adults being able to take medicine to make that happen. According to the article, the "district has removed the page on its website explaining the [equity books] program." When was it ever there?? Teachers and administrators have said it was never there.

Slide 2 of 3

Feb 11, 2021 - Greg Marchant's email after Trib article

Comments on the Trib article are ranting about how close-minded, intolerant, and homophobic any parent must be who raised any concerns. They are drawing these conclusions from the misinformation, half-truths, and falsehoods you provided to the Tribune. They have been intentionally misled and that is wrong. To be honest, this is total BS and there is no excuse or justification for it. How do people sleep at night when they are willing to do this to parents to protect themselves from criticism. We teach our kids to love everyone, to be tolerant of others viewpoints, to be kind and understanding. We are involved in their education. We try to serve in the community. All we wanted was some transparency, some straight answers, a partnership with teachers and the administration, and to protect our kids. Others with an adult, political agenda have secretly done things without notice to parents and then tell conflicting stories after the fact to parents and the media - and willingly pull the rug out from under us and put OUR SAFETY at risk.

I have tried to be calm and I have tried to be reasonable. I thought we were making progress. Not only are we not making progress, but I can't even process what is happening right now. I don't even know how trust can be repaired. I don't even know how we fix this. I am sure an apology won't be forthcoming and would be meaningless anyway. But something needs to be done and it better be thoughtful and it better be fair. It better have the interests of ALL kids at heart and not your reputations and not your jobs and not certain interest groups who make threats and call names and have a pipeline to the press and act as BULLIES.

I don't know what else there is to say or what else can be done. If you have an idea, send it our way.

Slide 3 of 3

District reaction to Tribune article

Doug Perry's email to Superintendent Jen Covington

February 13, 2021

On Sat, Feb 13, 2021 at 7:21 PM Jennifer Covington <jcovington@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Thanks for keeping an eye on that Doug. I believe the Board will take action at their meeting on March 11th. I don't think anything any of us want to sit on too long on this. As we have said, the pause is to get policy and procedures in place to ensure we have articulated how we will approve books that are required reading in the classroom. We have been really good at this at the secondary level for years - just not at the elementary.

The main concern I had with the "Call Me Max" books was that it said the statement "parents are wrong." That is something we as educators can't be teaching to students. We can never say that parents are wrong.

Hope you are taking some time to rest and relax too this weekend!

Jen

Jennifer Covington - Superintendent
Murray City School District
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107
801.264.7400



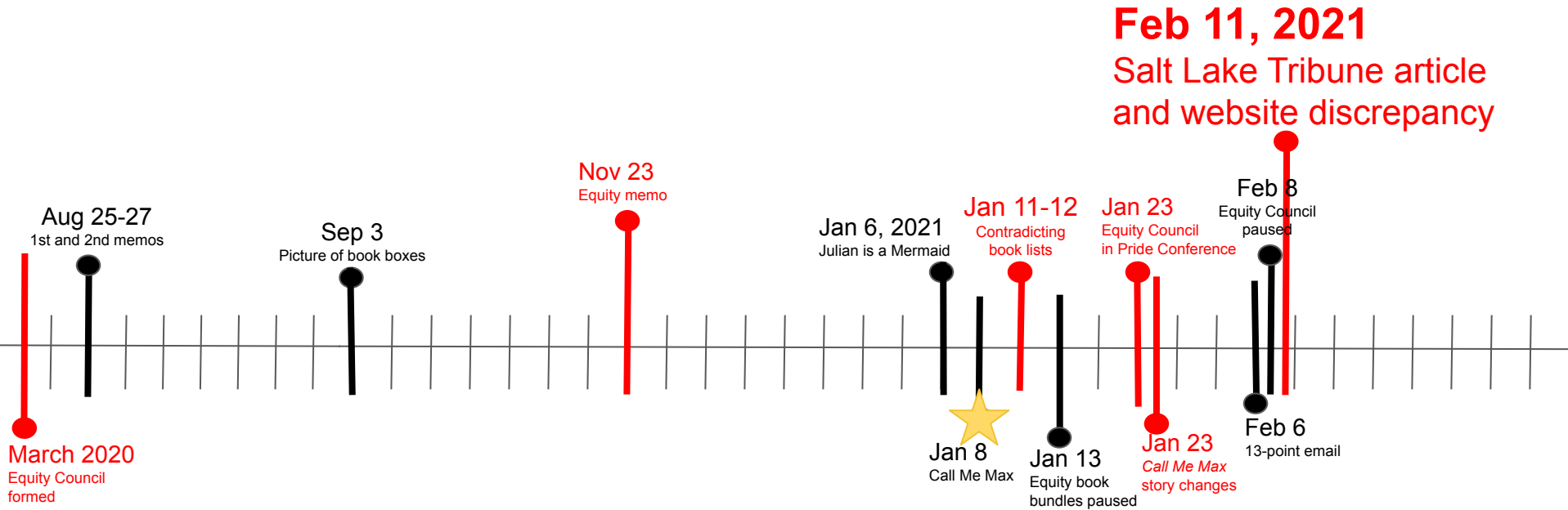
On Sat, Feb 13, 2021 at 7:14 PM Doug Perry <dperry@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Hey Jen, I am seeing this story has gotten some national attention in the last 24 hours (US News and World Report, Yahoo News). Hopefully, nothing to be too alarmed about but just wanted you to know what I am seeing as I track it. I've tracked negative stories that go national in previous jobs and what I am seeing is far from a "viral spread" but it is still spreading a little bit. If we can get a couple of days with no one picking it up - tomorrow and Monday - that will really help. The narrative is still the same - that our suspension is perceived as permanent and so forth.

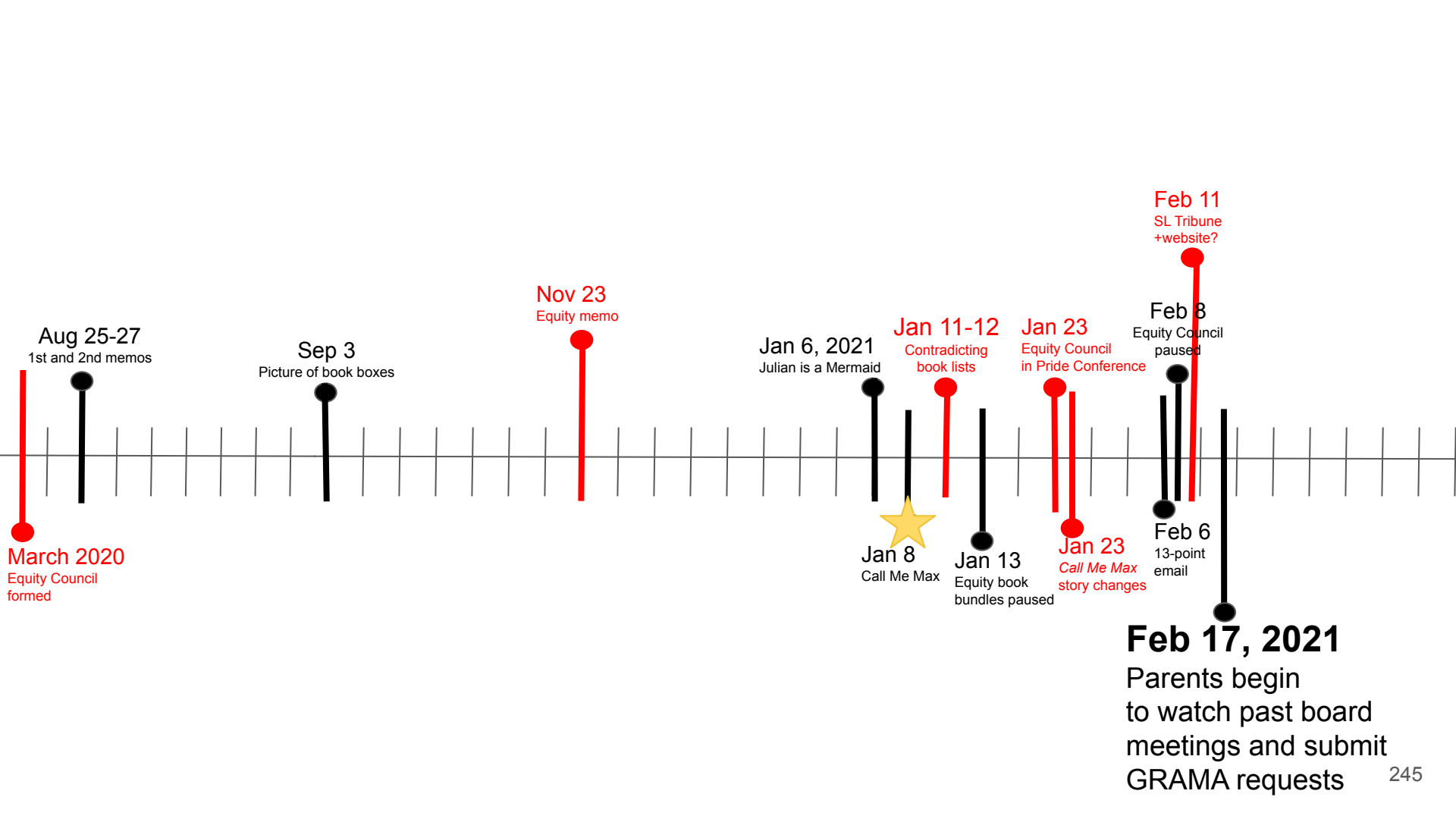
Do you have an ETA on when you think realistically when the Board might lift the "suspension"? I mean are we talking about March Board meeting? And at this point I don't think we should proactively promote whatever that is, assuming the story dies off. If the story dies off and we come out say we have this great plan it will put us right back where we are now in the public eye and remind everyone what happened. Mostly I am just wondering if the Board feels compelled to move on it in March or if they are content to sit on it for a while?

For what it's worth, I did a little bit of research on court cases when it comes to books in schools. You probably already know this, but it seems we have less control over what goes into our libraries because the courts consider that a violation of the First Amendment. But we have a lot more control over what is taught in the curriculum. Supreme Court in 1982 (Island Trees Schools vs Pico), said school boards have "absolute discretion to choose academic materials" as long as the board's discretion is "not exercised in a narrowly partisan or political manner." - so as long as it's expert or evidence-based we are in the clear to not allow a particular book. Right now this is immaterial because we haven't banned anything per say, but if the story continues and people insist the Call Me Max book should be allowed, they have me/the district on record as saying it was not appropriate for 3rd graders. So we may have to back that up somehow - so far no one has asked why we deemed it inappropriate which is good but it may come at some point.

--



**Parents hire attorney,
Watch past board meetings,
Submit GRAMA requests**



Listening With Care - training on equity

July 29, 2020

- Group of 12 panelists
- Their experiences in our community
- Unscripted conversations
- On impact of Covid
- On social unrest
- 203 teachers attended/participated
- Teachers had “heartfelt responses”
- Centered on “How do we make a difference with the social unrest that’s happening?”

Dr. Jackie Thompson

Dr. David Dominguez

Michelle Love-Day

Meghan Zarnetske

Dr. Claustina Mahon-Reynolds
(Process Forward, LLC)

Listening With Care - training on equity



Process Forward

Owned by Claustina Mahon-Reynolds
and Meghan Zarnetske

Started July 9, 2020

Workshops and Strategies for Undoing Racism

Reach Out



© 2022 Process Forward, LLC

Follow Us



Process Forward facilitates discussions surrounding inequity.

We empower organizations to dismantle racism and amplify marginalized people within their spheres of influence.

To do this, we must lean in to our discomfort.

We believe that undoing systemic racism and marginalization can happen when people feel safe to ask difficult questions, and when they have access to new language and perspectives.

Dr. Claustina Mahon-Reynolds

Co-Founder



"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." - Maya Angelou

I have been in education for 21 years and hold a doctoral degree from The University of Utah in Educational Leadership & Policy. Starting in 2013, I have worked as a part-time adjunct in addition to my full-time work as an educator and administrator. My research interests include working with Black and Latinx women leaders of color, English Language Learners, promoting student self-advocacy, collecting data on student voice, educating professionals on equity literacy / equitable outcomes for ALL students (impact vs. intent), supporting parent outreach, and educating adults on bias, systemic racism and anti-racist practices within organizations, systems, and structures.

One of the things that brings joy to my life is spending time with the people I love and care about. I also enjoy the outdoors and being in nature.

Meghan Zarnetske

Co-Founder



"We may encounter many defeats but we must not be defeated." - Maya Angelou

Hello! I've been working as a junior-high teacher and instructional coach for 15 years here in Utah. I am agitated by systems of oppression and strive to disrupt them. I do so through educating myself, actively sharing that knowledge, and seeking out more effective ways of listening. My outspokenness often results in discomfort for others. From experience, I have found this uneasy place is exactly where the process of undoing oppression must start. It has been a journey of looking inward, at my own biases and their origins. This uneasy terrain exists in all of us. It is where the process "forward" begins.

I hold 2 Master's degrees and am currently a Ph.D. student at the University of Utah in the Department of Education, Culture, and Society. My current research interests include systemic racism and whiteness in public education and how that translates (or not) to student experience, learning and growth.

Utah's wilderness, my dogs and my partner bring me joy.

I am honored and excited to work and learn from those who are ready to take the journey of looking inward and at systems of oppression.

Intro to Social Identities, Privilege and Power: Knowing ourselves in our organization.

About

Participants will:

Define different social identities (race, gender, sexuality, class, age, education level, language, religion, and more)

Examine how these identities interact with one another

Discuss how these identities relate to power, privilege, and oppression

[Request](#)

Whiteness & White Supremacy: Actions and Ways of Being.

About

Participants will:

Define whiteness, redlining, marginalization, deficit vs. asset mindset, assimilation

Understand how capitalism has perpetuated whiteness Examine dominant cultural norms

Interrogate those norms through an equity lens

[Request](#)

Intersectionality: Interactions of Mind and Body.

About

Participants will:

Define intersectionality

Examine how our identities intersect

Discuss power, privilege, and oppression with regard to identities

[Request](#)

Trainings & Services



Beyond the Sign

Request

New for 2022! A four or eight-day training series for individuals or organizations. Zoom and in-person options available.

[Read More](#) →



Intro to Social Identities, Privilege & Power

Request

Activities that examine our understanding of identities and how they can influence one's power or oppression in a social organization.

[Read More](#) →



Bias, Socialization & Normativity

Request

How we are taught certain behaviors, ideologies, and ways of being that directly or indirectly uphold systems of oppression.

[Read More](#) →



History of Racism in the U.S.

Request

An examination of the history we weren't taught in school (and why that is so).

[Read More](#) →



Whiteness & White Supremacy

Request

Defining whiteness and how it enacts power over communities of color throughout education, healthcare, law enforcement, recreation, and real estate.

[Read More](#) →



Intersectionality

Request

This is a good follow up to the Intro to Social Identities session. Participants will examine how social identities intersect with one another to create layers of power or oppression and how those social positionalities play out in society.



Language Matters

Request

An examination the history of words, phrases and ideologies of their organization and social settings. They will also engage in scenarios that teach how to recognize and how to speak out against harmful language in a public space.

[Read More](#) →



Centering and Supporting Marginalized Groups in Your Organization

Request

This is good for organizational leaders, principals, CEO's, executive directors, and more. We will examine your hiring practices, interview questions, business mission and vision to ensure that all identities are considered and given an equitable seat at the table.

[Read More](#) →



Anti-racist Strategies, Anti-bias Practices

Request

This is a recommended part two of either History of Racism or Whiteness and White Supremacy. Ways to actively change how we do business in order to support, and center marginalized groups.

[Read More](#) →

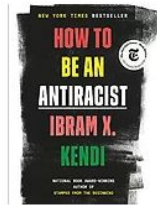


Equity Audit of Your Organization

Request

We will visit your site, ask questions and offer suggestions regarding equity, metrics for "success," language used, policies, hiring practices, and more.

Reading for Deeper Understanding



How to Be an Antiracist

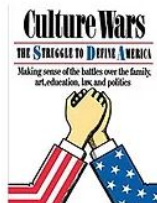
Dr. Ibram X. Kendi, Ph.D.



White Fragility:

Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism.

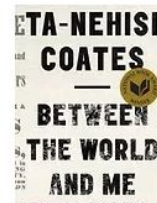
Robin DiAngelo, Ph.D.



Culture Wars:

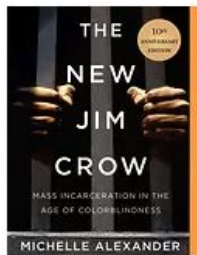
The struggle to define America.

James Davison Hunter



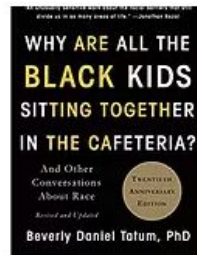
Between the World and Me

Ta-Nehisi Coates



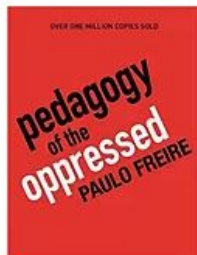
The New Jim Crow:
Mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness.

Michelle Alexander



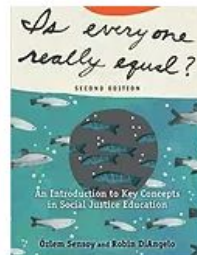
Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?

Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, Ph.D.



Pedagogy of the Oppressed

Paulo Frieri



Is Everyone Really Equal?
An introductions to key concepts in social justice education.

Sensy & DiAngelo

Reach Out



© 2022 Process Forward, LLC

Follow Us





Robin Williams

Our work so far

13

PD on Tough Kids, Behavior Interventions, SEL and Social Justice

14

Listening with Care..Unscripted Summer Listening Session with 12 community members

15

Listening with Care..Teacher training Michelle Love-Day, Dr. Jackie Thompson, Dr. David Dominguez

16

Listening with Care..Admin and School Board training Dr. Mahon-Reynolds and Ms. Zarnetske

17

Equity Council formation by teachers to address employee concerns

18

Equity Council presentation to board with Dr. Mahon-Reynolds, Dr. Thompson, Amanda Darrow

Our work so far

Year	Event
13	PD on High-Risk Behavior Interventions, SEL and Social Justice
14	Listening with Care... Districtwide Summer Listening Session with 12 community members
15	Listening with Care... Teacher Training Michelle Lopez-Diaz, Dr. Jackie Thompson, Dr. David Dominguez
16	Listening with Care... AdWU and School Board training Dr. Mahon Reynolds and Mr. Zametkov
17	Equity Council formation by teachers to address employee concerns
18	Equity Council presentation to board with Dr. Mahon Reynolds, Dr. Thompson, Amanda Darrow

zoom



Listening With Care video removed

when Claustina Mahon-Reynolds is hired as Hillcrest Jr. High principal, March 2022



Video unavailable

[GO TO HOME](#)

July 29, 2020 “Listening With Care” Training on Equity

Aug 25-27
1st and 2nd memos

Sep 3
Picture of book boxes

Nov 23
Equity memo

Jan 6, 2021
Julian is a Mermaid

Jan 11-12
Contradicting
book lists

Jan 23
Equity Council
in Pride Conference

Feb 11
SL Tribune
+website?

Feb 8
Equity Council
paused

Jan 8
Call Me Max

Jan 13
Equity book
bundles paused

Jan 23
Call Me Max
story changes

Feb 6
13-point
email

Feb 17
Parents
GRAMA
+watch meetings

March 2020
Equity Council
formed

**Laurel composes and
sends email outlining her
concerns to other parents
in Murray District.**

February 20, 2021

Dear Friends, Neighbors, and fellow volunteers of the Murray School District,

I am writing this letter to you to recruit help on a current issue facing the Murray School District. I am using as many email addresses as I have that I have used as a volunteer through Murray School District. Please know I am not sharing your email address with anyone. I am just needing as much attention from parents of students of the Murray School District as I can.

As many of you know, I have spent many hours volunteering at Parkside Elementary, Horizon Elementary, Hillcrest Jr. High, and Murray High School and for the whole district as the Science Fair Representative. I have interest in the improvement and quality of education in our school district. I have served as PTA presidents at both Parkside and Murray High, on the MHS community council and the Renaissance Committee, and now Spartan Strong committee. I am not very good at recruiting people to join me. I am just interested in making sure I know what is going on in our schools and helping where I can. But I want you to know that I am very worried about what is coming to Murray School District. Hopefully, anyone who knows me knows I am not a dramatic person and don't like to draw attention to myself for the work I've done in the schools. So, I am hoping you will listen to me when I say this is serious. I also want to say that I think Murray School district is already quite diverse, inclusive and not racist. I'm sure there can be improvements but for the most part, Murray School district schools are very welcoming places. We can only be as diverse as we have different people who live here.

About a year ago, Murray School District employees and teachers created an Equity Council. It sounds nice but as I've looked into it, it's packed with things that are not equitable. It is looking to protect interest groups and push very serious agendas in our schools. The only way I learned about the Equity Council was from a series of discussions and phone calls with a few parents who brought it to my attention. We have laws in Utah that state that if there is curriculum to be taught to minors about sexuality and related topics, there needs to be informed parental consent. Parents need to be informed and they need to give permission to let their children participate. There were two books read to a class and discussed in a 3rd grade class at Horizon Elementary without the parents' knowledge. Some parents don't think it's that big of a deal, but many others do. Their children came home with ideas that their parents made a mistake in calling them a boy or a girl when they were born, and that the girls could grow a beard if they want to when they grow up, if they take medication to help them. The teacher who read the book to the students felt she had permission to read this book without parental consent due to a memo (3rd memo) that was sent out by Murray School District. At the beginning of the year, the school district sent out a first and second memo reminding them that political speech and agendas are not allowed in the classroom. But then a third memo that came out in November that said that equity was to be centered in our schools.

Here's the quote from the third memo dated Nov. 23, 2020:

"MCS D affirms that black lives do matter. We condemn, racism, sexism, discrimination, hatred or other actions that marginalize our students or employees. This means fully embracing our responsibility for inclusion, belonging and justice; particularly for People of Color, Indigenous Peoples, People with Disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer People, Immigrants, Refugees, people from low-income households, members of minority religious groups, and people from other marginalized populations. MCS D supports and encourages all educators to center equity in their daily teaching. Some examples include equity based curriculum, conversations, dialogue, and displays that emphasize the dismantling of individual and systemic barriers to student achievement. We are committed to prioritizing equity in MCS D. We are Murray! Every one of us."

The teacher who read the books took this third memo to mean that she was given permission to read the books that were part of the equity program. Initially the books that were read said to be part of the equity book bundle and then were told it was not part of it. The book bundles have stories that are about indigenous people and people who are LGBTQ. The parents were confused from many different responses. So, they started asking more questions about how these books were read with out parental knowledge and what was behind it. Now, I have spent many hours learning about what happened, spending time understanding equity and reviewing school board meetings and understanding the law. I also learned that the Black Lives Matter and the LGBTQ community are both pushing the equity adjendas. I didn't know they were connected.

Now I agree with the fact that we need to include everyone in our education system. I have donated time and money for the good of all students for so many years in our schools. For anyone who knows me, I do stand for the traditional family. But I am not biased against those who are choosing to participate in other family dynamics. I don't agree with it. But I think everyone has a right to choose. I also think everyone has a right to a good public education and that should be open to all, no matter what your family dynamics are. But as I have looked into this idea of Equity is loaded with ideas that are trying to change our schools and society as we know it. The idea of equity is not equality. The equity idea brings many concepts into the classroom that I cannot support. Some of the ones I've learned about are Comprehensive Sexuality Education, Intersectionality, Critical Race theory, Social Emotional learning programs, and transgender ideology. There are Marxist theories in the equity agenda. Social Emotional Learning is not just teaching kids resilience and self-awareness, it is grooming children to accept new values, attitudes and belief systems, and to accept ideologies that often run counter to what they learn at home. On the surface, these topics look reasonable. But when you look more deeply into them, they are very extreme. They don't want discussion or freedom of speech. They don't want to create solutions for the issues they are concerned about, they want to change our society. I also think they are bringing

the issues they are concerned about, they want to change our society. I also think they are bringing sexual ideology in with indigenous history education on purpose. We need history in education, but we need history education of all types, like World History and U.S. History and understanding of all cultures. Bringing in sexual ideology and Critical Race Theory with indigenous people history is planned and sneaky. It makes people who are against it look like they don't support history. The more the word "racist" can be used - the more reasonable people back down because we aren't racist. When solving a math problem objectively is "racist," we have a problem. When you are born white, and you are called racist even though you've done nothing that is racist - there is a problem. This is the type of thinking that the equity stuff is pushing.

First of all, the responsibility of educating of our children fall on the parents first and the school as secondary. Its in our state code- 53A-13-109. My children have benefited immensely from their peers and teachers of many different backgrounds-so I am grateful for their help in supporting my children education. But I should know what is being taught. Our schools are supposed to support our first amendment rights - freedom of speech, religious freedoms, and rights of conscience. Utah code 53G-10-402(6) states that political, atheistic, sectarian, religious, or denominational doctrine may not be taught in the public schools (except as provided in Section 53G-10-202). Utah law also states, code § 53E-9-203, that these topics are not to be in the curriculum of children without parental consent. The equity book topics included information about "Sexuality and Gender" without parental consent.

I recently viewed a documentary that helped me see how big this issue is on YouTube called: "The Complete Story of Evergreen College" - <https://youtu.be/p5Wny9TstEM>. This is a summary video that is 16:27 minutes long. There are longer versions available. It might give you a view of what this equity stuff is really talking about. I have had 3 of my children graduate from Murray High. My daughter is still attending Murray High. I expect to get an education for her that produces a clear, critical thinker with many disciplines like Math, Science, English and History. I am not interested in teaching her how to experiment with sex, say she is anti-racist, and feel bullied for being white. No one should be bullied. Those ideas come with "equity".

I think our Superintendent and School Board members needs to hear from parents ASAP. Communication needs to be received before Tuesday Feb. 23rd in order to be considered by the Board for review. It would be good to send it in by Monday FEB. 21st. One of the concerned parents reviewed all the MCSD School Board meetings since August of 2020 where it concerns Equity. Individual from the University of Utah Pride Center and Utah Chapter of Black Lives Matter have attend our School Board Meetings and have done trainings for them on equity. I personally only attend school board meetings when I have to represent a school or a certain topic that is on the agenda. So, I do feel like I have left a lot of trust in their hands and not watched enough on the current issues. Our teachers have received training from the Equity committee on how to deal with "micro-aggressions".

issues. Our teachers have received training from the Equity committee on how to deal with "micro-aggressions". These trainings have already happened. I'm not sure what a micro-aggression is but it sounds like you can't talk about problems or you can get shut down for causing a micro-aggression. Our MCSD equity committee spoke at the University of Utah Pride Center's "Pride, not Prejudice" conference in January. There were many things taught in that seminar that I think most of us would disagree with. I have a short video of a few speakers at that conference and can share it with anyone who wants it. The Pride conference registrations said that the information they taught would be up on the internet I think until March. But it has been taken down. Please email me if you want more details about the pride conference or about the incident at Horizon Elementary and the responses of the teacher and administration. We have phone calls recorded and email responses saved. The equity committee was formed without parent consent and was bringing information into one of our elementary schools as a trial without parent knowledge. The plan was to then bring the program through all the other elementary schools in the district next year.

I hope you will consider looking into this matter further and sending a letter of concern to the Murray City School District Board of Education and Superintendent Jennifer Covington. Again, the School Board has a meeting on Feb. 25th - it's a study session. So, public comments need to be received by Tuesday Feb. 23th. There is not public comment allowed at this meeting. They are reviewing policy and procedure to make sure there is transparency in place with the equity council and its programs. If you want to know what is being taught in your kids' schools, please speak up! I have added a form letter that you can copy and paste into an email and email it in. The School Board members have received emails saying that they are racist and homophobic for pausing the equity committee and the book bundles. They have also received threats from the Black Lives Matter group. Our own parents do not have any clue that anything has even happened. There will be a meeting on March 11th that will allow public input. Any one who wants to speak or have a statement read can only speak for 3 minutes. We would like to have parent feedback at both meetings. Please help!

I personally don't think we need an equity committee. I would love it to be renamed to something that does not say equity. But as I've worked with some concerned parents, we have thought of a few things we need to see come from this committee. 1) If we have a committee, they need to approve curriculum to represent all people and not just people of protected interest. 2) The committee needs to follow state laws of being fully transparent and allowing parental input and viewpoints from the entire community. 3) The Murray City School District needs to write a new memo to clarify the inconsistencies that are now present in the schools that were brought about by the 3rd memo- which does not follow the law.

Your emails will need to be sent to the following individuals:

Jen Covington (Superintendent): jcovington@murrayschools.org
Glo Merrill (Precinct 1) gmerrill@murrayschools.org
Kami Anderson (Precinct 2) kanderson@murrayschools.org
Belinda Johnson (Precinct 3) bjohnson@murrayschools.org
Elizabeth Payne (Precinct 4) epayne@murrayschools.org
Jaren Cooper (Precinct 5) jcooper@murrayschools.org
Doug Perry- district media specialist dperry@murrayschools.org

We have an awesome diverse community in Murray. Let's not divide it. Let's protect our freedoms and stand for everyone.

Thank you for your friendship and support!

Sincerely,

Laurel Fetzer

Here's a form letter to use and share with friends (if you or they don't want to write your/their own). You can also just add to it if you agree with this but want to add any of your own thoughts. The more letters we can get to them, the better. Letters need to be in by Monday, Feb 22.

Send to info@murrayschools.org

This is a public comment to be read in the Murray School Board meeting:

Name

Address

Phone Number

Attn: Superintendent Covington and Murray School Board members,

As parents and community members of Murray City School District, we are only just learning about our district's Equity Council. None of us were told in advance about this council or any of its goals or programs. None of us had the opportunity to join this council. And none of our views were requested or considered as this council made goals, plans, and wrote memos that directly affected the curriculum and classrooms of OUR children.

Here's a form letter to use and share with friends (if you or they don't want to write your/their own). You can also just add to it if you agree with this but want to add any of your own thoughts. The more letters we can get to them, the better. Letters need to be in by Monday, Feb 22.

Send to info@murrayschools.org

This is a public comment to be read in the Murray School Board meeting:

Name

Address

Phone Number

Attn: Superintendent Covington and Murray School Board members,

As parents and community members of Murray City School District, we are only just learning about our district's Equity Council. None of us were told in advance about this council or any of its goals or programs. None of us had the opportunity to join this council. And none of our views were requested or considered as this council made goals, plans, and wrote memos that directly affected the curriculum and classrooms of OUR children.

We believe this council expects to have a huge impact on our children's education moving forward, and as parents we need and deserve the time to get informed about all of this and to better understand what is going on in our district. For any district council that is going to have such an effect on our children, we want and expect to be involved.

We are in favor of pausing the Equity Council and all its programs until they are fully transparent with the entire district about their goals and agendas, until they are following all Utah laws, and until they are seeking input from all parents and members of the ENTIRE community.

Sincerely,

Your Name

**Parents receive Equity
Council meeting minutes
From GRAMA request**

February 22, 2021

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Darren Dean <ddean@murrayschools.org>

Date: Fri, Feb 19, 2021 at 3:09 PM

Subject: Records Request for Equity Leadership and Council Meeting Minutes

To: Doug Perry <dperry@murrayschools.org>, Jennifer Covington <jcovington@murrayschools.org>

Jen and Doug,

Attached are the minutes for the equity leadership and council meetings. I took a look through the minutes. On 10/22 you will find that the book bundles are referenced. On 12/10 you will find sexuality/gender referenced. These are the places I noted that might lend to confusion.

Doug, I'll let you be the official sender of this information.

Thanks -Darren

Darren Dean

Director of Personnel & Student Services

Title IX Coordinator

Murray City School District

Office: 801-264-7466

On Fri, Feb 19, 2021 at 3:31 PM Jennifer Covington <jcovington@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Wanted to forward this to you. This will be something our public has here soon as it is going to Mr. Marchant as part of his GRAMA request. As I have read through these minutes, I have some definite concerns around some of the topics that were discussed and the way the meetings were structured. Even more reason to look at how we structure things moving forward. Please let me know if you want me to share this with the entire board. I don't want there to be any surprises for anyone.

Date : 2/19/2021 9:10:23 PM
From : "Jaren Cooper"
To : "Jennifer Covington"
Subject : Re: Records Request for Equity Leadership and Council Meeting Minutes

Jen,

Thanks for sharing these. After my first reading I have a couple of thoughts. please recognize that it may be hard to understand the full intent of a discussion just off reading the minutes.

1. I do think we should share this with all board members as any one of us could be approached and asked questions related to these minutes and I don't think any of us have reviewed them. Which isn't any different from any other committee within the district.
2. I think there are some things that are very positive with respect to what an equity council can do to support underserved and marginalized populations..
3. I would agree that there may be some areas of concern regarding some topics or the amount of emphasis on some topics, while not addressing others. Again, that just may not be represented in the minutes.
4. I appreciate that they mentioned parent involvement and I know it said that they would reach out to schools for names. I believe they did based on there being at least a few parents involved. While they talked about getting more parents involved. It hadn't perhaps got to that point of having more parents being involved and I question if that should have happened before we rolled out as quickly as we did.
5. Minutes seemed to be focused on a few of the leadership within the council and not much from other general members. But I may not be aware of who everyone is that is mentioned on the council.
6. It's disappointing that an equity council is being asked to educate district staff and students on how to dialogue in a safe and inclusive manner. Mention the Board as "a few white folk" when they received pushback on some aspects. Just seems counter to what they are claiming to stand for as a council. I truly believe that we are trying to find the best way to make all staff and students feel safe and included within the District. Without unintentionally marginalizing or making judgements based on anyone's race.

I agree that we need to consider a structure that ensures inclusiveness for all and provides resources for staff, students and allows for reasonable involvement of parents.

Thanks for all you are doing to work through this.

Jaren

Equity Council Leadership Meetings

8/12/20

8/26/20

9/29/20

10/22/20

11/20/20

12/1/20

12/17/20

1/7/21

1/21/21

Equity Council Meetings

3/3/20

5/27/20

9/10/20

10/8/20

11/13/20

12/10/20

1/14/21

Oct 22, 2020

Equity Council
Leadership Team Agenda

- Responses to problematic statements - where do we stand?: Cara had a peer approach her wondering how to approach another council member when they say something that is perhaps concerning. Kaele suggested that it might be nice to establish where the lines are and how to best approach a person who is perhaps saying things that could be considered divisive or offensive. Stephanie added that we need to have a safe space and if someone is not honoring that, how should that be addressed when that person is not willing to consider the impact of their comments or input - essentially is it worth the harm it may cause to someone else? Vanessa added that this is concerning because our issues should be about human rights - not of a political nature. Her suggestion is that the more clear the district messaging is, the easier it will be to contro that type of divisiveness - we need district back-up. Vanessa referenced that the equity statement on the district homepage as helpful, but it would also be helpful to add an equity page on the district website with resources and a clear message about where we stand on matters of equity and human rights and our responsibility for our words and our behavior. Darren offered that he thinks a person who is behaving that way should be dealt with directly - he offered to have the conversation as the district representative and HR Director who sits on the Equity Council. A few group members stated that the event in question was not isolated and there has been a pattern of similar behavior outside of the Equity Meeting. Keri suggested a conversation should happen with Darren before the next meeting to set the ship in the right direction before the meeting. Morgan was in agreement, as were other council members. Darren agreed to have that conversation prior to November 12th, the next general council meeting.

Last night's (11/19/2020) board study session

- The memo revision was shared with the board
- Board member questions were as follows:
 - What about when the majority becomes the minority
 - What about blue lives
 - Who's in charge of providing PD in the district
 - The questions themselves are revealing and show that equity work is much needed and overdue in MCSD.
- The Board initially stated that they supported the memo, however we learned that subsequent conversations among members revealed there were some concerns about the phrase "Black Lives Matter", thus the memo has not been issued.
- Jen C. joined - clarified that their issue is not with black lives, but the organization Black Lives Matter.
- Discussion among equity council members is that this is extremely disheartening to know that a collaboratively created message, one that was approved by the general equity council and administrators, can be stopped when 3 board members who are white (they are all white) experience some discomfort. What

about the discomfort of our students and teachers of color for the past 3 months since the initial memo went out that stated they didn't matter? What about the fact that "Black Lives Matter" gives people of color a feeling of safety and belonging? Final thought are that this is an example of institutional racism and the powers that keep it in place - when there is more concern for the comfort of a few white folk and disregard for the safety and identity of students and educators of color.

Nov 20, 2020
Equity Council
Leadership Team Agenda

(Side note: the Equity Council Leadership Team was also all white folk.)

Dec 10, 2020

Equity Meeting Minutes -

“What’s going on in your schools or classrooms right now with regards to equity and social justice?” Parkside and Horizon: GLSEN posters.



GLSEN

RISE UP TO PROTECT BLACK STUDENTS



GLSEN

RISE UP TO PROTECT IMMIGRANT STUDENTS



We must **RISE UP** and protect the most marginalized among us, who the Trump/Pence Administration has attacked in voice and policy.

We must **SPEAK OUT** in support of all LGBTQ people, including students of color, Muslim students, undocumented students, and particularly for those living at the intersections of multiple marginalized identities.

And we must **TAKE ACTION** to ensure that every child, in every school, has a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment in which to become their best self.

How will you RISE UP?

One way you can RISE UP for LGBTQ youth is to register to vote! Have a voice in your democracy and register [here](#) or text VOTEUP to 21333!

Show your support for LGBTQ youth and other marginalized communities by adding a RISE UP frame to your Facebook profile picture. Click on a frame below to add it to your profile picture and start a conversation! Then, take the actions listed below to show your pride and continue the fight for LGBTQ-inclusive schools.



This is a screenshot from GLSEN website.

Jan 29, 2021
Equity Council
Leadership Team Agenda

Equity Council Leadership Team Agenda
01-29-2021
3:00-4:00 p.m.

- Welcome, updates (pride presentation, equity book bundles, parents)
 - We're all here: yay!
 - Pride Conference: links and how to access the presentation
 - Cara has reached out to Amanda about that
 - Many were excited about the presentation!
 - Parent emails
 - Equity council, wanting to join (yay!)
 - Access to PTA meetings, want to be involved
 - More reason to restructure
 - Should we continue general council meetings until the parent membership issue is resolved?
 - There is talk about equity happening (not all good)
 - Parent objection to a book at Horizon
 - They want clear communication to parents from the district on our policies/professional development about equity
 - Two sides to the story: empowerment vs. these parents' concerns/misconceptions
 - Policy needs to be proactive opposed to reactive, especially in regard to parents (how do we move forward?)
 - Misinformation is spreading about our council
 - How do we get support for the council and work that we do?

Jan 29, 2021

Equity Council
Leadership Team Agenda

- District policy needs to be proactive opposed to reactive, especially in regard to parents (how do we move forward with these types of issues?)
 - What does district support look like (Board involved, too)
 - Happening across districts and the state!
- Helpdesk ticket so that we can hear parents out? (and students/staff/faculty)
- Make equity work visible to parents
 - Website/social media/parent letters
 - Make them part of the team - always the goal, need district and board support to enact this.
 - Community involvement
- Black History Month to help start up the website (could also help start up the newsletter, too)

- General council meeting on Thursday Feb. 11th
 - Invite parents
 - What do we do when they challenge? What if they become hostile?
 - Darren suggests we go over group norms!
 - How do we flag for help if needed? Phone numbers
 - Talk about the two sections: website or newsletter
 - Give equity members a single task and a due date
 - Cara will facilitate
 - Breakout rooms

Next general council meeting: Thursday Feb 11th

Next Leadership Team meeting: Thursday March 4th

Equity Council requests a paid Equity Director position for MCSD:

Date : 1/20/2021 10:40:49 AM

From : "Morgan Lami"

To : "Jennifer Covington"

Cc : "Mikaele Shields" , "Cara Cerise" , "Darren Dean" , "Keri Hohnholt" , "Lilibeth Tapia" , "Vanessa Jobe"

Subject : Equity Director Proposal

Dear Superintendent Covington,

Equity issues have been at the forefront of this past school year with the further development of an Equity Council and the protests that sprung up after the tragic murder of George Floyd. We as an Equity Council have been proud of the steps forward we have made, and certainly look forward to continuing the work we're doing with interventions through professional development and creating a space on the website to help all stakeholders shape a more equitable district and community. However, there are some gaps still to be filled, and we are now requesting that a paid position be created at the district level for an Equity Director. An Equity Director would support social justice issues and practices at the highest level, sending the message to the entire community that MCSD truly values equity work in education.

The responsibilities that we'd like the Equity Director to oversee include, but are not limited to the following:

- Create and organize a district-wide plan with concrete goals for equity in student outcomes, inclusive curriculum and pedagogy, teacher support, and professional development.
- Organize equity team topics and action steps. Hold monthly meetings with the equity team and council, organize work and support equity team growth across the district.
- Support, create and provide inclusive curriculum and pedagogy, including use of Google classroom and other digital media.
- Engage in every school every other week to work with teachers, provide the school with inclusive messaging strategies, and plan with administrators.
- Plan district-wide and school-level professional development opportunities to apply inclusive education in classrooms.
- Address parent, teacher and district concerns regarding the inclusive pedagogy and curriculum.

Equity Council requests a paid Equity Director position for MCSD:

There is a need, even in a small district like ours, for an equity professional to oversee the progress (or lack thereof) that the district as a whole is making in creating safer, more inclusive environments. The creation of this position would mean that there would be an expert to ensure that all schools and teachers are working toward an inclusive curriculum through the assessment and analysis of equity-driven data. This position is also a representation of the legitimate commitment Murray City School District has to equity, which may help a more diverse group of teachers find their way to the interview process and with our students, who dearly need to see themselves within school faculty and staff. Memos and statements are only words for people of color in this district, and this position would certainly show action toward a more just and equitable school system.

Additionally, being as this is a district level position, we would like to ensure that the person hired for the position has extensive experience in educational equity work, with a Ph.D. or Ed.D. preferred. This position won't create progress if it isn't headed by a true expert.

School buildings have unfortunately contributed to decades of systematic oppression of marginalized groups and it is our duty to ensure that we are working tirelessly to break down the old system and replace it with truly just practices that support every student, regardless of for People of Color, Indigenous Peoples, People with Disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer People, Immigrants, Refugees, people from low-income households, members of minority religious groups, and people from other marginalized populations.

Sincerely,

The MCSD Equity Council

--
Morgan Lami
HJH English & French

Dear Superintendent Covington,

Equity issues have been at the forefront of this past school year with the further development of an Equity Council and the protests that sprung up after the tragic murder of George Floyd. We as an Equity Council have been proud of the steps forward we have made, and certainly look forward to continuing the work we're doing with interventions through professional development and creating a space on the website to help all stakeholders shape a more equitable district and community. However, there are some gaps still to be filled, and we are now requesting that a paid position be created at the district level for an Equity Director. An Equity Director would support social justice issues and practices at the highest level, sending the message to the entire community that MCSD truly values equity work in education.

The responsibilities that we'd like the Equity Director to oversee include, but are not limited to the following:

- Create and organize a district-wide plan with concrete goals for equity in student outcomes, inclusive curriculum and pedagogy, teacher support, and professional development.
- Organize equity team topics and action steps. Hold monthly meetings with the equity team and council, organize work and support equity team growth across the district.
- Support, create and provide inclusive curriculum and pedagogy, including use of Google classroom and other digital media.
- Engage in every school every other week to work with teachers, provide the school with inclusive messaging strategies, and plan with administrators.
- Plan district-wide and school-level professional development opportunities to apply inclusive education in classrooms.
- Address parent, teacher and district concerns regarding the inclusive pedagogy and curriculum.

There is a need, even in a small district like ours, for an equity professional to oversee the progress (or lack thereof) that the district as a whole is making in creating safer, more inclusive environments. The creation of this position would mean that there would be an expert to ensure that all schools and teachers are working toward an inclusive curriculum through the assessment and analysis of equity-driven data. This position is also a representation of the legitimate commitment Murray City School District has to equity, which may help a more diverse group of teachers find their way to the interview process and with our students, who dearly need to see themselves within school faculty and staff. Memos and statements are only words for people of color in this district, and this position would certainly show action toward a more just and equitable school system.

Additionally, being as this is a district level position, we would like to ensure that the person hired for the position has extensive experience in educational equity work, with a Ph.D. or Ed.D. preferred. This position won't create progress if it isn't headed by a true expert.

School buildings have unfortunately contributed to decades of systematic oppression of marginalized groups and it is our duty to ensure that we are working tirelessly to break down the old system and replace it with truly just practices that support every student, regardless of for People of Color, Indigenous Peoples, People with Disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer People, Immigrants, Refugees, people from low-income households, members of minority religious groups, and people from other marginalized populations.

Sincerely,

The MCSD Equity Council

--

Morgan Lami
HJH English & French

“BLACK LIVES MATTER”
IS NOT A POLITICAL STATEMENT
IT IS A HUMAN AND CIVIL RIGHTS STATEMENT

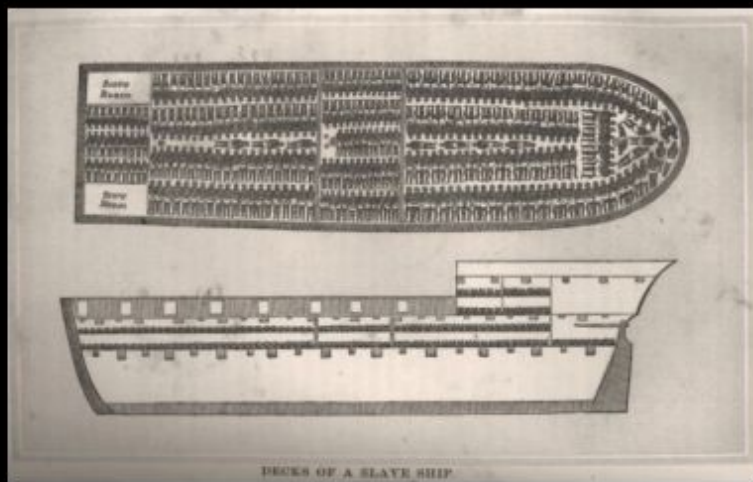
Dr. Jackie Thompson
Diversity and Inclusion Consultant

GREAT AFRICAN KINGS AND QUEENS



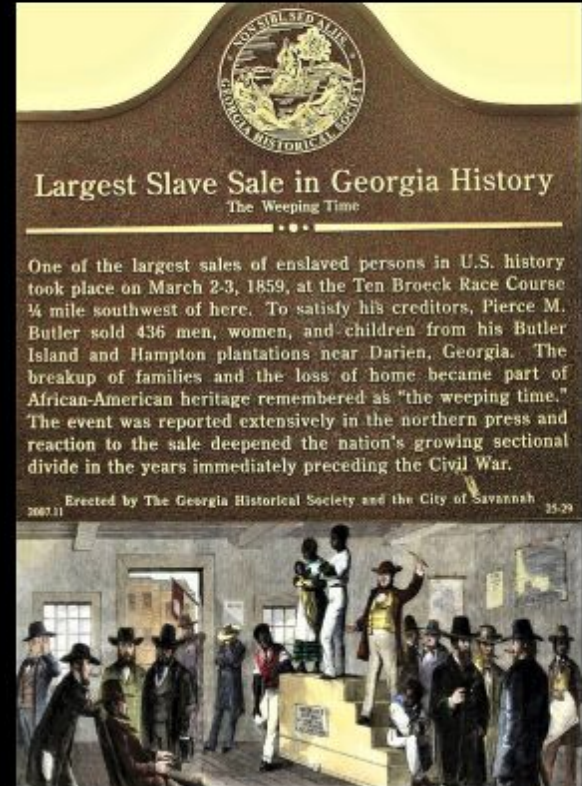
JOURNEY FROM AFRICA TO AMERICA

- Africans captured and taken against their will
- 2 million Africans died in the Middle Passage



SLAVERY

- 400 Years of Oppression
- Enslaved Africans classified as property
- 3/5ths of a human being
- Family members separated
- Immoral and inhumane treatment



CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

13th Amendment

14th Amendment

15th Amendment

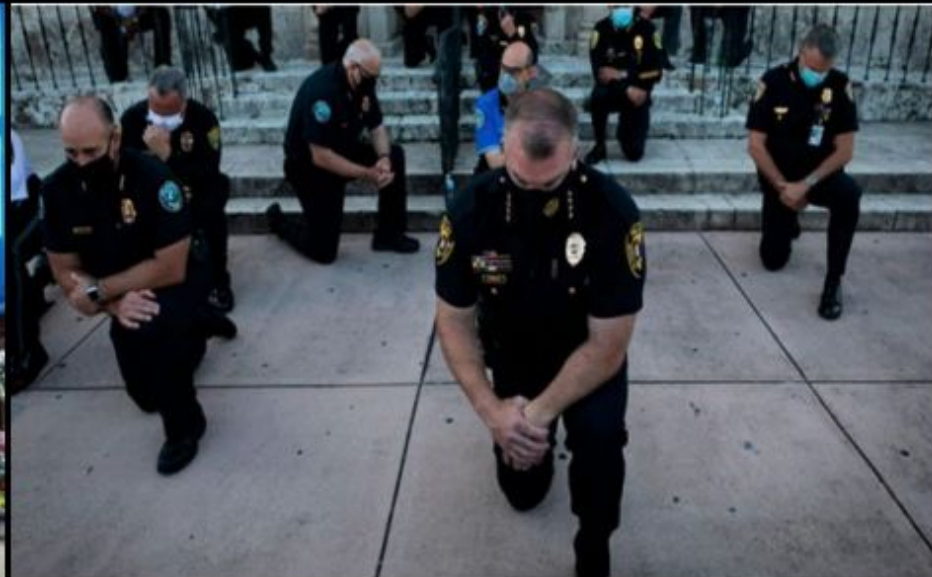
Jim Crow Laws

1954 Brown vs. the Board of Education

1964 Civil Rights Act

1965 Voting Rights Act





BECAUSE BLACK LIVES MATTER...



WE MUST CREATE WELCOMING, AFFIRMING AND INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS & SCHOOLS

- BLACK LIVES MATTER SIGNS
- MULTICULTURAL CURRICULUM
- MULTICULTURAL PRESENTATIONS FOR STUDENTS
- CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON DIVERSITY
AND INCLUSION
FOR ALL DISTRICT AND SCHOOL STAFF
- HIRING OF DIVERSE EDUCATORS AND STAFF

THANK YOU!



Antiracist Education: Student Work



- ❑ Horizon Equity Book Boxes
 - ❑ Student Responses
 - ❑ Parent Responses
- ❑ High school Student's Responses

-Dr. Jobe & Dr. Reynolds

Step 1

Full Faculty Meeting (In Aug): Where we: defined racism, watched the trailer to Precious Knowledge (held: faculty conversations on current events and how they may affect classroom spaces) and introduced our purpose in providing space for equity conversations in our classrooms daily.

-Restorative Circles

RACE: is defined by a combination of physical traits: geographic ancestry, language, ~~religions~~, and a variety of meaning of race differs depending on ~~always been perpetuated to maintain a~~ (racial hierarchy)

Step 2

Identified Monthly Themes that partner with our Second Steps Curriculum and also imbed Equity practices.



August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety, Respect and Race
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being Assertive and Language
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Empathy, Sexuality & Gender and Understanding Differences
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Managing Learning Challenges and Ability
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem Solving and Class
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Handling Name Calling and Equity
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Black History Month and Being Responsible
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Circle back on whichever topic your class could use more support on
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Circle back on whichever topic your class could use more support on
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Celebrating Cultures

Book List: Kings English Boo

Special Education:

All Are Welcome, Pengold
Daniel's Good Day, Archer
Little Legends: Exceptional Black Men in History, Harrison
Who Was Frederick Douglass? Prince
Who Did It First? Hart

Kinder:

Black is a Rainbow Color, Joy
Be You! Reynolds
Tiger Days: A Book of Feelings, Clark
Anti Racist Baby, Kendi
You Matter, Robinson

First:

I am Human, Verde/ Reynolds
La Princesa and the Pea, Elya
Ohana Means family, Ioomis
The Day You Begin, Woodson
A Family is a Family is a Family, O'Leary

Second:

Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters, Obama
Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History, Harrison
Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story, Millard
The Bell Rang, Ransome

Third:

Word Collector, Reynolds
Paper Kingdom, Rhee
The Oldest Student: How Mary Walker Learned to Read, Hubbard
What Was the March on Washington? Krull
What Was the Underground Railroad? McDonough

Fourth:

Let's Talk About Race, Lester
The List of Things That Will Not Change, Stead
Frederick's Journey: The Life of Frederick Douglass, Rappaport
Undeclared, Alexander/ Nelson
Champions of Change: 25 Women Who Made History

Fifth:

This Book is An Antiracist, Jewell
A Place to Land: Martin Luther King Jr and the Speech That Inspired a Nation, Wittenstein
Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag, Sanders and Salerno
Equality's Call: The Story of Voting Rights in America, Diesen

Sixth:

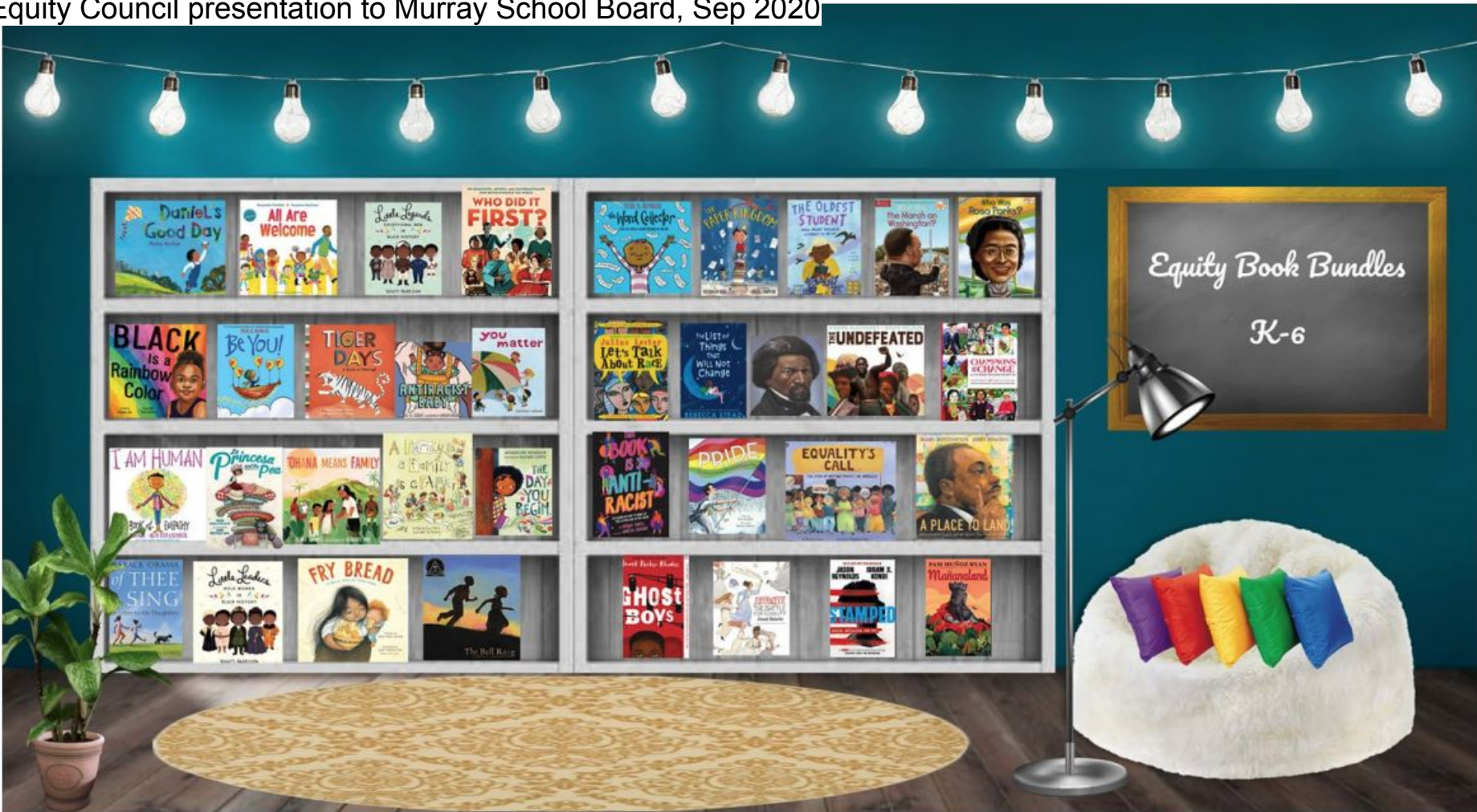
Ghost Boys, Rhodes
Suffragette: The Battle of Equality, Roberts
Rainbow Revolutionaries: Fifty LGBTQ+ People Who Made History, Prager
Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You, Reynolds
Mananaland, Ryan

Step 4

Created Faculty “Justice Team” (13 participants!)

Together we are creating teacher training and student extension ideas on Google Classroom to link with our hybrid learners and create access to ongoing curriculum for all of our learners (teachers included!)

Equity Council presentation to Murray School Board, Sep 2020



Equity Book Bundles

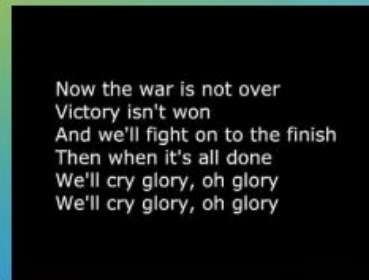
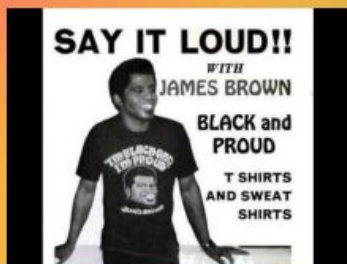
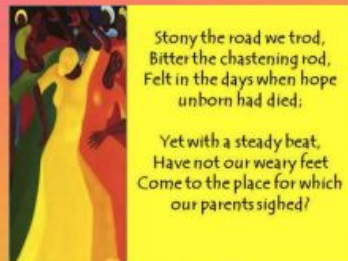
K-6

- | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

Black is a Rainbow Color



Playlist



Restorative Circle Question 1:

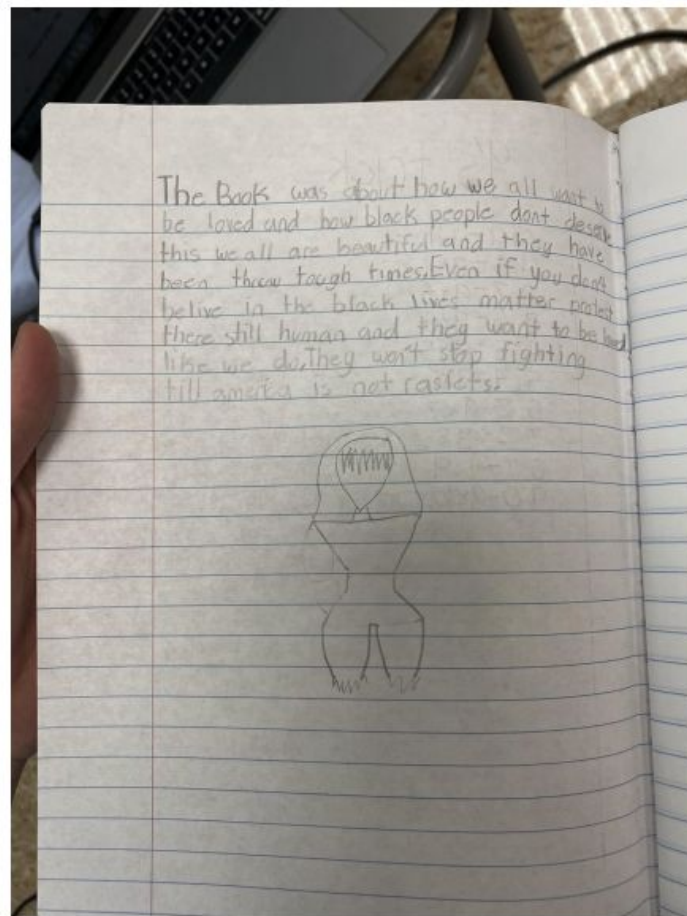
“Black is history. Black is family. Black is memory. Black is community. Black is the love that lives inside of me. My color is Black.”

What is your color?

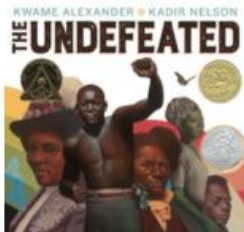
The Undefeated: Student Work from a 4th Grader



Student Response:



Student Responses:



Wednesday Meeting!

Question: What thoughts came to you as we read the book?

(Find an empty space and type your answer!)

I liked that they payed respect to everyone in the book	I liked that the book also talked about the hard parts of our history. Sometimes it's hard to hear but it's still important
And how they talked about what they did	It was nice to write that to the black,our live can't matter black lives matter. :)
.:)Yes, all black lives matter.hey are respectul	I feel so good that they stand up for justice.
I liked the book and all lives do matter, i'm not sure why black people are treated differently	I respect and like how it tied in to <u>Bck</u> Lives Matter!
	They are powerful and great and respectful.
That it had a great message and that it talked about black lives matter.	The black lives matter.

More spaces on the next slide!

Parent Communication

Thank you for this update, I appreciate that the school values and puts effort into teaching anti racism to my children. This is wonderful, thank you!

Reply · 12 days ago

Vanessa Jobe absolutely! Thank you for this kind message. What grade is your child in?

Reply · 12 days ago

Good morning Dr. Jobe,

I am so glad that the Horizon students will have this time to learn more about equality and peoples differences. It is such important work and with the current events they need to understand what is behind all of it. I know you and the teachers will handle these hard topics with care and as you have said will focus on and celebrate all cultures and family activity. Thank you so much for doing this. I am excited to support what is being taught at school.

Sincerely,

Reply · 12 days ago

Vanessa Jobe Thank you for your passion and your commitment to education around these issues and making sure all students feel a sense of belonging.

Reply · 12 days ago

Such an important program! I know you're working with Adah, but please keep me in the loop and let me know how we can help you with this program. It fits in perfectly with our PTA goals of building community and being inclusive. You're awesome!

Reply · 12 days ago

Vanessa Jobe Thank you! I would love to meet anytime and hear your ideas as well and I am thrilled to be here.

Reply · 12 days ago

Hi Dr. Jobe-

Thank you for doing this work. This sounds really great and we are excited to have even more programs like this at Horizon. How can we learn more about the equity work that will be happening? Is there a book list or info on the books in the Book Boxes so we can support it at home? How else can parents be involved?

Reply · 12 days ago

Vanessa Jobe All Are Welcome- Pengold

Daniel's Good Day- Archer

Little Legends: Exceptional Black Men in History- Harrison

Who Was Frederick Douglass- Prince

Who Did It First?- Hart

Black is a Rainbow Color- Joy

Be You!- Reynolds

Tiger Days: A Book of Feelings- Clark

Antiracist Baby- Kendi

You Matter- Robinson

I am Human- Verde/ Reynolds

La princesa and the Pea- Elye

Ohana Means Family- Loomis

The Day You Begin- Woodson

A Family is a Family is a Family- O'Leary

Of This I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters- Cozma

Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History- Harrison

Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story- Mikard

The Bell Rang- Ransome

Word Collector- Reynolds

Paper Kingdoms- Rhee



Book Bundles

Vanessa Jobe · 13 days ago · Thursday, Sep 3 at 3:57 PM · Horizon Elementary School

Hello Horizon Parents!

You may notice your students talking about "Book Boxes." I will attach a picture of the books so you can take a look. Each grade level is working on lessons regarding antiracist education. Antiracist education for Horizon means celebrating and valuing all cultures and families actively. Students and teachers are working in restorative circles, which is a time in the day where they are able to share a space and develop a sense of community and belonging by expressing who they are. We are really excited about this opportunity for our students and teachers to dive deeper into equity work.

Thank you parents for all you are doing this year. We truly appreciate you and having your students back in school.

Thank you,

Dr. Jobe



Appreciate · Comment · Print

Parent Communication

Thank you so much for this message [REDACTED] Here is the entire book list. It starts with special education and goes from 1st to 6th after that. I will make sure you all have online access to the books by Sept. 16th when all the lessons are available. I think that supporting and celebrating all lives is the main message and would love to combine forces with you at home. :)

[REDACTED] • Reply • 12 days ago

[REDACTED] Thanks so much! This looks awesome

[REDACTED] • Reply • 12 days ago

[REDACTED] Will these be available to online and hybrid kids as well?

[REDACTED] • Reply • 12 days ago

Vanessa Jobe Yes! On Sept. 16th they will be shared digitally with all the links to read alouds and questions. :)

[REDACTED] • Reply • 12 days ago

[REDACTED] This is a great idea. Thank you for doing this I think it's so important

[REDACTED] • Reply • 12 days ago

Vanessa Jobe Thank you [REDACTED] I totally agree.

[REDACTED] • Reply • 12 days ago

[REDACTED] This is such a great thing to do!! Thank you so much!

[REDACTED] • Reply • 12 days ago

Vanessa Jobe Thank you so much [REDACTED] We appreciate your support.

[REDACTED] • Reply • 10 days ago

Comment...

[REDACTED] Hold up, what are these books? I as a parent would like to make sure I'm comfortable with my child reading these. How can I get a list of these?

[REDACTED] • Reply • 12 days ago

→ **Vanessa Jobe** Hi [REDACTED] What grade is your child in? Here are all of the books. They are all children's books from Kings English Book Shop. The first four are special education and then they go up in grade level. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Word Collector- Reynolds

Paper Kingdom- Rhee

The Oldest Student: How Mary Walker Learned to Read- Hubbard

What Was the March on Washington? -Krull

What Was the Underground Railroad- McDonough

Let's Talk About Race- Lester

The List of Things That Will Not Change- Stead

Frederick's Journey: The Life of Fredrick Douglass- Rappaport

Undeafed- Alexander Nelson

Champions of Change: 25 Women Who Made History- Watkins

This Book is Anti-Racist- Jewell

A Place to Land: Martin Luther King Jr. and the Speech That Inspired a Nation- Wittenstien

Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag- Sanders and Salerno

Equity's Call: The Story of Voting Rights in America

Ghost Boys, Rhodes

Suffragette: The Battle of Equality, Robers

Rainbow Revolutionaries: 50 LGBTQ+ People Who Made History- Prager

Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You- Reynolds

Mananaland- Ryan

[REDACTED] • Reply • 12 days ago

→ **Vanessa Jobe** This list above is 4-6 here is Special Ed K-3. Thank you for your interest and reach out if I can answer further questions.

High school: Research for BLM in scho

- <https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/all-students-need-antiracism-education>
- Federal employees are legally allowed to support BIM under the Hatch act- U.S. Office of Special Counsel deemed not a political organization - cleared the Hatch Act - “BIM is thus an umbrella term for a constellation of ideas, objectives, and groups. There is no ‘leader’ of the BIM movement”
- “But BIM terminology is issue-based, not a campaign slogan.”
- Activist teachers formed a national committee and prevailed on the National Education Association to adopt a resolution of endorsement. Thus was conceived the BIM at School National Week of Action, to be held annually the first week of February to set the tone for Black History Month. The following year, school districts in more than 20 major cities, including New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., Boston, and Seattle incorporated BIM at School Week into their curricula. This past February, amid favorable publicity, school districts in more than 30 cities and counties participated.
- <https://www.city-journal.org/black-lives-matter-in-the-classroom>

High School: BLM in schools continued

How is BLM not political?

- Separate riots from BLM (they were separate)
- Just trying to represent other cultures and people besides the majority (not teaching about police brutality/violence)

Why is it okay to teach BLM in schools?

- It's not only about police brutality
- Teaching them at a young age allows them to learn to be inclusive before they have biases
- Shows solidarity for students of color, shows them that their school values them as much as white kids
- Helps break the cycle of parents passing down bias' to kids
- Beneficial for students to learn about other cultures besides themselves, more exposure and understanding of the world (teaching tolerance)

BLM curriculum:

- Equal opportunity for white students and students of color
- Teachers that represent the student body accurately (teachers of color)
- Reading books by black authors or with black protagonists
- Learning about people of color outside of the race factor
- Teaching tolerance

High school: BLM Close

- Remind the school board that they control narrative

- Don't have to talk about defunding police, but touch on the movement more generally. Less room for a possible bipartisan stance

- Local impacts of anti-racist education already seen (4th grade letter) don't need to prove impact in classrooms which makes approaching the subject a lot more manageable

Thank you!

MCSD Commitment to Equity Statement:

Murray City School District (MCSD) believes it is important to acknowledge the immense pain and grief that many of our students, families, staff, and community members are feeling because of the tragic death of Mr. George Floyd and the devastating impact that on-going institutional and interpersonal racism has on our society.

We denounce racism of any kind and strive to create a school system free of discrimination and injustice. Last fall, a district-wide Equity Council formed that is working continuously to ensure we are meeting the needs of all students, particularly our Black students and students of color. We will continue to:

- Teach and advocate for more inclusive curriculum;
- Procure more literary resources from authors of color;
- Establish policies and practices that do not perpetuate harm;
- Provide anti-bias training, resources, and instruction to educators;
- Improve efforts to ensure our staff, curriculum, and instruction reflect the communities we serve.

"We Are Murray" is not just a catchphrase, it is the embodiment of all we strive to be. We are committed to leading with love, inclusiveness, and compassion for all. Education is powerful and we must continue challenging ourselves, students, and each other to examine our shared and uncomfortable history.

We welcome an extended and open dialogue with our community and believe working together will help lead us to healing and change.

(written by the MCSD Equity Council Leadership Team- June 2020)

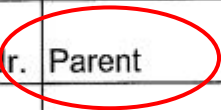
Equity Council presentation to Current MCSD Equity Council Member List as of September 2020
Murray School Board, Sep 2020

Name	School	Position	Email
Keri Hohnholt	District	Title I Specialist	khohnholt@murrayschools.org
Darren Dean	District	Personnel & St. Services	ddean@murrayschools.org
Mikaele Shields	Hillcrest Jr. High	English	mshields@murrayschools.org
Kendal Poole	Hillcrest Jr. High	English	kpoole@murrayschools.org
Victoria Bean	Hillcrest Jr. High	Health/Dance	vbean@murrayschools.org
Morgan Lami	Hillcrest Jr. High	English/French	mlami@murrayschools.org
Tanya Wadley	Hillcrest Jr. High	CTE	twadley@murrayschools.org
Stephanie Ruiz	Hillcrest Jr. High	English	sruiz@murrayschools.org
Maria Stump	Hillcrest Jr. High	Intervention Specialist	mstump@murrayschools.org
Erik Torres	Horizon El.	2nd grade	etorres@murrayschools.org
Whitney Anderson	Horizon El.	Principal	wanderson@murrayschools.org
Vanessa Jobe	Horizon El.	Assistant principal	vjobe@murrayschools.org
Nicole Wintch	Liberty El.	PE	nwintch@murrayschools.org
Shawn Johnson	Liberty El.	School Psychologist	sjohnson@murrayschools.org
Cyndi Ralston	Liberty El.	Social Worker	cralston@murrayschools.org
Becky Te'o	Longview El.	Principal	rteo@murrayschools.org
Wendy Sanders	Murray High	Counselor	wsanders@murrayschools.org
Haley Binggeli	Murray High	Math	hbinggeli@murrayschools.org
Hilary Moore	Murray High	Math	hmoore@murrayschools.org
Issac Beh	Murray High	Health/ESL	ibeh@murrayschools.org

Current MCSD Equity Council Member List as of September 2020

Alison Jacobson	Parkside El.	Special Ed.	ajacobson@murrayschools.org
Rachel Macchiarola	Parkside El.	2nd Grade	rmacchiarola@murrayschools.org
Brittany Lund	Parkside El.	2nd Grade	blund@murrayschools.org
Lilibeth Tapia	Parkside El.	5th Grade	ltapia@murrayschools.org
Loura Olson	Parkside El.	4th Grade	lolson@murrayschools.org
Jennifer King	Viewmont El.	Principal	jking@murrayschools.org
April Johnson	Viewmont El.	4th Grade	aljohnson@murrayschools.org
Charli Quiñonez	Grant	3rd Grade	cquinonez@murrayschools.org
Cindy Berry	Murray High	English	cberry@murrayschools.org
Jennie LaFortune	Murray High	English	jlafortune@murrayschools.org
Juliet Reynolds	Murray High/Hillcrest Jr.	Parent	[REDACTED]
Laurie Martinez	Parkside El.	ISS Coordinator	lmartinez@murrayschools.org
Cara Cerise	Parkside El.	3rd Grade	ccerise@murrayschools.org

ONE parent?



Addressing Race and Inequality: Resources for Families, Educators and Students

Curated resources about diversity, anti-racism and protests in response to current events from public media stations and others.

Museums and Organizations



Talking About Race from Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture

Portal Helps People Explore Issues Of Race, Racism And Racial Identity



Anti-Defamation League

Engage in conversations with young people using lesson plans, family discussion guides, children's literature and more.



Civil Rights History Project

Interviews in this project cover a wide range of topics within the freedom struggle, such as the influence of the labor movement, nonviolence and self-defense, religious faith, music, and the experiences of young activists.



NAACP: A Century in the Fight for Freedom

This exhibition presents a retrospective of the major personalities, events, and achievements that shaped the NAACP's history during its first 100 years.



Anti-Racism Resources for Parents & Families

Talking about racism and bias can be challenging. The resources below help families take action.



Facing History and Ourselves

Facing History and Ourselves uses lessons of history to challenge teachers and their students to stand up to bigotry and hate.



TeachRock

TeachRock is a standards-aligned, arts integration curriculum that uses the history of popular music and culture to help teachers engage students. Lesson plan paths offer a collection of lessons based on relevant current event topics.

Equity Council presentation to Murray School Board, Sep 2020

Public Media



PBS Utah Series Let's Talk: How to talk to Kids About Race

Let's Talk, a PBS Utah online series about talking to kids about race, racism, and cultural

differences.



PBS Utah Book List, Tips & Tools

Book lists for parents to help the discussion.



PBS Racism in America Films and Resources

Explore films and new specials focused on race.



WNET Education: Anti-Racist Resources: For Families, Educators, and Students

A growing list of resources from PBS and trusted partners, to use

as tools to support anti-racist learning and growth.



IdahoPTV

Embracing Diversity Idaho, local and national diversity resources.



KQED Education: Understand, Learn and Act: Teaching In the Midst of Mass Protests for Black Lives

Free resources for educators seeking to understand the Black Lives Matter protests in the context of systemic racism and to help provide a path to learning and teaching.




WGBH: Curated PBS Resources

The following resources were gathered by WGBH Director of History and Social Studies Curriculum




WXXI Education: PBS LearningMedia Resources: Race, Racism, Protests, Civil Rights, Current Events and more

WXXI Education staff collected resources from




Say Their Name
Chicago Public schools has released a very powerful resource to support all stakeholders in discussing race and civil disobedience with students.




Curriculum Resources on Bias, Race and Injustice
Relevant lesson plans, related curricula and additional anti-bias resources and strategies to help you discuss this topic with young people in school and at home.




Statement on Anti-Racism to Support Teaching and Learning
Originally developed by the National Council of Teachers of English Committee on Racism and Bias in the Teaching of English, February 2007, revised July 2018.




Committee Against Racism and Bias in the Teaching of English
The charge for the Committee Against Racism and Bias in the Teaching of English is to investigate and make recommendations to counteract racism and racial bias in teaching materials, methods, and programs for language arts, English, and humanities.



What Anti-Racist ELA Teachers Do
A PDF document filled with actionable steps and opportunities for self-reflection and discussions in your departments and schools.



Institutionalized Racism: A Syllabus
Tools for helping students understand George Floyd's death in the context of institutionalized racism.




What Anti-racist Teachers Do Differently
They view the success of black students as central to the success of their own teaching.




Antiracism in Social-Emotional Learning: Why It's Not Enough to Talk the Talk
Every day, new stories of discrimination and violence emerge that prompt new conversations.




An Anti-Racist Children's and YA Reading List
Though this is by no means a complete list, **NU** has compiled the following selection of recommended fiction and nonfiction about race and activism from creators of color, as well as suggested fiction that celebrates the diversity of the Black experience by #OwnVoices authors and illustrators.



We Need Diverse Books
WNDB strives to create a world in which all children can see themselves in the pages of a book. To reach this goal, we've created programs to celebrate diverse books, to mentor diverse writers and illustrators, to support diverse publishing professionals, and to provide books to classrooms nationwide.



Building Racial Justice and Equity
ASCD has provided free access to resources to dismantle racism at every level: individual, institutional, and systemic.



Rise Up! An American Curriculum: Inspired by Hamilton: An American Musical
Rise Up! uses creative inquiry to explore Hamilton: An American Musical. Lessons help students to understand and critically examine Hamilton themes and artistry, and to express their own personal narrative through writing and performance.

Equity Council presentation to Murray School Board, Sep 2020

© Utah Education Network in partnership with the Utah State Board of Education and Utah System of Higher Education.

UE's does not endorse and is not responsible for content on external websites linked to from this page.

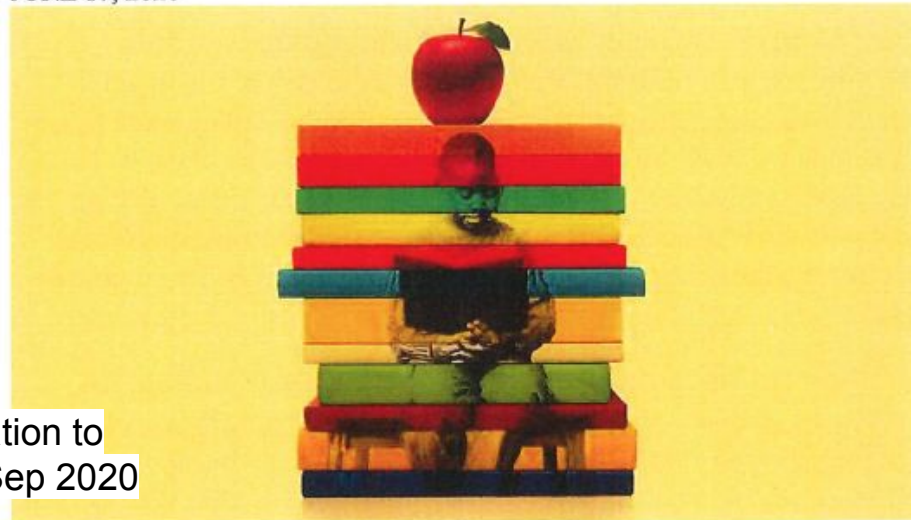
(801) 856-5852 | KUEN CPB and FCC Compliance | Terms of Use | Web Accessibility | Captioning

What Anti-racist Teachers Do Differently

They view the success of black students as central to the success of their own teaching.

PIRETTE MCKAMEY

JUNE 17, 2020



GETTY; PAUL

SPELLA / THE ATLANTIC

Editor's Note: In 1988, a teacher most commonly had 15 years of experience. In recent years, that number is closer to just three years leading a classroom. The "On Teaching" series focuses on the wisdom of veteran teachers.

Equity Council presentation to
Murray School Board, Sep 2020

Requests and Suggestions from the MCSD Equity Council:

Please continue to include the Equity Council in next steps and further study of racial equity and other related topics and issues.

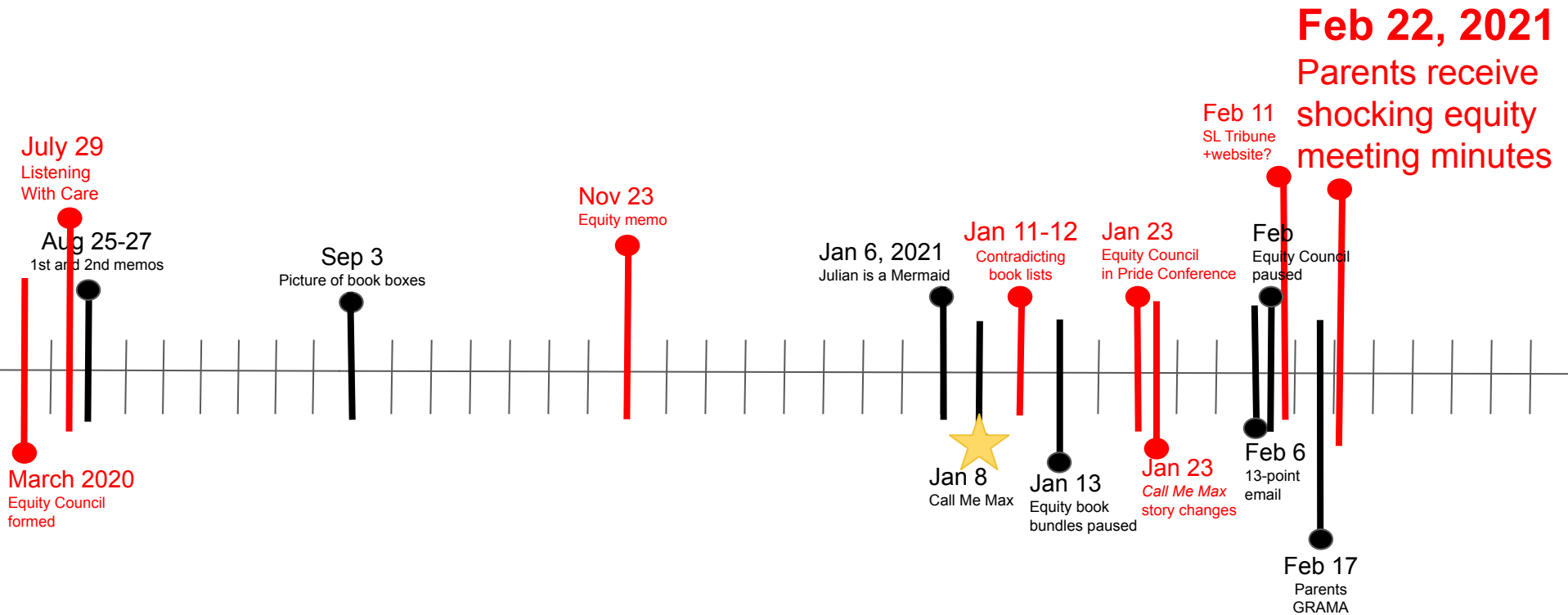
- We ask that a revised memo is sent out to all MCSD teachers and staff within the next two weeks that clarifies that “Black Lives Matter” is not considered political speech, nor are several of the other examples provided in the addendum. This could look like an updated version of the MCSD Commitment to Equity Statement, explicitly including the phrasing “Black Lives Matter” and/or a revised message such as the one provided below.*
- Ensure our policies regarding equity are updated and in accordance with the Utah Administrative Code (the Equity Council is happy to do this).
- Consider hiring a Director of Equity for the district who has a background in social justice education and/or experience in educational equity.
- We request that all MCSD staff and the school board participate in continuous and ongoing anti-bias and inclusion training.

*Example of Revised Memo:

The Murray City School District does not show support or non-support for any partisan political viewpoint. We do, however, value and pursue equity and justice in all areas of learning. Educators who struggle separating partisan slogans from non-partisan dialogue about equity and justice may reach out to the Human Resources office for guidance. One example of an equity/justice approach are conversations, signs, posters, and displays that emphasize dismantling of individual and systemic barriers to student access and achievement to learning. We recommend all educators (not just teachers) focus on such an approach that provides access for all learners and their families—regardless of individual partisan positions—to dialogue about issues of equity and social justice that will help our students, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, socioeconomic status, and more to access learning and reach their highest potential.

Video of Greg Marchant talking about Equity Council





Murray School Board Meeting

Study Session on Equity

February 25, 2021

MCSD holds school board meeting addressing Equity issues in our district

February 25, 2021

(Part 1)

Feb 25, 2021 - Murray School Board meeting on Equity



Whitney Anderson says:

- Ms. Paul said science made beards possible.
- Ms. Paul read the book before reading it to the class.
- The monthly pacing guide was a faculty theme schedule.
- The books and lesson plans were posted on the website in October.

Did the teacher say “Science has made it possible for people to grow beards when they get older”?

Had the teacher read the book before?

Date : 1/10/2021 10:32:32 PM

From [REDACTED]

To : wanderson@murrayschools.org, vjobe@murrayschools.org, spaul@murrayschools.org

Subject : Transgender Books

Hello,

[REDACTED] came home from school on Friday and told me all about the "puberty" lesson she had at school. She told me in detail about the books that were read last week, "Call Me Max" and "Julian the Mermaid". She also told me she learned from her teacher that when people grow up they can take special medicine to grow or not grow a beard if they really feel on the inside they're supposed to be a boy or a girl. My husband and I are very upset that these things were taught to our child without our permission. I have been in contact with several parents with children in these two classes who are equally upset. We would like to know why this information is being taught without our permission or without being informed first. Is this information new to the third grade curriculum?

[REDACTED]

**January 8,
2021** -
text message
from parent

**Feb 11,
2021** -
quote from
Tribune

Sorry, you're hearing from me a lot lately. I know [redacted] is in the other class, but did [redacted] happen to mention any books that were read in class today? (Im assuming the teacher read them to both classes)

I understand that there are kids out there who struggle with feeling like they were born the wrong sex, I'm just not sure how I feel about this being talked about with 8/9 year olds. [redacted] told me all about the 2 books in detail and also how the teacher told them if they are a girl, but really feel like a boy they can take medicine to grow a beard. If they're a boy and feel like inside they're really a girl they can take medicine to not grow a beard. I just feel like this is so much for young kids and can cause them to question themselves. Maybe I'm old fashioned, I just hate that this was taught to [redacted] in class today.



The book is an illustrated account of a young transgender boy who educates his own teacher and classmates about his identity.

It starts with the teacher taking attendance. "Can you call me Max?" the boy asks, noting that his name on the roll doesn't match how he sees himself.

As the teacher at Horizon Elementary was reading it, said Murray School District spokesman Doug Perry, students in the class began asking her questions. One was specifically about puberty, Perry noted. The teacher hadn't read the book before and deflected the questions, for the most part, he said.

But some of the students talked to their parents about the book and the discussion. And a few families then called the district, angry that the book was shared with their kids without permission.

Jan 11, 2021 -
quote from Sarah
Paul's email
to parents

On Monday, Jan 11 at 8:23 AM, Sarah Paul wrote:

Hello,

I understand there are concerns with two of the books read during our equity lessons last week, "Julian is a Mermaid" and "Call me Max". As a school and district, we are focusing on equity and antiracist work. Reading books about all people is part of this. Additionally, we learn about equity during our Wednesday Second Steps curriculum. Learning about transgender, gay and straight people in developmentally appropriate ways is part of our district and school.

Here is a link to Julian is a Mermaid: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E44zjYyxnWg>

Here is a link to Call Me Max: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jcrPnaCbKrY>

Class discussions with these books were intended to teach students to feel confidence in themselves as well as accepting others. We also talked about gender norms like in clothing or colors and how you should be able to like any color or wear any clothes despite your gender. I answered student questions as they arose honestly and in developmentally appropriate ways.

I would like to clarify that there was no discussion on puberty. One student asked how they grew a beard. I replied by stating that science has found ways to help them, to which another student replied, "like medicine." I felt the need to clarify with students that this is not something that happens until they are an adult. Again, one student replied, "oh after puberty." A few students began repeating the word puberty because they thought it was funny. I quickly shut that down and we moved on.

Despite the sidetracked conversations, I feel students benefited from these books with a sense of confidence in who they are and an ability to accept others.

**Was the monthly
“pacing guide” a
faculty theme schedule
or a classroom
schedule?**

Second Steps and Equity Themes Schedule:

August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety, Respect and Race
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being Assertive and Language
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy, Sexuality & Gender and Understanding Differences
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Learning Challenges and Ability
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem Solving and Class
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handling Name Calling and Equity Issue that pertains to your class.
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black History Month and Being Responsible
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circle back on whichever topic your class could use more support on
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circle back on whichever topic your class could use more support on
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating Cultures

Jan 12, 2021 -

Dr. Jobe's email
to parent with
"Equity Themes Schedule"

**Were the books and
lesson plans posted on
the website in October?**

**Jan 13, 2021 -
Parent phone call
with Principal
Whitney Anderson**

“I think in the future...
we can do better with
the communication and
transparency piece. I
would like to get our
equity books... on our
website and make
those available.”

**team that's made up of an admin
team and some teachers in the
building**

Date : 1/11/2021 9:49:23 AM
From : "Vanessa Jobe"
To : "Whitney Anderson"
Subject : Re: Equity Bundles

Oh that's an idea! I could share it with [REDACTED] (so help me if I spelled [REDACTED] name wrong)? I could also pull all the titles and put the ones that have digital links in there.

On Mon, Jan 11, 2021 at 9:22 AM Whitney Anderson <wanderson@murrayschools.org> wrote:
I wonder if we can get the list published on our website.

On Mon, Jan 11, 2021, 9:04 AM Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:
This parent understands. :)

----- Forwarded message -----
From: [REDACTED] <jwsquared@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Jan 11, 2021 at 8:51 AM
Subject: Equity Bundles
To: <vjobe@murrayschools.org>

Dear Dr. Jobe,

First of all, thank you for all you do at Horizon. What a year to come in new! In the few times I have interacted with you, I have been impressed with your gentleness and your desire to understand and to help.

I'm sure you know there has been a flurry of messaging amongst 3rd grade dual immersion parents about the books that were read last week ("Julian is a Mermaid" and "Call Me Max"). I want to say that I really appreciate you letting parents know in advance about the Equity Bundles. I think that kind of exposure to anti-racist and anti-prejudiced literature is a really great idea, especially in Murray, where kids don't have as many opportunities to interact with minorities.

Would it be possible for me to know what specific books were included in the equity bundles for the 3rd grade? Honestly, I would love to know the titles in the 6th grade bundle (as I have another child in that grade), if not all the grades' bundles, as they are clearly well thought out (thank you!) and great for initiating discussion in my family.

Sincerely,
[REDACTED]

On **Wed, Jan 13, 2021** at 8:19 AM Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Hi [REDACTED]

We are happy to post our equity lessons so all parents can see them. I will include the books about supporting transgender students on our list. Those were not included at first because we did not think they were necessary. As we learned more about our student populations we learned they are necessary.

We are working on setting up our website to list the specifics that you have asked for. We would love to support as much transparency as possible.

Yes we made an informed decision about the two books as an admin and teacher team. This law 53E-9-203 does not include children's books that support transgender students.

We hope that these changes will support you and all families as we continue this work.
Thank you so much for your communication

—

Vanessa Jobe, Ed.D.

Horizon Elementary Assistant Principal

(she/her/ hers)

801.264.7420

Date : 1/22/2021 10:18:21 AM
From : "Darren Dean"
To : "Whitney Anderson"
Subject : Re: Book bundles

Whitney,

Can you hold off on sharing the doc in advance with Community Council? I need to discuss with Jen.

Thanks -Darren :)
Darren Dean
Director of Personnel & Student Services
Murray City School District
Office: 801-264-7466
Cell: 801-647-0339



On Fri, Jan 22, 2021 at 9:56 AM Whitney Anderson <wanderson@murrayschools.org> wrote:
February 9th. I'm adding the documents to our SCC shared drive and asking them for feedback before the meeting. Anything else you think would be helpful?

On Fri, Jan 22, 2021, 9:36 AM Darren Dean <ddean@murrayschools.org> wrote:
Whitney,

When is your community council scheduled for?

Darren Dean
Director of Personnel & Student Services
Murray City School District
Office: 801-264-7466
Cell: 801-647-0339



On Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 4:17 PM Whitney Anderson <wanderson@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Hey Darren,

came in this afternoon and we had a good chat. I'm hopeful that we are back on the right track.

Here is the communication that we are wanting to post on our website and send our via ParentSquare. I just can't do that until we meet with our SCC. But, here it is for your reference.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z7-KHVzhYYXeX9XotbXl6LUVBm2lXWVSj00L_iszFI/edit?usp=sharing

Mrs. Whitney Anderson
Principal - Horizon Elementary
801.264.7420

On Wed, Jan 20, 2021 at 4:17 PM Whitney Anderson <wanderson@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Hey Darren,
[REDACTED] came in this afternoon and we had a good chat. I'm hopeful that we are back on the right track. Here is the communication that we are wanting to post on our website and send our via ParentSquare. I just can't do that until we meet with our SCC. But, here it is for your reference.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Z7-KHVzhYYXeX9XotbXl6LUYBm2IXWV5l00L_iszFI/edit?usp=sharing

Mrs. Whitney Anderson
Principal - Horizon Elementary
801.264.7420



----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Sat, Feb 27, 2021 at 9:34 AM
Subject: Equity book bundles
To: <j.covington@murrayschools.org>

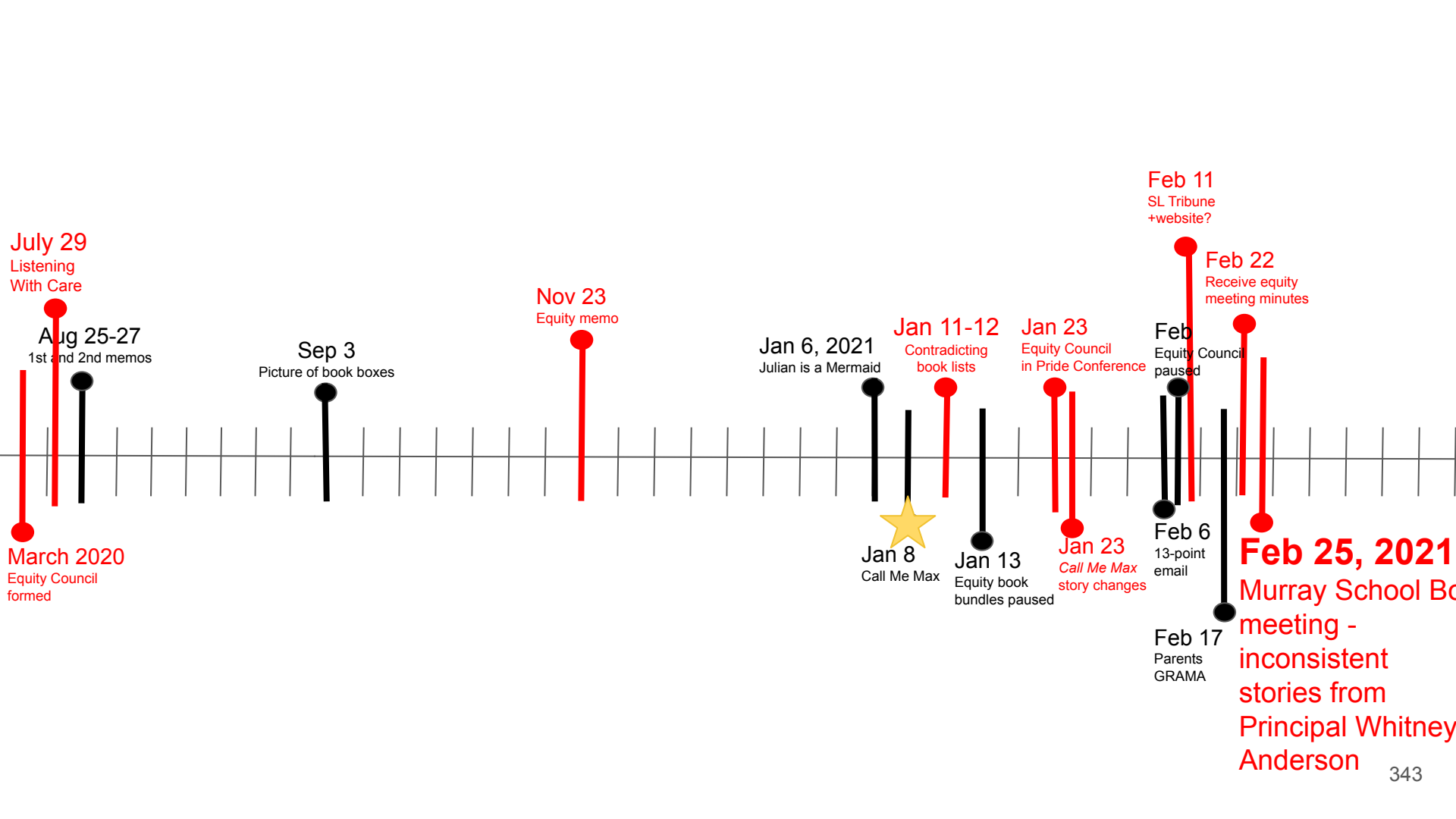
Hello,

Could you please send me a list of the equity book bundle books? I tried to click on the link provided for parents and it only takes me to a general library website. I have asked Whitney Anderson (my children attend Horizon) and she has not responded to me. Will this list of books not be shared with parents? I really would encourage transparency at this time.

Also, I listened to the board meeting and what Ms. Anderson shared. She truly put a positive spin on the reading of the book, "Call me Max". I have a 3rd grader in Mrs. Paul/Mrs. Luna's classrooms. I have spoken with several parents. The reason this book was found out to have been read to the students is because a good number of 3rd graders went home and shared with their parents how uncomfortable they were with the reading of this book.

I hope you can decipher between truth and lies. What Ms. Anderson shared about the reception of this book was a lie. If you are interested in the truth, talk to the children that were there, not a Principal that is lying to you.

Please send a list of the books in the equity book bundle to me. Thank you,



MCSD holds school board meeting addressing Equity issues in our district

February 25, 2021

(Part 2)

Feb 25, 2021 - Murray School Board meeting on Equity



Darren Dean says:

- Equity Council -
 - No intent to exclude parents
 - Not involved in Equity Book Bundles
 - Not involved in planning PD

**Did the Equity Council
INCLUDE parents?**

Attendance: Cara Cerise, Brittany Lund, Alison Jacobson, Darren Dean, Susan Jorgensen, Keri Hohnholt, Shawn Johnson, Juliet Reynolds, Lilibeth Tapia, Laura Olson

Darren: Need to do some policy work at the district level, Keri and Cara met with Darren and talked about formalizing the committee. Superintendent gives her approval and Darren will serve as the district liason on the council. Darren is a one-man show over student services, so having a committee to help change occur will be helpful. Are there other stakeholders that need to be included in the council? How can we reach out to others to get them involved?

More parent voices, possible student voices, social workers/counselors, teachers from all schools (Darren will reach out to principals to get 1-3 names of teachers and possible parents from each school that would be good candidates to join.)

Shawn: If the council gets large enough we can break into groups to work on specific issues.

How do we see parent involvement? Want parents who are interested in the issues, they wouldn't have to serve on the committee, but could come and present to the council James Kuay is one possibility, if you have other names, send them to Darren so he can make the contact.

Equity Council presentation to Current MCSD Equity Council Member List as of September 2020
Murray School Board, Sep 2020

Name	School	Position	Email
Keri Hohnholt	District	Title I Specialist	khohnholt@murrayschools.org
Darren Dean	District	Personnel & St. Services	ddean@murrayschools.org
Mikaele Shields	Hillcrest Jr. High	English	mshields@murrayschools.org
Kendal Poole	Hillcrest Jr. High	English	kpoole@murrayschools.org
Victoria Bean	Hillcrest Jr. High	Health/Dance	vbean@murrayschools.org
Morgan Lami	Hillcrest Jr. High	English/French	mlami@murrayschools.org
Tanya Wadley	Hillcrest Jr. High	CTE	twadley@murrayschools.org
Stephanie Ruiz	Hillcrest Jr. High	English	sruiz@murrayschools.org
Maria Stump	Hillcrest Jr. High	Intervention Specialist	mstump@murrayschools.org
Erik Torres	Horizon El.	2nd grade	etorres@murrayschools.org
Whitney Anderson	Horizon El.	Principal	wanderson@murrayschools.org
Vanessa Jobe	Horizon El.	Assistant principal	vjobe@murrayschools.org
Nicole Wintch	Liberty El.	PE	nwintch@murrayschools.org
Shawn Johnson	Liberty El.	School Psychologist	sjohnson@murrayschools.org
Cyndi Ralston	Liberty El.	Social Worker	cralston@murrayschools.org
Becky Te'o	Longview El.	Principal	rteo@murrayschools.org
Wendy Sanders	Murray High	Counselor	wsanders@murrayschools.org
Haley Binggeli	Murray High	Math	hbinggeli@murrayschools.org
Hilary Moore	Murray High	Math	hmoore@murrayschools.org
Issac Beh	Murray High	Health/ESL	ibeh@murrayschools.org

Current MCSD Equity Council Member List as of September 2020

Alison Jacobson	Parkside El.	Special Ed.	ajacobson@murrayschools.org
Rachel Macchiarola	Parkside El.	2nd Grade	rmacchiarola@murrayschools.org
Brittany Lund	Parkside El.	2nd Grade	blund@murrayschools.org
Lilibeth Tapia	Parkside El.	5th Grade	ltapia@murrayschools.org
Loura Olson	Parkside El.	4th Grade	lolson@murrayschools.org
Jennifer King	Viewmont El.	Principal	jking@murrayschools.org
April Johnson	Viewmont El.	4th Grade	aljohnson@murrayschools.org
Charli Quiñonez	Grant	3rd Grade	cquinonez@murrayschools.org
Cindy Berry	Murray High	English	cberry@murrayschools.org
Jennie LaFortune	Murray High	English	jlafortune@murrayschools.org
Juliet Reynolds	Murray High/Hillcrest Jr.	Parent	[REDACTED]
Laurie Martinez	Parkside El.	ISS Coordinator	lmartinez@murrayschools.org
Cara Cerise	Parkside El.	3rd Grade	ccerise@murrayschools.org

ONE parent?



Juliet Reynolds (she/her/hers)

Juliet is a parent of 4 mostly grown children who went to schools in the Murray School District. Juliet has been an active parent and volunteer through the years, and in 2015, when her son came out as gay in his 8th grade year, and then her youngest came out as non-binary in their 8th grade year a few years later, she and her family have been committed to expanding the LGBTQ+ community in the Murray School District. Both of her youngest children have been integral in establishing the R.E.A.D.Y. program at Hillcrest Jr. High, and leading the GSA at Murray High School. She graduated from the University of Utah this past Spring with degrees in Anthropology and Gender Studies, and has worked with educators, and administration in the district over the last year with a research project centered around inclusive practices and policies, which has let to her participation as a parent representative on the newly formed Equity Council.

Equity Council Leadership Team Agenda

01-07-2021

3:00-4:00 p.m.

- Welcome- What did you enjoy most about the break?
- Any updates regarding the letter to Superintendent Covington about a MCSD Equity Director?- Morgan
 - Morgan sent us a copy of the letter she drafted to the Superintendent.
- General council meeting on Thursday the 14th- topics (Keri facilitating), restructuring of Equity Council? This year? Next year? (original call for sign ups- Haley Binggeli, April Johnson, Issac Beh, Wendy Sanders, Tanya Wadley, Victoria Bean. Others: Brittany, Shawn)
 - Potential Restructuring - Would like to move beyond discussions and words to actions and practices. Should we add some people to the leadership team? Do we need to split things into “action oriented” groups, but still host an “equity fire-side chat” of sorts to provide a space for people to discuss equity concerns and/or ask questions. Additional notes KH took: Need to figure out how the district/board wants to go about adding parents, likely next year due to COVID. Could do Zoom meetings this year, but in-person meetings are preferred. Parent membership s/b diverse and include all views (i.e., African American schema differs from African Refugee schema, as educators we need to know our students to reach our students).

Did the Equity Council Plan Equity Book Bundles?

Action Items:

Susan and Cara will make a Diverse Book Lists for Elementary Schools and send out to the committee. NEA and Teaching Tolerance have good resources.

Darren will reach out to principals to get 1-3 names of teachers and possible parents from each school that would be good candidates to join.

Darren will ask the Teaching and Learning Team for PD time for equity and inclusion issues.

All work on the definition of Equity and think about mission/vision statements. (Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals)

All explore PD opportunities that we would like to have and possibly look into options.

Next Meeting: Define equity and work on Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals. Set group norms. Second Wednesday of every month from 3:30-4:45.

April 8th, 3:30 pm, DO in the PD room

May 13th

Antiracist Education: Student Work



- ❑ Horizon Equity Book Boxes
 - ❑ Student Responses
 - ❑ Parent Responses
- ❑ High school Student's Responses

-Dr. Jobe & Dr. Reynolds

Step 1

Full Faculty Meeting (In Aug): Where we: defined racism, watched the trailer to Precious Knowledge (held: faculty conversations on current events and how they may affect classroom spaces) and introduced our purpose in providing space for equity conversations in our classrooms daily.

-Restorative Circles

RACE: is defined by a combination of physical traits: geographic ancestry, language, ~~religions~~, and a variety of meaning of race differs depending on ~~always been perpetuated to maintain a~~ (racial hierarchy)

Step 2

Identified Monthly Themes that partner with our Second Steps Curriculum and also imbed Equity practices.



August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety, Respect and Race
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Being Assertive and Language
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Empathy, Sexuality & Gender and Understanding Differences
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Managing Learning Challenges and Ability
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problem Solving and Class
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Handling Name Calling and Equity
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Black History Month and Being Responsible
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Circle back on whichever topic your class could use more support on
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Circle back on whichever topic your class could use more support on
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Celebrating Cultures

Book List: Kings English Boo

Special Education:

All Are Welcome, Pengold
Daniel's Good Day, Archer
Little Legends: Exceptional Black Men in History, Harrison
Who Was Frederick Douglass? Prince
Who Did It First? Hart

Kinder:

Black is a Rainbow Color, Joy
Be You! Reynolds
Tiger Days: A Book of Feelings, Clark
Anti Racist Baby, Kendi
You Matter, Robinson

First:

I am Human, Verde/ Reynolds
La Princesa and the Pea, Elya
Ohana Means family, loomis
The Day You Begin, Woodson
A Family is a Family is a Family, O'Leary

Second:

Of Thee I Sing: A Letter to My Daughters, Obama
Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History, Harrison
Fry Bread: A Native American Family Story, Millard
The Bell Rang, Ransome

Third:

Word Collector, Reynolds
Paper Kingdom, Rhee
The Oldest Student: How Mary Walker Learned to Read, Hubbard
What Was the March on Washington? Krull
What Was the Underground Railroad? McDonough

Fourth:

Let's Talk About Race, Lester
The List of Things That Will Not Change, Stead
Frederick's Journey: The Life of Frederick Douglass, Rappaport
Undeclared, Alexander/ Nelson
Champions of Change: 25 Women Who Made History

Fifth:

This Book is An Antiracist, Jewell
A Place to Land: Martin Luther King Jr and the Speech That Inspired a Nation, Wittenstein
Pride: The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag, Sanders and Salerno
Equality's Call: The Story of Voting Rights in America, Diesen

Sixth:

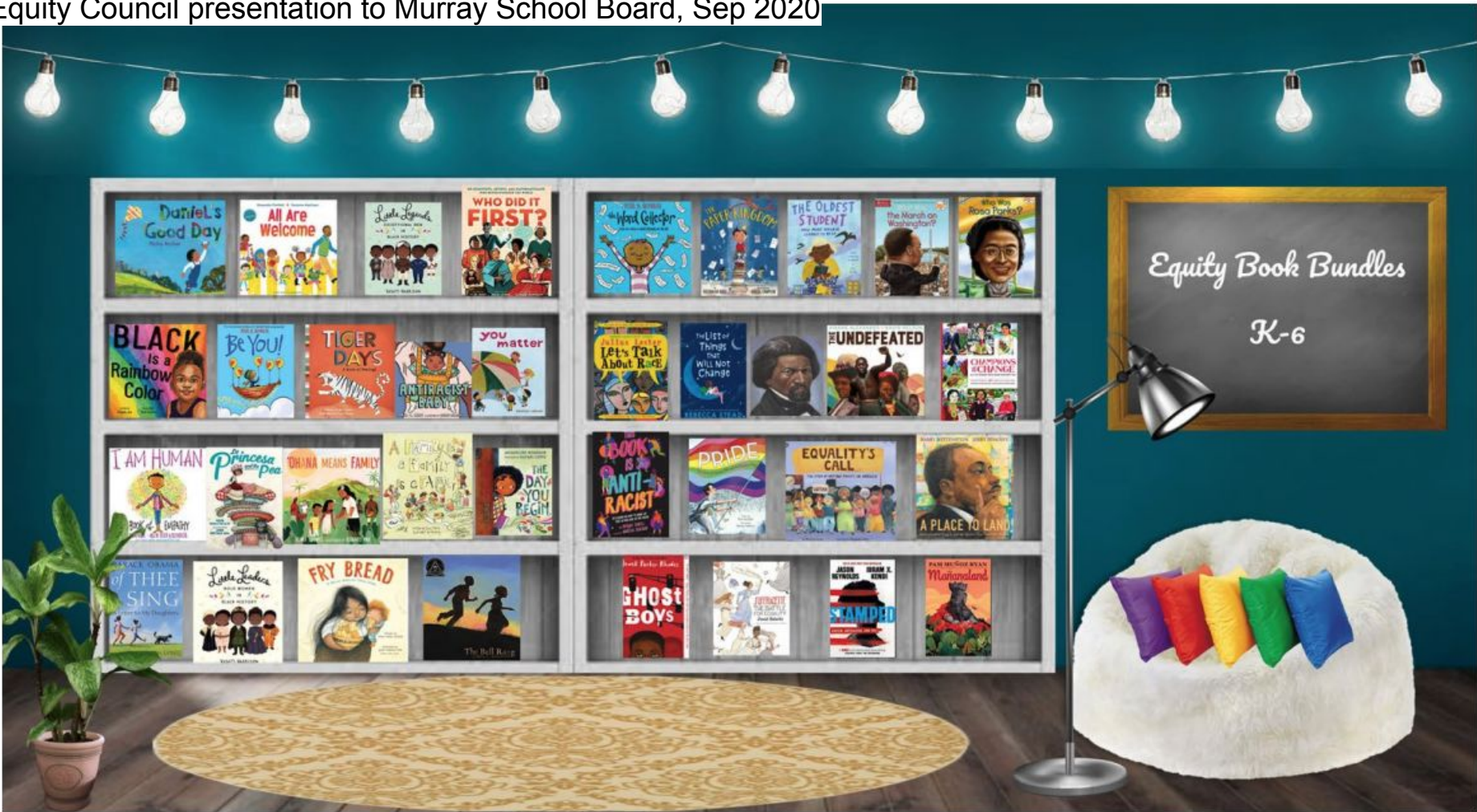
Ghost Boys, Rhodes
Suffragette: The Battle of Equality, Roberts
Rainbow Revolutionaries: Fifty LGBTQ+ People Who Made History, Prager
Stamped: Racism, Antiracism and You, Reynolds
Mananaland, Ryan

Step 4

Created Faculty “Justice Team” (13 participants!)

Together we are creating teacher training and student extension ideas on Google Classroom to link with our hybrid learners and create access to ongoing curriculum for all of our learners (teachers included!)

Equity Council presentation to Murray School Board, Sep 2020



Equity Book Bundles
K-6

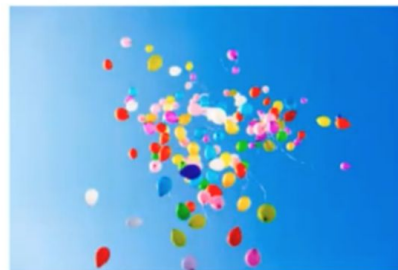
- | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | |

- Discussion from general council meeting: sign up sheet, participant concerns, action items for the year, topics to cover during next meeting on Nov. 12th.
 - Equity Topics Sign Up: Not very many signed up, but we can bring this up at the next larger meeting to fill more spots.
 - Equity Budget?: Question about funding for PD or other things. Darren will talk to the teaching and learning team to find out if there are any PD funds that can be prioritized for equity. We have 4 schools identified as TSI and although there is no funding for that, perhaps we can justify using some other braided funds for PD to address equity for ELL our populations.
 - PD for teachers s/b paired with Equity Book Bundles: Vanessa Jobe - does a different PD session that goes along with each monthly theme. She has shared these with the Principals. Is happy to record those. Explained that the Equity Team @ HZN is also doing a book study How to be an Anti-Racist. So far, there has been no pushback from staff. Vanessa said that other schools have ordered the books, but she's not sure about the PD that goes with it or if it's being paired with the SEL curriculum. At HZN, the expectation is that every teacher will read the books to students and participate in the conversation, but there is no expectation that they are an expert on every topic. They are learning.
 - Cost of Equity Books: Book bundles were \$2,000 and Robin Williams offered another \$700 to help with the overall cost.
 - Should equity topics be optional? Cara mentioned that she would like this to be something that happens at every school and not just an "extra" thing that schools can opt into. Darren said that these are things that we need to discuss with so many competing priorities at each school.



Successes:

- Council coming to fruition, district office involvement
- Higher employee interest and investment in equity: events, trainings
- Getting conversations started with the school board and district office
- Formally requesting Equity Director
- Equity book bundles at Horizon Elementary (project of Dr. Jobe's)
- Correction of a harmful memo that went out to MCS D staff in late August
- Professional development on LGBTQ+ cultural competency for next school year



**Did the Equity Council
plan PD?**

Action Items:

Susan and Cara will make a Diverse Book Lists for Elementary Schools and send out to the committee. NEA and Teaching Tolerance have good resources.

Darren will reach out to principals to get 1-3 names of teachers and possible parents from each school that would be good candidates to join.

Darren will ask the Teaching and Learning Team for PD time for equity and inclusion issues.

All work on the definition of Equity and think about mission/vision statements. (Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals)

All explore PD opportunities that we would like to have and possibly look into options.

Next Meeting: Define equity and work on Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals. Set group norms.
Second Wednesday of every month from 3:30-4:45.

April 8th, 3:30 pm, DO in the PD room

May 13th

- Discussion from general council meeting: sign up sheet, participant concerns, action items for the year, topics to cover during next meeting on Nov. 12th.
 - Equity Topics Sign Up: Not very many signed up, but we can bring this up at the next larger meeting to fill more spots.
 - Equity Budget?: Question about funding for PD or other things. Darren will talk to the teaching and learning team to find out if there are any PD funds that can be prioritized for equity. We have 4 schools identified as TSI and although there is no funding for that, perhaps we can justify using some other braided funds for PD to address equity for ELL our populations.
 - PD for teachers s/b paired with Equity Book Bundles: Vanessa Jobe - does a different PD session that goes along with each monthly theme. She has shared these with the Principals. Is happy to record those. Explained that the Equity Team @ HZN is also doing a book study How to be an Anti-Racist. So far, there has been no pushback from staff. Vanessa said that other schools have ordered the books, but she's not sure about the PD that goes with it or if it's being paired with the SEL curriculum. At HZN, the expectation is that every teacher will read the books to students and participate in the conversation, but there is no expectation that they are an expert on every topic. They are learning.
 - Cost of Equity Books: Book bundles were \$2,000 and Robin Williams offered another \$700 to help with the overall cost.
 - Should equity topics be optional? Cara mentioned that she would like this to be something that happens at every school and not just an "extra" thing that schools can opt into. Darren said that these are things that we need to discuss with so many competing priorities at each school.

Leadership Team Agenda

11-20-2020

3:00-4:00 p.m. (45 min to an hour)

Miscellaneous Updates/Issues

- Robin is planning a Cultural Competence PD for January with secondary
- McMillan is having a gender identity PD November 20th for her staff
- What are PD needs around the district (admin, teachers, staff, district office, etc.)
- How can we reserve PD days for equity PD? This year? Next year?
- Racism is happening NOW and creating unsafe working conditions for some of our employees. It's important to make sure our school administration members get some training about these issues. Admin PD needs are immediate.
- Vanessa reminded us that while we should address these issues with our district office first, and give them a chance to implement corrective action, individuals have the right to contact The Office of Civil Rights if they are not being heard. That is the appropriate next step.

Vanessa Jobe sent you a message.

Hi [REDACTED]

First of all, we are so proud of your [REDACTED] What a strong and appropriate way to show support. I am pulling the [REDACTED] to tell them what a good job they did and to also support the other students in understanding how problematic that name calling was. I left you a message and feel free to call back at any time.

We as a school and as a district support Black Lives Matter. At Horizon we are practicing "Equity Book Bundles." Each month we have a focus: (race, ethnicity, gender, ability ect). We offer professional development for teachers and then offer resources for teachers to use in their classrooms to support students in being inclusive and supportive. (Just as your daughter and her friend were). So, all students are receiving lessons on equity and human rights with their Second Steps Curriculum.

Thank you for your e mail. We also agree that this situation was not political. This was human rights issue and we support learning and having the appropriate language around human rights.

Please reach out if you have any questions,

Dr. Jobe
VP Horizon

Date : 12/5/2020 12:06:06 PM

From : "Cara Cerise"

To : "Darren Dean", [REDACTED]

Subject : LGBTQ+ PD trainers

Attachment : Safe at School Description.pdf;

Hi Darren,

Here are the three presenters I know that offer fantastic trainings on LGBTQ+ cultural competency and suicide prevention for educators:

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

The details of the workshops she offers are attached to this email.

[REDACTED] whom you have already met from the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] who recently presented at McMillian. He is an administrator in the Salt Lake City School district and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is also currently a doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership and Policy program at the University of Utah and doing part of his doctoral research on the impacts of professional learning on educators' ability to enact LGBTQ-inclusive practices and curricula? [REDACTED]

Let me know if there is anything else I can do to facilitate contact with these presenters. I have worked professionally with all of them and they are excellent!

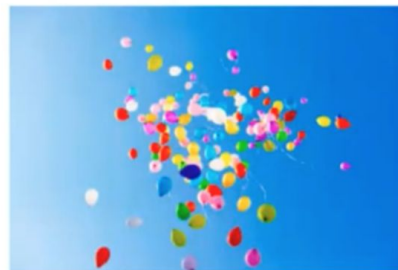
Thanks!

Cara



Successes:

- Council coming to fruition, district office involvement
- Higher employee interest and investment in equity: events, trainings
- Getting conversations started with the school board and district office
- Formally requesting Equity Director
- Equity book bundles at Horizon Elementary (project of Dr. Jobe's)
- Correction of a harmful memo that went out to MCS D staff in late August
- Professional development on LGBTQ+ cultural competency for next school year



Horizon
Professional Development
How to be an Antiracist



Language Professional Development

Let's take a look!



How to be an Antiracist- Ibram Kendi

EXTRACTS

Ibram X. Kendi defines what it means to be an antiracist

In this extract from his 2019 book *How To Be an Antiracist*, historian Ibram X. Kendi breaks down exactly what the term means - and why clear language is a vital first step in the battle against prejudice.

Ibram X. Kendi

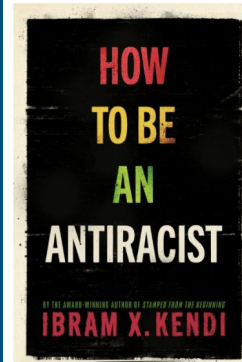
09 JUNE 2020



RACIST: One who is supporting a racist policy through their actions or inaction or expressing a racist idea.

ANTIRACIST: One who is supporting an antiracist policy through their actions or expressing an antiracist idea.

Definitions anchor us in principles. This is not a light point: If we don't do the basic work of defining the kind of people we want to be in language that is stable and consistent, we can't work toward stable, consistent goals. Some of my most consequential steps toward being an antiracist have been the moments when I arrived at basic definitions. To be an antiracist is to set lucid definitions of racism/antiracism, racist/antiracist policies, racist/antiracist ideas, racist/antiracist people. To be a racist is to constantly redefine racist in a way that exonerates one's changing policies, ideas, and personhood.



So let's set some definitions. What is racism? Racism is a marriage of racist policies and racist ideas that produces and normalizes racial inequities. Okay, so what are racist policies and ideas? We have to define them separately to understand why they are married and why they interact so well together. In fact, let's take one step back and consider the definition of another important phrase: racial inequity.

Watch :)

<https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/we-still-live-here/>



**Horizon Faculty
Book Club
How to be an Antiracist**

This seems to be a pattern:

Racism and antiracism is not an identity. Anyone can be either one of those things.

Questions (anything people want to write to discuss)

1. Gender: **Female**
2. Restricted Info: **No restrictions**
3. Hispanic or Latino: **Hispanic**
4. Race(s): **White**

The above classification comes from our Aspire student rosters. I've always wondered why we need it and what it's purpose is.

I wanted to share a podcast episode that goes really well with ch. 4. The podcast is called Dope Labs the episode is Lab O25: Skin Deep. It discuss the history of science and racism.

Thank you!



Join these change-makers in reinventing education!

The shifts in the learning landscape this year are tough to keep up with. Switching to online and blended learning. Addressing equity issues. Helping learners be creators even from a distance. Assessing remote learning. It's a lot.

The good news: The learning you need now on these topics and dozens more is just over a week away at ISTE20 Live, Nov. 29-Dec. 5! You'll get the powerful inspiration you need from our latest round of featured voices:



IBRAM X. KENDI, Ph.D., Founding Director, Boston University Center for [Antiracist Research](#)

Kendi is a professor, historian and the author of the New York Times bestseller *How to Be an [Antiracist](#)*. Hear what he's learned from research and writing on [anti-racism](#), the topic of our times.

Book Club!

Welcome!

Chapter 8: Introductory Idea/ Discussion

[Kendi](#) defines a behavioral [racist](#) as someone who conflates the behavior of individuals with that of entire racial groups. A behavioral [antiracist](#) understands that “racial group behavior” is a totally fictional concept.

Chapter 9: Introductory Idea/ Discussion

Although inequity across color lines (or [colorism](#)) is often forgotten, [antiracists](#) must recognize and address it. There are clear disparities between light and dark-skinned Black people in health, education, and employment. Light-skinned and dark-skinned immigrants and Latinx Americans suffer similar inequities

Further Questions or comments to discuss :)

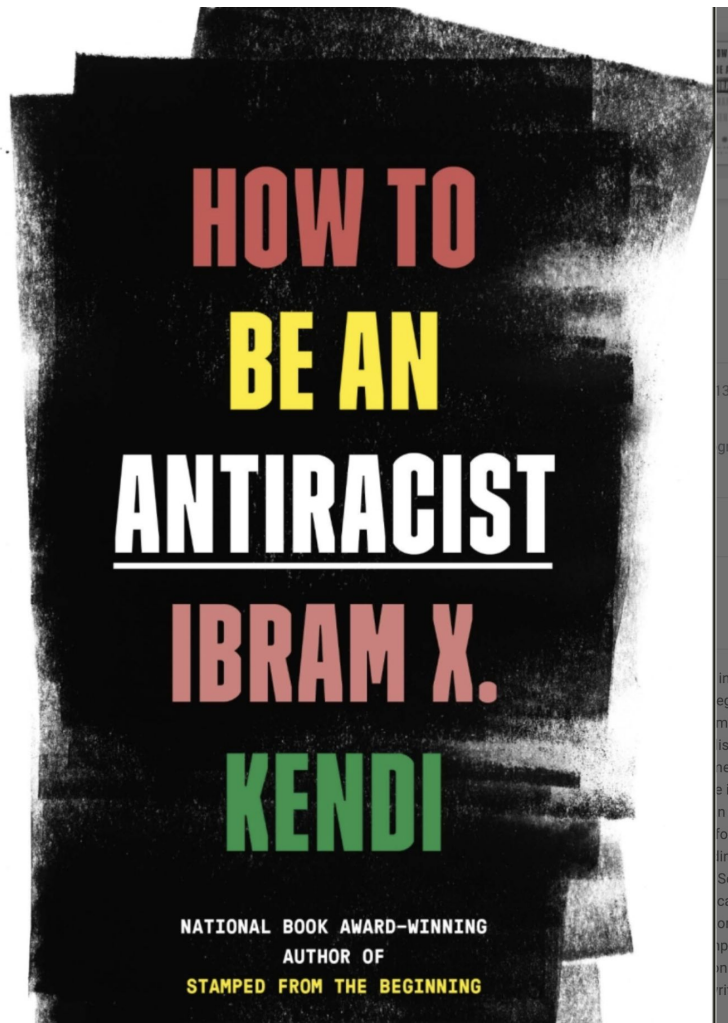
Chap 10 & 11

White:

But later, upon traveling to Mecca and seeing Muslims of all [races](#) praying together, Malcolm X quit the NOI and disavowed Elijah Muhammad's philosophy. He also took the remarkable step of recognizing that anti-white [racism](#) is real.

Black:

[Kendi](#) used to believe in the “[powerless defense](#),” the idea that only white people can be [racist](#) because only white people have power. This is actually a racist idea that lets powerful people of color avoid taking [antiracist](#) action and diminishes the power that Black people do have (while exaggerating white people's power). In reality, everyone has *some* power, and some Black people have a lot of it—there are Black congresspeople, judges, police officers, university professors, billionaires, CEOs, and presidents. White people have *most* of the power, but not all of it.



Any responses on the following quotes or anything from the reading that stood out to you?

Horizon Elementary - August 2020

Professional Development on Race

Given in conjunction with equity book bundle themes



Conversations in School: Equity and Race



(Feet, why do I want them if I have
wings to fly?)

Introductory Ideas:

1. Embrace discomfort, that is where the learning happens.
2. Remember the socio-cultural reality for our students may be different from ourselves. We need to embrace that and use it in our classroom.



Each of us
has a magic
inside of us
that we can
use to make
the world a
better place.
-Marley Dias



When Marley Dias was in the sixth grade, she got tired of never seeing herself in the books she read for school. So she founded #1000BlackGirlBooks, collected thousands of stories featuring black girls as main characters and donated them to schools. In 2018, she even published a book of her own, Marley Dias Gets It Done: And So Can You! At that time, the author and activist was only 13 years old.

Although we will focus on conversations around race, equity also includes:

- Sexuality
- Gender
- Class
- Ethnicity
- Language
- Religion
- Ability



Socially Distanced Vocab Activity “Prairie Dog”

Race is socially constructed and is defined by a combination of physical traits (skin color-ish, hair), geographic ancestry, language, religion, and a variety of other cultural features. The meaning of race differs depending on context and has ***always been perpetuated to maintain a racial hierarchy***. (TeachingTolerance.org)

NOTE: Race is not a biological signifier. There is no racial gene.

Trailer for *Precious Knowledge* (2009)

Documents the Mexican American Studies Program in Tucson, AZ, and the fight to protect the program

As you watch, consider:

How does this trailer reflect issues, goals, successes, current events, and other ideas in our current educational situation, especially here at Horizon? (Relate it to elementary)

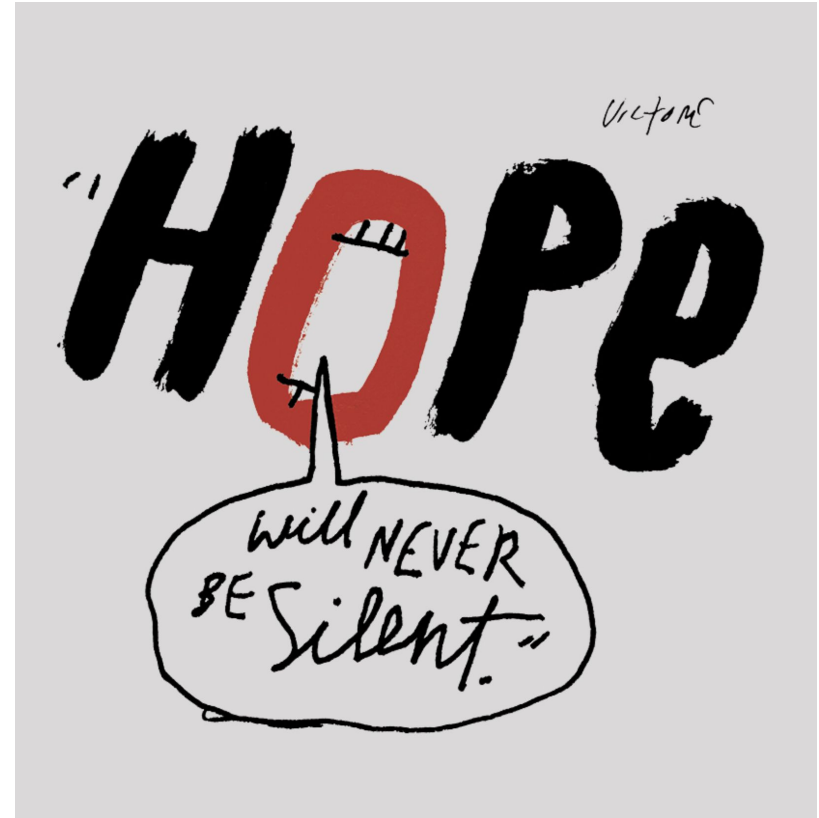


Background:

Racism has always been a problem in our schools.

Racism is in the national conversation now.

It's the responsibility of teachers to address these issues in classrooms, and not just address them, **but embrace them.**



Student Experiences and Needs

Kids see these issues on social media, the news, and in their lived experiences.

Kids must know they are supported and safe in their classroom.

Kids need teachers to answer questions about racism and provide student appropriate answers.

Kids must know their race/ethnicity is embraced regardless of skin color and documentation status.



Examples of how to pull conversations about race into the classroom:

Kids sharing stories about their experiences

- Using self-created stories and narratives (both as individuals and in groups) allows students to engage their ethnicity and race and makes conversations around ethnicity and race normal in the classroom.

-Restorative Circles



How can we incorporate these students' ideas and advice into our own classrooms?



“In Person” Resources

It is ok to not know. Model strong learning.

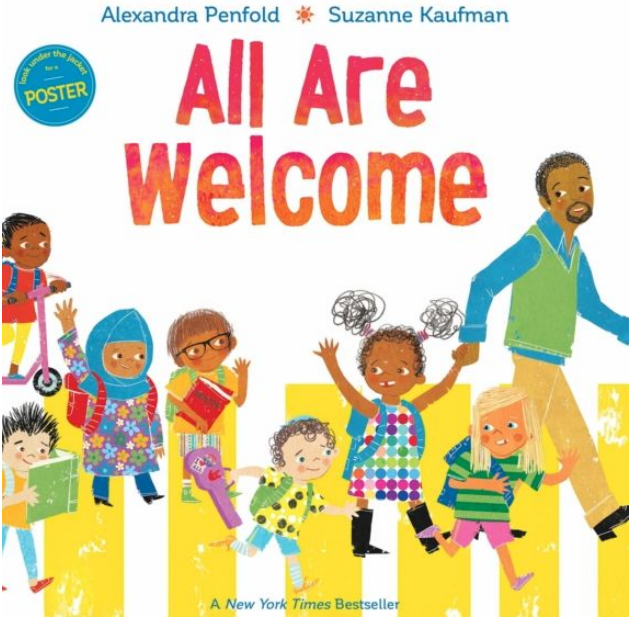
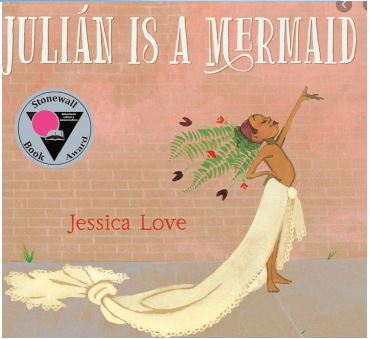
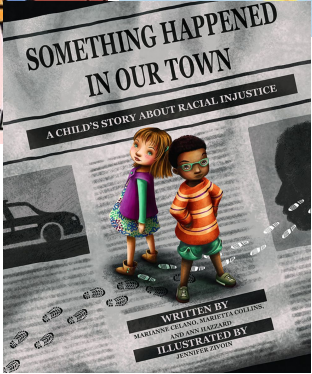
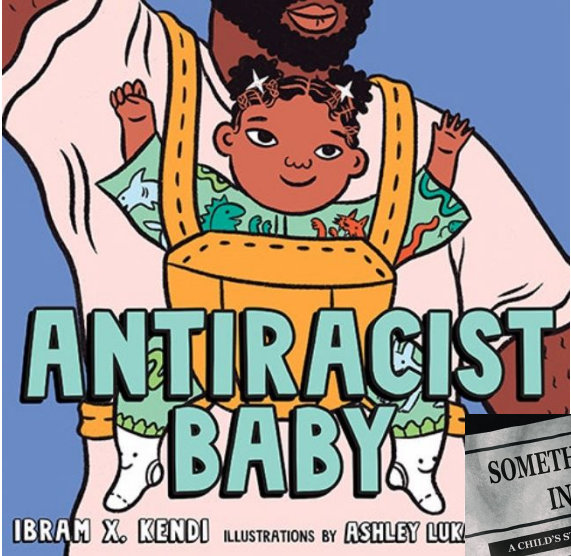
Its ok to say, "I don't know, but I will find out for you."

Its ok to not know the answer, be humble and make it a part of the learning process. Model that you (the teacher) can be a learner too.

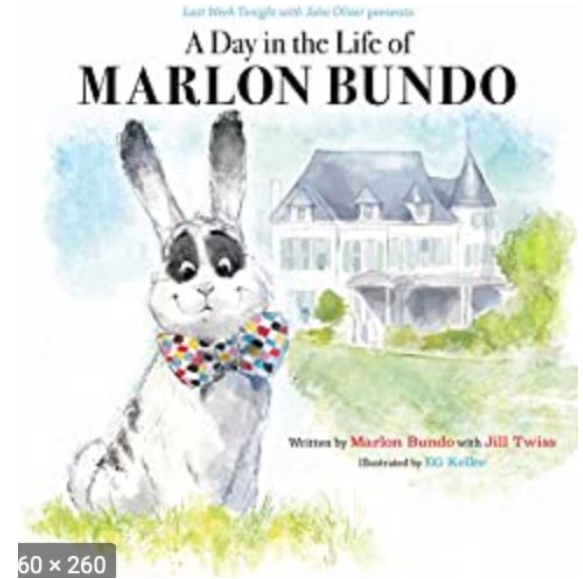
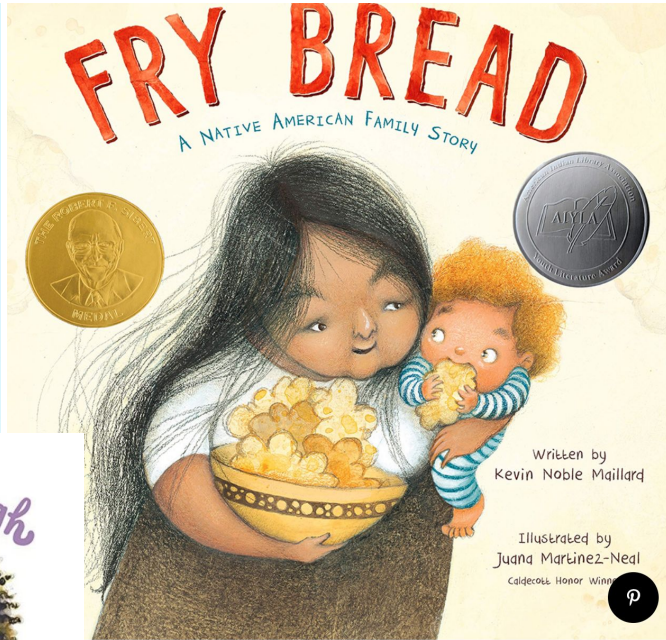
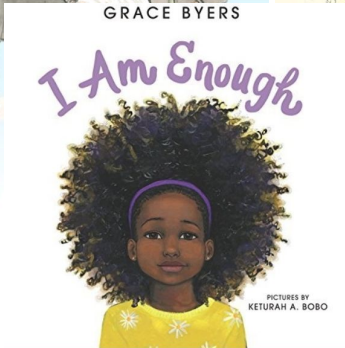
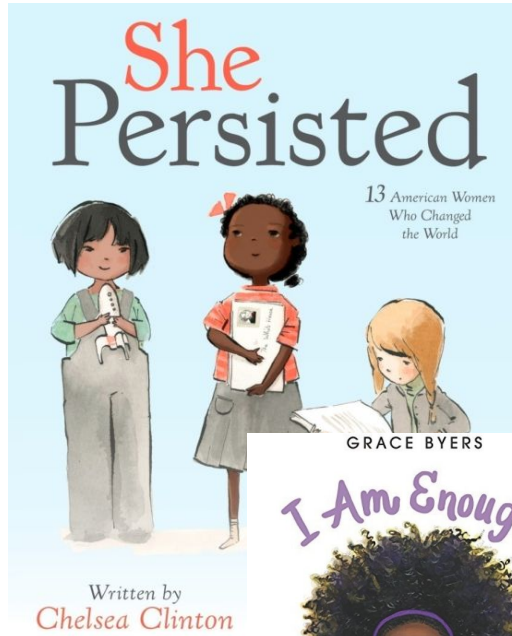
Identify on a team: Volunteers for "safe contacts" for help with conversations about race.



Examples of Children's Books to Battle Injustice



Examples of Children's Books to Battle Injustice



Online Resources (Just one: It is massive)

+Teaching Tolerance

Horizon Elementary - September 2020

Lesson Plan

Pride: The story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag
5th grade equity book



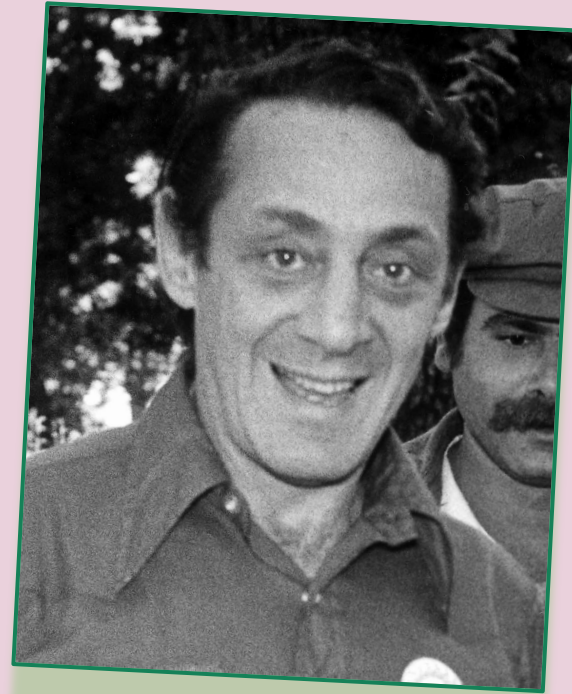
Pride

The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag

Written by Rob Sanders

Illustrated by Steven Salerno

“It takes no compromise to give people their rights...it takes no money to respect the individual. It takes no political deal to give people their freedom. It takes no survey to remove repression.” -Harvey Milk



Who was Harvey Milk? What was his big dream?

Including everyone!

"In 1978, artist Gilbert Baker designed the original rainbow flag, ... So much has happened since then. A lot of good, but there's more we can do. Especially when it comes to recognizing people of color in the LGBTQ+ community. To fuel this important conversation, we've expanded the colors of the flag to include black and brown. It may seem like a small step. But together we can make big strides toward a truly inclusive community."

Why did Philadelphia think it was important to add black and brown stripes to the rainbow flag?

Discussion

- *Why did Harvey Milk think it was important to create a symbol for the LGBTQ community?*
- *What can you tell me about Gilbert Baker?*
- *What does pride mean?*
- *What does the rainbow flag symbolize?*



Lena Waithe in her rainbow cape.

"I want everybody to know that you could be whoever you are and be completely proud." - Lena Waithe

Who am I?

Lena Waithe is a writer, producer and actress. In 2017, she won an Emmy for Outstanding Writing. Short clip of Lena Waithe's Vogue interview at the Met. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NmQnKbyMCA4> Students should ask themselves, "Who am I?" Brainstorming out loud could be helpful.

Activity

*You will Draw an identity cape or flag
These will be a symbol of how each of us are unique
and wonderful!
Use crayons, markers, colored pencils, colored paper,
or collage materials*

What is my identity?

Think to yourself about the different ways that you identify.

Think about your hopes and dreams.

What are you proud of?

What symbols, if any, do you want to put on your flag or cape?

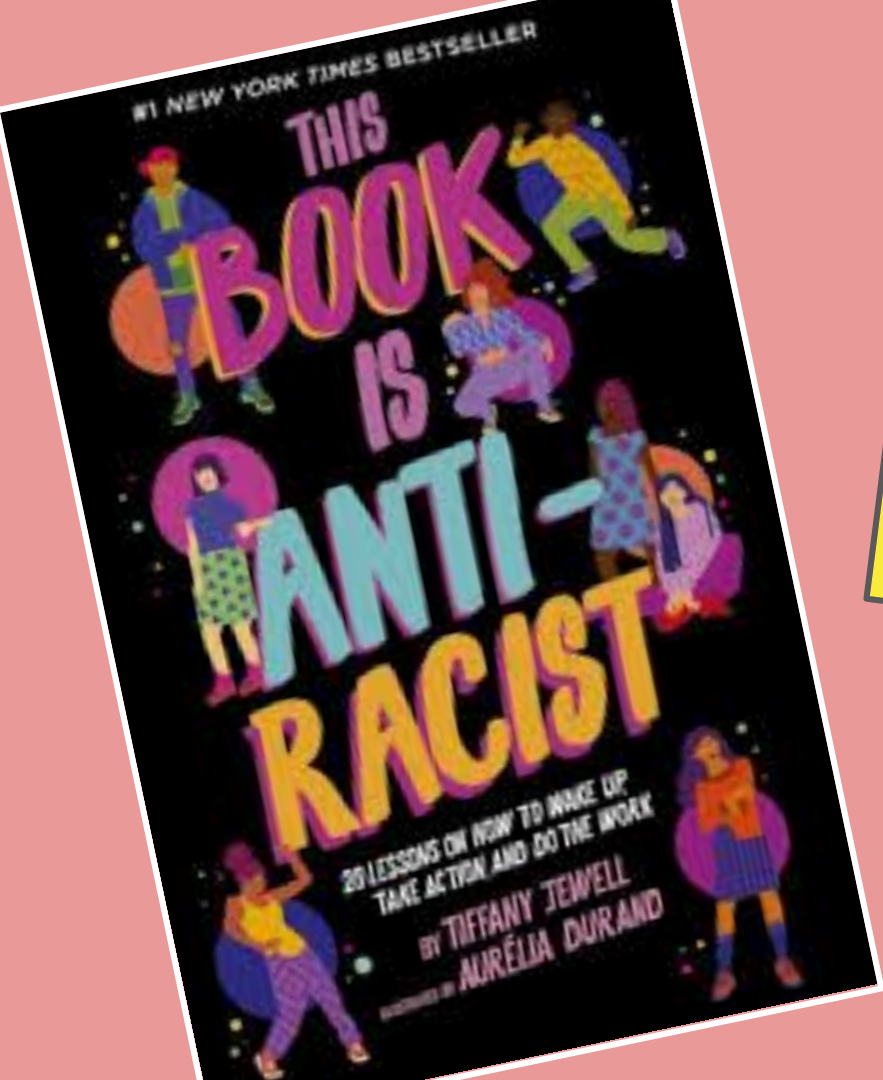
***What colors do you want to use? What do the colors symbolize for you?
(Colors have different meanings individually and culturally throughout
the world.)***

September 2020 -
Horizon
Professional Development
on Equity Book Bundles

***Time to present your flag or cape to the
class...if you would like to!***

***Take time to enjoy the diversity in our
classroom!***

**This Book is Antiracist
Lesson Plan for classroom
5th grade**



Author: Tiffany Jewell

Lesson 1: Anti Racist

What does it mean to be an antiracist?

Ask yourself:

Who am I?

What are my social identities?

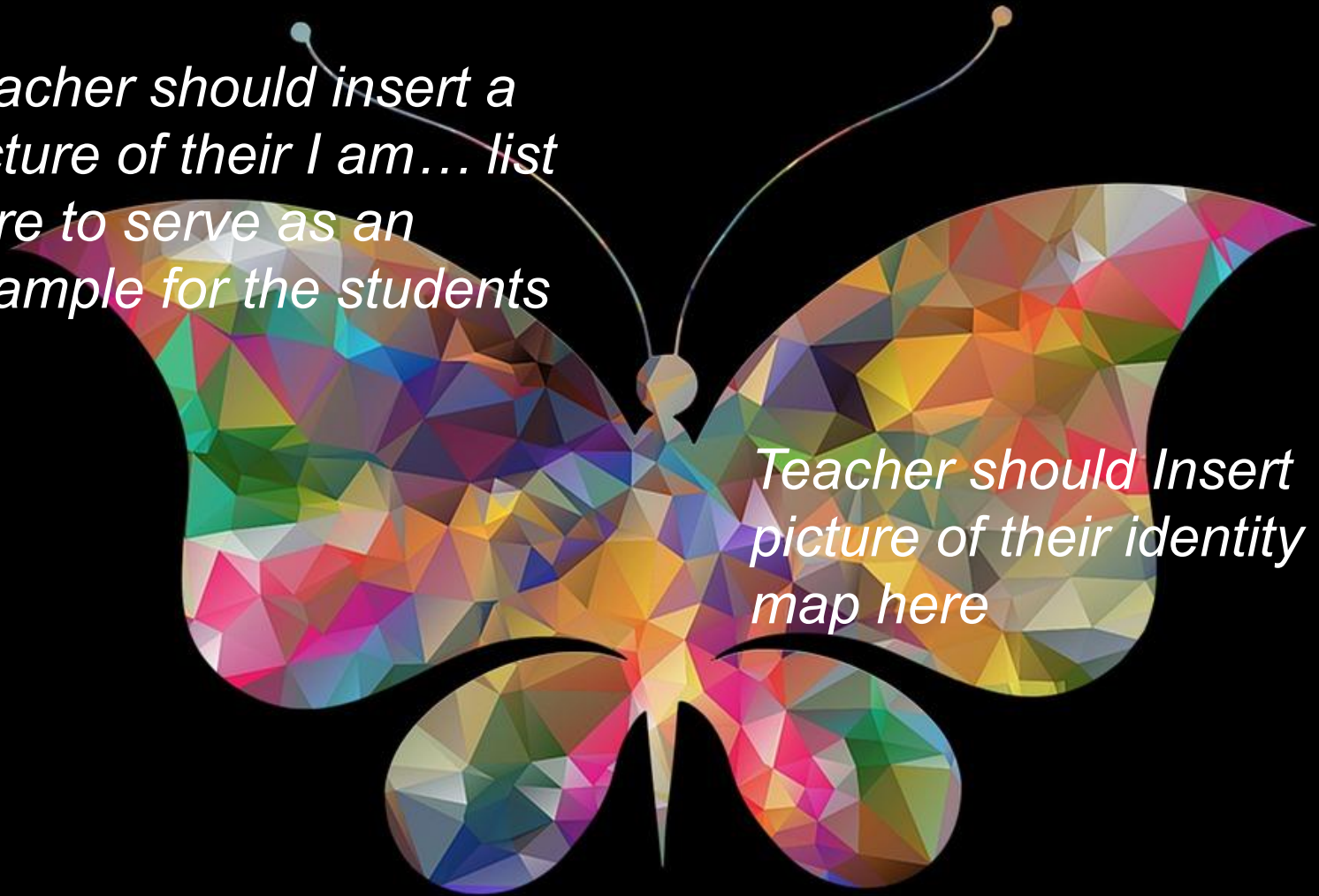
What is race?

What is racism?



Teacher should insert a picture of their I am... list here to serve as an example for the students

Teacher should Insert picture of their identity map here



Lesson 2: What are my social identities?

What is the dominant culture where I live?

ACTIVITY: Create a list of social identity categories mentioned in ch. 2. Can you think of more? Now write down your identity within those socially constructed categories.

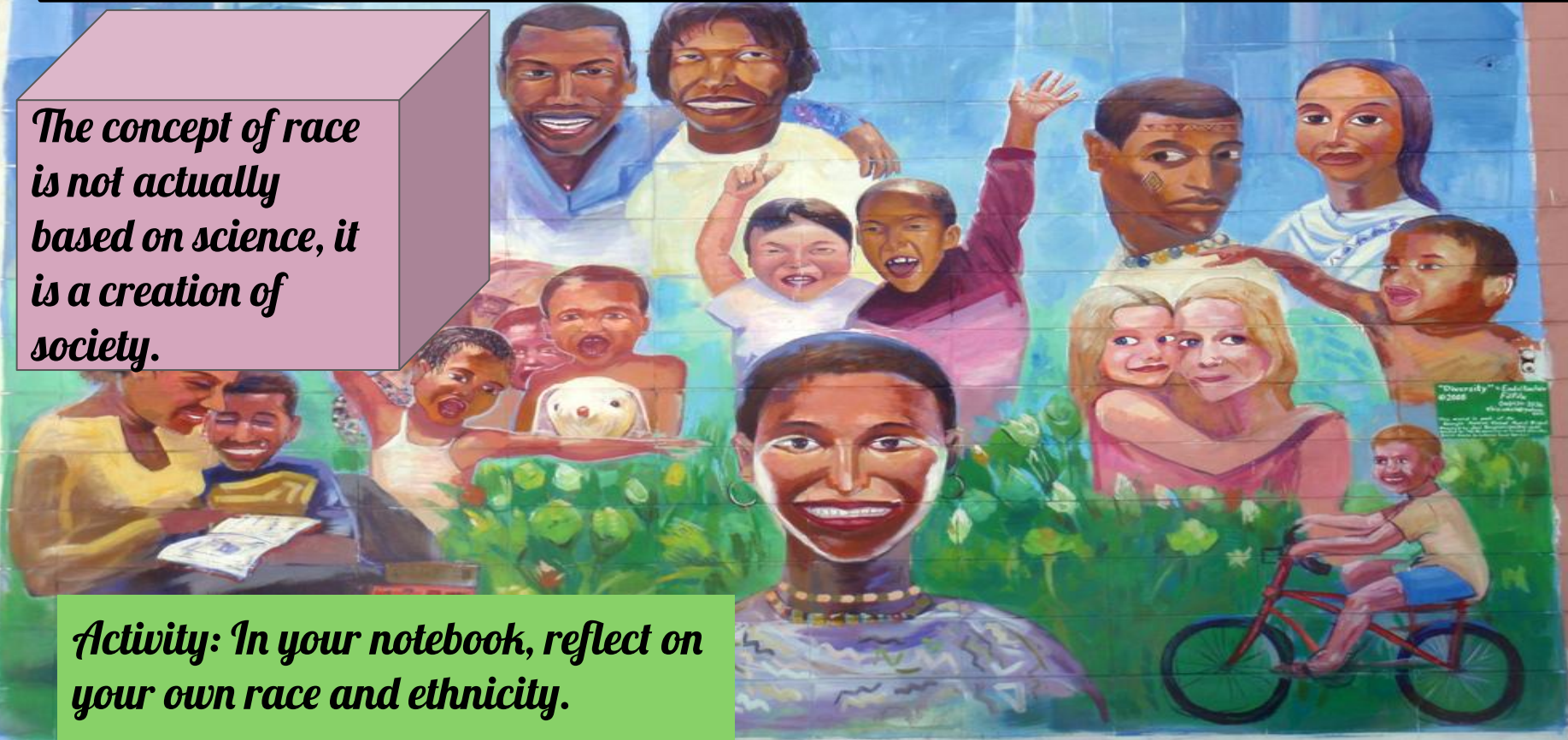
*YOU HAVE
THE ABILITY
TO CREATE A
NEW HISTORY*

Reflect: What do you notice? Are there parts of you that hold power and privilege within your community? Are there parts of your identity that exist outside of the dominant culture?

Lesson 3: What is race? What is ethnicity?

The concept of race is not actually based on science, it is a creation of society.

Activity: In your notebook, reflect on your own race and ethnicity.



Horizon Elementary - Sep 18, 2020

Professional Development Lesson Plan examples

(Showing ideas teachers had already done with Equity Book Bundles)

Student Work Examples: Ideas for extensions on Equity Book Boxes



Funko Pop Activity! 5th Grade (Women's History)

POP! SERIES Voting Activists




CHARACTER NAME
Elizabeth Cady Stanton

POP! Elizabeth Cady Stanton

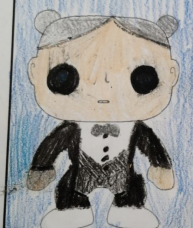
CHARACTER NAME

CHARACTER BIOGRAPHY
Elizabeth Cady Stanton was a leader of the women's rights Elizabeth died in Oct 26, 1902, when congress finally approved it.

COLLECT THEM ALL!



POP! SERIES Voting Activists

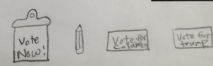


CHARACTER NAME
Clarrie Chapman Catt

CHARACTER BIOGRAPHY


- Suffrage Association from 1900-1904.
- She got a winning plan for campaigning at the state election levels.
- Was born Jun. 9th 1859
- She taught school, the first woman superintendent of mission city schools bus.
- In 1876 she married George Catt

ACCESSORIES



COLLECT THEM ALL!

POP! SERIES Voting Activists

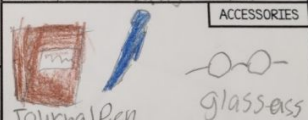


CHARACTER NAME
Susan B. Anthony


CHARACTER BIOGRAPHY

- Born Feb 15, 1820
- Died March 13, 1906
- She worked to get women the right to vote.
- She taught school she then joined a movement she formed the woman state temperance society in New York.
- She led a movement group she published a journal

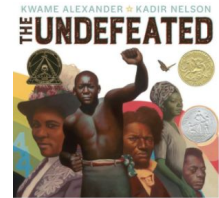
ACCESSORIES



COLLECT THEM ALL!



4th Grade



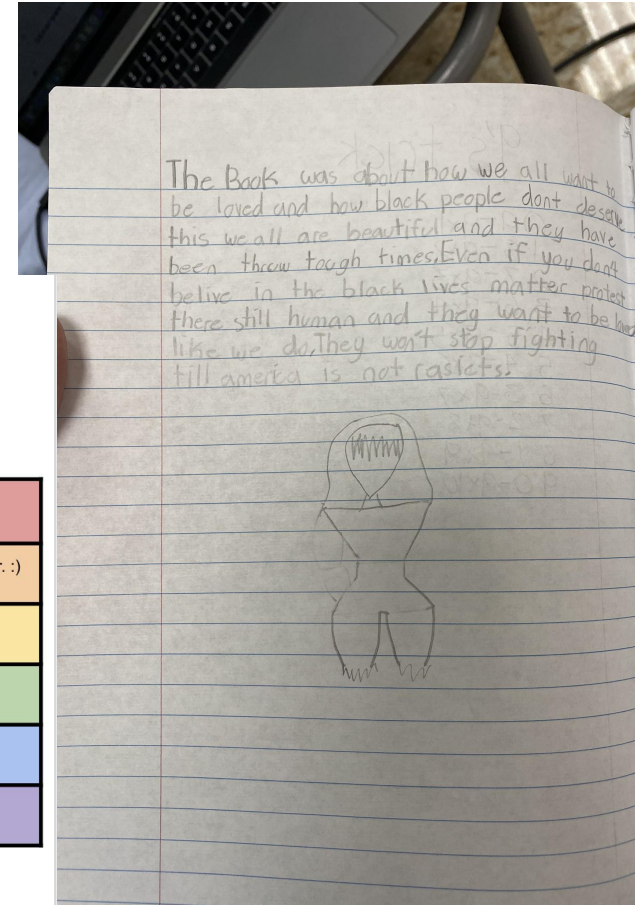
Wednesday Meeting!

Question: What thoughts came to you as we read the book?

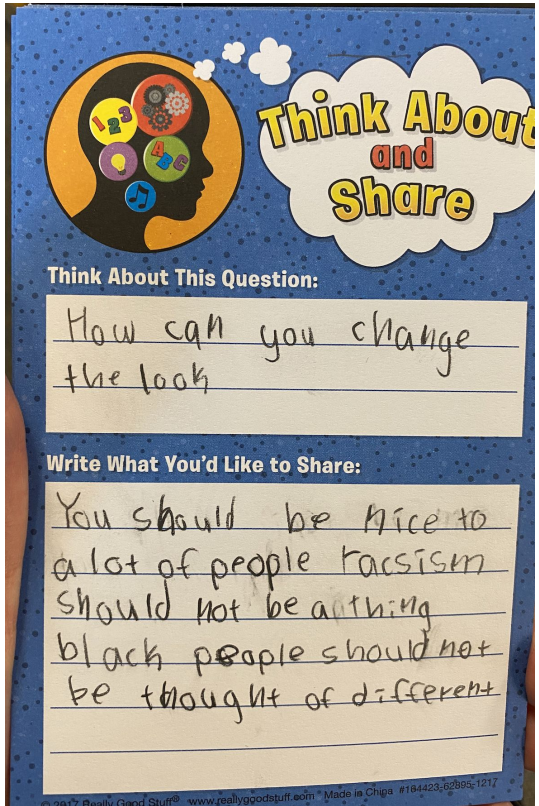
(Find an empty space and type your answer!)

I liked that they payed respect to everyone in the book	I liked that the book also talked about the hard parts of our history. Sometimes it's hard to hear but it's still important
And how they talked about what they did	It was nice to write that to the black,our live can't matter black lives matter. :)
.:)Yes, all black lives matter.hey are respectful	I feel so good that they stand up for justice.
I liked the book and all lives do matter, i'm not sure why black people are treated differently	I respect and like how it tied in to Bck Lives Matter!
	They are powerful and great and respectful.
That it had a great message and that it talked about black lives matter.	The black lives matter.

More spaces on the next slide!



5th Grade



Think About and Share

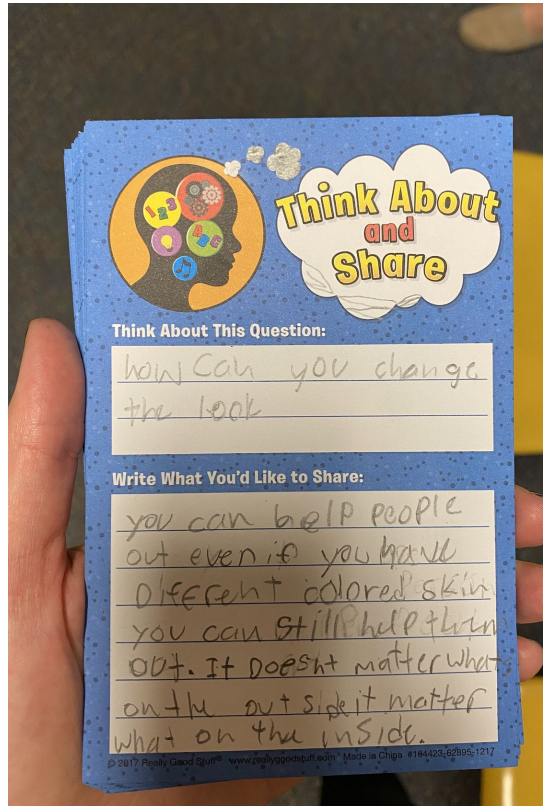
Think About This Question:

How can you change the look

Write What You'd Like to Share:

You should be nice to a lot of people racism should not be anything black people should not be thought of different

© 2017 Really Good Stuff® www.reallygoodstuff.com Made in China #184423-62895-1217



Think About and Share

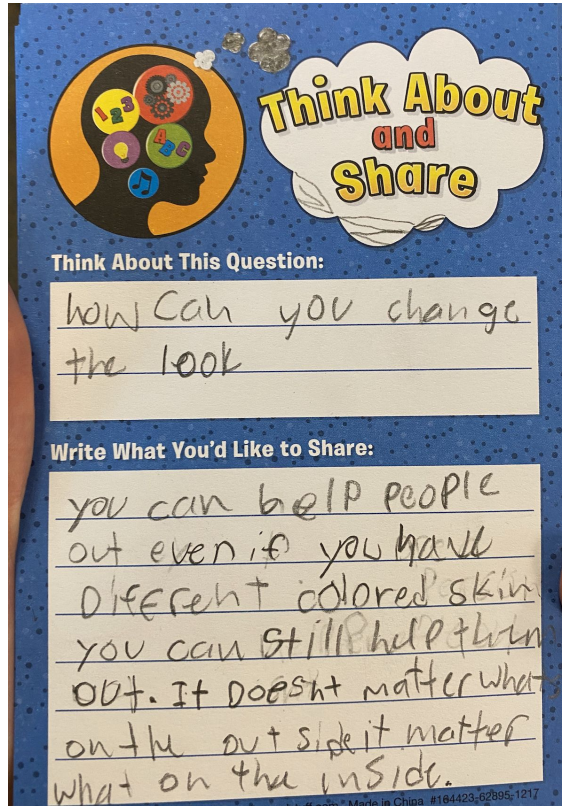
Think About This Question:

how can you change the look

Write What You'd Like to Share:

you can help people out even if you have different colored skin you can still help them out. It doesn't matter what on the outside it matters what on the inside.

© 2017 Really Good Stuff® www.reallygoodstuff.com Made in China #184423-62895-1217



Think About and Share

Think About This Question:

how can you change the look

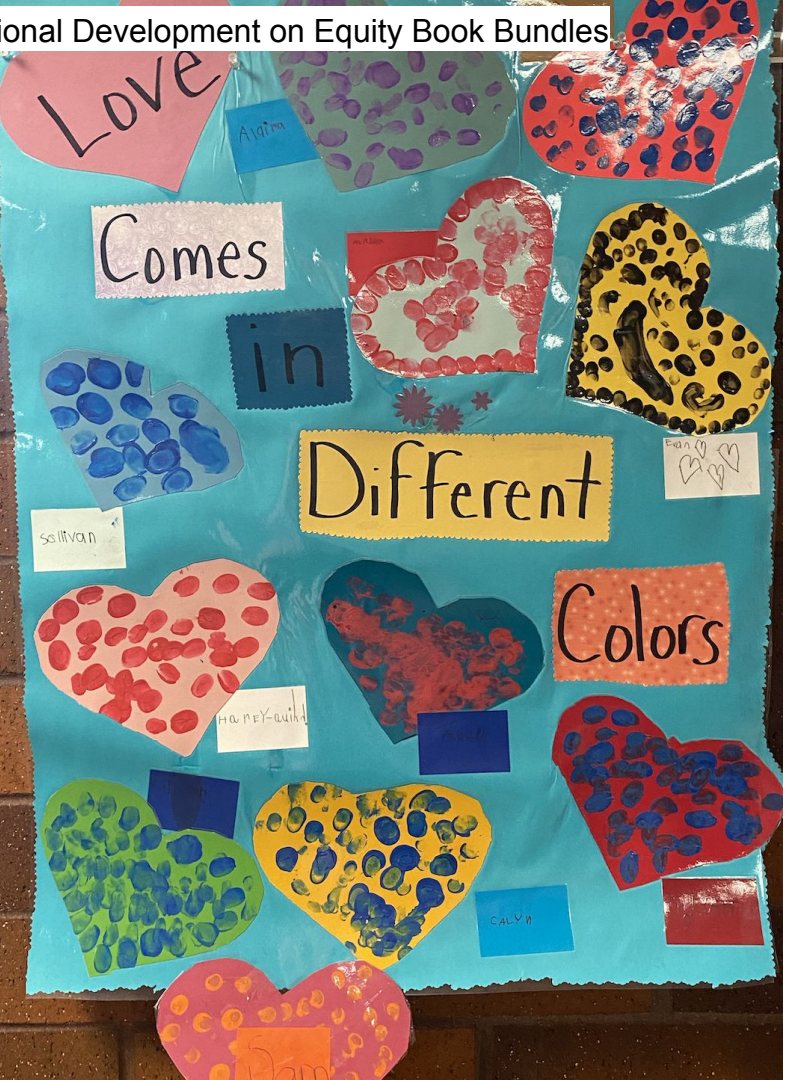
Write What You'd Like to Share:

you can help people out even if you have different colored skin you can still help them out. It doesn't matter what on the outside it matters what on the inside.

© 2017 Really Good Stuff® www.reallygoodstuff.com Made in China #184423-62895-1217

Family

Pamilya Ojaki familie farivaar malbat
Pere familie familie familia ohana gajog gimere
rodina familje eayila oikogeneia familj
yntanik aila csalad famiglia ger bul goyska
teulu semeistvo Kazoku teaghlaigh
Juring obitelj famiglia Fjolskylda umndeni famil whanau mshpkhh



Horizon Elementary - October 2020

Professional Development on Sexuality and Gender

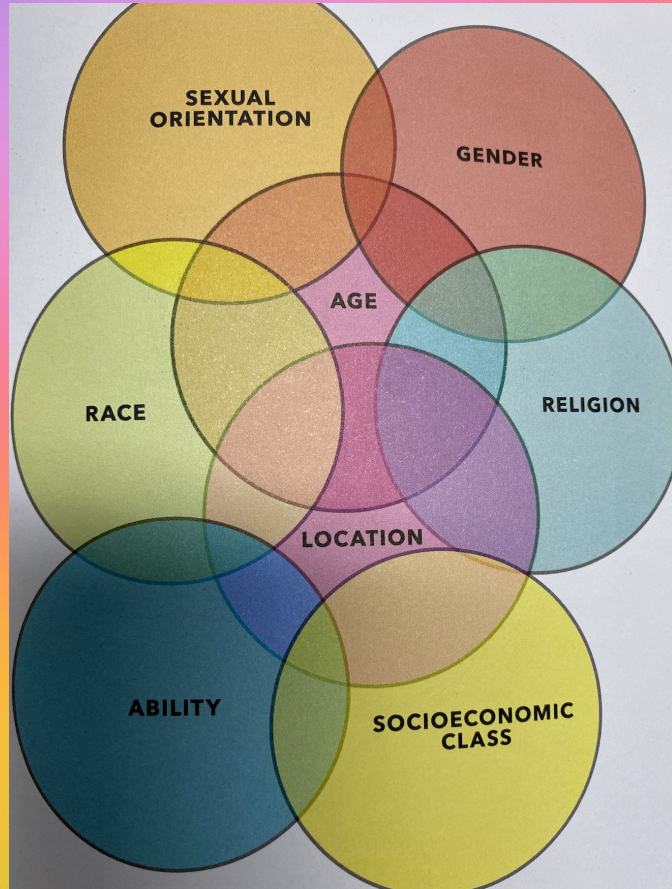
Given in conjunction with equity book bundle themes



Sexuality, Gender and Understanding Differences Professional Development

October 2020 - Horizon Professional Development on Sexuality and Gender

The purpose:

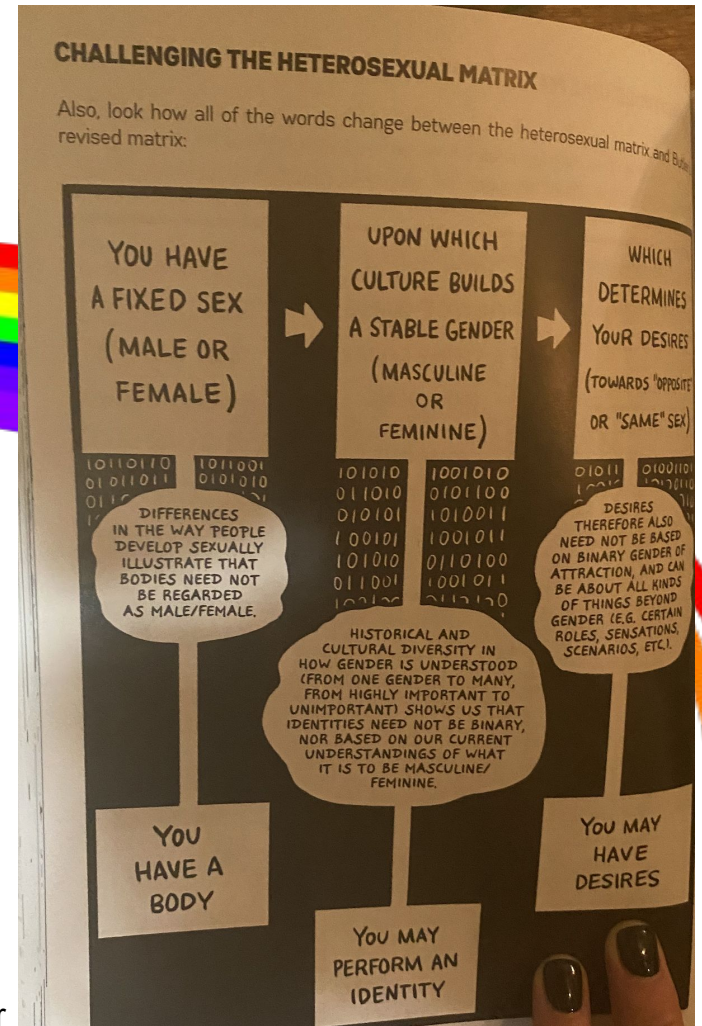
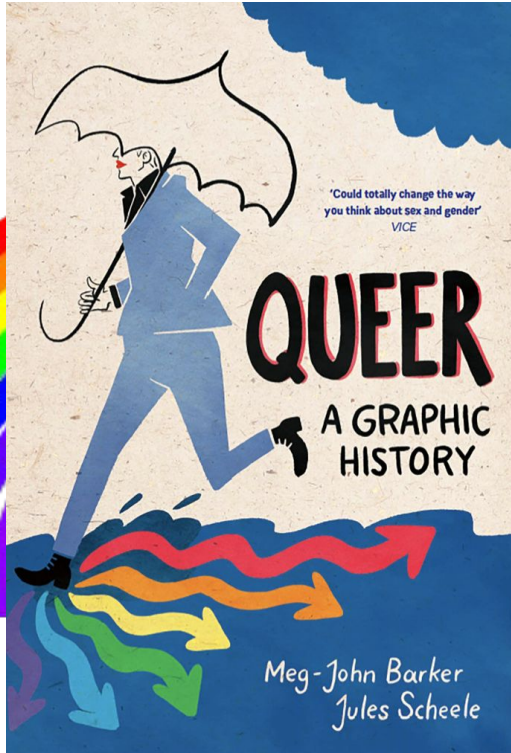


Intersectionality

"In every generation and in every intellectual sphere and in every political movement, there have been African American women who have articulated the need to think and talk about race through a lens that looks at gender, or think and talk about feminism through a lens that looks at race."

DR. KIMBERLÉ CRENSHAW

Gender and Sexuality Explained



From the State School Board Office

"The recommendations ask the State School Board to "intentionally engage in anti-racist practices to ensure that underrepresented, historically marginalized and underserved students feel safe and welcome at school."

"It's important work. It's right up there with everything that we talk about when it comes to academics and social-emotional needs. When we're talking about diversity and inclusion, it's right up there. You know, we all want to see success for our students. Now it's bringing all our various perspectives together and having that open dialogue and discussion."

<https://www.ksl.com/article/50024398/state-school-board-urged-to-engage-in-anti-racist-practices-so-students-feel-safe-and-welcome-at-school>

Utah youth LGBTQIA+ Suicide Rates

LGBTQIA+ youth are 5 times more likely to attempt suicide in comparison to heterosexual peers.

Pride flags ignite hope and outrage in Utah, where youth suicide rate soars

Cities and towns across Utah, where the youth suicide rate has tripled since 2007, are displaying rainbow flags in support of LGBTQ youth.



A devastating trend

Youth suicide rates have tripled in Utah since 2007, according to the [most recent data available](#) from the Utah Department of Health. The problem is so severe that Republican Gov. Gary Herbert spearheaded a [task force](#) to combat the issue.

Nationwide, [youth suicide skyrocketed 56 percent](#) from 2007 to 2017, according to a newly released report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, but it's unclear what's behind the increase. LGBTQ youth are almost five times as likely to attempt suicide compared to their heterosexual and cisgender peers, according to the [Trevor Project](#), a national organization providing crisis intervention and suicide prevention services to LGBTQ youth.

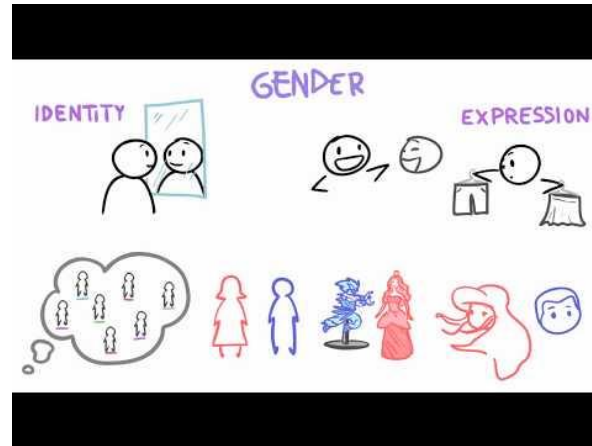
Many advocates believe LGBTQ youth represent a large portion of suicides in Utah, but because public health data do not track sexuality and gender identity, there is no data that confirms their suspicions, according to Hillary McDaniel, a manager for the Utah Pride Center, Utah's largest LGBTQ organization.

Definitions

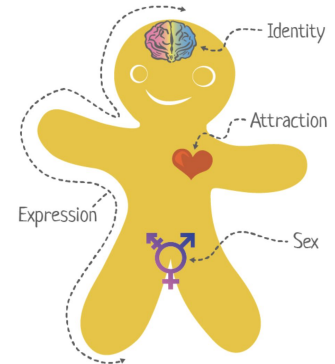
Sexuality: Who a person is, or is not, attracted to.

Gender: Social Meaning, attached to performances of masculinity and femininity which is expressed by the individual and perceived by society.

LGBTQIA+ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Ally or asexual, + (anything else).



The Genderbread Person v4 by its pronounced METROsexual



'Ask Me': What LGBTQ Students Want Their Professors to Know

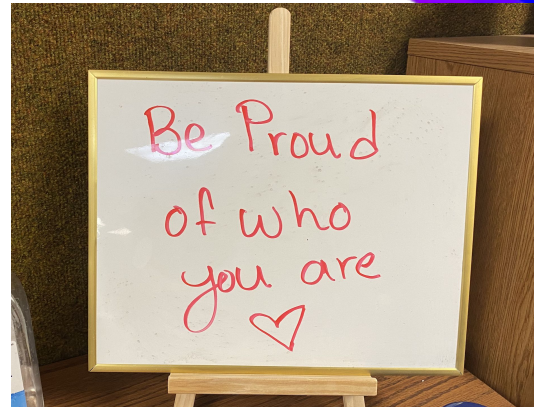
<https://www.mypronouns.org/>



Student Opportunities to Learn From Book Boxes

Younger Grades and Step One

1. All Are Welcome
2. Be You!
3. You Matter



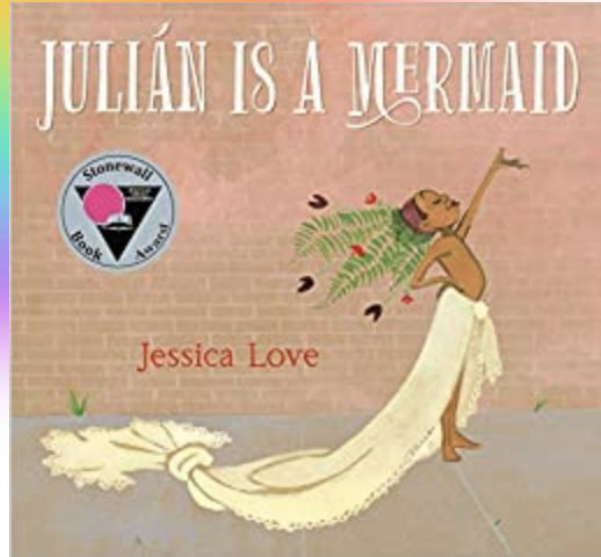
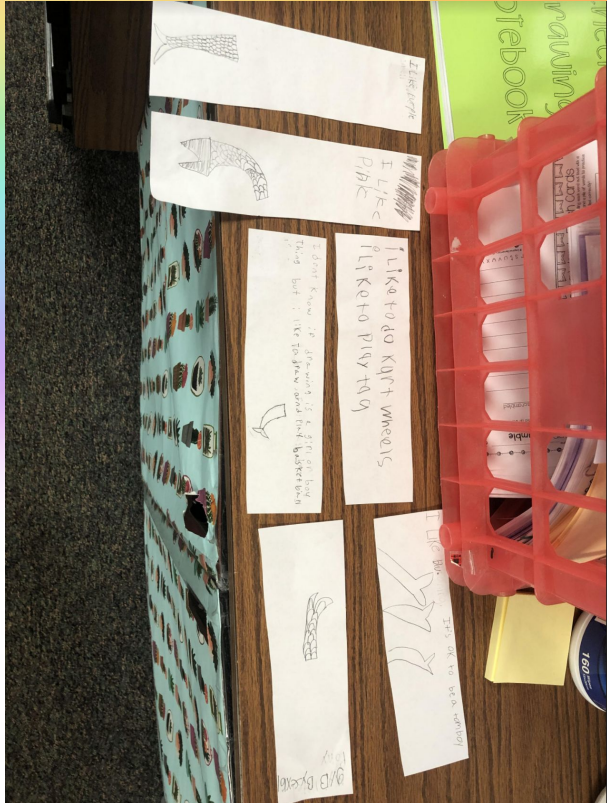
1. Pride- 5th Mrs. Chacon Preview Lesson
2. Rainbow Revolutionaries- 6th

Linked Video: It Feels Good To Be Yourself

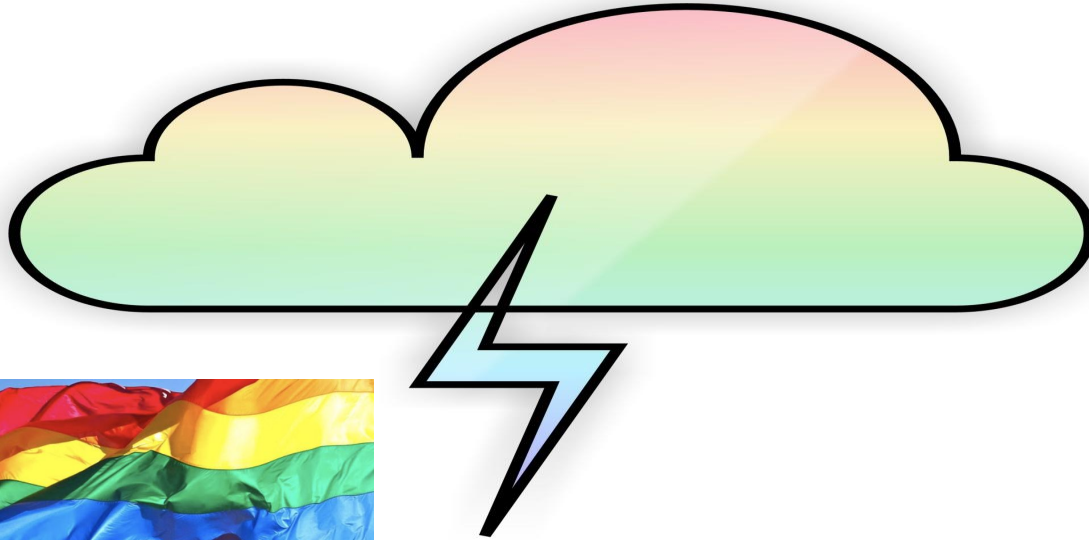


October 2020 - Horizon Professional Development on Sexuality and Gender

Mrs. Averett's Example



Mrs. Chacon's Example



The Story of Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag

*Written by Rob Sanders
Illustrated by Steven Salerno*

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1_sau7yH43eIOmgVu922vJLLqUv5btstuEHXmZhbn-2k/edit?usp=sharing

Welcoming Schools Resources

<https://www.welcomingschools.org/resources/lesson-plans/lgbtq-inclusive-schools/lgbtq-with-books/>

Welcoming Schools

A PROJECT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION



MAKING DECISIONS: ALLY OR BYSTANDER

SUGGESTED GRADE LEVEL: 3 – 8

LENGTH OF TIME: 45 minutes

GOALS

- To increase ally behavior in the school community.
- To define the complexity of what it means to show ally behavior and train students in these skills.
- To increase students' empathy and compassion for those who are targeted for name-calling and bullying.
- To encourage students to articulate their beliefs regarding behavior toward others and to think about intentional ways to take care of other members in their school community.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will explore their own roles in incidences of bullying, harassment and name-calling.
- Students will talk about bullying, harassment and name-calling.
- Students will consider different responses to bullying behavior and how that might change depending on the situation.
- Students will discuss alternatives to ignoring bullying, harassment and name-calling.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. (Also SL.3.1, 5.1 and 6.1)

EDUCATORS' NOTES

This discussion with students will explore how all of us, at one time or another, have had to make a decision about whether or not we will intervene or take a stand when we witness name-calling, bullying or harassment of a friend or a stranger. Often we make these decisions in the moment, reacting to situations as they come up.

In this lesson, students take the time to explore many different situations that could be seen at school and think about how they make decisions around allyship, such as speaking up in the moment, getting help from a caring adult, talking to the person in private or walking away. This activity can be done multiple times using different situations to increase your student's ability to be an ally.

ALLY OR BYSTANDER?

INTERVENE MYSELF
TALK TO THE PERSON
IN PRIVATE

SEEK HELP FROM AN ADULT
OR SOMEONE OLDER

IGNORE THE SITUATION
OR WALK AWAY



Welcoming Schools

A PROJECT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION

THE GREAT BIG BOOK OF FAMILIES: DISCUSSION GUIDE

SUGGESTED GRADE LEVEL: K - 2

LENGTH OF TIME: 30 - 35 minutes

GOALS

- To use literature to explore family diversity and increase the sense of inclusiveness in the classroom.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to define what makes a family and describe a variety of families.
- Students will learn that families have similarities and differences.
- Students will be able to identify common characteristics within many families.

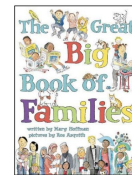
ACADEMIC STANDARDS

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. (Also 1.1 and 2.1)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.1: Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups. (Also 1.1 and 2.1)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. (Also 1.2 and 2.2)

EDUCATORS' NOTES

"When someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked in the mirror and saw nothing." – *Adrienne Rich*

Written by Mary Hoffman, author of the well-known children's book, *Amazing Grace*, *The Great Big Book of Families* showcases diverse families and their lives together. When students do not see their reality reflected in any of the materials used in school, it is like having no mirror or relevance. This book provides mirrors for many students while providing a window for others into many kinds of families expanding their understanding of the world. *The Great Big Book of Families* provides a rich tool to include and celebrate the broad scope of human experience with family across differences including race, ethnicity, economic class and family structure.



Local Resources

facebook

English Español Tiếng Việt Soomaali More

Home 801-578-8599 Employees Login (Employees Only)

Schools Departments Calendars Directory Board

Home > Departments > Educational Equity and Student Support > Educational Equity > Resources for LGBTQ+

Table of Contents

CONTACT US

About Resources

Resources for LGBTQ+

Equality Utah, in conjunction with the Board of Education and the Equity of Educational Services for Students (ACEESS), have unanimously voted that school employees must be trained to effectively intervene and report incidents of bullying based on individuals' perceived/stated sexual orientation or gender identity. Friends, Allies and Mentors (F.A.M.) is a great resource for schools who are seeking more information/support around supporting our LGBTQ+ stakeholders in Salt Lake City School District.

Resources for families and students are listed below.

Resources

SafeUT Crisis Line Send A Tip	🔗
Student and Family Resource List	📄
Queer People of Color	📄
LGBT Black Heroes	📄

🕒 AUG. 24, 2020 [PAGE FEEDBACK](#)

Friends, Allies, and Mentors of the Lgbtq+ Community - FAM

@FAM.SLC

Home About Events Photos Community Reviews Posts Create a Page

Like Share Suggest Edits Send Message

Friends, Allies, and Mentors of the Lgbtq+ Community - FAM Education

Community See All

267 people like this

281 people follow this

About See All

Contact Friends, Allies, and Mentors of the Lgbtq+ Community - FAM on Messenger

Education

Page Transparency See More

Facebook is showing information to help you better

English Español Tiếng Việt Soomaali More

Home 801-578-8599 Employees Login (Employees Only)

Schools Departments Calendars Directory Board

Home > Departments > Educational Equity and Student Support > Educational Equity > Resources for LGBTQ+

Table of Contents

CONTACT US

About Resources

Resources for LGBTQ+

Equality Utah, in conjunction with the Board of Education and the Equity of Educational Services for Students (ACEESS), have unanimously voted that school employees must be trained to effectively intervene and report incidents of bullying based on individuals' perceived/stated sexual orientation or gender identity. Friends, Allies and Mentors (F.A.M.) is a great resource for schools who are seeking more information/support around supporting our LGBTQ+ stakeholders in Salt Lake City School District.

Resources for families and students are listed below.

Resources

SafeUT Crisis Line Send A Tip	🔗
Student and Family Resource List	📄
Queer People of Color	📄
LGBT Black Heroes	📄

🕒 AUG. 24, 2020 [PAGE FEEDBACK](#)

October 2020 - Horizon Professional Development on Sexuality and Gender

Additional Resources for your own time if interested:

IDEAS • GENDER
I Let My Child Create Their Own Gender
Identity. The Experience Has Been a Gift for Us
Both



Kyl, Zoomer and Brent in Liberty Park in Salt Lake City on Aug. 10
Lindsay O'Grady for TIME



<https://time.com/5885697/gender-creative-parenting/>

Rain Dove- NYC Supermodel: Gender Non conforming: Many Ted
Talks with Rain Dove if interested.

McMillan Elementary - Nov 20, 2020

Professional Development on Gender

By Kody Colvin, from FAM



FRIENDS, ALLIES, AND MENTORS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY



Kody Colvin (he/him/his): Kody Colvin started his career as an elementary educator before entering school administration. In addition to his work responsibilities, Kody co-founded a group called Friends, Allies, and Mentors (F.A.M.) of the LGBTQ Community in 2016. The goal of F.A.M. is to provide professional learning experiences for educators to better support their LGBTQ stakeholders in school. In 2017, SLCS D, in partnership with F.A.M., created a task force to develop and implement policies and procedures that would better support our LGBTQ stakeholders. Kody is a doctoral student at the University of Utah in the Educational leadership & Policy program.

Supporting Gender Diverse Students





Poll



At this point in time, how comfortable/capable do you feel to support gender-diverse students in your classroom and school? (your response will be anonymous)

- Very Comfortable
- Somewhat Comfortable
- Neutral
- Somewhat Uncomfortable
- Very Uncomfortable

Norms

Questions, Questions, Questions

Share the Airtime

Reserve the Right to Change Your Mind

Today's Objectives

When I leave this PD today, I will be able to...

1. better understand the impact of rigid gender expectation on gender-diverse students
2. better understand what the data highlights related to genderqueer youths' experience in K-12 school
2. begin your journey in better understanding how to support our gender-diverse students.



When have you felt limited based on your gender?
Job down more than one (on different post-its), if you'd like :-)

Collaborate!

When have you felt limited based on your gender?

**GENDER
TERMINOLOGY**



GENDER ATTRIBUTION

HOW YOUR GENDER IS PERCEIVED BY OTHERS



SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH

WHAT THE MEDICAL COMMUNITY LABELS YOU



GENDER IDENTITY

HOW YOU IDENTIFY (SEE YOURSELF)



GENDER EXPRESSION

HOW YOU WANT TO DISPLAY YOUR GENDER

Myths About Gender

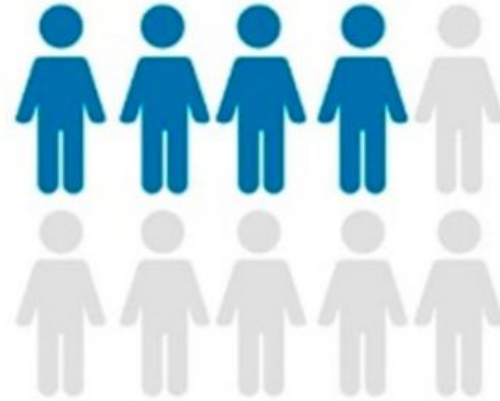
1. Children are too young to know their gender
-- by age four, most children have a stable sense of their gender identity
2. We shouldn't talk to young children about gender diversity
--If we shy away from the conversation (or address stereotypes), students will grow up with those beliefs deeply engrained.
3. A person is transgender only if they declare it at a very young age
4. There are only two gender
--there is a spectrum of genders
5. My transgender children "change their mind" about their gender
--It is very rare for a transgender/genderqueer person to change their mind
--Gender exploration is different than a mind shift

WHAT DOES THE DATA REFELCT?

Effects of Gender Bias

Approximately 4 in 10
students avoid gender-
segregated spaces in school
due to safety concerns.

GLSEN 2017 National School Climate Survey



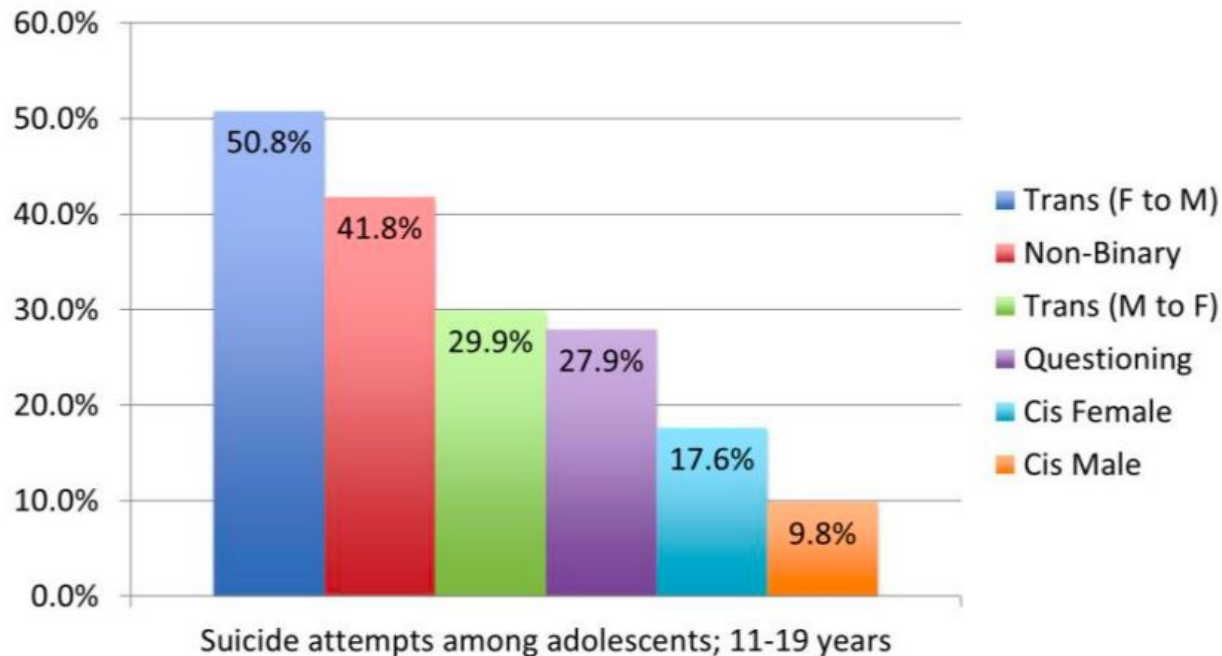
More from the GLSEN 2017 Survey

94% of LGBTQ students heard negative remarks about gender expression.

87.4% heard negative remarks about transgender people

American Academy of Pediatrics

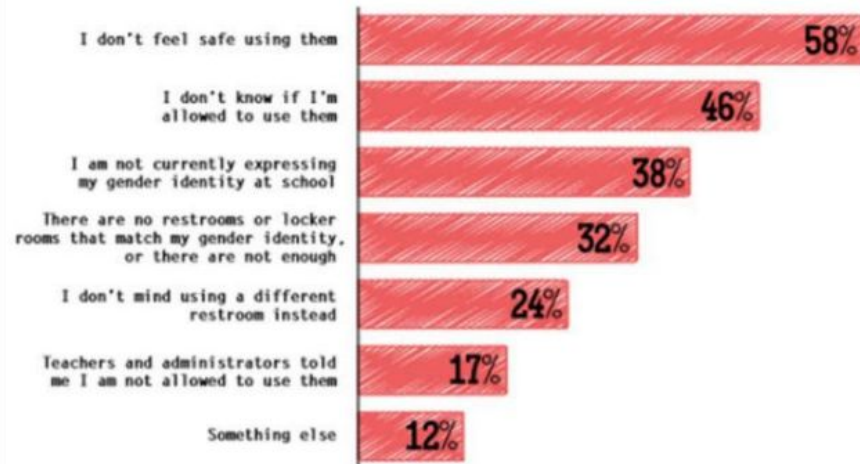
October 2018



- 51% of trans youth can NEVER use the restroom or locker room that matches their gender identity.
 - Additionally
 - Only 31% can express themselves in a way that completely reflects their gender identity in school
 - Only 1 in 3 are always called by their true name in school
 - Only 1 in 5 are always called by their pronouns in school
 - Data pulled from LGBTQ Youth Report, 2018

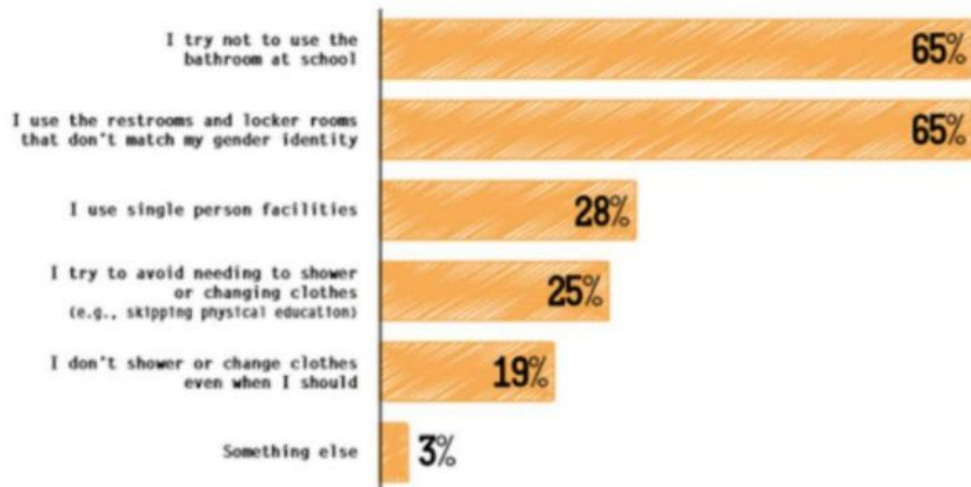
Trans and gender-expansive youth often are unable to use school restrooms or locker rooms corresponding to their gender identity.

Reasons Why Trans Youth Can't Use the Restroom or Locker Room That Best Reflects Their Gender⁴²



"I would like to talk about socially transitioning at school, but I have no clue what the school's policy for this is."

Options for Trans Youth That Are Unable to Use the Restroom or Locker Room That Best Reflects Their Gender⁴³



CONSIDERATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE PRACTICES & CURRICULA

THE CONTINUUM OF SAFETY



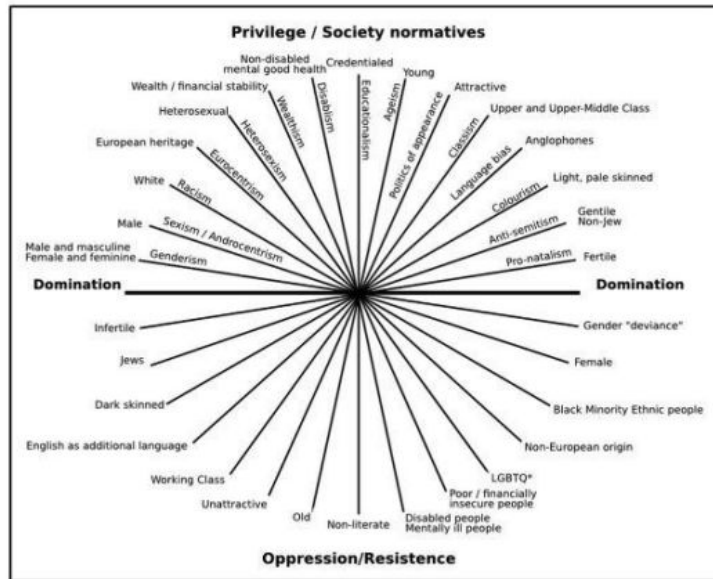
MSD Non-Discrimination Statement

Murray City School District prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, **gender, sexual orientation, gender identity**, genetic information, pregnancy, religion, marital status, disability, age, veteran status, or any other legally protected classification in its **educational programs, activities, admissions, access, treatment, or employment practices** and provides equal access to scouting groups and other designated youth groups. The district is committed to providing equal access and equal opportunity in its programs, services and employment including its policies, complaint processes, program accessibility, district facility use, accommodations, and other Equal Employment Opportunity matters.

Ch. 3 in the Morris reading describes how leaders often misunderstand students who are multiply marginalized.

Use this diagram to consider the multiple identities our students (and we) hold.

- How might one's position within the various spokes of the wheel influence their interactions with others?
- We understand that queer erasure is an issue in schools but what other types of erasure happen? In schools? In the LGBTQ community?



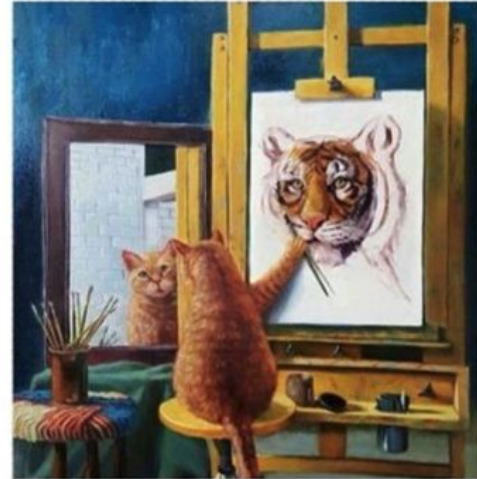
Adapted from Kathryn Pauly Morgan, "Describing the Emperor's New Clothes: Three Myths of Educational (In)Equity," *The Gender Question in Education: Theory, Pedagogy & Politics*, Ann Diller et al., Boulder, CO: Westview, 1996.

INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM

Windows



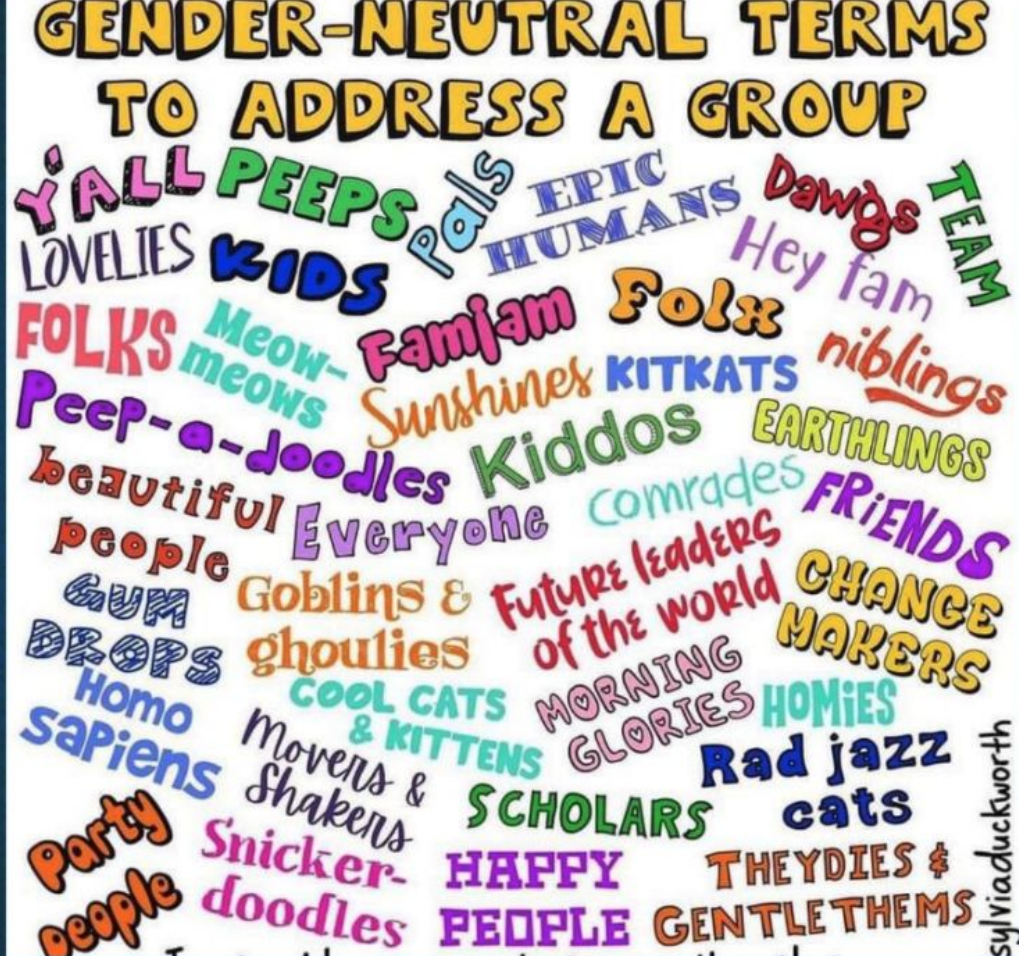
Mirrors





<https://www.youtube.com/embed/kq19QdOfH1Y>

REFRAMING OUR LANGUAGE



CLASSROOM LIBRARIES



Making
the
invisible
visible

Responding to Name-Calling in Schools

	Less Time/Public Space	More Time/Private Space
Structured Setting/Know Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “That is unacceptable in this room” • “You know our class rules” • “Please apologize” • “Out of this room” • “Leave him/her/them alone” • _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What did you mean by ...?” • “That was a stereotype. Stereotypes are a kind of lie and they hurt people’s feelings.” • “That was a putdown and we don’t do that here” • “You may not have meant to be hurtful, but here’s how your comment hurt...” • _____
Unstructured Setting/Unknown Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “That’s way out of line” • “Keep your hands to yourself” • “Stop it right now” • “Go to the office” • “Whoa, that is not okay” • “We don’t talk like that here” • _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “That’s bullying. It is against school rules...” • “We at this school do not harass people. It could get you suspended...” • “That was really mean. Why did you say that?” • “Do you understand why that was so hurtful?” • _____

Educate on the spot:	Educate Privately:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides immediate information & support • Models taking a stand • Reassures others that this is a safe space • Sets a compassionate tone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows harasser to “save face” • Prevents possible embarrassment of target • Allows you to cool down • Allows more time to explore and discuss

Adapted from *GLSEN’s A How-To Guide for Ending Name-Calling in Schools*



https://www.youtube.com/embed/Z_1bYYF_clo

It is not our differences that
divide us. It is our inability
to recognize, accept, and
celebrate those differences.

WINDOWS AND MIRRORS



Secondary PD - Jan 22, 2020

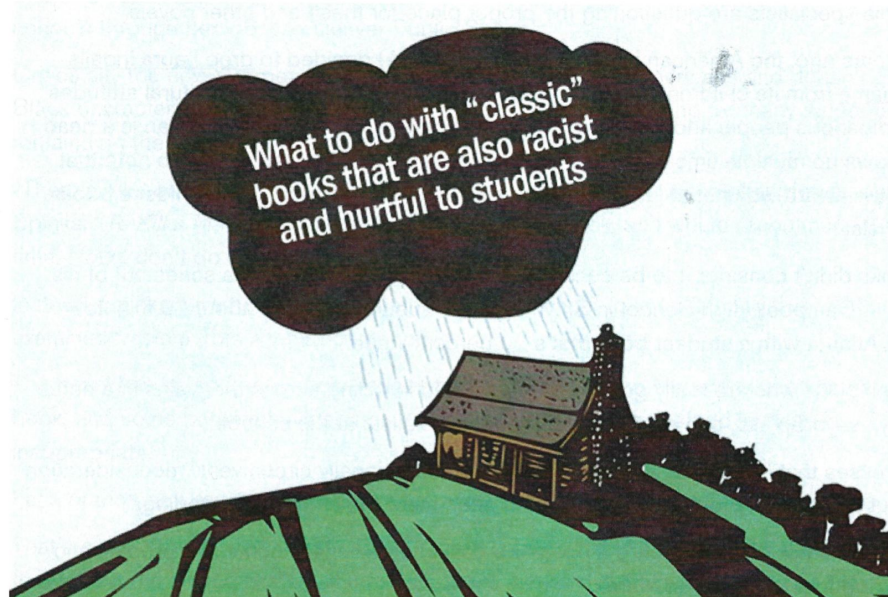
**Professional Development
on Racism, Safe Spaces,
Grading Scales, and
Social Justice**

Teachers choose 4 articles to study-

Little House, Big Problem: What To Do with “Classic” Books That Are Also Racist

by [Marva Hinton](#)

May 28, 2020 | Filed in [News & Features](#)



Safe Spaces and Brave Spaces

Historical Context and Recommendations for Student Affairs Professionals

In fall 2016, University of Chicago Dean of Students John Ellison chose to address what he and many others in higher education felt was a disconcerting trend toward intellectual isolationism on college campuses. He published a letter to incoming students, stating that the university would no longer tolerate the use of trigger warnings or safe spaces: "We [at the University of Chicago] do not condone the creation of intellectual 'safe spaces' where individuals can retreat from ideas and perspectives at odds with their own" (Grieve, 2016). In contrast, commentary made earlier in the year by Morton Schapiro (2016), president of Northwestern University, resurfaced affirming the value of safe spaces, stating, "I'm an economist, not a sociologist or psychologist, but those experts tell me that students don't fully embrace uncomfortable learning unless they are themselves comfortable. Safe spaces provide that comfort" (para. 10).

Both Ellison and Schapiro used the term *safe space* as a pivotal part of their messaging; however, a closer look at how each of them used the term reveals key differences. Ellison defined a *safe space* as a place where students with different ideas can isolate themselves from those who would disagree with them (Grieve, 2016). This kind of space, he claimed, coddles students, meeting them exactly where they are comfortable, without pressing them further (Grieve, 2016). Schapiro (2016) defined a *safe space* similarly as a space where students of diverse backgrounds can find comfort, but instead he believes that comfort leads to a valuable outcome for students by also creating opportunities for honest dialogue and learning. Both administrative leaders exemplify how a safe space is presented within varying contexts. Ellison identified the kind of safe space, utilized within student support or activist spaces, where historically marginalized students require specific support and attention (Grieve, 2016); Schapiro (2016) identified the kinds of safe spaces fostered in a classroom atmosphere.

Both university representatives operate under an assumption that they are referring to the same learning environment, and the debate takes off from here. Both kinds of safe spaces appear on today's college campuses—the kind of safe space allowing marginalized individuals opportunities to retreat from the very real threats and demands they face by their very existence and the kind of space to allow students to process new and uncomfortable ideas productively. This paper explores the various contexts of safe spaces within the higher education community and notes that a fuller understanding of safe spaces, brave

SAFE SPACES VERSUS BRAVE SPACES: DEFINITIONS AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

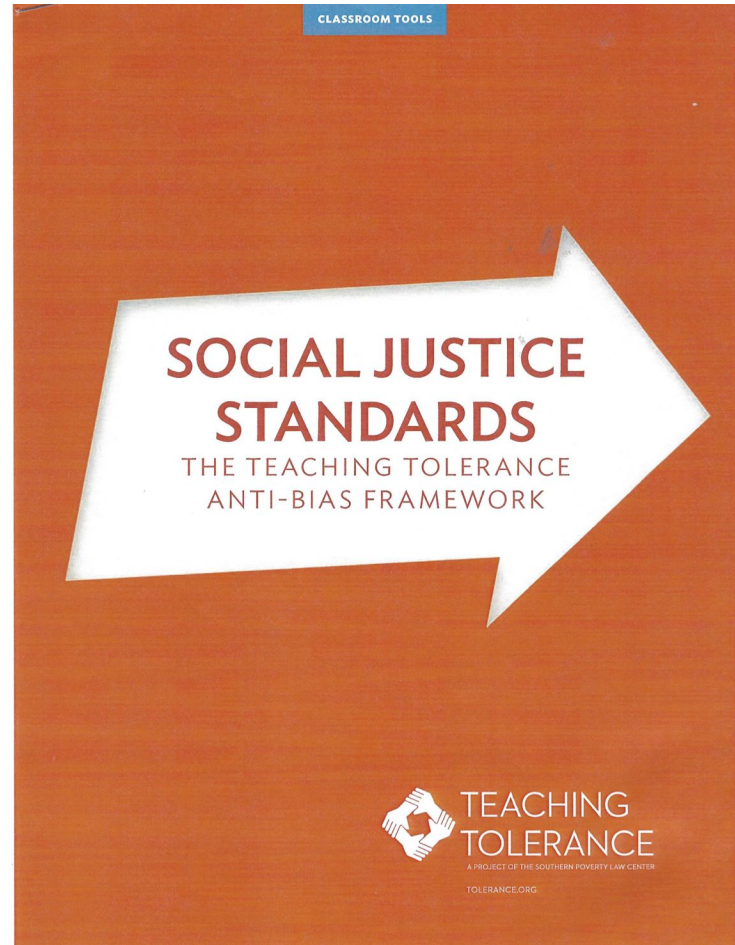
The term *safe space* has been used in various contexts in higher education—from movement-building, to academic theory, to student support services, as well as in the classroom. Although the origin of the term remains unclear, its many uses have ultimately centered on increasing the safety and visibility of marginalized or oppressed community members. While the focus of the current discussion on college campuses has been on safe spaces, the history behind the term, as shown in the following pages, demonstrates that it is used to describe different types of safety. Therefore another term—*brave space*—is introduced to draw attention to the differences and to bring clarity to the conversation.

The term *brave space* was first popularized by Brian Arao and Kristi Clemens (2013) in chapter eight—"From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces"—of their book *The Art of Effective Facilitation: Reflections From Social Justice Educators*. In it, a brave space within a classroom environment contains five main elements:

- ◊ "Controversy with civility," where varying opinions are accepted
- ◊ "Owning intentions and impacts," in which students acknowledge and discuss instances where a dialogue has affected the emotional well-being of another person

Experimental Evidence on Teachers' Racial Bias in Student Evaluation: The Role of Grading Scales - David M. Quinn, 2020

A vast research literature shows that teachers give racially biased evaluations of student work (for reviews, see [Ferguson, 2003](#); [Malouff & Thorsteinsson, 2016](#); [Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007](#)). Downwardly biased evaluations can lead to actual reductions in student learning through self-fulfilling prophecies, or teacher expectancy effects (e.g., [Ferguson, 2003](#)). Such effects may be far-reaching, given that students' future teachers base their expectations in part on the biased evaluations of previous teachers. Biased evaluations may also produce stereotype threat ([Steele, 2011](#)), which negatively affects students' short-term performance and their learning over the longer term ([Taylor & Walton, 2011](#)). Furthermore, when students detect bias from their teachers, they are unlikely to develop trusting relationships with those teachers and may disengage from that class, or—over time—school more generally ([Rangvid, 2018](#); [Woodcock et al., 2012](#)).



Framing Brave Conversations about Race and Ethnicity

How to Use this Resource:

Issues of race, culture, and identity are deeply personal and oftentimes emotional. As we engage with students, families, and other stakeholders around the concepts of race and ethnicity, it is important to frame conversations in a way that creates a safe, affirming space for all. Use this list of tips as a guide for engaging in brave discussions about race and ethnicity as an educator.

Respect Preferences & Honor Experiences

In conversations about race and ethnicity, the most vital principle to acknowledge is that the ultimate authority on a person's identity and experiences belongs to that individual. Thus, if a student tells you that they identify as a particular ethnicity, respect that identity. If a parent says that they experienced racism, believe them. Above all, **commit to respecting the other person's preferences and honoring their lived experiences.**

Acknowledge Bias & Privilege

Be intentionally aware of your privilege and your implicit biases. Acknowledge how your appearance, social class, upbringing, or affiliations might place you in a privileged position. If you have not done any work of identifying and unpacking your biases, I would suggest taking the **Implicit Association Test** before choosing to embark on brave conversations about race.

Own Your Learning

As you discuss complex notions about race and ethnicity, be open to learning something new - especially from your students! Be careful, however, not to rely on the other person to teach you everything about their race or culture. Engage people on their terms, and do not expect them to accept the burden of automatically educating you about unfamiliar topics.

Communicate Positive Intentions

Always lead with positive intentions. Explicitly communicate your respect for the other person and your commitment to treating them with care. **Never expect students or families to presume that you have positive intent, just because of your role as an educator.** This is especially important if you do not yet have a strong relationship with the person.

Framing Brave Conversations about Race and Ethnicity

Avoid Assumptions

Avoid making assumptions or inferences about a particular racial or ethnic group based on limited or biased samples. While it is excellent to research different cultures and backgrounds, be careful to ensure that your sources of information are credible.

Reject Color Blindness

To build relationships, it can be powerful to connect with students and families over similarities. However, **do not neglect to celebrate your differences! Refuse to be color blind.** Take time to appreciate the uniqueness and individuality of each individual you encounter.

Consider Context

Be mindful of the social and historical context in which you operate. Approach the conversation acknowledging your position as a member of the majority or the minority. Keep in mind that there may be a history of certain groups being underrepresented or mistreated in your particular educational or geographic context.

Be Open to Being Wrong

Be willing to acknowledge that you might be wrong! Understand that we all have implicit biases that can misinform how we perceive the world. **Approach the conversation with the goal of learning and understanding, not persuading or convincing.**

Get Comfortable with Discomfort

Because concepts of race, culture, and identity are complex and deeply personal, they often bring feelings of discomfort. Many of us enjoy talking to our students about the latest movies we saw over the weekend, music, activities, and events in our communities. Yet, racial issues such as police brutality and xenophobia are avoided at all costs. Whether we address them in class or not, our students are thinking and talking about these issues. We cannot avoid these conversations because they make us uncomfortable. **Get comfortable with your discomfort, and do not use it as an excuse to avoid engaging with people who are different from you.**

**Other 2020 Equity
Professional Development
we tried to access
but could not**



● April Wilde [REDACTED]
To: Laurel Fetzer, Greg Marchant



Fri, Apr 30, 2021 at 6:23 PM ★

Just submitted this GRAMA request:

Teacher trainings

1. David Dominguez secondary teacher training (including microaggression training), week of Aug 17, 2020 (or around then). This training was mentioned in the "Listening with Care" PD at 2:56:46.

2. Michelle Love-Day and Jackie Thompson teacher training for the week of Aug 17, 2020 (or around then).

All recordings, slideshows, documents, and financial records and receipts etc. associated with these trainings. (Referenced in the July 29, 2020 "Listening with Care" professional development.)

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: "openrecordsportal@utah.gov" <openrecordsportal@utah.gov>

To: "[REDACTED]"

Sent: Friday, April 30, 2021, 06:21:52 PM MDT

Subject: Your records request has been submitted

Request Title:
Teacher trainings

Submitted To:
Murray City School District

Submission Date:
04/30/2021 18:21 49

Submitted By:
April Despain

Records Officer:
Doug Perry
dperry@murrayschools.org

- Update



• **openrecordsportal@utah.gov** <openrecordsportal@utah.gov>

To: [REDACTED]



Tue, May 4, 2021 at 3:34 PM

Most of the content for this request is copyrighted material - owned by outside entities (not MCSD). Utah Code Section 63G-2-103(22)(b)(iv), treats this information as a non-record and thus not an open record even though it was delivered as a training to MCSD personnel. This code has been challenged on numerous occasions and the appeals by requesters have been denied.

However, in the interest of being transparent and to hopefully demonstrate an additional effort to gain your trust, we are going to seek the permission of the copyright owners of the material to grant access. That doesn't mean we will get it but we will request it and at that point provide you with a timeline and pricing for some or all of this requested information.





openrecordsportal@utah.gov

To: [REDACTED]



Wed, May 5, 2021 at 1:21 PM



We contacted Dr. Dominguez, Dr. Thompson, and Michelle Love-Day about the training they provided in August.

Dr. Dominguez is retired from BYU and works with the non-profits of Stride On and Ecotopia Now. His training materials are proprietary as they were developed by him and not our district. In reaching out to him, he prefers to meet with you in person to share the presentation he gave to our teachers. This allows him to retain ownership of his training. He is amenable to a small group if you want to invite others.

Dr. Jackie Thompson and Michelle Love-Day, Love-Day Educational Consulting, likewise consider their materials proprietary. Further, they are REACH trained and used copyrighted REACH materials in their presentation. In reaching out to them they did not give their permission to send you their materials. It should be noted that the August training video was only given to Dr. Thompson and Mrs. Love-Day for their review, not to our staff. However, similar to Dr. Dominguez, they agreed to let us show you the training video at our facilities, under the agreement that you will not record it or create any unauthorized production or reproduction of it.

As for the financial materials, we can of course provide those and will at no cost, although it should be noted that Dr. Dominguez donated his time/presentation at no cost to the District.

In terms of the recordings and presentation arrangements, the cost will be \$175 as it will necessitate coordination of schedules and our own participation to ensure their requests regarding recording and reproduction of the material can be honored.

Date : 1/16/2021 6:41:39 AM

From :

To : vjobe@murrayschools.org,

Subject : Invitation: LGBTQ Professional Learning - Session 2 @ Sat Jan 16, 2021 9am - 12pm (MST) (vjobe@murrayschools.org)

Attachment : invite.ics;

You have been invited to the following event.

LGBTQ Professional Learning - Session 2

When Sat Jan 16, 2021 9am – 12pm Mountain Time - Denver

[more details »](#)

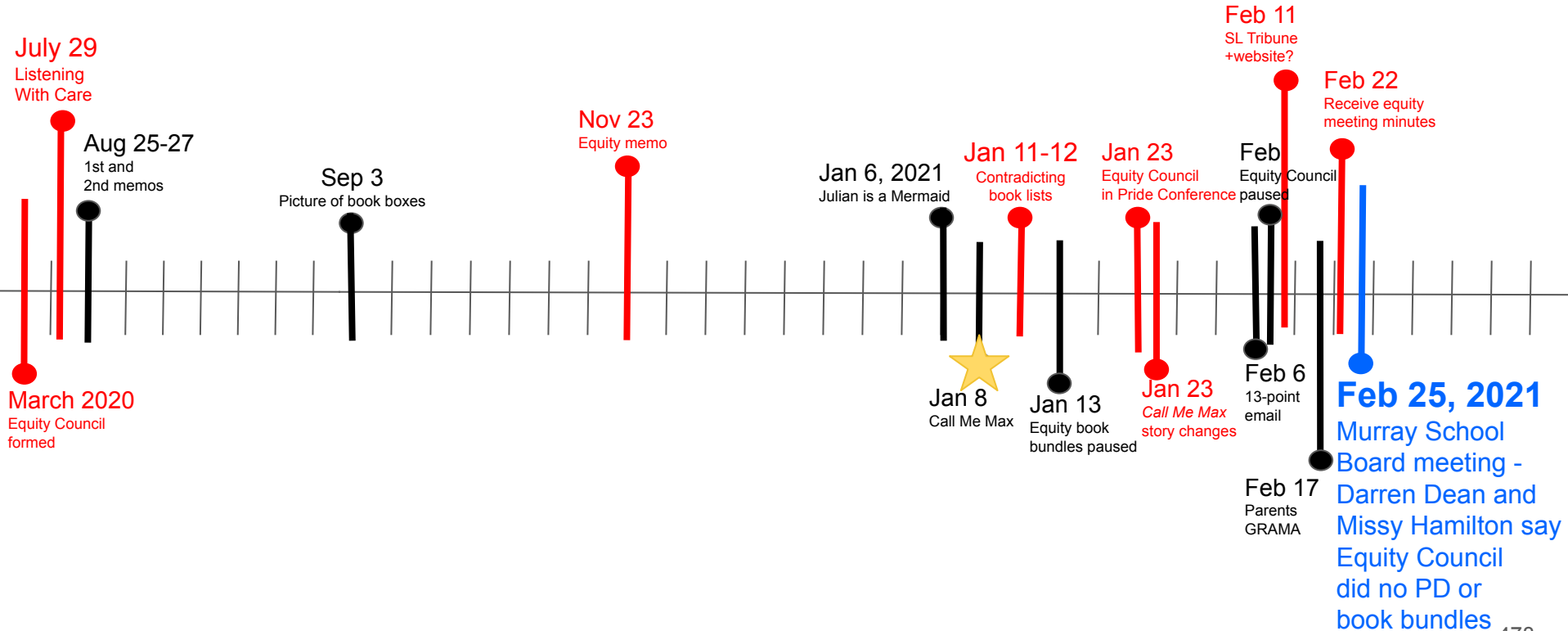
Where

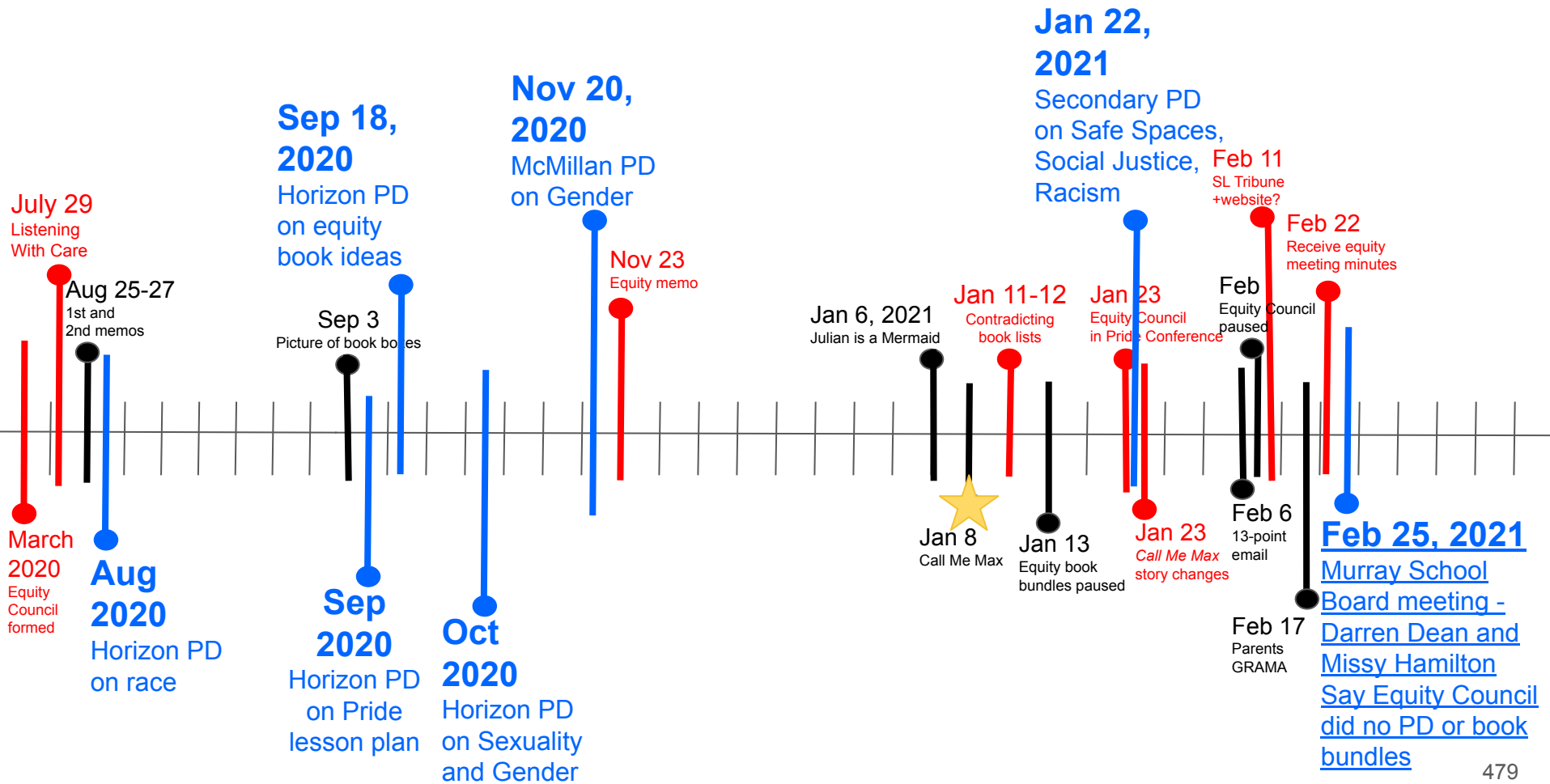
Calendar vjobe@murrayschools.org

Who

In this session, we will examine our local and state policies re LGBTQ affirming practices. We will start a deeper exploration of gender and gender identity in K-20 spaces. The last hour, [redacted] will facilitate learning specific to transgender (genderqueer) youth.

Join Zoom Meeting





MCSD holds school board meeting addressing Equity issues in our district

February 25, 2021

(Part 3)

Feb 25, 2021 Murray School Board Meeting

- Robin Williams - Director of Secondary Teaching & Learning.
- Missy Hamilton - Director of Elementary Teaching & Learning.
- Give slideshow presentation about Equity.
- Why it's necessary and positive for our schools.
- Speak explicitly about racism several times.
- Then claim equity is not about racism.

American Academy of Pediatrics

Racism hurts children, in real and fundamental ways. It hurts not just their health, but their chances for a good, successful life.

That's the bottom line message of a new policy statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics(AAP). It is a call to action for all of us. If we care about the health and future of all of our children, it says, we need to take real steps to end racism — and to help and support those who are affected by it.

How Racism Harms Children by Claire McCarthy, MD
Interview: The Impact of Racism on Children's Health



Harvard Health Publishing
HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
Trusted advice for a healthier life



zoom



Harvard Health Publishing
HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL
Trusted advice for a healthier life



Robin Williams

How can we help change course on **racism** and discrimination?

There are things we can all do immediately.

- We can take a hard look at ourselves, take stock of our beliefs and our biases, and work to change them.
- As part of this, we need to think about and change how we talk about each other, as individuals and as a society.
- We need to speak up when we hear or see racism or discrimination in any form. Empowering ourselves and each other is an important way to begin.
- We need to talk to our children about racism, and teach them healthier ways to think about themselves and each other.
- We need to work to stop institutional racism.
- We need to work with our schools to be sure that all children, no matter what, have access to a good and supportive education. This is no small endeavor, but it needs to be our goal.
- We need to be sure that there are programs in place to not just help people who are poor or struggling, but lift them out of poverty.
- We need to be sure our laws truly protect all people, not just some people.



Utah House Committee

House Committee unanimously approves
resolution declaring racism public health crisis

2/24/21



zoom

Utah State Board of Education

USBE Denouncing Racism and Embracing Equity

Utah schools should be a place where all students feel safe and are given equitable opportunities to succeed. Utah law provides that "every student in the public schools should have the opportunity to learn in an environment which is safe, conducive to the learning process, and free from unnecessary disruption" 53G-8-202; and "all students have the ability to learn and that each student departing the system will be prepared to achieve success" 53E-2-302.

Utah Achievement Gaps Data

Missy Hamilto...



RESOLUTION NO. 2021-01

DENOUNCING RACISM AND EMBRACING EQUITY in Utah Schools

The Utah State Board of Education is deeply saddened by recent events evidencing racism and disregard for human rights, and by the associated violence, turmoil and societal unrest. We call on ourselves and on people everywhere to abandon attitudes of prejudice against any group, to take action to create and maintain an environment of dignity and respect for all, and to strive for understanding. We commit to learn from the past but will focus our efforts on building a bright and equitable future.

Recognizing our moral and legal obligations to educate our students as we assist in developing each student's unique potential, while being guided by the laws and administrative rules of the great state of Utah, we state and resolve as follows:

- Racism in the past and the present is destructive to individuals and society as a whole.
- Individuals have a fundamental responsibility to treat others with respect and civility, regardless of their race or ethnicity.
- Utah schools should be a place where all students feel safe and are given equitable opportunities to succeed. Utah law provides that "every student in the public schools should have the opportunity to learn in an environment which is safe, conducive to the learning process, and free from unnecessary disruption" 53G-8-202; and "all students have the ability to learn and that each student departing the system will be prepared to achieve success" 53E-2-302.
- An educator may not: (1) "interfere with or discourage a student's or colleague's legitimate exercise of constitutional, legal, or civil rights" 2277-515-3(4)(c); (2) "exclude a student from participating in any program or deny or grant any benefit to any student" on the basis of race, color and national origin; (3) "engage in conduct that would encourage a student to develop a prejudice" 2277-515-3(4)(c).





Utah State Board of Education News Release: Utah State Board of Education Leadership Statement on Board Member's Social Media Post

"We reiterate that the Board's official position on issues, including some recently raised in social media, can be found on our Board website and include: the [Board's strategic plan](#) centered on equity through the four main areas of personalized learning, safe and healthy schools, early learning, and effective educators and leaders; [the Board's resolution denouncing racism and supporting equity in schools](#); and the core standards developed for core subjects including [civic education](#)."

February 18, 2021



STOP RACISM

- Promoting good character is one defense against racism. As contained in Utah Code: "Character education means reaffirming values and qualities of character which promote an upright and desirable citizenry" §56-10-204(1)(a), and "The continuous cultivation of an informed and virtuous citizenry among succeeding generations is essential to the state and the nation" §56-2-201.
- Programs, policies and curriculum should "respect, protect, and further the interests of parents in their children's public education" §56-2-201-2(a) no matter their race, color or national origin.
- Disparities in educational programs and outcomes for underserved groups, including students of color, exist under our current education system.
- Racism can be unconscious or unintentional, and identifying racism as an issue does not necessarily mean that those involved in the act are racist or that any negative impact was intended.
- Education should create hope and inclusion while avoiding divisive theories about race or ethnicity. We should look forward, not with despair and hopelessness, but with thoughtful optimism for continued, concerted efforts by educators, students, families and communities to live up to the ideals of equality and unity expressed in the United States Constitution, the Utah Constitution, and civil rights laws.

The Utah State Board of Education firmly denounces racism in any form in our schools and in our education system and embraces principles of equity and justice for all.

All of our policies, programs, and activities shall promote unity and civility among diverse groups. The Utah State Board of Education commits to identify and examine issues of race, ethnicity, and color and the effect they have on the education system and community and to understand and correct any inequalities; and recognizes that the starting point of this work of racial equity must be a reflection and internal examination, whereby the Board will look for ways to engage our members in open and courageous conversations on racism and inequity.

As stated in our Portrait of a Graduate, we will show respect by acknowledging differences, looking for the good in everyone, and showing due regard for others' feelings, rights, cultures and traditions. Our actions will demonstrate our belief that we are better when we are together.

 schools.utah.gov

Feb 25, 2021 Murray School Board Meeting

Equality vs. Equity

EQUALITY VERSUS EQUITY



In the first image, it is assumed that everyone will benefit from the same supports. They are being treated equally.



In the second image, individuals are given different supports to make it possible for them to have equal access to the game. They are being treated equitably.



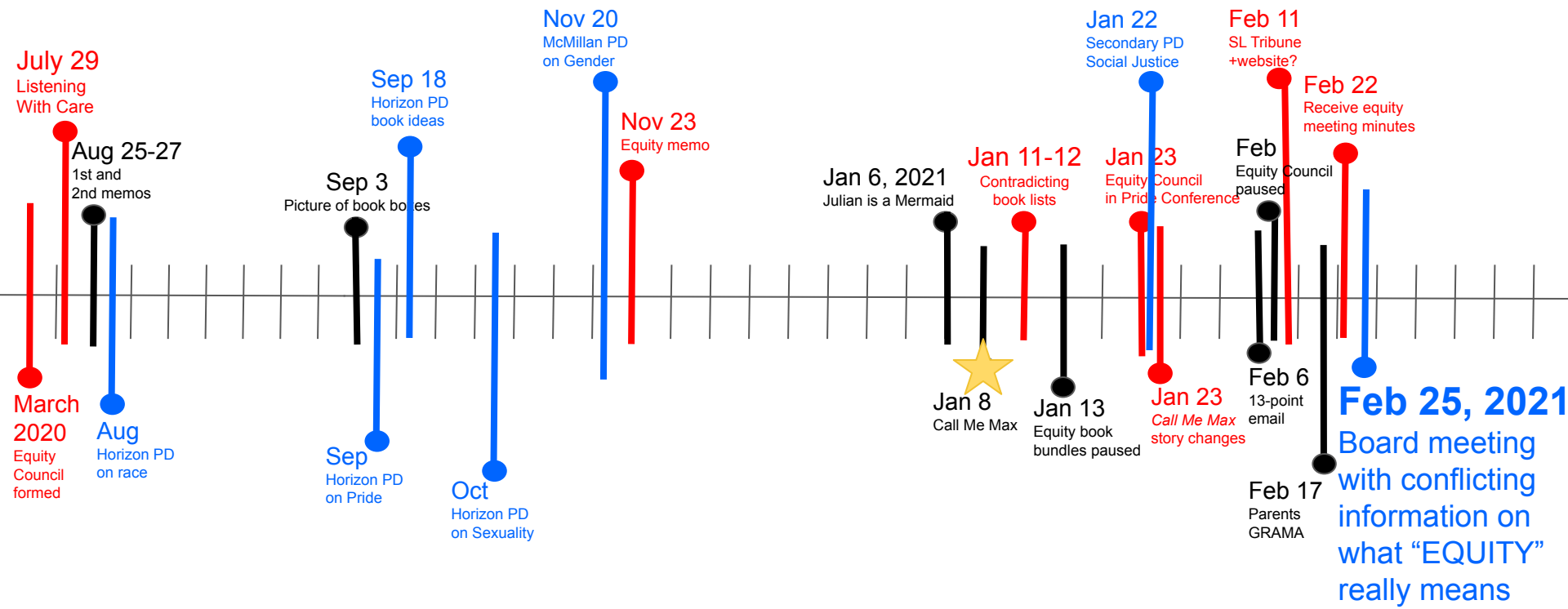
In the third image, all three can see the game without any supports or accommodations because the cause of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.



zoom

Missy Hamilton says:

- Equity is misunderstood to be synonymous with-
 - Racism
 - Gender
 - Quotas
 - Sex Education
 - Reading of books
- Equity is really about access and opportunity



MCSD holds school board meeting addressing Equity issues in our district

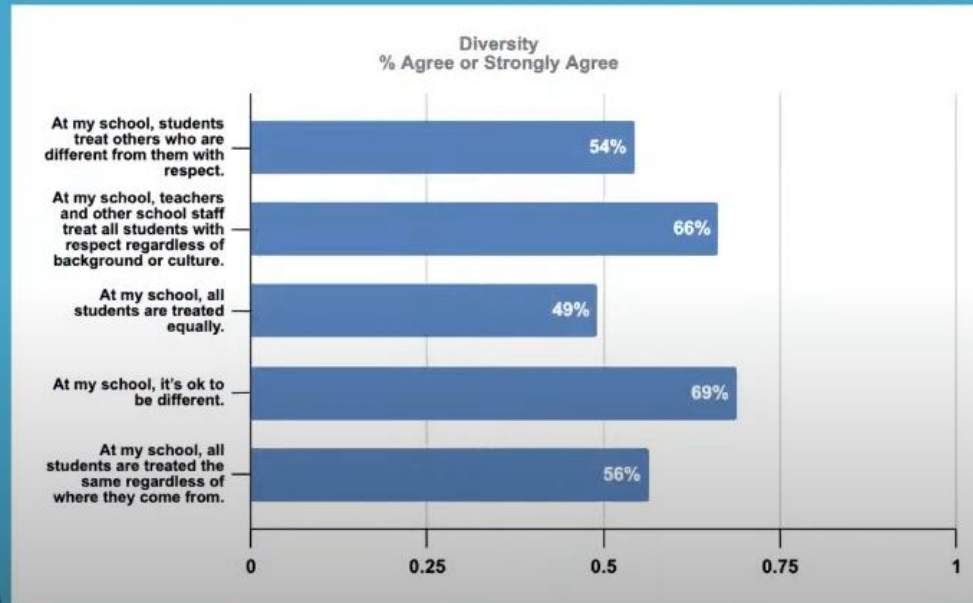
February 25, 2021

(Part 4)

Feb 25, 2021 Murray School Board Meeting

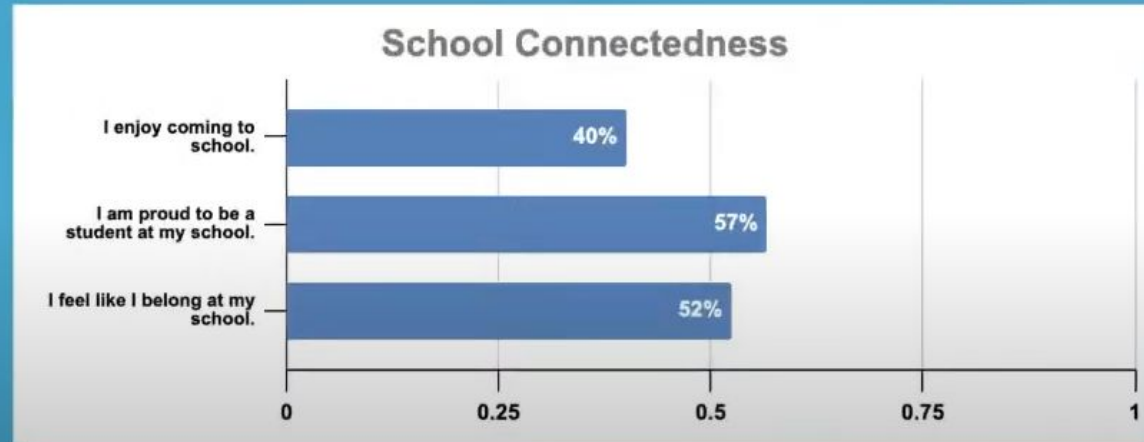
- Shows stats with white students appearing more successful.
- Correlation does NOT equal causation.
- NO evidence for causation.
- Ends with saying this proves we need equity.

CAYCI Survey Spring 2020



CAYCI Survey Spring 2020

Robin Williams





Robin Williams

Graduation Rate



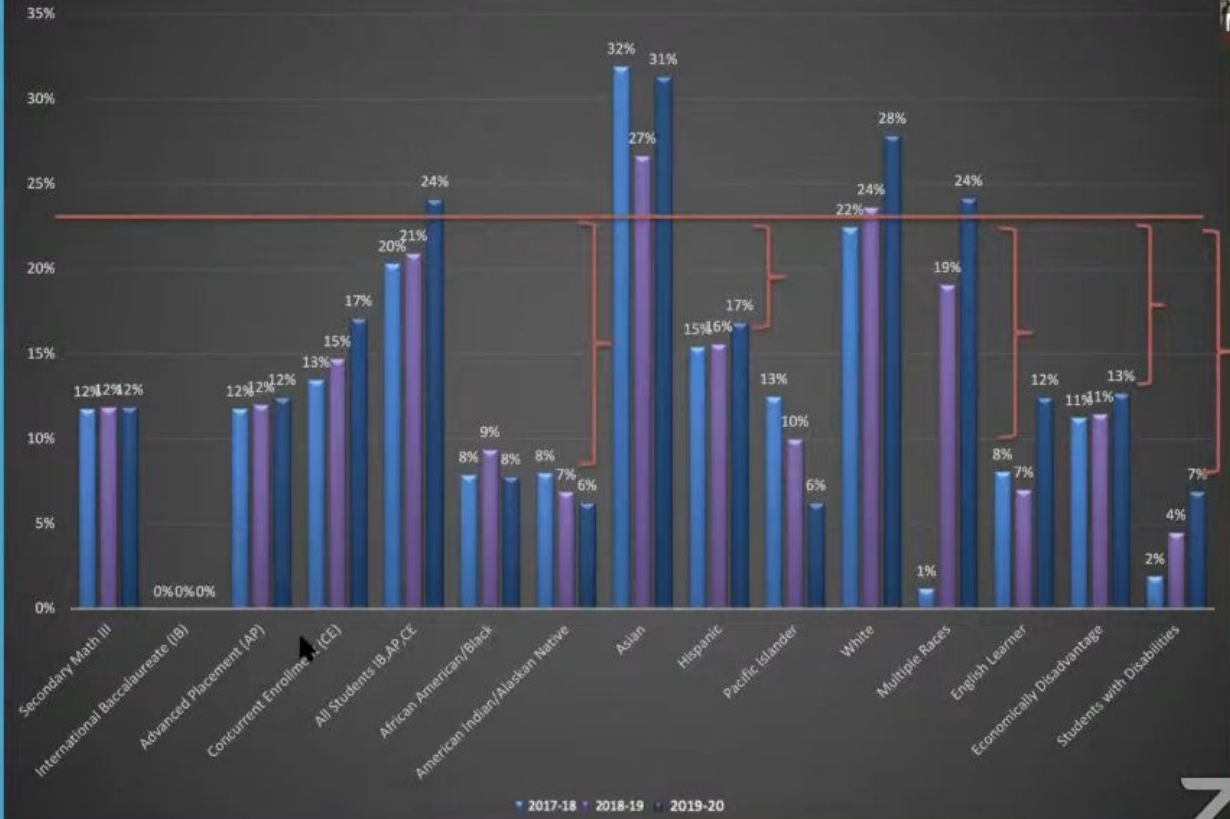
Overall Graduation Rate 2020





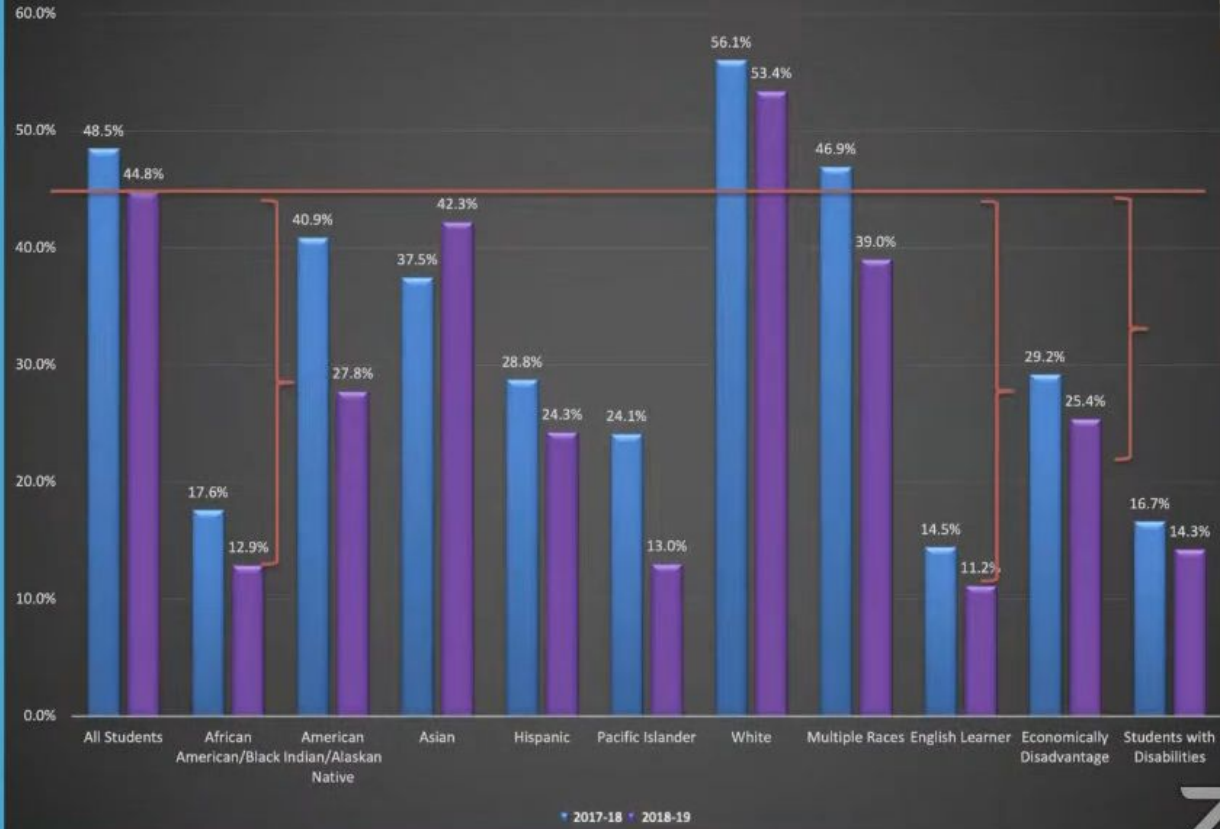
Missy Hamilto...

Advanced Courses



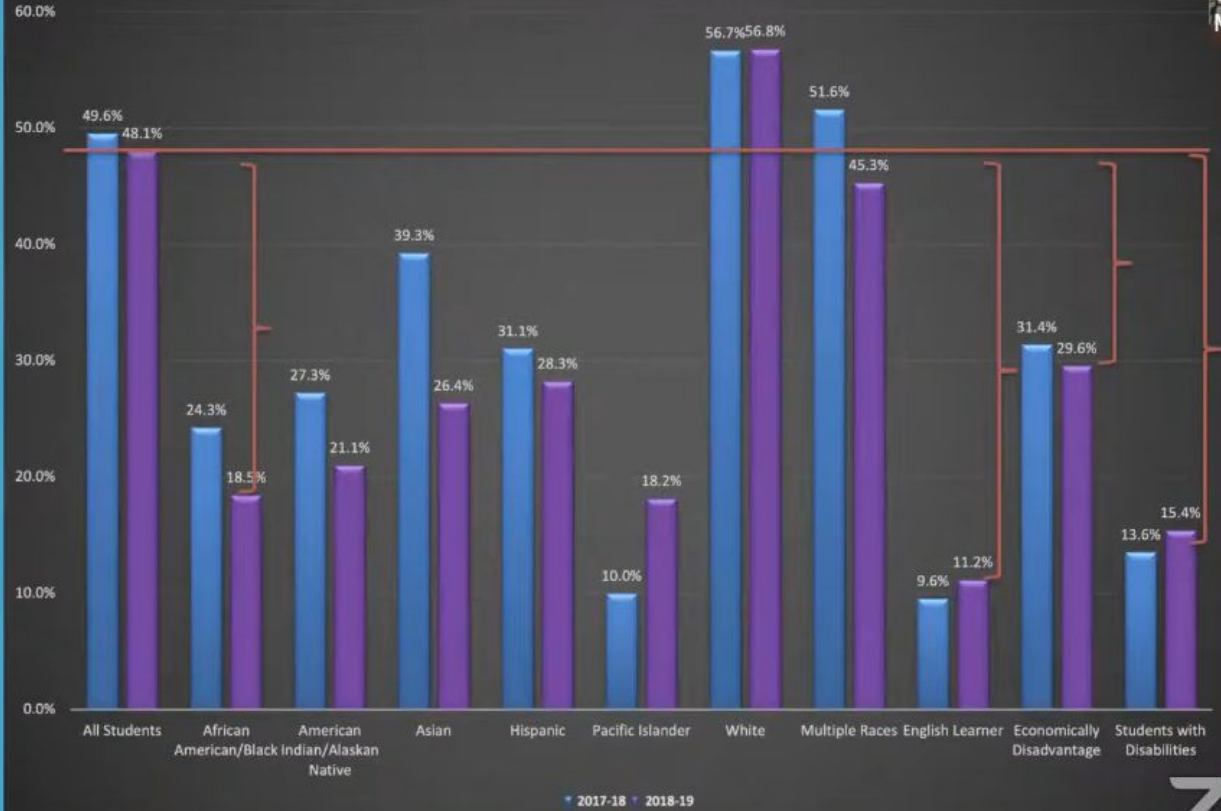


Math Proficiency





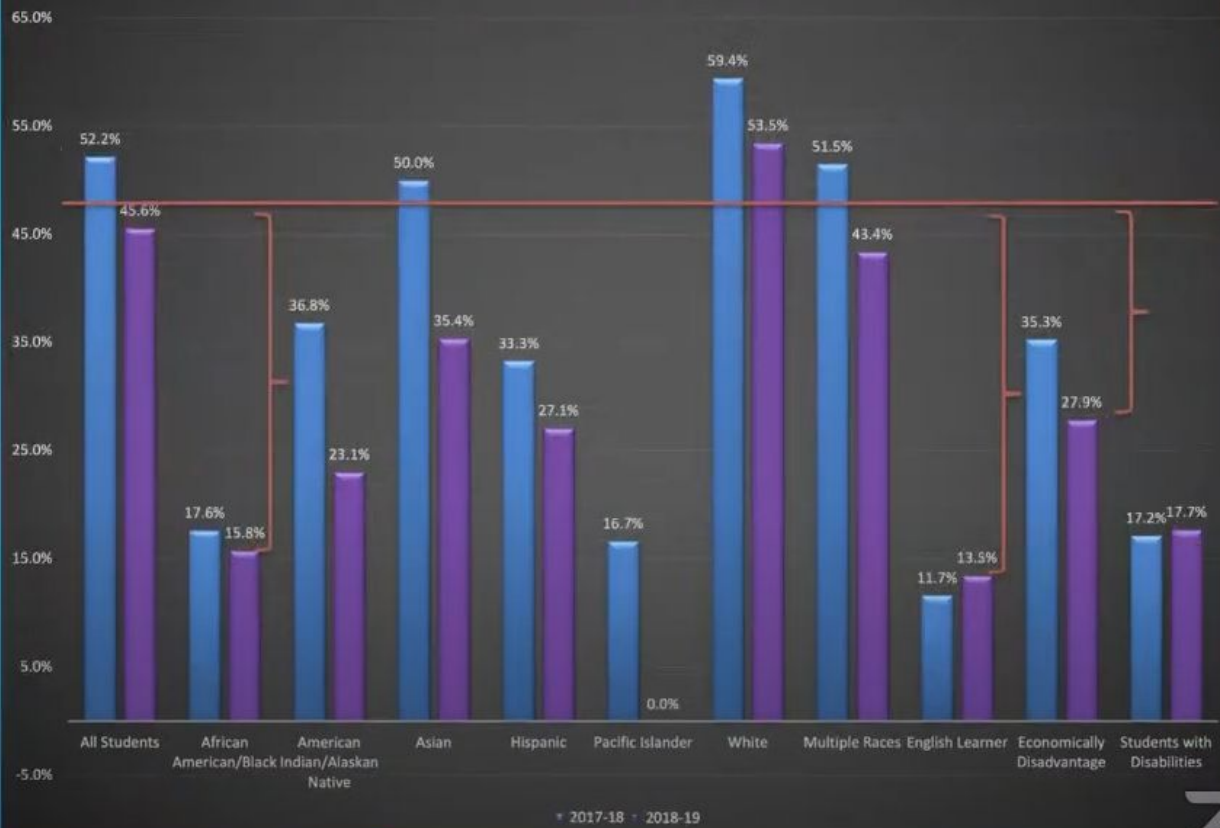
Language Arts Proficiency





Missy Hamilto...

Science Proficiency

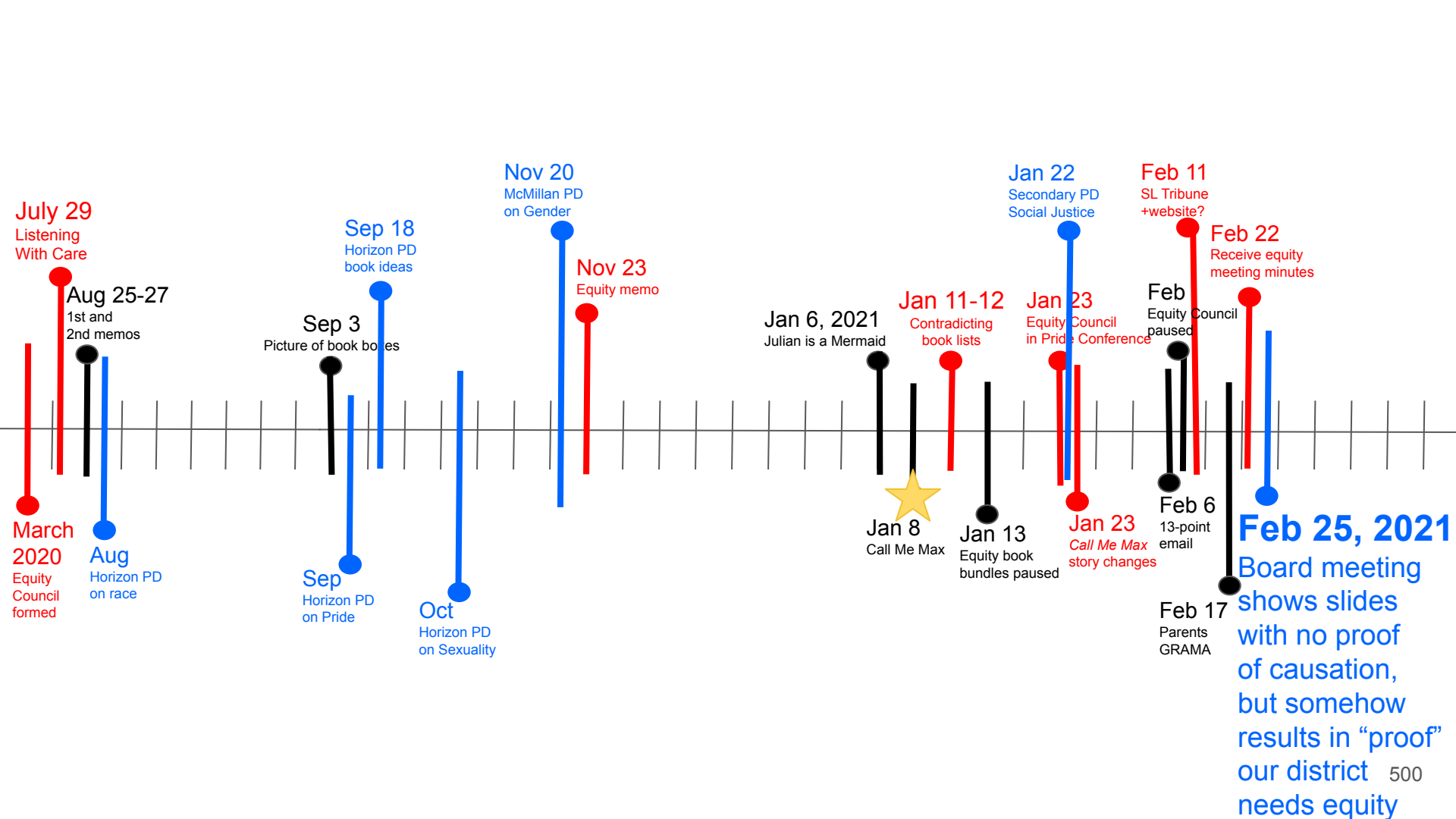


2017-18 2018-19



Feb 25, 2021 Murray School Board meeting



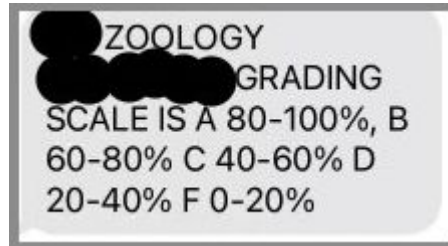


Feb 25, 2021
 Board meeting shows slides with no proof of causation, but somehow results in "proof" our district needs equity

**How does Equity
“bridge the gap?”**

**Is this about
academic excellence
for all?**

Lowered Grading scales at MHS, 2021



ally do not occur in my class. I'd like to keep it that way.

A > 87.5 %
A- > 84.5
B+ > 79.9
B > 74.5
B- > 69.9
C+ > 64.5
C > 59.5

A percentage below 54.5% will result in an "F". In rare cases a "D" grade or "no grade" will be given. These are highly unusual. Your grades are usually posted online weekly. It is your responsibility (and your parents too) to keep track of your progress. There should never be a surprise at the end of the term. Please do not come in at the end of the term and expect me to alter your grade from anything other than what you have earned.

MCSD holds school board meeting addressing Equity issues in our district

February 25, 2021

(Part 5)

**Murray School Board
votes to move all
Equity Book Bundles
to the elementary
school libraries**

February 25, 2021

Feb 25, 2021 Murray School Board meeting



**Did other schools have
the Equity Book Bundles?**

Date : 9/2/2020 10:57:40 AM
From : "Vanessa Jobe"
To : "horizonteachers"
Subject : 1st Justice Team Meeting Date: Thursday, 3rd @ 3:15 in the Library

Hi!

This is just so everyone as the invite.

Additionally, Whit and I presented what Horizon is doing with equity and our book boxes at the district yesterday. We know of 4 other elementary schools that bought the book bundles as well... and that is pretty cool.

Thank you,

Vanessa

—

Vanessa Jobe, Ed.D.
Horizon Elementary Assistant Principal
(she/her/ hers)
801.264.7420

- Discussion from general council meeting: sign up sheet, participant concerns, action items for the year, topics to cover during next meeting on Nov. 12th.
 - Equity Topics Sign Up: Not very many signed up, but we can bring this up at the next larger meeting to fill more spots.
 - Equity Budget?: Question about funding for PD or other things. Darren will talk to the teaching and learning team to find out if there are any PD funds that can be prioritized for equity. We have 4 schools identified as TSI and although there is no funding for that, perhaps we can justify using some other braided funds for PD to address equity for ELL our populations.
 - PD for teachers s/b paired with Equity Book Bundles: Vanessa Jobe - does a different PD session that goes along with each monthly theme. She has shared these with the Principals. Is happy to record those. Explained that the Equity Team @ HZN is also doing a book study How to be an Anti-Racist. So far, there has been no pushback from staff. Vanessa said that other schools have ordered the books, but she's not sure about the PD that goes with it or if it's being paired with the SEL curriculum. At HZN, the expectation is that every teacher will read the books to students and participate in the conversation, but there is no expectation that they are an expert on every topic. They are learning.
 - Cost of Equity Books: Book bundles were \$2,000 and Robin Williams offered another \$700 to help with the overall cost.
 - Should equity topics be optional? Cara mentioned that she would like this to be something that happens at every school and not just an "extra" thing that schools can opt into. Darren said that these are things that we need to discuss with so many competing priorities at each school.

How many schools were using the Equity Book Bundles?

Date : 1/28/2021 1:37:27 PM
From : "Jennifer Covington"
To : "Elementary Principals"
Cc : "Hamilton, Melissa" , "Darren Dean" , "Scott Bushnell"
Subject : Equity Book Bundles

Principals: We know many of you have heard from parents regarding concerns with the Equity Book Bundles. At this time, we are asking you to suspend these books from being read until further notice. The district is working on a process to ensure equity focused books are vetted by educators and parents and that all equity work is transparent and accurately communicated to our parents. We anticipate having information to you by next week.

Please reach out to me via phone if you have any questions. I am happy to discuss.

Jennifer Covington - Superintendent
Murray City School District
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107
801.264.7400



On Mar 1, 2021, at 4:43 AM, Jennifer Covington <jcovington@murrayschools.org> wrote:


Thank you for reaching out to me. The equity books at each school may be different as there was not a set 'bundle' the district asked for schools to purchase. At this time, these books are only being returned to the school libraries - not the classrooms - while we continue to work on policy for required reading materials.

I have copied Principal Anderson on this email so she can get back to you regarding the books that Horizon has. I do know they have been posted on the Horizon Elementary PTA website at <https://horizon.murrayschools.org/pta/> and just verified they are still there. However, I will ask that Principal Anderson confirm with you that these are the books that Horizon has.

If you would like any help navigating the library link that is on our district web page, you can reach out to your school's librarian or our Elementary Director of Teaching & Learning Missy Hamilton. I know both would be happy to help you.

Jennifer Covington - Superintendent
Murray City School District
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107
801.264.7400

**Why did MCSD vote to put the
Equity books into our
children's school libraries?**

On Sat, Feb 13, 2021 at 7:21 PM Jennifer Covington <jcovington@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Thanks for keeping an eye on that Doug. I believe the Board will take action at their meeting on March 11th. I don't think anything any of us want to sit on too long on this. As we have said, the pause is to get policy and procedures in place to ensure we have articulated how we will approve books that are required reading in the classroom. We have been really good at this at the secondary level for years - just not at the elementary.

The main concern I had with the "Call Me Max" books was that it said the statement "parents are wrong." That is something we as educators can't be teaching to students. We can never say that parents are wrong.

Hope you are taking some time to rest and relax too this weekend!

Jen

Jennifer Covington - Superintendent
Murray City School District
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107
801.264.7400



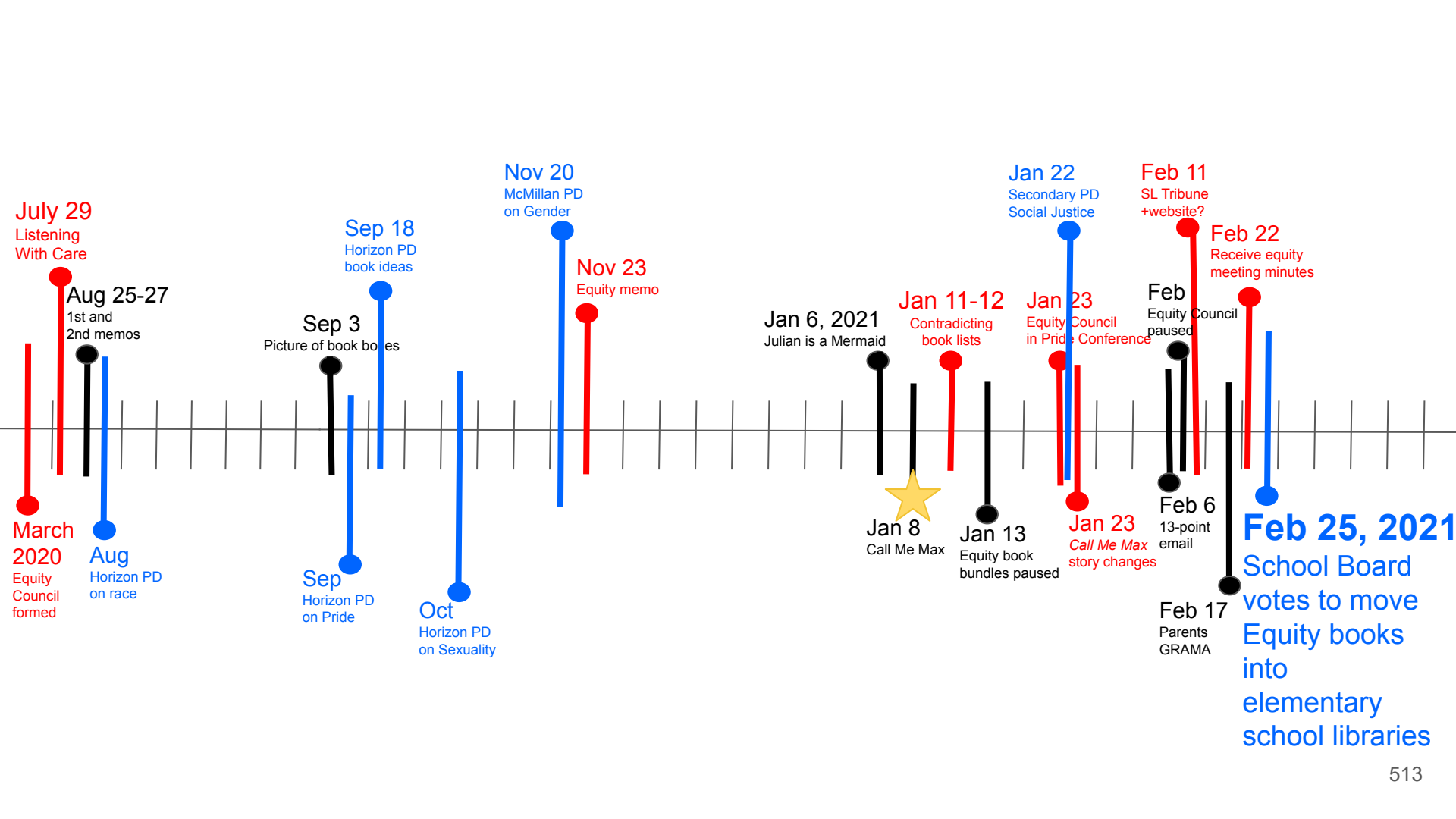
On Sat, Feb 13, 2021 at 7:14 PM Doug Perry <dperry@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Hey Jen, I am seeing this story has gotten some national attention in the last 24 hours (US News and World Report, Yahoo News). Hopefully, nothing to be too alarmed about but just wanted you to know what I am seeing as I track it. I've tracked negative stories that go national in previous jobs and what I am seeing is far from a "viral spread" but it is still spreading a little bit. If we can get a couple of days with no one picking it up - tomorrow and Monday - that will really help. The narrative is still the same - that our suspension is perceived as permanent and so forth.

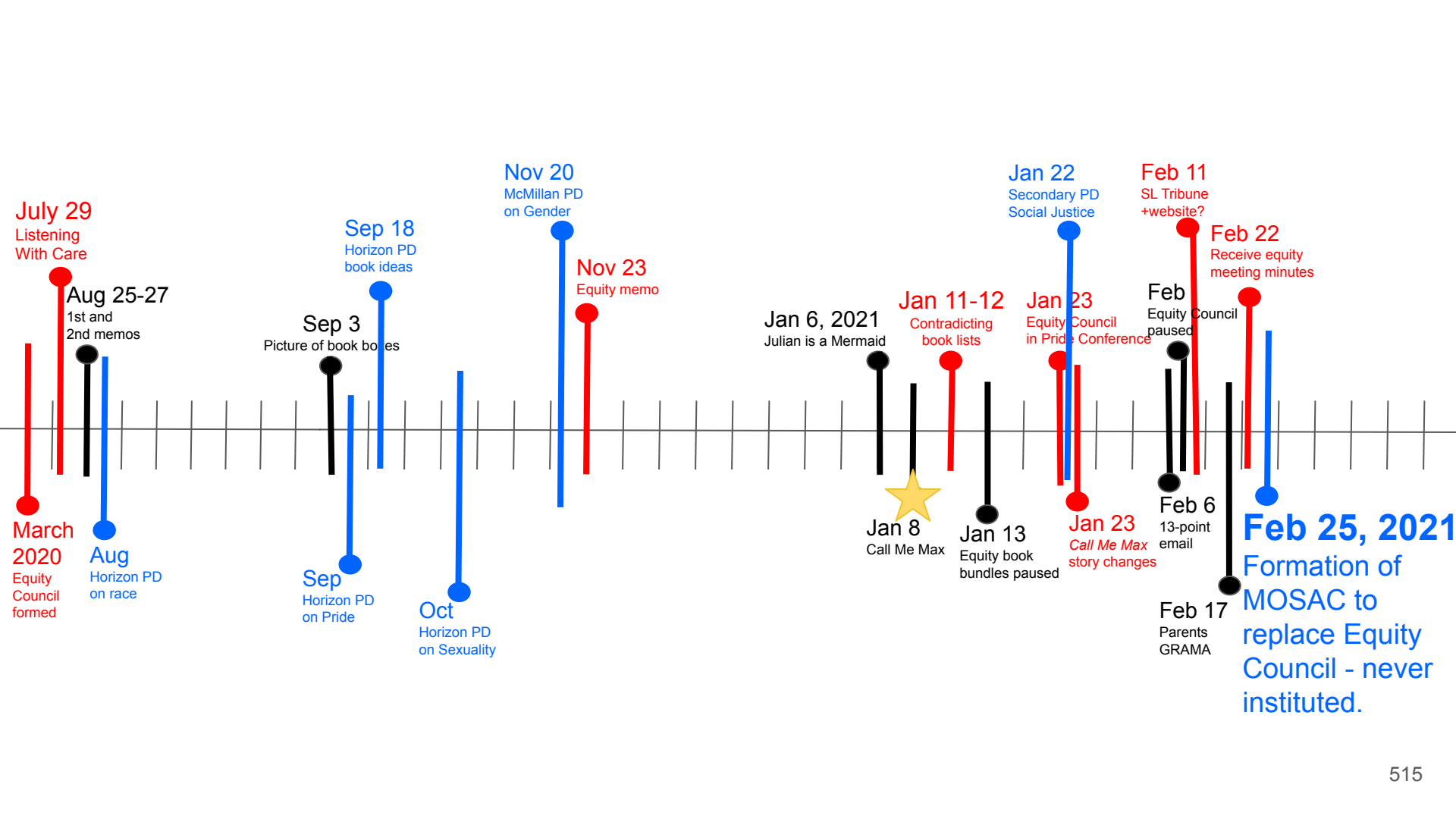
Do you have an ETA on when you think realistically when the Board might lift the "suspension"? I mean are we talking about March Board meeting? And at this point I don't think we should proactively promote whatever that is, assuming the story dies off. If the story dies off and we come out say we have this great plan it will put us right back where we are now in the public eye and remind everyone what happened. Mostly I am just wondering if the Board feels compelled to move on it in March or if they are content to sit on it for a while?

For what it's worth, I did a little bit of research on court cases when it comes to books in schools. You probably already know this, but it seems we have less control over what goes into our libraries because the courts consider that a violation of the First Amendment. But we have a lot more control over what is taught in the curriculum. Supreme Court in 1982 (Island Trees Schools vs Pico), said school boards have "absolute discretion to choose academic materials" as long as the board's discretion is "not exercised in a narrowly partisan or political manner." - so as long as it's expert or evidence-based we are in the clear to not allow a particular book. Right now this is immaterial because we haven't banned anything per say, but if the story continues and people insist the Call Me Max book should be allowed, they have me/the district on record as saying it was not appropriate for 3rd graders. So we may have to back that up somehow - so far no one has asked why we deemed it inappropriate which is good but it may come at some point.

--



Also during this Feb 25 Board Meeting, Superintendent Covington and the school board created four “Murray Opportunities School Advisory Councils,” (MOSAC) to replace the Equity Council. These new councils have since never been instituted in our district.



Emails with April's school board representative

Following the February 25 School Board meeting

April's email to her Board Representative

March 11, 2021

Belinda,

As one of your constituents I want to let you know my honest feelings. You were one of the first people I went to when this whole *Call Me Max* incident began. I told you how I felt. I assumed that, because you are my representative, you would represent me on the school board. I voted for you because I thought you would stand for similar values as what I stand for.

Watching you in board meetings I have to be honest that I have NOT felt represented by you. When you sent me the text on Feb 25 saying that I would appreciate the district's moves going forward, I was hopeful. But as I watched the meeting I was so confused. What about that meeting did you think I would appreciate? Either you don't understand where I'm coming from, or you're not listening to me when I express my feelings.

I want to remind you of two points from "THE ROLE OF THE MURRAY BOARD OF EDUCATION": 4. Maintain compliance with all legal requirements; and 6. Assure the informing of citizens regarding the operation of the District and the accomplishments of its schools. Do you honestly believe those two points were followed in the writing, publishing and distribution of the Nov 23rd memo? I sure don't. It is NOT legal to bypass Utah laws with a district memo about equity. And in the publication of the Nov 23rd memo, citizens were most definitely NOT informed. That memo affected the operation of OUR children's classrooms and curricula, and all parents and citizens should have been informed when that happened. MANY PARENTS are upset about this memo and its effects. I have watched you in board meetings talk about the employees who felt "safe" when the memo came out. So are you going to talk about how parents feel about it now? What about if WE don't feel safe because of that memo? Will you bring that up too in board meetings, even if it's not the popular, cool viewpoint?

I am telling you that I have been LIED TO by Horizon teachers and administrators. Do you believe me? Or do you just think I'm an overly emotional, crazy mom with whom you "can't win?" Based on your behavior in board meetings and your text conversations with me, I can only assume the latter. In the Feb 25 board meeting, why did you not ask hard questions to Whitney Anderson, Darren Dean, Robin Williams and Missy Hamilton? I sent you concrete evidence of the lies I was told, and you made very little effort to question Whitney, Darren, Robin, or Missy on any of those things. You did not bring up ANY of the documents I had sent you in defense of my position. WHY NOT? Even if you personally do not believe my perspective, if you honestly represent me as a board member, you would still ask those hard questions for MY sake. You would still present, or at the very least, talk about the evidence for MY sake. Instead, it appears that you are more worried about maintaining a friendly relationship with Missy and your district colleagues.

I think you're forgetting what your real job is as an elected official. Whitney Anderson did not elect you. Darren Dean did not elect you. Robin Williams did not elect you. Missy Hamilton did not elect you. Tony and I on the other hand -- WE DID ELECT YOU. We expect you to represent our viewpoint. When I tell you that I've been lied to, I expect you to represent my position in board meetings. I expect you to ask the hard questions, no matter how awkward that may make you feel personally, no matter if that may offend your district friends. If you are truly doing your job as a representative, you will worry less about your own personal feelings and viewpoints, and more about the feelings and viewpoints of your constituents who voted for you, ESPECIALLY when the stakes are so high.

My children are my most precious and treasured individuals. My family and personal values matter more to me than anything else in this world. BOTH have been directly attacked by the teacher and administrators of Horizon in the reading and discussion of *Call Me Max* and *Julian is a Mermaid* without parental knowledge or consent. In addition, I have been LIED TO by the administrators in the cover-up story of how *Call Me Max* appeared in the classroom. This is a MAJOR concern. This is not something small or light. This is a HUGE DEAL that needs to be investigated by our district. Investigating all of this is part of your job as a board member. I do not feel you have done this. Because I (and MANY OTHER parents) have not felt heard or represented by the board, we have formed our own council, and WE will make our voices heard. And in upcoming elections we will strive to replace all board members who don't listen to us. So if you would like to retain your seat, I think it would be a good idea to start LISTENING to and REPRESENTING your constituents from now on.

One of the first comments you made to me and [REDACTED] in that initial meeting at your house was that you would not want your own grandchildren to attend public schools because of the way things are changing now. As this situation has progressed, that comment keeps coming back to me. Why would you not want your own grandchildren to attend public schools? Is it because of incidents like what I'm experiencing right now? Is it because of books like *Call Me Max* and the agendas associated with them? If so, maybe you should truly stand up for parents' rights when those incidents occur. I hope you will do that, starting with tonight's board meeting.

April Despain

Belinda's response to April's email

March 11, 2021

On Thursday, March 11, 2021, 11:09:09 AM MST, Belinda Johnson <bjohnson@murrayschools.org> wrote:

April,

Whether you believe it or not, there has not been a day since you brought this to me that I haven't thought about it and thought about you and your family. I think if you step back and look at my history you would know that we have many of the same political views and exactly the same standards. That being said everything I do and say as a school board member has to be done thoughtfully and carefully. Yes, I represent you but I also represent all the other families in our area and our district. I have found through the last couple of months that there is a wide variety of opinions amongst parents, I must stand up for my own beliefs while also representing all those people and what they want. So I will try and answer some of your questions, concerns but I ask that you read them with the same thoughtful consideration I have given all the emails written to me.

Why did I think you would appreciate the district's moves forward? Well, because first of all the equity council was being disbanded and a new committee that would focus on all children's success was being put into place. I am extremely hopeful that this group can look at our district as a whole and work towards our kids being better educated and prepared for the world. I hoped you would see that as a positive too. I am sure you were disappointed that the meeting wasn't harder hitting, it was never meant to be an interrogation but at times it felt like one to me. It was meant to be a study session where we study issues that are happening in our district, the format was slightly different, but study sessions always include the district personnel giving us their ideas or an update on a program and us asking questions. If you noticed Jarren and I asked most of the questions, that is because we have spent the most time on it and we have had hours and hours of meetings about this issue. I will admit it is difficult to formulate questions in the moment and to make sure they are asked in a fair way, that is why many questions get asked after study sessions in phone calls and visits, it is often the next day that I think I should have asked this or that. This does not mean those questions don't get asked! I have asked dozens of times about how the book ended up in Horizon, I have expressed my scepticism that it came from a child and I have been told by many different people why they think or know that to be true. Superintendent Covington is fully aware of how I feel about certain individuals who took part in this. And I know, as I have told you before, appropriate personnel actions will be or have been taken

The memo. I believe that I told you and [REDACTED] that I was not comfortable with the 3rd memo. As you will see in the emails that you have requested I pushed back on it and asked for changes to be made. You will see in the end I still said I was not comfortable with it but that I would have to go with the majority of the board's decision. That is how a school board works, the majority wins. I can absolutely disagree with the way a vote goes but it is my duty to now uphold that decision. This is how school boards work across the nation, we are trained on it over and over again to support board decisions once they are made. You question the lawfulness of the law and as you have been told we have taken it to every legal counsel we have and they have said it is within the bonds of the law. Could it still be looked at modified in the future, yes, and yes I would like it to be looked at again. But to your point, yes, I was shocked by the letters I received from employees after it came out. It brought to my attention how some employees were feeling about their work environment. And because not only are we there to represent kids but also to make sure our employees are fairly treated. It was very eye opening to me. I don't want any employee to feel ostracized because of their gender, religion, race etc., I want good educators to be able to be good educators.

Being on the school board is not about being "cool" or "popular," I've tried to express this to you before. I have been on the school board 11 of the 13 years I have lived here, in that time I have made friends but I have also been held at arm's length because of being on the school board. It is not fun or popular to go to a football game and have some tell you for an hour about a terrible teacher, it is not fun to go to a youth activity and get criticized for the actions of a coach, it is not fun to have half a school district mad at you because you pushed for in person learning in the fall of 2020, it is not fun to have someone approach you and ask whether you are living up to your church covenants. I am saying this to point out that if I wanted to be "popular" or "cool" I would have just continued on in PTA or other groups than to spend my time on the school board. I do it because I care deeply about children and their education. The fact that I have been elected 3 times and have been appointed to other positions in education shows that others know this by my actions.

I have never said you weren't lied to. Period. From the day you and [REDACTED] came to my house I believed that you were both told different stories and that somebody was covering their butt. I believed you then and I believe you now. I know you have email proof, I have never denied that. Like I said, I have pushed back in many discussions about this, asking how we know the student brought the book, why the teacher didn't preview the book, and many other questions. Questioning the district administration in the study session about that didn't serve a purpose, they all agree that parents were given false and contradicting information. That has been investigated and documented, apologies have been made. Those apologies might not be to your satisfaction but they have been made. The district office had/has been tasked to make a plan to move forward with a plan to take care of all kids, all employees and do so with transparency.

If you think that I am too light hearted with the people at the district office let me tell you a few things about my relationships there. As I have told you, I have known Jenn Covington for 12 or 13 years. She helped me through some hard days with my own kids, I was part of the hiring committee that went against the "good old boys club" when we hired her, I trust her one hundred percent. Take some time to look at her track record as a Superintendent, she is still considered a new Superintendent and is still highly respected by her peers and people in our district. Daren Dean and I have known each other longer than that, he was a great principal but has some work to do as a HR director. Missy Hamilton and I actually have a terrible past. We have not seen eye to eye on many things and often find ourselves playing very politely with each other. As a side note, you would be surprised by her take on this and her personal beliefs. Robin and I come from VERY different points of view, we know this and know that we have to be respectful to each other, you will see this in our interactions. So, things are not all rosy and perfect with my relationships with the district office but I RESPECT everyone of them and each was hired for their educational background and knowledge that have been huge assets to the district. Yes, things come off light hearted in a meeting because it is nerve wracking to have dozens of people, including the press, in a room or on the internet watching everything you do or say. Joking is how I get past that. I also believe in civil conversation.

Let me tell a little bit of the makeup of the board that you want to vote out. At this moment 4 out of 5 members of the board are extremely conservative. Each has their own personal views on what should be taught at schools and for the most part they align. If you think the board you have now has let this intentionally come into your school, you are wrong. This "left" leaning curriculum came in from the "side" not from the top. And this is where I want to make a very important point, this will get much worse if you are not careful! There is a group of women in this valley who are very well organized and very well funded that are pushing into every public office that they can, their views are on the extreme left! You found them on the front row of every protest last summer and in the headlines frequently. Just look at our county and city leadership and you will find who I am talking about. And then look at our CITY COUNCIL and give a very close look to the policies and agendas they are pushing. The current Murray City School Board is not who you should be fighting, they are on the "same" side as you

Finally, yes, I did say I would consider not sending my own grandkids to public schools in the future. I told you that the first time we talked. Before any of this was looked at or investigated. I said that because the views of the world are pushing in on our kids lives, no matter who is pushing it it is coming. I told you that because I fear for kids of our faith, or really any conservative background, in the world we live in not just at school. You and everyone else should fight for these rights. My point was at some point I don't know if schools will become so much part of a socialist agenda that I won't want mine there anymore.

April, what I am telling you is I am not the enemy in this whole thing. I do not think you are wrong in your views or your frustration. But I am not sure what you need to happen to move forward? Unfortunately, you read a text to my husband when I said "I can't win" with you. I say this because no matter what I say or how honest I am with you you paint me as a liar and the enemy. I offered to have in person conversations, I've emailed you, I've text you and yet you still don't want to believe what I have to say, that's where I can't win. I appreciate that you have at least contacted me at all, only 4 or 5 people have contacted me personally about this and given me a chance to talk to them about it. Those have been great conversations where I have been able to share my personal point of view as well as what I can and can't do as a school board member. However, after writing this all to you I hesitate to send it. I am very tempted to just delete it because I know my words will either not be seen as insincere or will be used against me. That being said I hope you can focus on the whole of what I have said instead of focusing on bits and pieces, I hope you can look at my reputation and the reputation of the district over the years not just involving this one matter. I know that although things have happened that I am not comfortable with and don't like I have tried to make the best decisions for students and families.

Sincerely,
Belinda Johnson

April's response to Belinda's email

March 14, 2021

On Sunday, March 14, 2021, 10:43 PM, April Wilde [REDACTED] wrote:

Belinda-

Thank you for all the unseen efforts you've made in standing up for my position and values. I am grateful for your hard work, and obviously that's partly why Tony and I voted for you each election since we've lived here. And thank you for replying to me and for your honesty. I do feel that honest communication is the only way we're going to make progress on understanding each other, so I will try to be forthright with my honest feelings too.

If you feel that my communication with you paints you as a "liar" and "the enemy," then I'm sorry you interpret it that way. I've never thought that, called you that, or said that about you to anyone. I care about your feelings and our friendship, and I would like to maintain a good relationship with you despite the fact we both have felt misunderstood and misrepresented. I would like to keep our communication focused on the issues, because that's what this is about. I realize that relationships and feelings (mine too) naturally get tangled up in there, but that's not what this issue is about, so I hope we can let those things go and just focus on what needs to be fixed in our schools. For me, this is about the issue of "Equity" coming into our schools and the fact that parents have been deceived in multiple ways through the "Equity" agenda and programs.

It's probably too much to try to address every point in this email, but just overall, I think the perspective I'm coming from is that parents have been lied to by their children's teacher and the administrators of their school. Until THAT is fixed, we cannot move forward with trust. The formation of 4 new committees with a different name does not fix that broken trust. Watching a slide show about the necessity of expanding equity in our district does not fix that broken trust. There has been no letter or statement that has been honest or accurate, so any apology relating to the current statements is pointless. Until the true story -- that parents have been deceived -- is acknowledged to the whole district, we will continue to lack trust.

In the Feb 25 meeting when Whitney Anderson told about the *Call Me Max* incident, it was not an accurate representation. And I didn't hear an apology given -- in fact, what I heard from both Ms. Anderson and Missy Hamilton was that the student was "thriving" and it was beneficial for the class, because now they were more unified and little boys felt better about wearing nail polish. What about parents who felt like their kids were NOT thriving after hearing that book? [REDACTED] wrote in her letter to the board that her daughter was extremely confused after *Call Me Max* was read. [REDACTED] wrote about her daughter and how confused she was, as well, after reading that book. What about them? Why weren't those perspectives mentioned by Ms. Anderson in the Feb 25 meeting? When she asked the board if they had questions, why didn't any of the board mention those perspectives? I know you had heard mine and [REDACTED] perspectives as well, but you didn't mention our thoughts. Why does one student's perspective get talked about publicly, but four other students' perspectives get completely ignored? Might it be because those four other students' perspectives don't fit the narrative the district wants to move forward with? All the parents I've talked to sure felt that way. And that does not feel honest to us.

You said questioning the district administration in the study session would not have served a purpose, but I disagree. The purpose it would have served was making sure the COMPLETE story was told and that the public got to hear the narrative from ALL perspectives. That's why board meetings are public -- so our community can know what is going on in the district. The public wants to know the truth of what's going on, not just a narrow slice of perspective that fits the district's greater agenda. You said it was not meant to be an interrogation, but the convenient questions in favor of equity WERE asked, while the questions us as parents had asked went unmentioned. That's a big problem.

Many parents watched the Feb 25 meeting and said they were surprised by your behavior. In fact, several said your behavior surprised them the most out of everyone. Like me, these parents did not feel that your words or actions lined up with representing your constituents. I don't say that to hurt your feelings, but just to let you know that the way you present yourself in meetings comes off as wanting to please your district friends more than wanting to stand up for parents. I appreciate your explanations for why you may come off that way, but parents still see it as not representing them. In addition, you say you have to represent ALL viewpoints, and I understand that, but when 53 letters (many from your precinct) are read for our side compared to 9 for the other side, I think you can guess where the majority of your constituents probably stand. And I know there were SEVERAL more letters for our side that weren't even read. That's a lot of parents who feel the district has been dishonest and nontransparent.

You have said the left leaning agenda came in from the side, not the top. But we have watched all the board meetings where the equity council and pride center presented. You didn't question them in their presentations. Most of the board did not question them. It was a lot easier for the equity council to sneak in books and programs through the side when their agenda was not questioned at the top.

My number one priority in life right now is to teach, guide and protect my children. The most direct influence on my children, besides our home, is the school system. You say that 4 out of 5 board members are on our side, and they are not the ones parents should be concerned about. If the majority of board members are listening to equity and pride presentations without questioning their agenda, that's a big problem for parents. If the majority of board members are approving memos that affect our children's classrooms and curricula in ways we don't agree with, that's a big problem for parents. If the majority of board members are reading our emails and then not publicly asking our questions or presenting our positions, that's a big problem for parents. Why would we continue to vote for and support those board members? Those actions are NOT representing us. And it's because we have been so misrepresented in board meetings that we have felt the need to form our own council and take these matters into our own hands. We honestly WISH we did not have to. If we felt represented and heard, we would not be forming this council and we would not be considering whom to vote out of the school board.

When you tell me I need to be careful about pushing this, please let me know what you mean. Are you saying it's hard and scary to push for the truth? Are you saying there might be people who would bully me or my family? Because if that's what you're saying, I already know that. If you think this has been easy and comfortable for me or any parent, then you're wrong. IT IS HARD TO STAND UP FOR WHAT WE BELIEVE IS RIGHT. I have felt alone and worried many times throughout this process. But I do believe in what I'm standing for, and I know that all I'm asking for is HONESTY. I would like to know, Belinda -- do you hold back in board meetings because you feel the need to be "careful" with those women watching? If so, I think that might explain why hard questions aren't being asked and why parents like me aren't being publicly represented. Please let me know which women you want me to be concerned about, so I can keep my eyes peeled as I try to stand for my family and values.

Belinda, I do not see you as "the enemy." In fact, I see you as a friend, and I love you. But from what I and other parents have watched publicly in board meetings, we have NOT felt represented and that's a big problem that we want fixed. If you feel like you "can't win" with me, it's because something needs to change. I'm not going to stop pushing for what I know is right for my own children, and when I'm lied to by administrators in regards to my own children, I will NOT be shut down. But if you really want to win with me, you can. If you push HARD publicly for the truth, then you can win with me (and a lot of other parents)!

April

**Greg, April, and Laurel meet
with Murray District Office
and Murray School Board**

March 2, 2021

Meeting with district and board members

March 2, 2021

- **Jaren Cooper:** “Antiracist is just an opposite way of saying ‘I’m a racist.’”
- **Jen Covington:** Whitney Anderson and Vanessa Jobe performed internal investigation on their own story.
- **Scott Bushnell:** Let’s mend the distrust... But we can’t rectify the story told to the media.
- **Bushnell:** Equity is about the golden rule.

On Mon, Mar 1, 2021 at 8:56 AM Whitney Anderson <wanderson@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Could you please remind me again how Julian is a Mermaid was read in Ms. Paul's class? I know we talked about this but I can't seem to find my notes. Specifically -

1 - Was this a book Ms. Paul had in her class or was it one she borrowed from someone at school? (If I remember right, a 4th grade teacher had it in their classroom and used it. I also remember Vanessa saying she had it in her office.)

Ms. Paul borrowed the book from a 4th grade teacher. This teacher had read it to her class and shared with Vanessa and I how she felt that it let kids express things they liked without limitations of gender norms. We then invited her to share the book and the classroom experience during our October PD. (slides used during PD) <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1851u79InAP2ttbmdqpl7A0eFViy4cy9VvvoebYDfOs/edit?usp=sharing>

2 - Was there a designated 'lesson plan' centered around this book or was it something the teacher just used?

There was not a school created designated lesson plan for the book "Julian the Mermaid" because it was not part of the book bundle list. The 4th grade teacher read the book and discussed gender norms. The teacher gave the students the opportunity to write on a piece of paper (which you will see on slide 10 of the PD document shared with faculty) The teachers example was, "I'm a girl, but I like to watch Football."

Yes, this is still continuing. We have a group of parents coming in to meet with myself and Board President Cooper tomorrow and this is one of their questions I need to address.

Let me know if I can help with anything else. I think it's important to note the class roster that I've attached. All of the parents (to my knowledge) who are still upset, don't have students in the class. I'm not sure how they can speak to how "students in the classroom felt" when their student wasn't in the classroom. I'd like to know specifically what students(s) felt uncomfortable so we can appropriately address their needs as well.

Thanks for helping me with this.

Jen

Jennifer Covington - Superintendent
Murray City School District
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107
801.264.7400



March 2, 2021 - Parents meet with Murray District Officials and School Board

April Wilde Despain - parent

Greg Marchant - parent

Laurel Fetzer - parent

Jaren Cooper - School Board
president

Kami Anderson - School board
representative

Jen Covington - Superintendent

Scott Bushnell - Assistant
Superintendent

Parents meet with MCSD board

March 2, 2021



**Is Equity about
“The Golden Rule”?**

Lesson from Second Step

Introduction (5 minutes)

Display the first screen.



Today we're beginning the **Second Step** program. Ask how many students have had *Second Step* lessons

in the past. Ask them what they remember from those lessons.

Over the next several weeks, you'll be learning and practicing skills to improve learning, get along with others, manage your emotions, and solve problems.

Story and Discussion (10–15 minutes)

Now let's take a look at the introduction to this year's *Second Step* program. See if you can identify at least three topics fifth-graders will learn about and practice in the *Second Step* program.

Play the video.

1. Tell me how many topics you can name from the fifth-grade *Second Step* program by showing me that many fingers. Call on students to

ways toward others. What does it mean to be “respectful”? Accept a few responses. Many students will define *respect* by offering examples of respectful behavior, such as being helpful, polite, fair, using good manners or saying hello, not being mean, not calling names, not using put-downs. Affirm that these are all respectful behaviors.

5. One good way to think about being respectful is the golden rule—considering how someone would like to be treated and then treating them that way. But what if the way someone else wants to be treated is different from the way you want to be treated? I want you to take a few moments to think to yourself about what you could do if someone's ideas or preferences are different from yours. How can you still act respectfully toward him or her?

Give students a few moments to think about it. Ask students to report ideas. (Various answers.) **If you believe everyone should be treated respectfully, give a thumbs-up.**

6. In the *Second Step* program, all of you will be asked to think about and exchange ideas. Let's come up with some rules that will help you be respectful of one another's ideas when you're working on *Second Step* lessons. Write students' suggestions on chart paper. These may correspond to your class rules. Highlight the common rules. (If

**We asked the
superintendent to
investigate the incident
for herself.**

- Follow Up From March 2, 2021 Meeting



• **Jennifer Covington**



Wed, Mar 3, 2021 at 3:47 PM

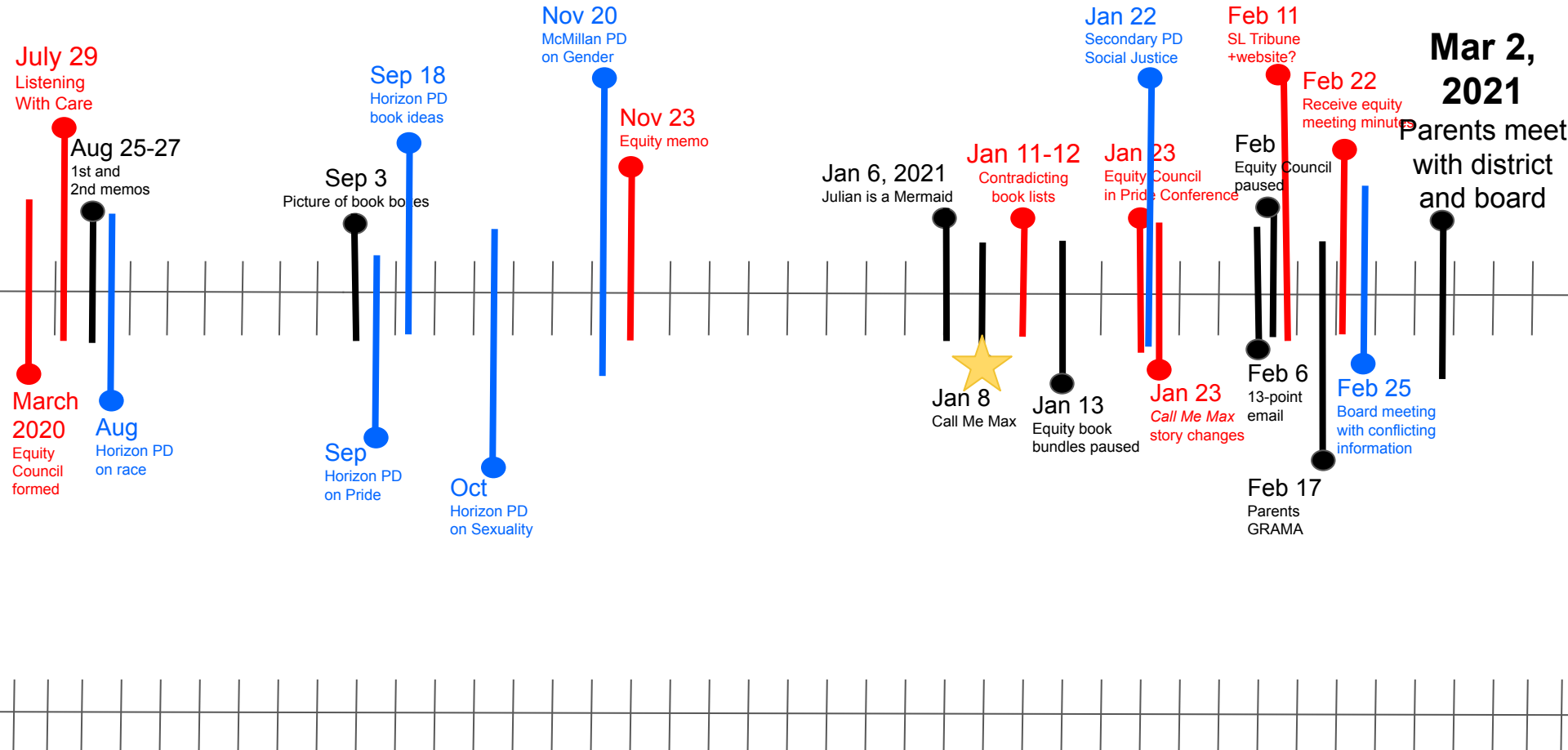


To: Jaren Cooper, Kami Anderson, Scott Bushnell,
April Wilde, Greg Marchant, Laurel Fetzer

I have personally spoken to the Horizon parent and confirmed that their child did bring the book "Call Me Max" to class.

Jennifer Covington - Superintendent

Murray City School District
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107



Murray School Board Meeting

March 4, 2021

Murray School Board meeting

March 4, 2021

- District requested parent feedback
- Letters submitted for consideration in Feb 25 meeting
- Public comments read in Mar 4 meeting
- 53 letters from community troubled with equity agenda
- 9 letters in favor of equity

District requests public feedback regarding equity:

Many have asked about the next steps Murray Board of Education will take following their temporary administrative pause of the Equity Council and Book Bundle program. Please note the following timeline:

- February 25, 2021: The Board will hold a study session at 5:00 p.m. to review and discuss changes to IN304 and the framework of the Equity Council
- March 4, 2021: The Board will hold a regular board meeting at 5:00 p.m. to review and potentially finalize policy and procedure changes

Members of the public are invited to participate via electronic means by viewing the board meeting at <https://tinyurl.com/y8a6hhbr>. The agenda for each meeting, which includes a link to view the meeting live on YouTube, will be posted on our district website (<https://www.murrayschools.org/meeting-information/>). Due to COVID protocols, only those on the agenda will attend in person.

There is no public comment session for study sessions. However, we would like to provide an opportunity for any Murray City School District patron to share feedback. Please click here to submit a comment which will be presented to the Board for review prior to the study session on February 25, 2021.

There will be a public comment session at the regular Board meeting on March 4, 2021 meeting. Patron comments may be submitted via email to info@murrayschools.org until 5:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting. Please state in your email that this is a public comment for the board meeting and include your full name, address, and phone number along with your comment. Comments will be read during the Patron Statements portion of the meeting by the Murray City School District Office of Public Communications. Each individual will be limited to three minutes with a total of 30 minutes to be set for this purpose.

This is a public comment for the board meeting on March 4th and to be considered during your study session on Feb. 25th:



Attn: Superintendent Covington and School Board Members

My daughter is in the 3rd grade in the Murray School District, and her good friend was in the 3rd grade class where the book “Call Me Max” was read among other lessons on equity. While she was playing after school that day, her mom overheard her privately talking and rehearsing the things that were discussed in the book. That night her parents asked her where she learned about those things, and she explained that her teacher read a book about it in her class that day. She was very confused about why a girl would want to be a boy and even wondered if some of her friends should be a boy.

After inquiring with the teacher why this happened, the teacher stated she was justified because of the 3rd memo that came out from the Murray School district and school board stating they fully embrace their responsibility for inclusion, belonging, and justice for transgender populations as well as other marginalized populations. It then goes on to state that “MCSD supports and encourages all educators to center equity in their daily teaching. Some examples include equity-based curriculum, conversations, dialogue, etc.”

Whether a student brought the book in or it was a planned event, this teacher felt justified in reading this book without parent consent. In fact, in a response letter to the parents she said the following – “I feel students benefited from these books with a sense of confidence in who they are and an ability to accept others. I follow administrative code and guidelines around transgender issues.”

I grew up in Murray and even taught elementary school in Murray. My husband and I chose to live in Murray and we have 6 children who are or will be attending the schools here in Murray. We care a lot about what happens here for our kids as well as all other students attending Murray schools. I am grateful that the MCSD is taking this situation very seriously. I am currently [REDACTED] and I am very impressed at how the administration and teachers focus on teaching the importance of accepting and loving all, no matter who they are, without the need to bring in subjects that aren't age appropriate such as human sexuality. I've always felt it is important to treat everyone with respect and love no matter what they believe, and I have strived to teach my children through example and word.

I care deeply about the things my children learn no matter where they are. It is my opportunity and responsibility as a parent to teach my children these sensitive issues as well as my right to decide when it is age appropriate to address equity issues including human sexuality. It breaks my heart that 3rd graders at Horizon were exposed to this topic without any intention to notify parents. I plead with you to consider the rights of all people as you make district memos and to stress the importance of being transparent and to require parent consent before these sensitive issues are discussed in schools.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Attn: Superintendent Covington and School Board,

My daughter is an 8th grade student at Riverview this year. I picked her up early from school on Monday and noticed a "Black Lives Matter" sign on one of the classroom doors. I was surprised to see the sign in school, and I emailed Mr. Kauffman concerning the matter.

I voiced my concern that I believe the sign violates Utah code 53G-10-402(6), which states that political, atheistic, sectarian, religious, or denominational doctrine may not be taught in public schools. I believe this sign falls under that code. In response he quoted the following: "The Murray City School District does not endorse or support any political statements in schools. The statement that black lives matter is permitted in the school setting not as an endorsement of a political viewpoint, but as a statement of support for anti-racism and human rights."

I disagree with this statement. Racism is not exclusive to one race. Of course black lives matter! And if we are to support human rights and strive to not be racist, I believe this should include ALL races and ALL humans. Human rights are not just rights for one race. If we are to pledge support for human rights, we must include EVERY race, for example - Hispanic lives matter, Asian lives matter, Pacific Islander rights matter, Native American lives matter, and yes, even white lives matter. We should want ALL students and ALL races to feel safe in our schools.

I have friends and family members of many races and ethnicities, and I assure you -- they would not oppose me in saying that ALL lives matter. I know it's not politically correct to say that in this day and age, but for me it comes from a place of love, unity, and respect for all races and all humans.

When we put up a sign in our schools supporting one race above another, we divide ourselves even more than we are divided already. We live in a very emotionally charged environment right now. I think bringing statements and subjects like these into our schools is doing our kids a disservice. I believe there are better ways to foster unity in our schools.

I thank you for considering my viewpoint.



Political Signs in Schools

MCSD supports and encourages all educators to center equity in their daily teaching. Some examples include equity-based curriculum, conversations, dialogue, and displays that emphasize the dismantling of individual and systemic barriers to student achievement. We are committed to prioritizing equity in MCSD. We Are Murray! Every one of us.

On Fri, Sep 18, 2020 at 3:08 PM Cara Cerise <ccerise@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Thanks, Darren. What specifically about the signs being up has been at the heart of the complaints? What about the signs have made people reach out to administration and/or HR? What are the 10-14 (with some possible overlap) complaint filers saying?

Do you have anything written? It would most definitely be kept anonymous if shared.

On Fri, Sep 18, 2020 at 2:37 PM Darren Dean <ddean@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Cara,

Here is what I have on complaints from parents and staff regarding BLM. I don't have exact numbers because principals gave me a count of complaints and those people may have or may not have talked to me also.

Parental Complaints Reported to HR – Approximately 4-5

Staff Complaints Reported to HR – Approximately 6-9

Main topics of complaints:

Large BLM sign at Murray High School

On Fri, Sep 18, 2020 at 5:54 PM Cara Cerise <ccerise@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Thank you, Darren, this is very helpful. Do you also happen to have an approximate count of how many people responded to the memo/addendum stating they were concerned about it?

Yes, I would love to catch you up. I'll give you a call!

On Fri, Sep 18, 2020 at 3:47 PM Darren Dean <ddean@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Cara,

The sign at the high school was a big issue, but that has been moved inside the classroom and things have quieted down.

Riverview hasn't had additional complaints, but I think there are probably some folks left wondering what the district is going to do about the BLM signs.

Here is a complaint that speaks to the concern.

As a former student of Murray School District, I know firsthand that Murray School District takes pride in providing the best education for their students. It has come to my attention that there are one or more teachers who have placed signs on their doors and/or in their classrooms supporting certain current political topics. The teachers' personal political views do not belong in the school, be it speech, posters, signs, etc. School should be a neutral place where, when appropriate, the children are presented with information regarding BOTH sides of any political issue. I believe this to be even more important than ever because they are feeling enough pressure just trying to deal with all of the changes a worldwide pandemic has brought to their lives. Every student deserves to feel safe and welcome at school. Allowing ANY political sign to be put up destroys this sense of safety. Whether the sign is Blue Lives Matter or Black Lives Matter, Trump 2020 or Biden 2020, or anything in between you are leaving students open to being distracted about their safety rather than focusing on learning. These are extremely hot topics with a great deal of anger and tempered debates behind them. Adults struggle to have open, respectful conversations about these topics. You may question whether or not students would be concerned about their safety while at school, but as I watch various news stations from local news to the national news, I see continual violence and destruction happening around the country because of various political movements. How do you think the students feel? Does this scare them? Will the teachers retaliate if the students have an opposing view? How many are worried about being attacked? As teachers put up these messages, they also ruin the opportunity for open discussion because the students now know the teachers' position. When taking a political science course in college, the professor must carefully present the information to avoid showing their own view, thereby avoiding persuading the student's discussion. This allows the students to learn HOW to think and not WHAT think. I hope you take into consideration the environment created by leaving these signs up, and the fact that if political signs are up many will then assume that the school district supports not only the political cause, but the candidates who endorse the cause as well. This being said, I respectfully ask again, that these signs be taken down. I appreciate all the hard work the teachers have put in and the extra work they are being asked to do this year.

Also, Robin said that you and she had been dialoguing about the study session. I would like to hear where you are at.

Let's chat on Monday or Tuesday next week if that is okay. Just give me a ring at your convenience.

Darren :)

Sep 18, 2020 - Email regarding parental concerns with BLM signs in schools

Date : 11/20/2020 8:50:21 AM
From : "Cara Cerise"
To : "Vanessa Jobe"
Cc : "Darren Dean"
Subject : Re: Memo Ideas

Yes, if they are open to these changes, we really need to move forward. Has anyone sent this to them?

On Fri, Nov 20, 2020 at 8:39 AM Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

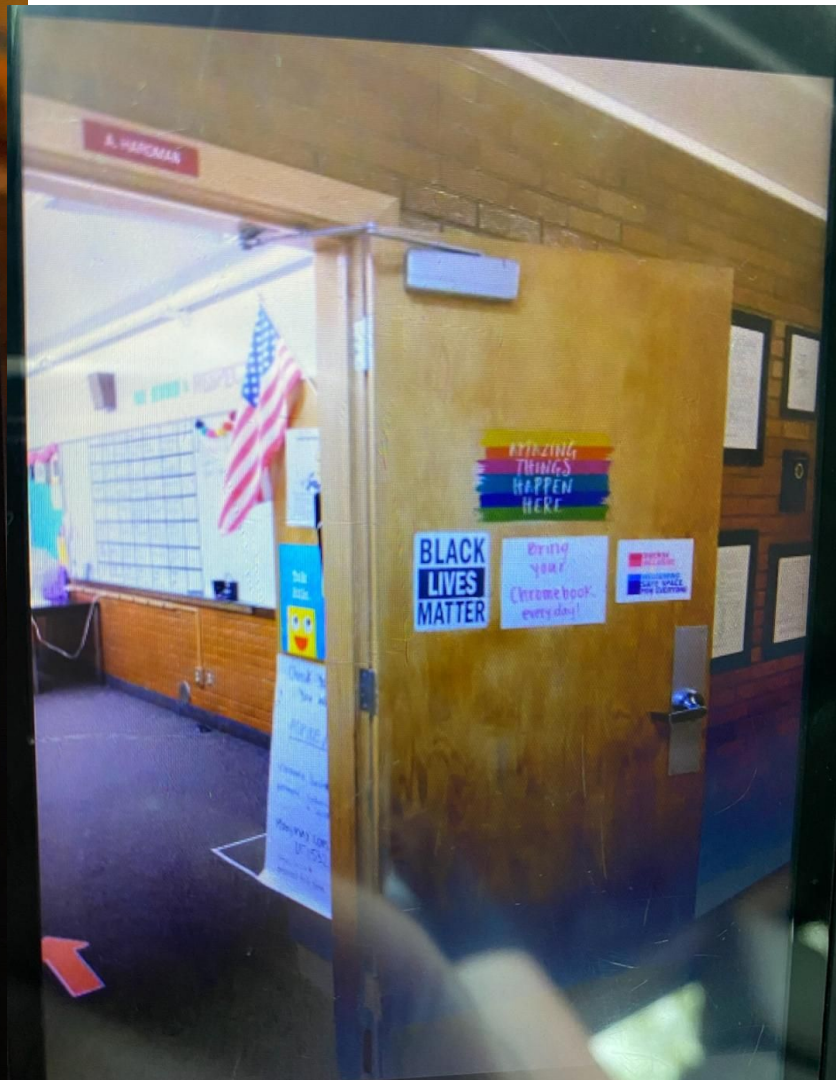
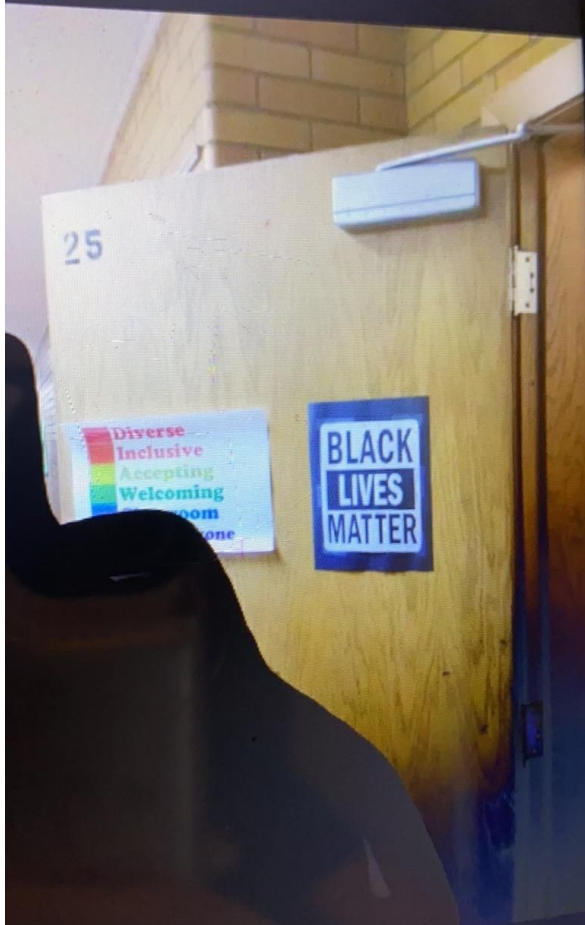
Yes. I think that the uncapitalization would clear up the organizational concerns. I think that getting the memo out would allow us to focus on further equity issues (hiring, professional development ect). Since it has been 3 months of this... I worry if we don't make the corrections the memo won't go out. I do not want to have the un-capitalization to heighten the racism at work that our employees are already experiencing. I agree we will figure this out.

On Fri, Nov 20, 2020 at 8:23 AM Cara Cerise <ccerise@murrayschools.org> wrote:

I am definitely open and willing to consider these changes, but again, I don't necessarily feel comfortable making that decision without the input of the other people who crafted the message. Taking out "mistake" seems fine because harm is still acknowledged.

The fact remains that other school districts have said Black Lives Matter, so we can indeed say it and code and laws support that (we/they are choosing not to). I worry about it being insulting if it is not capitalized. And I also have the feeling that if it is capitalized or uncapitalized, the folks who have a problem with it will still have a problem with it. I think "affirms" is good. Honestly, whatever reasonable measures to get this sent out I am fine with discussing. There just doesn't seem to be much discussion happening outside of just the board members talking amongst themselves... so it's hard to say what they would and wouldn't accept as far as edits and changes go. Thank you both for everything. We will figure this out.





Dec 10, 2020

Equity Meeting Minutes -

“What’s going on in your schools or classrooms right now with regards to equity and social justice?” Parkside and Horizon: GLSEN posters.



GLSEN

RISE UP TO PROTECT BLACK STUDENTS



GLSEN

RISE UP TO PROTECT IMMIGRANT STUDENTS



On Mon, Feb 22, 2021 at 10:23 PM [REDACTED]

wrote:

Dear Mr. Kauffman,

I wanted to reach out to today with a concern I have. My daughter is an 8th grade student at Riverview. I checked her out of school early today for an appointment. As I was waiting in the hallway for her, I noticed there was a "Black Lives Matter" sign on one of the classroom doors. I was surprised to see that in school. As a parent I believe there are some things that are best taught from parents, that have no right or reason to be taught or promoted in schools. I believe "Black Lives Matter" is one of those things. Utah code 53G-10-402(6) states that political, atheistic, sectarian, religious, or denominational doctrine may not be taught in public schools. I believe this matter falls under that code. I would respectfully ask that you consider removing the sign. I believe it is inappropriate in a school setting.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

On Feb 23, 2021, at 2:51 PM, Earl Kauffman
<EKauffman@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Thank you for your email. The sign you referred to is allowed by the Murray City School District. I asked for direction to respond to your email and received the following: "The Murray City School District does not endorse or support any political statements in schools. The statement that black lives matter is permitted in the school setting not as an endorsement of a political viewpoint, but as a statement of support for anti-racism and human rights."

If you have further questions you are welcome to contact Darren Dean at the district office.

On Thu, Feb 25, 2021 at 12:31 PM [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Mr. Dean,

My daughter is an 8th grade student at Riverview this year. I picked her up early from school on Monday and noticed a "Black Lives Matter" sign on one of the classroom doors. I was surprised to see the sign in school, and I emailed Mr. Kauffman concerning the matter. He may have passed my email along to you. In any case, I voiced my concern to Mr. Kauffman that I believe the sign violates Utah code 53G-10-402(6), which states that political, atheistic, sectarian, religious, or denominational doctrine may not be taught in public schools. I believe this sign falls under that code. In response he quoted the following: "The Murray City School District does not endorse or support any political statements in schools. The statement that black lives matter is permitted in the school setting not as an endorsement of a political viewpoint, but as a statement of support for anti-racism and human rights."

Mr. Dean I disagree with this statement. Racism is not exclusive to one race. Of course black lives matter! And if we are to support anti-racism and human rights, I believe this should include ALL races and ALL humans. Human rights are not just rights for one race. If we are to pledge support for human rights we must also say that Hispanic lives matter, Asian lives matter, Pacific Islander rights matter, Native American lives matter, and yes, even white lives matter. I have friends and family members of many races and ethnicities and I assure you, they would not oppose me in saying that ALL lives matter. I know it's not politically correct to say that in this day and age, but for me it comes from a place of love, unity, and respect for all races and all humans. When we put up a sign in our schools supporting one race above another, we divide ourselves even more than we are divided already. We live in a very emotionally charged environment right now. I think bringing statements and subjects like these into our schools is doing our kids a disservice. I believe there are better ways to foster unity in our schools.

I thank you for reading my email and considering my viewpoint.

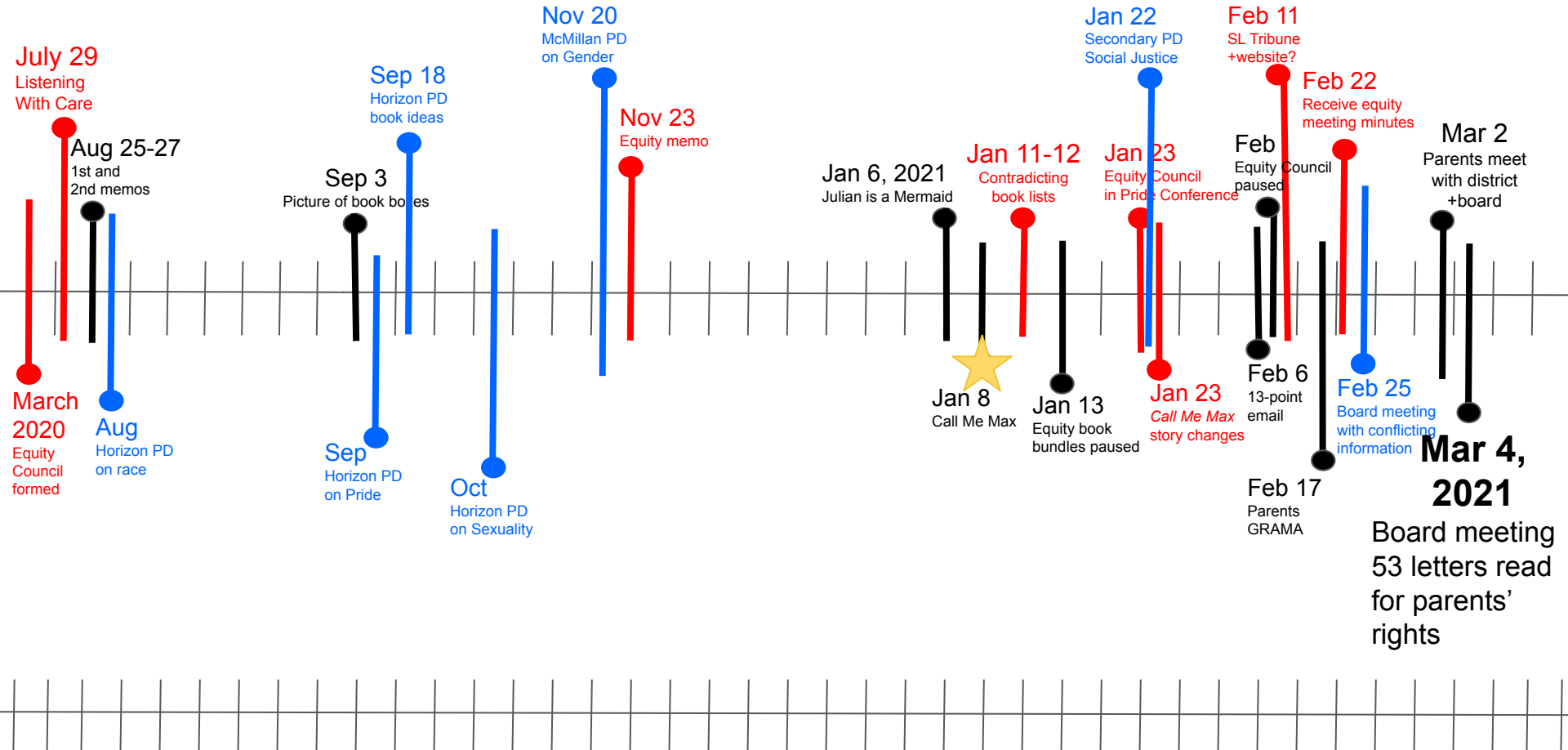
On Feb 25, 2021, at 4:24 PM, Darren Dean <ddean@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for voicing your concern and sharing your viewpoint. I have shared your viewpoint with both our Asst. Superintendent and Superintendent to ensure that we are hearing the concerns of our patrons.

Sincerely,

Darren Dean
Director of Personnel & Student Services
Title IX Coordinator
Murray City School District
Office: 801-264-7466



**Parents submit GRAMA request for emails
District charges \$1,520**

March 9, 2021

On March 9, parents requested the following from MCSD (through a GRAMA request):

All emails to and from each (listed below) account, using keywords/phrases: "Julian is a Mermaid", "Call Me Max", "It Feels Good to be Yourself", "transgender", "Equity book bundles", "book bundles", "Equity book boxes", "book boxes", "Max", "Julian", (in reference to the books), including deleted emails. Jennifer Covington, Darren Dean, Missy Hamilton, Cara Cerise, Robin Williams, Whitney Anderson, Vanessa Jobe, Sarah Paul, Miriam Luna

(Date range: June 1, 2020 - Mar 31, 2021)

On March 9, parents heard back from MCSD open records officer:

I have heard back from everyone involved in this request (including the additional request for the superintendent's emails). I asked them to give me an estimate as to how many hours it would require them to pull, review, and redact any sensitive/protected information. Collectively, the total is 76 hours and at the assigned rate of \$20 per hour that comes to \$1520.00.

If you would like to proceed, call AnnMarie Nielson at 801-264-7400 and make payment with her. I will instruct her to let me know when that payment has been made and that will begin the process. As of today, since you made the request in the last 24 hours I don't foresee a delay beyond the March 16 due date. However, if in daily coordination of this I see that potentially happening I will let you know of a required extension and provide that date.

Let me know if you have any questions.

On March 10, parents paid \$1520 to Murray City School District. Message from MCSD open records officer:

I was informed you submitted payment. So we will begin that process. I am going to bump the date back to March 23 for delivery of the content, however. I know it specifies on the request March 16 but that might be pushing it. So we'll exercise the allowance for 10 business days (from the request date). If it looks like it's taking longer and we need more time I will reach out to you with that heads up and also an estimate on a new delivery date. Let me know if you have any questions.

Email Totals

	Transgender	It Feels Good...	Book Bundles	Book Boxes	Max	Julian	Totals
Miriam Luna	8	0	9	3	123	8	151
Cara Cerise	76	1	44	13	57	5	196
Sarah Paul	60	0	23	5	218	61	367
Robin Williams	37	0	41	27	269	28	402
Darren Dean	165	0	93	10	133	32	433
Whitney Anderson	55	0	140	45	163	94	497
Missy Hamilton	43	0	82	47	325	37	534
Vanessa Jobe	93	6	261	46	93	60	559
Jennifer Covington	213	0	300	61	553	102	1229
Totals	750	7	993	257	1934	427	4368

Printed Page Totals

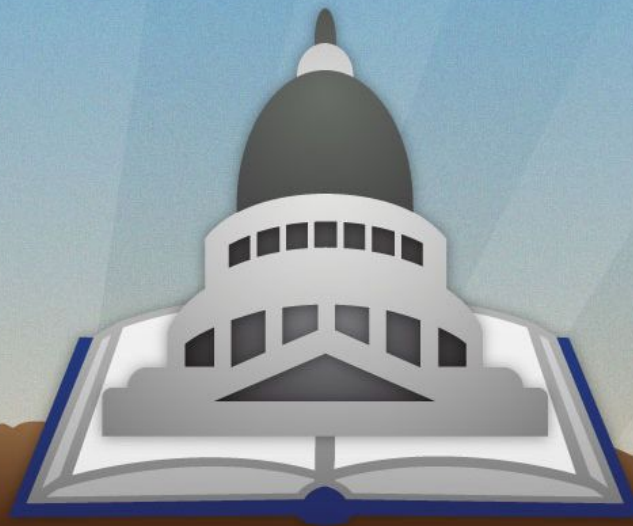
	Transgender	It Feels Good...	Book Bundles	Book Boxes	Max	Julian	Totals
Miriam Luna	16	0	9	3	198	13	239
Cara Cerise	51	1	109	51	189	25	426
Vanessa Jobe	141	6	333	51	138	101	770
Whitney Anderson	79	0	141	152	255	154	781
Darren Dean	306	0	163	13	272	90	844
Robin Williams	97	0	86	39	722	70	1014
Sarah Paul	170	0	163	7	564	163	1067
Missy Hamilton	136	0	180	164	927	112	1519
Jennifer Covington	425	0	546	190	2270	546	3977
Totals	1421	7	1730	670	5535	1274	10637

Home

Open Records Portal

OpenRecords

The Open Records Portal is a central site from which a user can submit a records request (GRAMA request) to a governmental entity.



[Request Records](#)

March 9, 2021 - Parents submit GRAMA request for emails

March 10, 2021 - Receipt for \$1,520 email GRAMA request

MURRAY SCHOOL DISTRICT
5182 S COMMERCE DR
MURRAY UT 84107
(801) 264-7400
MID H8788290170963

Term ID: 3
Merchant ID: 8788290170963

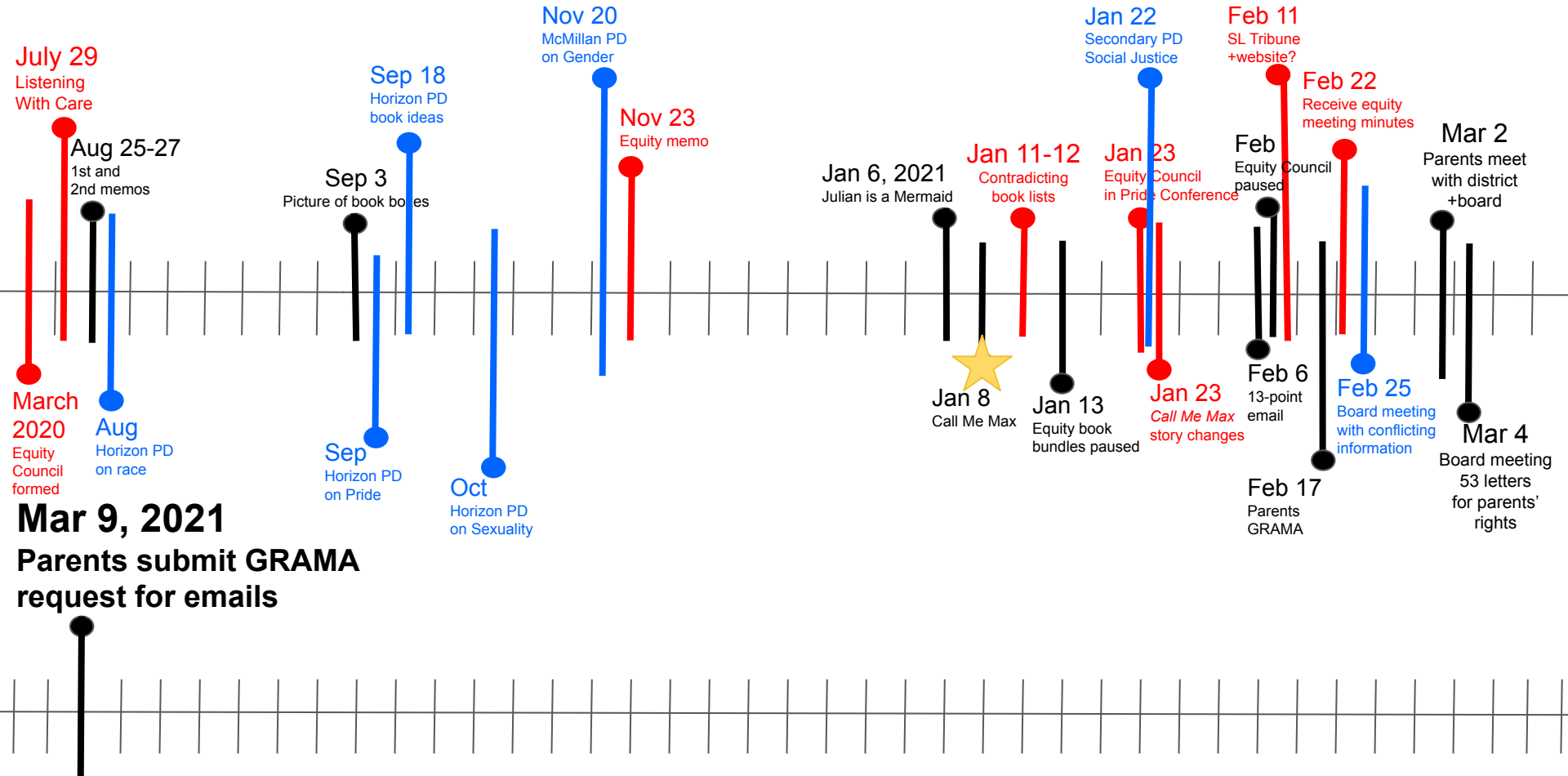
Phone Order Sale

XXXXXXXXXX [REDACTED] Exp: XX/XX
[REDACTED] Entry Method: Keved CNP

Total: \$ 1,520.00

03/10/21 13:47:10
Inv#: 000003 Appr Code: 093980
Apprvd: Online Batch#: 000021
AVS Code: Z
CVV2 Code: M
BRIC #: 07AXHB3R4KDBBLE6A7F

CARDHOLDER COPY
RETAIN THIS COPY FOR STATEMENT
VERIFICATION



District says they can't fulfill the GRAMA request

March 19, 2021



Superintendent Jennifer Covington
Assistant Superintendent Scott Bushnell
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107
(801) 264-7400
www.murrayschools.org

Regarding your GRAMA requests submitted March 8-9, requesting all emails for nine personnel and eight keywords/phrases, as promised I am giving you an update of the project and some unforeseen issues.

First, let me outline the process to complete this project, some of this I explained over the phone but this is a more detailed review and will be helpful to understanding some challenges we have encountered. Also you will note the number of hours spent on each step to this point (steps 1-7).

- Step 1: MCSD PIO (3 Hours): Coordinating and managing the project with all parties. This includes developing an efficient process, technical details, gathering initial estimates, fielding questions with the requester, and mapping out the assignments and final delivery.
- Step 2: MCSD IT Staff (5 Hours): Perform an electronic email database search for all emails described in the GRAMA request containing keywords/phrases identified for nine individuals, over a span of June 1, 2020 to March 8, 2021.
- Step 3: MCSD IT Staff (2 Hours): All emails collected have to be collated by individual and keyword search, then placed in a series of cloud files.

- Step 4: MCSD PIO (2 Hours): Each collection of emails have to be downloaded from that cloud source (into a single Zip file) that is then extracted into a similar file system that is local on a computer.
- Step 5: MCSD PIO (2 Hours): Each collection of emails has to be joined together into one master file per individual and per keyword so that printing is more efficient (in groups instead of individually).
- Step 6: MCSD PIO (20 Hours): From there, each file has to be printed and bundled by individual and keywords into hard copies that are bound together for each person performing the redaction process.
- Step 7: MCSD PIO (1 Hour): Had to research and locate appropriate redaction pens. Preliminary tests using standard and even maximized Sharpies failed to redact properly. However we did locate a special pen used for redaction that does redact content and ordered a bunch of them online. Hopefully one pen per person will be sufficient but that remains to be seen.
- Step 8: MCSD Redactors (Est TBD): Next, each individual (again nine total people) will have to go through each email and redact private information (ie student names, parent names, contact information). This is per FERPA, GRAMA, and even HIPPA laws.
- Step 9: MCSD Additional Redactors (Est TBD): To ensure we have properly redacted all that information, we believe it's necessary for a second set of eyes (someone



Superintendent Jennifer Covington
Assistant Superintendent Scott Bushnell
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107
(801) 264-7400
www.murrayschools.org

independent at the District) to review the redactions and make additional ones as necessary.

- Step 10: MCSD PIO (EST TBD): Finally, we need to photocopy all emails to create a record that we keep of the fully redacted request. Once this is done we can hand over the material to the requester.

With that said, here are four critical problems we have encountered so far, not including the redacting pen issue that we believe we have solved.

1. We misapplied the GRAMA laws for establishing a fee per hour. For smaller requests our traditional fee schedule of \$20/hour is at a loss to us but represents a very simple and good-natured attempt to keep these costs minimal for those requesting information that generally only requires 5-30 minutes to complete and no material cost. However, after pulling all the content you requested, the extensive nature of it and individuals necessary to complete it, point to a grossly inadequate initial estimate, that if fulfilled would be a serious dereliction of our fiduciary accountability of public funding.
2. Similarly, our estimate on the amount of time this request would take to fill (76 hours) has also proven inaccurate. Steps 1-7 thus far have required 35 hours to complete and we had estimated only 7 to this point. The biggest factor in this is attributed to new information regarding the immense nature of the request.

Let me explain as fully and simply as I can so you understand the complexities. Our initial estimate did not include a page count - we had each individual you requested information for provide us with their best guess estimate. In the end, there are four key unforeseen factors.

- a. First, their estimates were a recollection of approximately eight months worth of email activity. It would be difficult for anyone to accurately assess that for 7-8 different keywords/phrases. We even heard expressions of that concern from one or two of them when we asked them to provide us with that estimate.
- b. Next, they had not factored that solicitations and other irrelevant information would be included in the findings of this search. This is understandable in that they are aware of the nature of what it is you are looking for - information related to the incident that took place at Horizon and subsequent material and topics you feel are inappropriate for public education curriculum - but not fully cognizant of the potential large volume of other email they get that might be included in such a search. Here are some examples of irrelevant information that consumes a large percentage of this search:
 - i. Example 1: Solicitations from all kinds of business. One of the common ones was book sellers, soliciting books to teachers. It was noted that the terms "book" and "boxes" flagged quite a number of these solicitors.



Superintendent Jennifer Covington
Assistant Superintendent Scott Bushnell
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107
(801) 264-7400
www.murrayschools.org

- ii. Example 2: One of the teachers you requested information from indicated they have two students named “Max” in their classroom this year. Since “Max” is one of your requested keywords, this compilation includes all emails that mention one of these students and is completely irrelevant to the intentions of your request. This also points very clearly at the importance of our redaction process.
 - iii. Example 3: There is a very large duplication factor in your request. If person A on your requested email list sends an email to persons B and C, all three of them now have a duplicate record that gets included in this search, yet two of them would be irrelevant to you because you only need one copy of that email. I’m sure you can see the compounding nature and factor of your request that involves nine people who are all intertwined and yet integral to your request.
- c. Third, we did not know the actual number of emails (4,368) until we reached step #2. Further we did not get a sense for the actual page count (10,637 pages) until we reached step 5, and didn’t fully tally it up until we had already started printing.

- d. Lastly we did not ascertain or predict that a large percentage of these files were completely irrelevant to your interests until we were well into our printing. One thought that crossed my mind as I was printing these documents was to try and pull the irrelevant content. But two factors stopped from that.
- i. First that you repeatedly told me you did not trust the District and were concerned we would not be fully transparent - that we would, in effect, hide or pull files from this search we felt were incriminating. As I told you on the phone, we feel we have publicly and repeatedly disclosed and regretted all missteps and subsequent communication problems following the Horizon Elementary School incident. We have taken actions to correct or prevent any future occurrence of this type. Unfortunately, this has not satisfied your doubts. You have raised questions over concerted or conspiratorial efforts by District officials to hide, lie, and develop or introduce curriculum content that is against Utah State Code - and you said you already have evidence you need to prove that. My decision to continue to include irrelevant material is to hopefully earn back some measure of trust with you and those you collaborate with, demonstrating this was a good faith attempt to show this was everything you asked for (and more).
 - ii. Second, as I have said over and over, the sheer volume of this request and what it yielded would have also substantially driven up the cost for my time as I would have had to scrutinize all 10,637 pages printed before or after the redaction process. I am certain you agree this is not practical or a good use of public resources.



Superintendent Jennifer Covington
Assistant Superintendent Scott Bushnell
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107
(801) 264-7400
www.murrayschools.org

3. Next, we incorrectly assumed we could complete the redaction process using a standard Sharpie. However, in our tests this instrument failed miserably. Subsequent tests using other Sharpies also failed. Finally, we did locate a special pen used specifically for redactions and have found that this issue is resolved, albeit more expensively and using up some time for them to be shipped here.
4. Lastly, we had mistakenly not factored material costs for this project. Initially it was thought that this could all be done electronically. However, after we had provided the estimate and began seeing the actual totals we surmised that the redaction process could not be completed electronically. This meant that our material costs would go up substantially. This includes copier use, paper, clips/bands, and special pens.

As mentioned above, we have completed steps 1-7 and it is very apparent that the balance of the steps will far exceed our estimate of 76 hours. Moreover, we feel the fee structure and material costs must be addressed before we move into the most expensive part of this project. It's important that we are appropriately accountable in our time and resources as they are public and we do have important work we have been charged with day to day.

Citizens have the right to demand transparency, but they also demand fiscal responsibility among public institutions. Further, resources are particularly valuable in public education and must be guarded and managed carefully. Parents demand that we meet certain standards in the discharge of our duties of educating their children. Clearly these two areas, transparency and fiscal responsibility, can and must coexist under current state code and so we will always follow the law and do what is right as that is in the best interest of our students, parents, and tax-paying citizens.

Further, you indicated the importance of individuals not pulling content out of these stacks they find personally problematic. So we don't feel that would add to your trust if we were to exercise our judgement to exclude anything we deem irrelevant. Nor would it likely change the overall time and expense involved anyway.

Additionally, the redaction process is extremely sensitive and critical to privacy laws. We can't simply hand these files over to you without performing that due diligence. That means every single page has to be scanned by human eyes to redact any potential violations of FERPA or GRAMA.

As you can see this project is fraught with challenges. We trust that you are sincere in wanting some of this information and have weighed the merits of the effort and the expense versus your desired outcome. With this new information we ask that you weigh it again and propose an option you feel best represents that balance.



Superintendent Jennifer Covington
Assistant Superintendent Scott Bushnell
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107
(801) 264-7400
www.murrayschools.org

So where do we go from here? Unless you have an alternative, we ask you to consider three options:

- Option A: You can continue to have us perform the service as outlined in your request. However, we will require up front payment based on a revised estimate that is more realistic to the actual costs.
- Option B: You can submit a new GRAMA request that is different (presumably much more narrow and smaller). We would be happy to include our IT department to help you define some parameters that will yield more narrow results and be less expensive. And we would apply your paid fee to a new estimate.
- Option C: You can cancel your GRAMA request and we would be willing to refund your \$1520 installment.

We recognize this is not what you may have hoped for. However, we have to take seriously the drain on public resources this request has ultimately become, balancing that with a transparency solution that is equitable. We look forward to your decision.

To show you we have made a good faith effort to this point, I am providing you with a picture of the printed documents, broken out by person.



Doug Perry
Public Information Officer

GRAMA request for emails
District increases charge to \$9,664

March 22, 2021

On Monday, March 22, parents replied to the MCSD open records officer:

Thanks for the info about the emails. What is the estimate of the new cost to continue with the original grama request?

On March 22, the MCSD open records officer replied:

As per our previous letter to you on March 19, and your response March 22, we are providing a revised estimate on your March 8/9 GRAMA requests. As a refresher, both of them have to do with emails you would like to have copies of for nine individuals.

We are adjusting the rate from \$20 per hour to \$35 to reflect more accurately this unique request and in accordance with Utah Code 63G-2-203. We are also adjusting the estimated total hours of 76 to 258 as new information about this request has emerged (as outlined in the March 19 letter).

Additionally, there are significant material costs associated with your request. Specifically, these are printing and paper costs (\$534) and special redaction pens, clips and bands (\$100).

So the total cost we would require upfront payment for would be \$9,030 for the time and \$634 for materials, totaling **\$9,664**. Taking out the \$1,520 already paid, the balance would be \$8,144.

As mentioned in the letter Friday, we are prepared to proceed with the balance of the steps. However, given the inordinate size of the project, we will also require an extension of time to complete it. From the date of payment, we will need 20 business days to complete it.

Should you decide to change your GRAMA request, please send me your new search parameters and I will work with our IT Department to determine what that revised estimate would be. Keep in mind, the redaction process will still be the lion's share of this request as it is tedious.

Lastly, of course, you do still have the option of canceling the request.

March 22, 2021 -
New total of \$9,664

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: "openrecordsportal@utah.gov" <openrecordsportal@utah.gov>

To: [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021, 11:26:23 AM MDT

Subject: Revised Estimate

April, as per our previous letter to you on March 19, and your response March 22, we are providing a revised estimate on your March 8/9 GRAMA requests. As a refresher, both of them have to do with emails you would like to have copies of for nine individuals.

We are adjusting the rate from \$20 per hour to \$35 to reflect more accurately this unique request and in accordance with Utah Code 63G-2-203. We are also adjusting the estimated total hours of 76 to 258 as new information about this request has emerged (as outlined in the March 19 letter).

Additionally, there are significant material costs associated with your request. Specifically, these are printing and paper costs (\$534) and special redaction pens, clips and bands (\$100).

So the total cost we would require **upfront payment for** would be \$9,030 for the time and \$634 for materials, **totaling \$9,664**. Taking out the \$1,520 already paid, the balance would be \$8,144.

As mentioned in the letter Friday, we are prepared to proceed with the balance of the steps. However, given the inordinate size of the project, we will also require an extension of time to complete it. From the date of payment, we will need 20 business days to complete

On Tue, Mar 23, 2021 at 4:24 PM Doug Perry <dperry@murrayschools.org> wrote:
Hi Cara,

I gave them the revised estimate yesterday. The total bill is close to \$10K so I am speculating they may not find that acceptable and trying to regroup as to a more narrow search. It's also possible they have some financial backing from outside their group and need time to access that funding.

I really tried hard to explain to them that almost 3/4 of what they requested is completely irrelevant information (advertisements, duplicates, etc.). So I can't see them really wanting all of that stuff. My hunch is they will come back with a more narrow/realistic request. But we'll see.

Also, I told them that we will need 20 business days to complete it as is (which is outside the normal response time required of 10 business days). I wouldn't change any Spring Break plans you have as we should have time well beyond that. Even if they file a new or revised request that is more narrow, we'll have to give them a new estimate on timelines and cost so that kinda resets everything.

Hope that helps!

On Tue, Mar 23, 2021 at 4:08 PM Cara Cerise <ccerise@murrayschools.org> wrote:
Hi Doug,

Any news on the status of all this? I'm a bit worried about the timing with Spring Break, etc.

Thanks,

Cara

April agrees to modify the current request as follows:

Email for these individuals and dates:

1. Vanessa Jobe – June 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021
2. Whitney Anderson – June 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021
3. Sarah Paul – August 17, 2020 to March 31, 2021
4. Daren Dean – August 17, 2020 to March 31, 2021
5. Missy Hamilton – August 17, 2020 to March 31, 2021
6. Jennifer Covington – Dec. 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021
7. Cara Cerise – August 17, 2020 to March 31, 2021

Search terms to include:

1. “Julian is a Mermaid”
2. “Call me Max”
3. “It Feels Good to be Yourself”
4. “transgender”
5. “Equity book bundles”
6. “Equity book boxes”
7. “book boxes”
8. “book bundles”

Murray School District will provide a cost estimate which includes payment for time and copies. April (parents) can pay based on the actual time spent and the actual number of copies.

Murray School District will provide a second proposal, which will be a set amount for which they will agree to provide the records.

Murray School District agrees to provide these responses within one week.

April agrees that in processing the request, the school district should remove duplicate records.

April 7, 2021 - Mediation brings down the price from \$9,664 to \$2900

April 16, 2021 - Parents pay the additional balance of \$1380

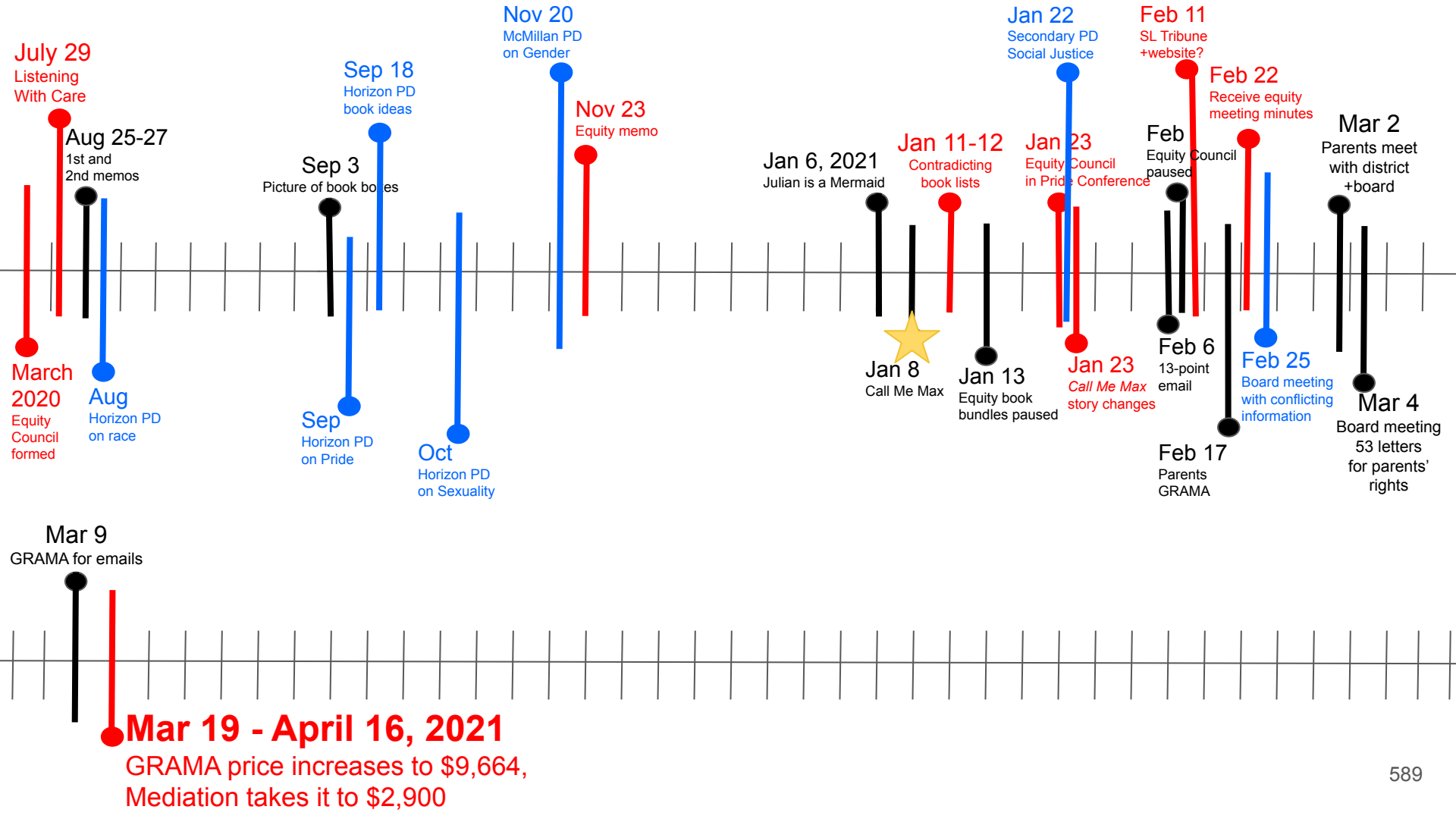
MURRAY SCHOOL DISTRICT
5182 S COMMERCE DR
MURRAY UT 84187
(801) 264-7488
MID #8788290178963

Term ID: 3
Merchant ID: 8788290178963

Phone Order Sale

XXXXXXXXXXXX [REDACTED] Exp: XX/XX
[REDACTED] Entry Method: Keyed CMP
Total: \$ 1,380.00
04/16/21 14:57:58
Inv#: 000002 Appr Code: 363980
Apprvd: OnLine Batch#: 000034
AVS Code: Z
CVV2 Code: M
BRIC #: 06UXKAD5BQYPVJHJLV

CARDHOLDER COPY
RETAIN THIS COPY FOR STATEMENT
VERIFICATION



Parents receive GRAMA request for emails
Divide and Conquer

May 6, 2021

Folders

Name ↑

 Cara Cerise

 Darren Dean

 Jennifer Covington

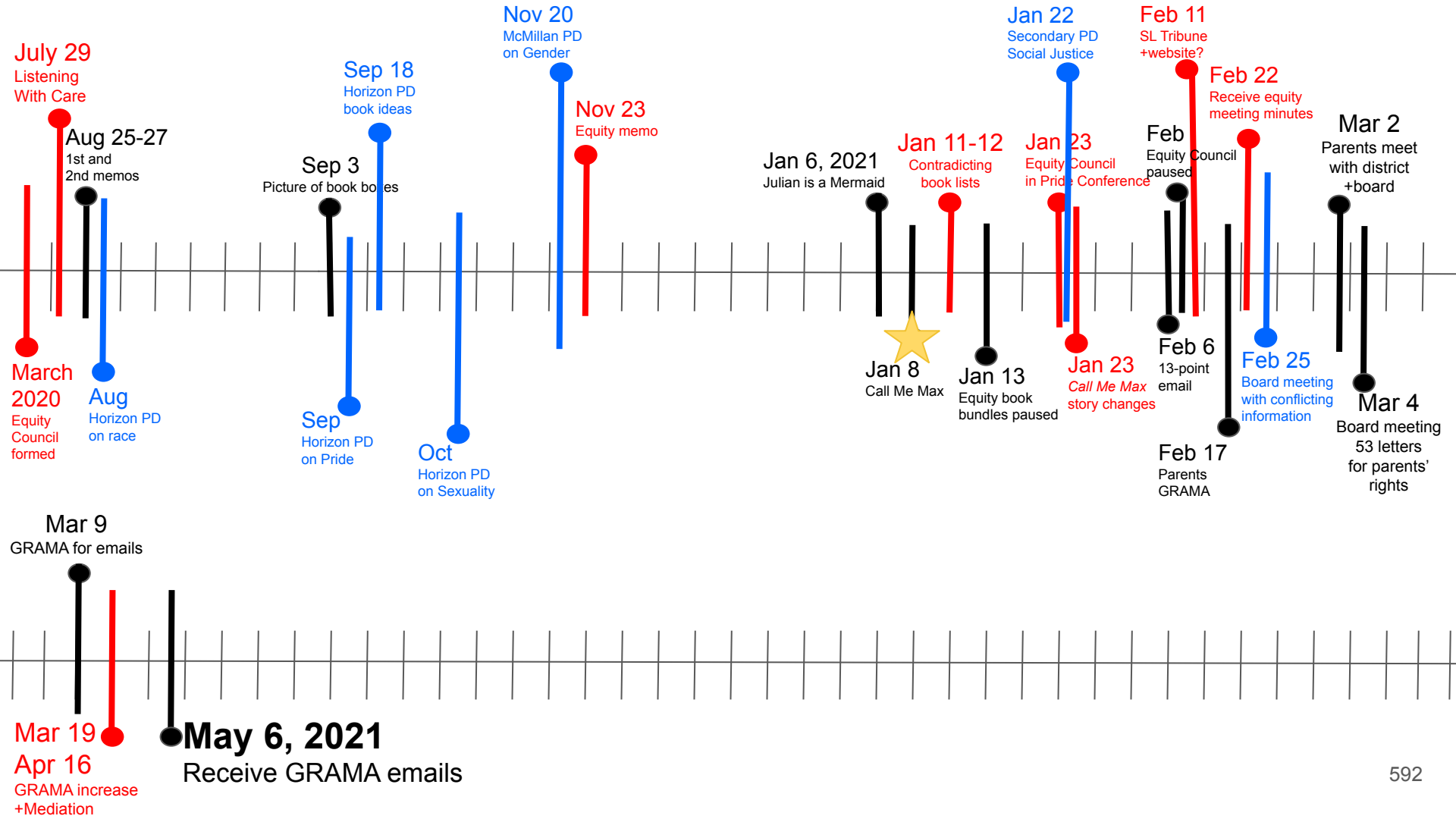
 Missy Hamilton

 Sarah Paul

 Vanessa Jobe

 Whitney Anderson

May 6, 2021 - Receive GRAMA emails



**All employees
redacted their own
emails.**

Date : 12/5/2020 12:06:06 PM

From : "Cara Cerise"

To : "Darren Dean", [REDACTED]

Subject : LGBTQ+ PD trainers

Attachment : Safe at School Description.pdf;

Hi Darren,

Here are the three presenters I know that offer fantastic trainings on LGBTQ+ cultural competency and suicide prevention for educators:

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

The details of the workshops she offers are attached to this email.

[REDACTED] whom you have already met from the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] who recently presented at McMillian. He is an administrator in the Salt Lake City School district and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is also currently a doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership and Policy program at the University of Utah and doing part of his doctoral research on the impacts of professional learning on educators' ability to enact LGBTQ-inclusive practices and curricula? [REDACTED]

Let me know if there is anything else I can do to facilitate contact with these presenters. I have worked professionally with all of them and they are excellent!

Thanks!

Cara



FRIENDS, ALLIES, AND MENTORS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY



Amanda Darrow (she/her/hers): Amanda holds a master's degree in Education and a bachelor's degree in Clinical and Counseling Psychology, both from Westminster College in Salt Lake City, Utah. She is passionate about inclusion and social justice. Amanda began her advocacy with her research on, "The Effects of a Heteronormative Classroom Environment on LGBTQ+ Students." Before the Utah Pride Center, Amanda worked in higher and elementary education. Amanda works at the Utah Pride Center as the Director of Youth, Family, and Education. She focuses on making homes more accepting and welcoming for our youth and families, schools and community spaces more inclusive for all, and educating the current and future generations about our incredible LGBTQIA+ community.



FRIENDS, ALLIES, AND MENTORS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY



Kody Colvin (he/him/his): Kody Colvin started his career as an elementary educator before entering school administration. In addition to his work responsibilities, Kody co-founded a group called Friends, Allies, and Mentors (F.A.M.) of the LGBTQ Community in 2016. The goal of F.A.M. is to provide professional learning experiences for educators to better support their LGBTQ stakeholders in school. In 2017, SLCS D, in partnership with F.A.M., created a task force to develop and implement policies and procedures that would better support our LGBTQ stakeholders. Kody is a doctoral student at the University of Utah in the Educational leadership & Policy program.

Date : 1/16/2021 6:41:39 AM

From :

To : vjobe@murrayschools.org,

Subject : Invitation: LGBTQ Professional Learning - Session 2 @ Sat Jan 16, 2021 9am - 12pm (MST) (vjobe@murrayschools.org)

Attachment : invite.ics;

You have been invited to the following event.

LGBTQ Professional Learning - Session 2

When Sat Jan 16, 2021 9am – 12pm Mountain Time - Denver

[more details »](#)

Where

Calendar vjobe@murrayschools.org

Who

In this session, we will examine our local and state policies re LGBTQ affirming practices. We will start a deeper exploration of gender and gender identity in K-20 spaces. The last hour, [redacted] will facilitate learning specific to transgender (genderqueer) youth.

Join Zoom Meeting

Ok, here are a few documents – let me know if you need more.

Welcoming Schools – this was published in 2016 before Utah got rid of the “no promo homo” policy, so just know this document is really detailed for federal level laws but there might be a few state specific polices which have change. https://assets2.hrc.org/welcoming-schools/documents/WS_Laws_Policies_Safe_Welcoming_Schools.pdf

GLSEN:

<https://www.glsen.org/policy-maps>

Murray School District Policies:

Employee Code of Conduct:

4. g) A staff member shall not discriminate against a student on the basis of sex, religion, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other prohibited class.

Webster Dictionary defines discrimination as:

Definition of *discrimination*

1a: prejudiced or prejudicial outlook, action, or treatment racial *discrimination*

b: the act, practice, or an instance of discriminating categorically rather than individually

2: the quality or power of finely distinguishing the film viewed by those with *discrimination*

3a: the act of making or perceiving a difference : the act of discriminating a bloodhound's scent *discrimination*

psychology : the process by which two stimuli differing in some aspect are responded to differently

I might consider pointing out (and I'm going to start using the same discourse) that the intentional exclusion of LGBTQ affirming literature is "prejudicial" towards our queer students, which could be deemed as discrimination. Although this is murky in state/federal policy, someone could (easily) challenge this in the future – which I hope they do.

HB 393: Suicide Prevention Amendment requires that all 7-12 students should receive training and support to address... C. that student are at a "increased risk of suicide among youth who are not accepted by family for any reason, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning youth."

I can send more, so let me know if this is/is not what you are looking for.

In solidarity,

A series of five thick, black horizontal bars redacting the signature and name of the sender.

Date : 11/16/2020 8:07:25 AM

From : "Vanessa Lebel"

To : [REDACTED]

Subject : Re: LGBTQ Affirming Policies

[REDACTED] this is so helpful. Do you have links to state code or any state board stuff around equity work?

I found this.... I am looking for more direct language.

<https://www.ksl.com/article/50024398/state-school-board-urged-to-engage-in-anti-racist-practices-so-students-feel-safe-and-welcome-at-school>

On Sun, Nov 15, 2020 at 7:15 PM [REDACTED] wrote:

Ok, here are a few documents – let me know if you need more.



FRIENDS, ALLIES, AND MENTORS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY



Kody Colvin (he/him/his): Kody Colvin started his career as an elementary educator before entering school administration. In addition to his work responsibilities, Kody co-founded a group called Friends, Allies, and Mentors (F.A.M.) of the LGBTQ Community in 2016. The goal of F.A.M. is to provide professional learning experiences for educators to better support their LGBTQ stakeholders in school. In 2017, SLCS D, in partnership with F.A.M., created a task force to develop and implement policies and procedures that would better support our LGBTQ stakeholders. Kody is a doctoral student at the University of Utah in the Educational leadership & Policy program.

Parents finally access “Additional Resources” list

Shared as attachment: Other Google Classroom Equity Book Bundles

May 14, 2021

These lists contained *Julian is a Mermaid*, *Enemy Pie*, and several other books used in tandem with the Equity Book Bundles Program but which were not found on the original list shared with parents.

Date : 11/23/2020 4:11:39 PM
From : "Vanessa Jobe"
To : "Tiana Bagley"
Subject : Other Google Classroom Equity Book Bundles :)

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1GaKtWNxu2jVbmcdLqdhphgyX5AgS0TV2?usp=sharing>

I think this should work. Let me know if you can access this. The equity leadership team (Cara) worked with Graves to locate more of these lessons.

Cheers, Thank you for all you do Tiana!
Vanessa

—

Vanessa Jobe, Ed.D.
Horizon Elementary Assistant Principal
(she/her/ hers)
801.264.7420



To: [REDACTED]

April Despain,

The response, "Main Request," has been approved, with this message from the records officer:

April, here are the results of your GRAMA request from May 14, 2021. As this required little time to complete there will be no charge for it.

Please note, most of what you are requesting and we are providing are to be viewed as teacher resources and not teacher implementations. That's an important distinction because one cannot assume that because teachers share ideas and content that 100% of that shared content becomes part of lessons or lesson materials - teachers often don't even have time to review everything offered to them as resources, let alone implement it.

Secondly, most of these materials we are providing should also be viewed as independent resources - not part or connected to the equity book bundle program.

To characterize all or large swaths of this content as an implementation or part of the equity book bundle program would not be accurate. As with most professions, teachers enjoy sharing all kinds of content to improve their ability to educate and connect with all students.

See responses below:

1. Access to the shared drive in 11/23/2020 email from Vanessa Jobe to Tiana Bagley. Subject: Other Google Classroom Equity book bundles. We want to see the shared drive and other/more equity book bundles lessons referenced in this email.

Here's a link to a folder with these items:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wQA7CCICOWlgaUA_mhRgx3fNqVI3gZ_L?usp=sharing

2. Attachment: "inclusivebookproject.docx" in 10/13/2020 email from
Cara Corino to Vanessa Jobe

**Were these used
as part of the Equity
Book Bundles
program?**

Date : 11/23/2020 4:11:39 PM

From : "Vanessa Jobe"

To : "Tiana Bagley"

Subject : Other Google Classroom Equity Book Bundles :)

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1CaKtWNxu2jvbmcdLqdhphgyX5AgS0TV2?usp=sharing>

I think this should work. Let me know if you can access this. The equity leadership team (Cara) worked with Graves to locate more of these lessons.

Cheers, Thank you for all you do Tiana!

Vanessa

—

Vanessa Jobe, Ed.D.

Horizon Elementary Assistant Principal

(she/her/ hers)

801.264.7420

On Aug 28, 2020, at 11:22 AM, Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Hi!

I am wondering how much it would cost to get:

4 of "It Feels Good to Be Yourself" Theresa Thorn

4 Something happened in our Town

4 Separate is never equal :)

Thanks [REDACTED]

Both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] say hi and are thinking of you

--

Vanessa Jobe, Ed.D.

Horizon Elementary Assistant Principal

(she/her/ hers)

801.264.7420

Date : 9/16/2020 1:59:44 PM

From : [REDACTED]

To : "Vanessa Jobe"

Subject : Re: Book Question

I can order 4 of them this afternoon. Your price would be \$13.49 each, no tax. The total would be \$53.96.

Just let me know if that works for you, and I will get them on their way!!

Thanks again,

Nathan

On Sep 16, 2020, at 1:49 PM, Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

I just need the "It Feels Good to Be Yourself" Theresa Thorn :) And 4 if possible! No worries at [REDACTED]

Vanessa

January

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Social Studies will continue the study of Native Americans.		Science will be the study of plants and animals in different environments.		1 Happy New Year!
4 Multiplication Review	5 Math: Understand area as an attribute of plane figures.	6 Math: Model tiling with cm and inch unit squares. Equity: Julian is a Mermaid	7 Math: Relate side lengths with the number of tiles on a side.	8 Math: Form rectangles by tiling with unit squares to make arrays.
11 Math: Draw rows and columns to determine the area of incomplete array. ELA: Imaginative Writing, Adjectives Spirit Night-Papa Murphy's	12 Math: Interpret area models to form rectangular arrays. ELA: Imaginative Writing, Adjectives	13 End of Term 2 Spirit Day-Backwards Day Math: find the area of rectangle by multiplying side lengths. ELA: Imaginative Writing, Adjectives Equity: Enemy Pie	14 No School Teacher Work Day	15 No School Teacher Work Day
18 No School Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day 	19 Start of Term 3 Math: Analyze different rectangles. ELA: Author's Point of View, Adverbs	20 Math: Mid Module Assessment. ELA: Author's Point of View, Adverbs Equity: What Was the March on Washington? Class Spelling Bee	21 Math: Apply the distributive property as a strategy to find the total area. ELA: Author's Point of View, Adverbs	22 Early day Math: Find areas of rectangles using the associative property. ELA: Author's Point of View, Adverbs
25 Math: Solve word problems involving area. ELA: Subject Verb Agreement	26 Math: Find areas by decomposing into rectangles. ELA: Subject Verb Agreement	27 Math: Find areas by decomposing into rectangles. Equity: What Was the March on Washington?	28 Math: Module 4 Review ELA: Subject Verb Agreement	29 Math: End Module assessment. ELA: Subject Verb Agreement

Date : 2/10/2021 6:40:37 PM
From : "Jennifer Covington (Google Docs)"
To : wanderson@murrayschools.org
Subject : Dear Horizon 3rd ... - Hi Whitney. I think there is an email...

Jennifer Covington added a comment to the following document

 Dear Horizon 3rd Grade Parents/Guardians,

Equity Book Bundles do not include an additional resource list.



Jennifer Covington **New**

Hi Whitney. I think there is an email out there from Vanessa that said there is an additional resource list. I think Vanessa also mentioned something about this when we talked. I think it will be important to clarify that.

I am good with the rest of this. Well done.

Date : 1/19/2021 9:26:37 PM
From : "Vanessa Jobe"
To : "Michelle Christie"
Cc : "Whitney Anderson"
Subject : Re: Book bundles

Perfect. I took those and put them with the additional resources list. :) Thank you Michelle. Thank you also for always sharing in book club. You are great to work with and your ideas/ sharing make us better.

On Tue, Jan 19, 2021 at 8:13 PM Michelle Christie <mchristie@murrayschools.org> wrote:
Hi, Vanessa and Whitney,

I added three books to the Kindergarten list that I like to read to my class and lend themselves to age-appropriate discussions:

My Name is Yoon by Helen Recorvits is about a little Korean girl who moves to the United States.

It's Okay to Be Different is a light-hearted self-esteem builder by Todd Parr.

If You Plant a Seed is by Kadir Nelson who won the Coretta Scott King award for *Heart and Soul: The Story of America and African Americans*.

I don't know how to insert rows in the Google doc., so I just added the books under the last Kinder entry.

Thanks for all you're doing!
Michelle C

—
Vanessa Jobe, Ed.D.
Horizon Elementary Assistant Principal
(she/her/ hers)
801.264.7420


Date : 11/20/2020 9:45:18 AM

From : "Vanessa Jobe (via Google Slides)"

To : horizonteachers@murrayschools.org

Subject : Empathy & Black & Indigenous Library - Invitation to edit

vjobe@murrayschools.org has invited you to edit the following presentation:

 Empathy & Black & Indigenous Library



Here are some other book bundles that may support culturally appropriate thanksgiving lessons. I like the empathy page as well.

Open in Slides

On Friday, Nov 6 at 7:50 AM, Sarah Paul wrote:

Thanks for letting me know! Hope he feels better soon.

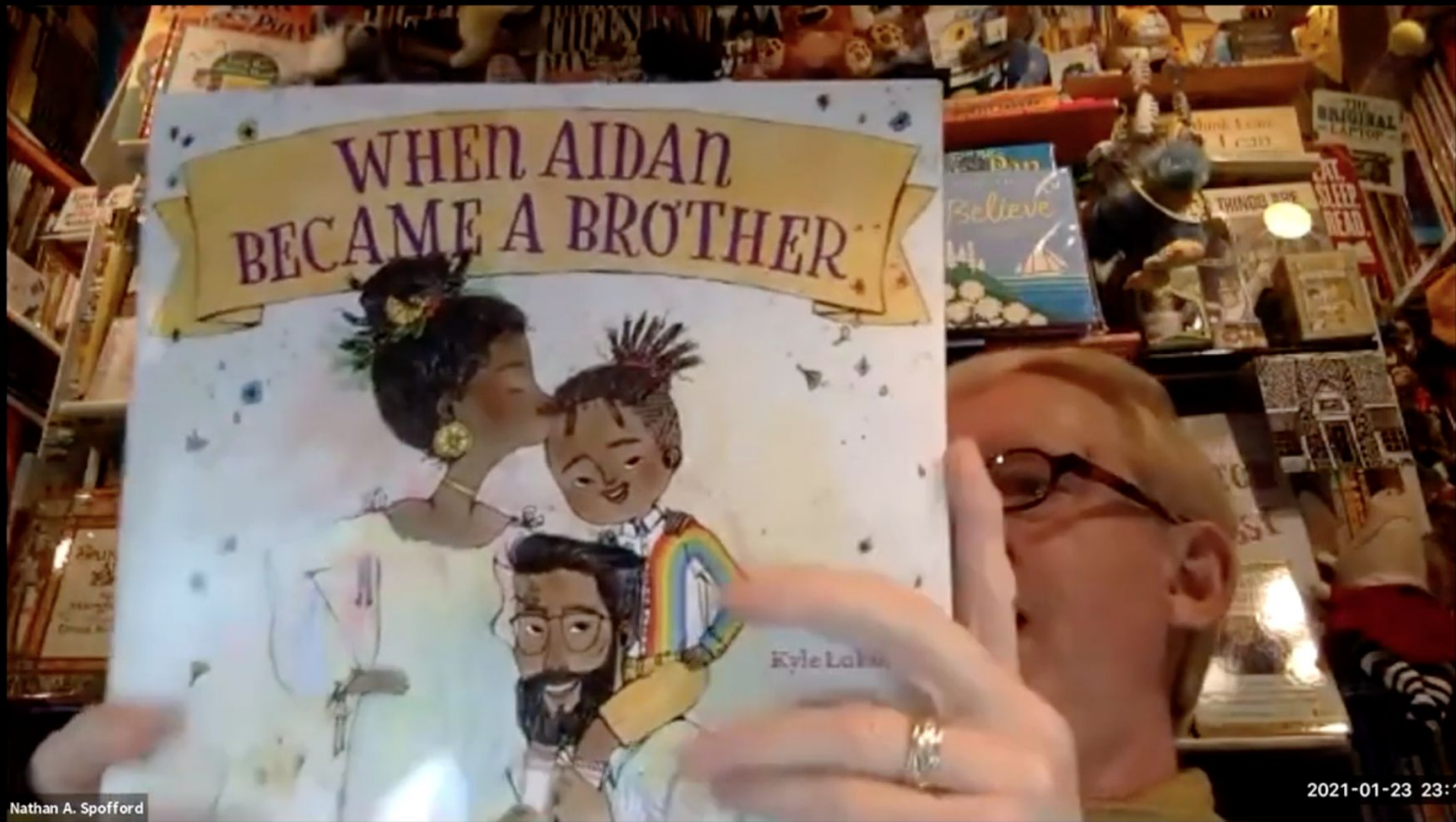
I meant to email yesterday. We've been working on character traits this week, and [REDACTED] is doing great! Yesterday we read the Native American version of Cinderella, The Rough-Face Girl, and we were talking about why the man called her beautiful when the whole book had told us how ugly she was. [REDACTED] raised his hand so proudly and shouted "she has a beautiful heart!" It was awesome that he was so engaged!

Another book found on the Additional Resources list.



Nathan A. Spofford

2021-01-23 23:07:56



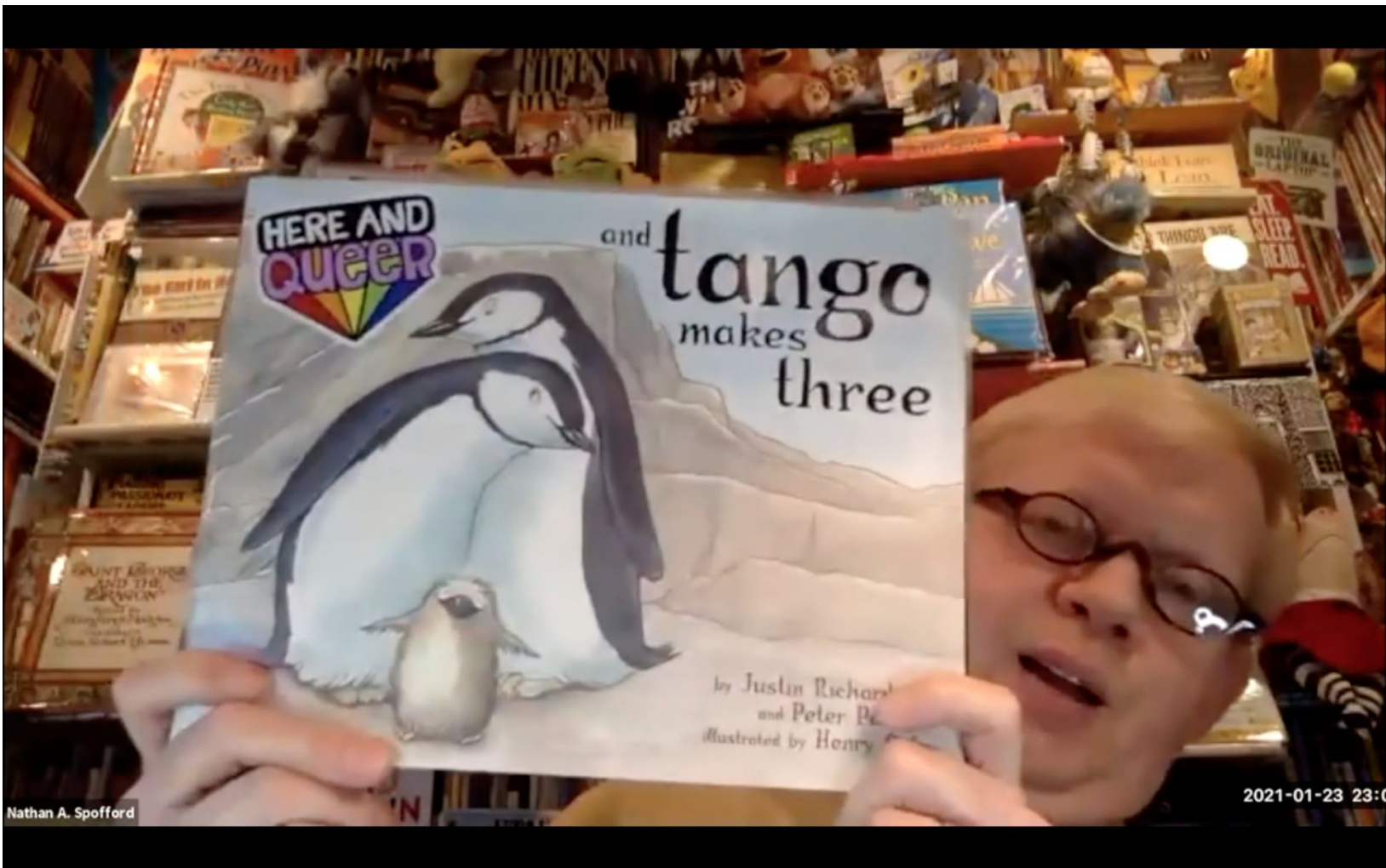
Nathan A. Spofford

2021-01-23 23:10:22

HO'ONANI HULA WARRIOR



Heather Gale
illustrated by
Mika Song



Nathan A. Spofford

2021-01-23 23:0

Additional Resources

Aka: “Other Equity Book Bundles”



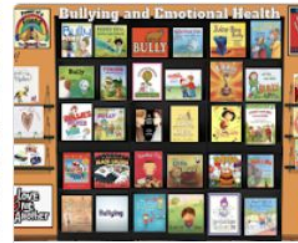
African American Library



Asian/Pacific Islander Libra...



Autism Library



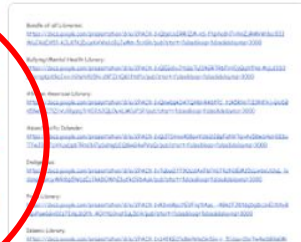
Bullying/Mental Health



Different Ability Awareness



Diversity in Children's Litera...



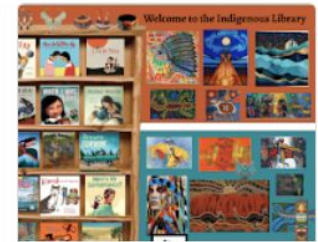
Diversity in Children's Litera...



Empathy Library



Figurative Language



Indigenous Library



Islamic Library



Kindness Library



Latinx/Spanish Library



Pride Library



Respect Library

This was the ONLY list ever openly shared with parents:





Asian / Pacific Islander Library - 28 books (From the “Additional Resources List,” released Nov 23, 2020, which parents were told did not exist.)

Indigenous Library - 30 books

(From the "Additional Resources List," released Nov 23, 2020, which parents were told did not exist.)





Bullying and Mental Health Library - 47 books (From the "Additional Resources List," released Nov 23, 2020, which parents were told did not exist.)



Pride Library - 23 books (From the “Additional Resources List,” released Nov 23, 2020, which parents were told did not exist.)

Islamic Library - 35 books (From the "Additional Resources List")





**Welcome to the
Latinx/Spanish
Picture Book
Library!**

Latino/Spanish Library - 34 books (From the “Additional Resources List,”)

Figurative Language Library - 22 books (From the "Additional Resources List,")

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

Left Column (Yellow background):

- The King Who Rained* by Fred Gwynne
- Brave Irene* by William Steig
- Crazy Fox: A Fable Story*
- Chocolate for Dinner* by Patricia Polacco

Middle Column (Purple background):

- My Best Friend is as Sharp as a Pencil*
- Anella Bedella's First Day of School*
- Munch! Munch!*
- My Hair is a Garden*
- Some Smug Slug*
- GILBERTO AND THE WIND*

Right Column (Red background):

- YOU'RE TOAST*
- Quick as a Cricket*
- Skin Like Milk, Hair of Silk: Why Are Babies and Mermaids?*
- My Dog is as Smelly as Dirty Socks*

Central Green Grid:

- FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE** (with icons for simile, metaphor, personification, and hyperbole)
- ONOMATOPOEIA** (with sound effect icons)
- PERSONIFICATION** (with a pencil character)
- SIMILES AND METAPHORS** (with a house and a person)
- We finally understand! Idioms** (with a star and a person)
- HYPERBOLE** (with a girl holding a plate)
- Figurative Language** (with a girl holding a plate)

Different Ability Awareness Room

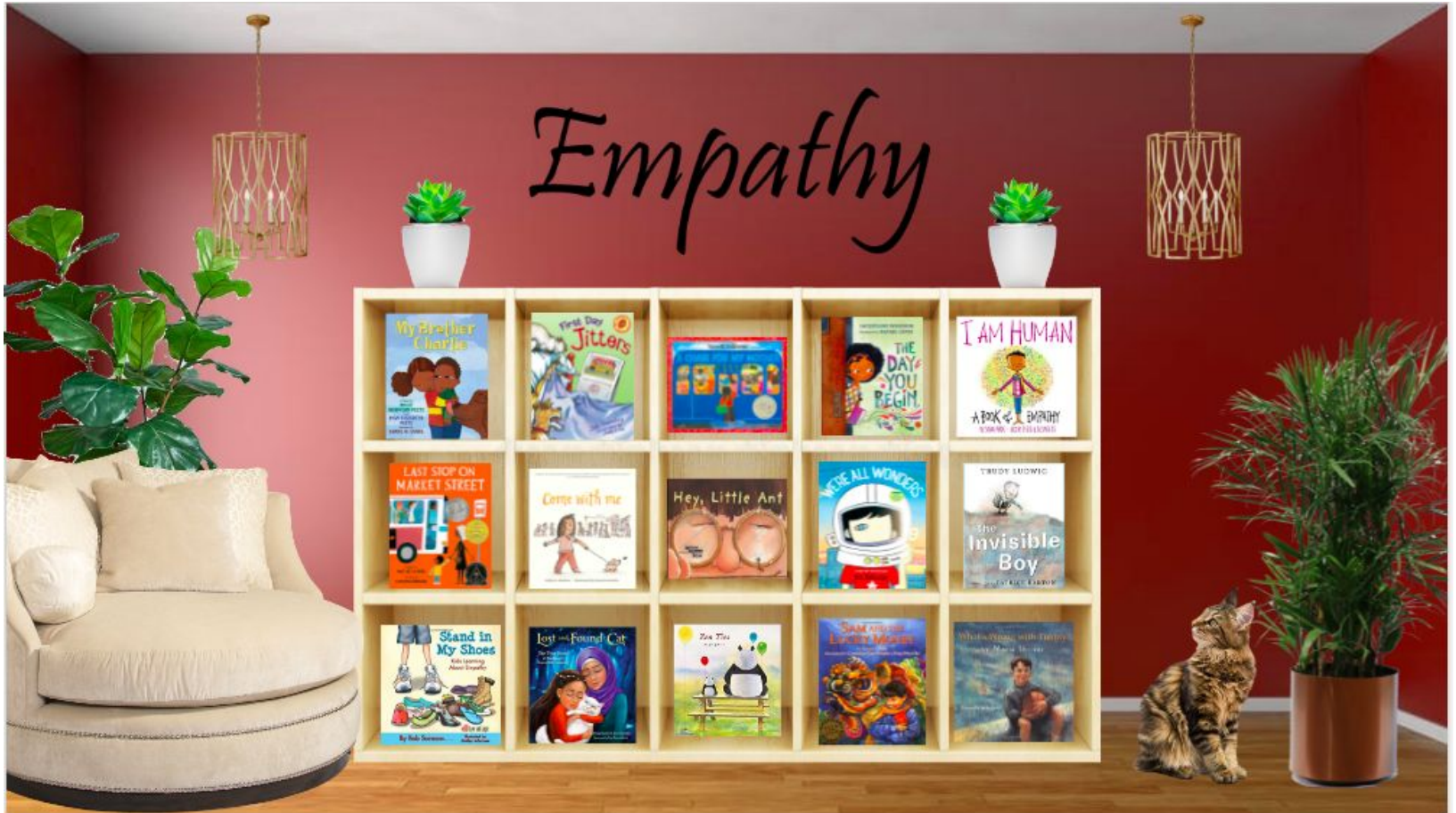


Different Ability Awareness Library - 16 books (From the “Additional Resources List,”)

Autism Library - 18 books (From the “Additional Resources List,”)



Empathy Library - 15 books (From the “Additional Resources List,”)





Respect Library - 12 books (From the “Additional Resources List,”)

African American Library - 45 books (From the "Additional Resources List,")





Kindness Library - 12 books (From the “Additional Resources List,”)

Date : 10/13/2020 4:21:10 PM
From : "Cara Cerise"
To : "Vanessa Jobe"
Subject : Chapter books
Attachment : Inclusive book project.docx;

Hello again!

Question for you. I have been keeping a list of inclusive picture books and chapter books that I want for my classroom/life. I have checked a bunch of them out at the library and have listened to a few on Audible. I am trying to get Heather N. to buy some class sets for novel studies and wanting to pick 2 or 3 really good chapter books.

When I got to 3rd grade here they read Charlotte's Web (white Christian girl on a farm), Stone Fox (white boy, also in a rural setting. There's a whole bunch of problematic shit about Native American stereotypes), and Because of Winn-Dixie (a beautiful book but also featuring a white Christian protagonist in a small town).

I have kept Because of Winn-Dixie but got rid of the other two. We were able to buy a class set of Save Me a Seat (protagonist is from India and moves to the U.S.) and I also read A Boy Called Bat with my class last year (protagonist is on the Autism Spectrum. He is also white). I would love to add some awesome chapter books with protagonists of color and LGBTQ characters. I have a list of several I have looked up but I haven't read all of them yet.

Anyway, this is all to ask you if you have any suggestions. I am going to be doing some more research over fall break.

I want some good ones for whole class study and smaller literature circle groups. I cannot stand only being able to pick from the Box Car Children, Ramona Quimby, Frindle, Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing, Third Grade Angels, Sarah Plain and Tall, Judy Moody, etc. EVERY SINGLE MAIN CHARACTER IS WHITE (if not every character in the entire book)! Not to mention able-bodied, from English speaking backgrounds, and with heteronormative families.

I'll attach the list I have if you're interested. They're organized by picture books and chapter books. You'll notice a lot of the titles.

Not urgent. Just thought I'd ask around!

Thanks!

Reading for classroom:

Chapter books:

Lola Levine is Not Mean- Monica Brown
Stef Soto, Taco Queen- Jennifer Torres
Nikki and Deja- Karen English
Blended- Sharon Draper
Tua and the Elephant- B.P. Harris
Unusual Chickens for the exceptional poultry farmer- Kelly Jones
A Good Kind of Trouble- Lisa Moore Ramee
One Crazy Summer- Rita Williams-Garcia
New Kid- Jerry Craft
Front Desk- Kelly Yang
The Unsung Hero of Birdsong, USA- Brenda Woods
My Life as an Ice Cream Sandwich- Ibi Aanu Zobo
The First Rule of Punk- Celia Perez

The Last Kids on Earth- Max Brallier
Mindy Kim and the Yummy Seaweed Business- Lee Ho
The Right Swipe- Alisha Rai
When Stars are Scattered- Victoria Jamieson and Omar Mohamed
The Queen Bee and Me- McDunn
13th Street Series- Bowles
Get a Life, Chloe Brown- Talia Hibbert
For Black Girls Like Me- Mariana Lockington
Love Like Sky- Leslie Youngblood
Caterpillar Summer- Gillian McDunn
I look up to... (series) Malala, Serena Williams
Max Loves Muñecas by Zetta Elliot
Jake the Fake- Craig Robinson
Book Uncle and Me- Uma Krishnaswami
Turning Pages- Sonia Sotomayor
My Name is María Isabel- Alma Flor Ada
Maka and the Impossible- Ruby FaAgaua

Stella Diaz Has Something to Say- j Domingue
A Boy Called Bat j Arnold
Wishtree
Clayton Byrd Goes Underground by Rita Williams-Garcia
Other Words for Home- Jasmine Warga
Where the Mountain Meets the Moon
Blended- Sharon M. Draper

Picture books:

The Day You Begin- Jacqueline Woodson
Dreamers- Yuyi Morales
Drawn Together- Dan Santant

Mango, Abuela, and Me- Jacqueline Woodson and Rafael López
Lovely Beasts- Kate Gardner
Go Show the World- Wab Kinew
All Are Welcome Here- Alexandra Penfold and Suzanne Kaufman
I'm New Here- O'Brien
The Legend of Rock, Paper, Scissors- Drew Daywalt
We're All Wonders- J.R. Palacio
Say Hello!- Rachel Isadora
Lailah's Lunchbox: A Ramadan Story- Reem Faruqi
This is the Rope: A Story from the Great Migration- Jacqueline Woodson
The Retired Kid- Jon Agee
Elena's Story- Nancy Shaw
When Charlie met Emma-Amy Webb
The Undefeated- Kwame Alexander
Dear Black Boy sincerely Marty
We Came to America- Faith Ringgold
Hey Black Child-Useni Eugene Perkins
A Boy Like You- Frank Murphy
How to Make a Better World- Kelly Swift
Consent (for kids!)- Rachel Brian
When Aidan Became a Brother- Kyle Lukoff
It Feels Good to Be Yourself: A Book About Gender Identity- Theresa Thorn
Stella Brings the Family- Mirian Schiffer
Mommy's Khimar- Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow
The Quickest Kid in Clarksville- Pat ziettlow Miller
Angel in Beijing- Belle Yang
I Really Absolutely Must Have Glasses
The World is Not a Rectangle- Jeanette Winter
My Three Best Friends and Me, Zulay- Cari Best
Sonia Sotomayor: a judge grows in the Bronx- Jonah Winter
Rainbow Weaver- Linda Elovitz Marshal
Under My Hijab- Hena Khan
I Love Saturdays and Domingos- Alma Flor Ada
The Other Side- Jacqueline Woodson
Jingle Dancer- Cynthia Leitich Smith
A Bike Like Sergio's- Maribeth Boelts
A stor, a Story- Gail E. Haley
I Wish I Had Glasses Like Rosa- Kathryn Helling
A Family is a Family is a Family- Sara O'Leary

A Family is a Family is a Family- Sara O'Leary
Cookies: Bite size life lessons- Amy Krouse Rosenthal
Children Make Terrible Pets- Peter Brown
Chopsticks- Amy Krouse Rosenthal
Exclamation Point- Amy Krouse Rosenthal
The Don't Worry Book- Todd Parr
Happy Dreamer- Peter Reynolds
The Word Collector- Peter Reynolds
Alma dn how she got her name- Juana martinex neal
A Boy Like You- Frank Murphy
My Friend Maggie- Hannah Harrison
In Plain Sight- Richard Jackson
My Papi Has a Motorcycle- Isabel Quintero
Astro Girl- Ken Wilson-Max
All My Stripes- Shaina Rudolph
Suki's Kimono- Chieri Uegaki
Let's Talk About Race- Julius Lester
Six Dots- Jen Bryant
Jacob's Eye Patch by Beth Kobliner Shaw
The snail and the wail- Julia Donaldson
One day house- Julia Durango
The relatives came- Cynthia Rylant
Wild about books- Judy Sierra
Thank you, Omu- Oge Mora
Maybe Something Beautiful
Jabari Jumps- Gaia Cornwall
I Like Myself- Karen Beumont

We Are Cousins- Somos Primos- Diane Bertrand
The Journey of York: The Unsung Hero of the Lewis and Clark Expedition- Hasan Davis
Dear Black Boy- Martellus Bennett
Community Soup- Alma Fullerton
Meet Miss Fancy- Irene Latham
Dress Like a Girl- Patricia Toht
Say Something- Peter H. Reynolds
What do you Celebrate?- Whitney Stewart
Be a Maker- Katey Howes
Lumber Jills- Alexandra Davis
A Computer Called Katherine- Suzanne Slade
Magic Ramen- Andrea Wang
We Chose YOU- Tony and Lauren Dungy
Going Down Home with Daddy- Kelly Starling Lyons
A New Home- Tania de Regil
The Gift of Ramadan- Rabiah York Lumbard
The Undefeated- Kwame Alexander
Stonewall: A Building. An Uprising. A Revolution. Rob Sanders
Girls with Guts- Debbie Gonzales
Rise! Bethany Hegedus
Where Are You From?- Yamile Saied Méndez
First Day Jitters- Julie Danneberg
Chrysanthemum- Kevin Henkes
David Goes to School- David Shannon
You Hold me Up- Monique Gray Smith
What Riley Wore- Elana Arnold
I'm Gonna Push Through- Jasmin Wright
Stand tall Molly Lou melon- Patty Lovell
Watch Us Rise- Elen Hagan, Renee Watson
Hey, Kiddo- Jarret Krosocza
Yo! Yes?- Christopher Raschka
Our Favorite Day- Joowon Oh
Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match- Monique Brown
Something Happened in Our Town- Marianne Celano

Mufaro's Beautiful Daughter- John Steptoe
Polly Diamond and the Magic Book- Alice Kuipers
Not Quite Snow White- Ashley Franklin
Carson Chooses Forgiveness- Tony and Lauren Dungy
The Buddy Bench- Patty Brozo
What is a Refugee?- Elise Gravel
Frey Bead- Noble Maillard Kevin
M is for Melanin- A Celebration of the Black Child- Tiffany Rose
The Proudest Blue- Ibtihaj Muhammed
Muslim Girls Rise- Saira Mir
Ho'onani Hula Warrior- Heather Gale
Surfer of the Century- Ellie Crowe
Amy Wu and the Perfect Bao- Kat Zhang
A Different Pond- Bao Phi
The Name Jar- Yangsook Choi
A Big Mooncake for Little Star- Grace Lin
Goldy Luck and the Three Pandas- Natasha Yim
No Kimchi for Me!- Aram Kim
Too Many Mangos- Tammy Paikai
Hot Hot Roti for Dada-Ji- F. Zia
Sulwe- Lupita nyong'o
Juneteenth for Mazie- Floyd Cooper
Black History- Stephen Jones, Sr.
Saturday- Oge Mora
La Frontera by Deborah Mills
Brothers in Hope by Mary Williams
The Only Road by Alexandra Diaz
Your name is a Song- Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow
The Recess Queen- Alexis O'Neill
A new kind of wild- Zara Gonzalez Hoang

Ruby, Head High: Ruby Bridge's First Day of School- Irene Cohen-Janca
What Will I Be?- Jayla Joseph
Fast Enough- Joel Christian Gill
Right This Very Minute- Lisl H Detlefsen
Remarkably You- Pat Zietlow Miller
Pancakes to Parathas- Alice McGinty
The Boy Who Grew a Forest- Sophia Gholz
Bea's Bees- Katherine Pryor
My Two Dads and Me- Michael Joosten
My Two Moms and Me- Michael Joosten
My Mama is a Mechanic- Doug Cenko
Luca's Bridge- Mariana Llanos
What Does it Mean to be American- Rana DiOrlo
Mango Moon- Diane de Anda
Hair is a Family Affair- Mylo Freeman
Dazzling Travis: A Story About Being Confident- Hanna Carmona Dias
A is for All the Things You Are- Anna Forgeron
Queer Heros- Arabelle Sicardi
Back to School- Maya Ajmera
Shiloh and Dande the Lion- Ciara Hill
My Two Blankets by Irena Kolbad
The Lost and Found Cat Doug Kuntz
Stepping Stones by Margriet Ruurs
The Journey by Francesca Sanna
Enough! 20 Protesters that Changed America- Emily Easton
Hannah Sparkles Hooray for the First Day of School- Robin Melbom
Jada Jones Sleepover Scientist- Kelly Starling Lyons
Make Way for Daniel Dyamonde- Dyomande Daniel series- Nikki Grimes

530+ Books

There were additional libraries (including a 5-page list of 196 books curated by the equity council chair) of more than 530+ equity books that parents were not told about. These lists were shared throughout the district by teachers and administrators from the Equity Council. Parents only acquired access to these additional libraries and lists after paying more than \$3,000 in GRAMA requests to Murray School District, and then painstakingly combing through THOUSANDS of pages of employee emails.

MCSD: “most of these materials we are providing should be viewed as independent resources - not part or connected to the equity book bundle program.” However, we have clear evidence of these books being used over and over again as part of the equity book bundles program, without parental knowledge, consent, or transparency.

**Some Problematic
books from
Additional Resources List**

On Aug 28, 2020, at 11:22 AM, Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Hi!

I am wondering how much it would cost to get:

4 of "It Feels Good to Be Yourself" Theresa Thorn

4 Something happened in our Town

4 Separate is never equal :)

Thanks [REDACTED]

Both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] say hi and are thinking of you

--

Vanessa Jobe, Ed.D.

Horizon Elementary Assistant Principal

(she/her/ hers)

801.264.7420

Date : 9/16/2020 1:59:44 PM

From : [REDACTED]

To : "Vanessa Jobe"

Subject : Re: Book Question

I can order 4 of them this afternoon. Your price would be \$13.49 each, no tax. The total would be \$53.96.

Just let me know if that works for you, and I will get them on their way!!

Thanks again,

Nathan

On Sep 16, 2020, at 1:49 PM, Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

I just need the "It Feels Good to Be Yourself" Theresa Thorn :) And 4 if possible! No worries at [REDACTED]

Vanessa

IT FEELS GOOD TO BE YOURSELF

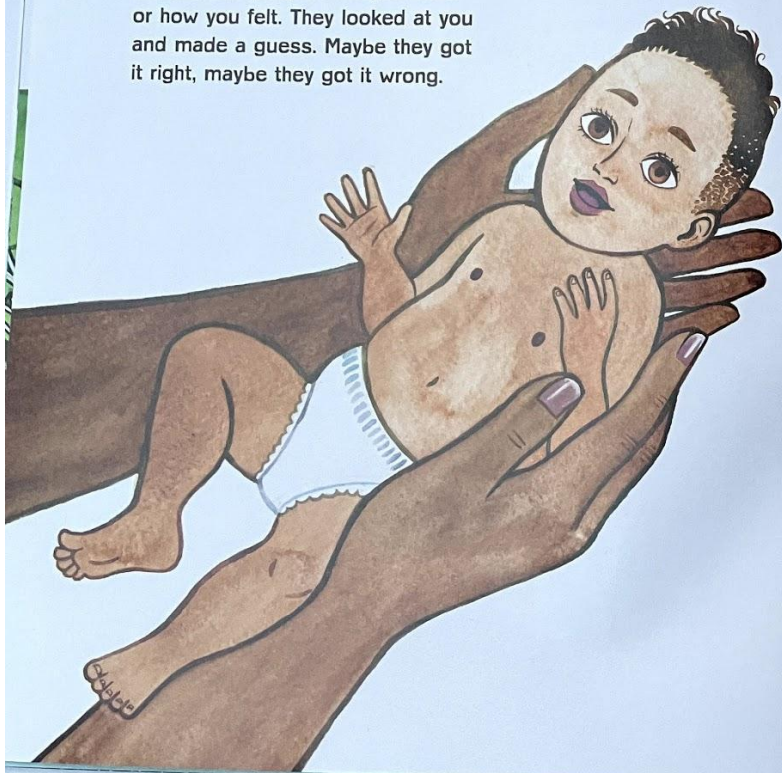
A BOOK ABOUT GENDER IDENTITY



WRITTEN BY THERESA THORN

ILLUSTRATED BY NOAH GRIGNI

See, when you were born, you couldn't tell people who you were or how you felt. They looked at you and made a guess. Maybe they got it right, maybe they got it wrong.



What a baby's body looks like when they're born can be a clue to what the baby's gender will be, but not always.

She's a transgender girl.

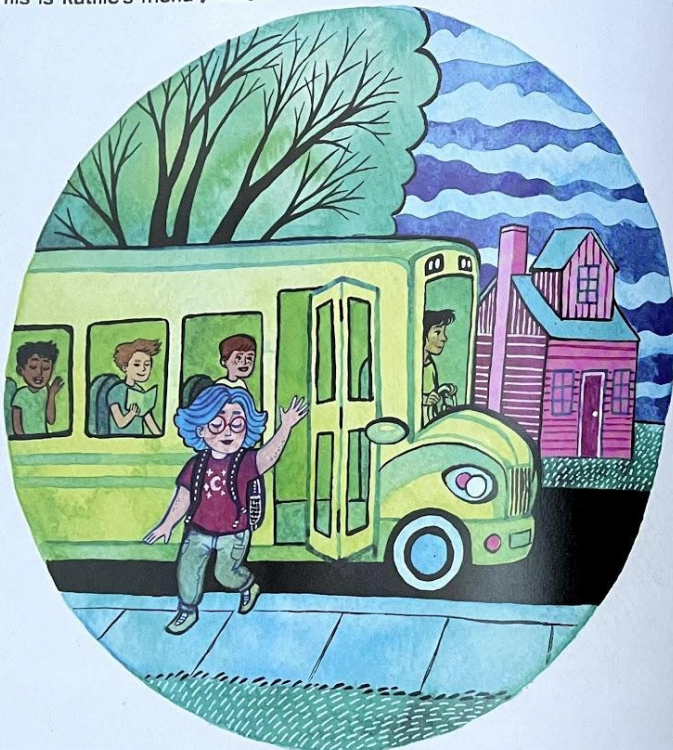
That means when she was born, everyone thought she was a boy. Until she grew a little older—old enough to tell everyone that she's actually a girl.



GiRL is Ruthie's gender identity.



This is Ruthie's friend **ALEX**.



Alex is **BOTH A BOY AND A GIRL**.

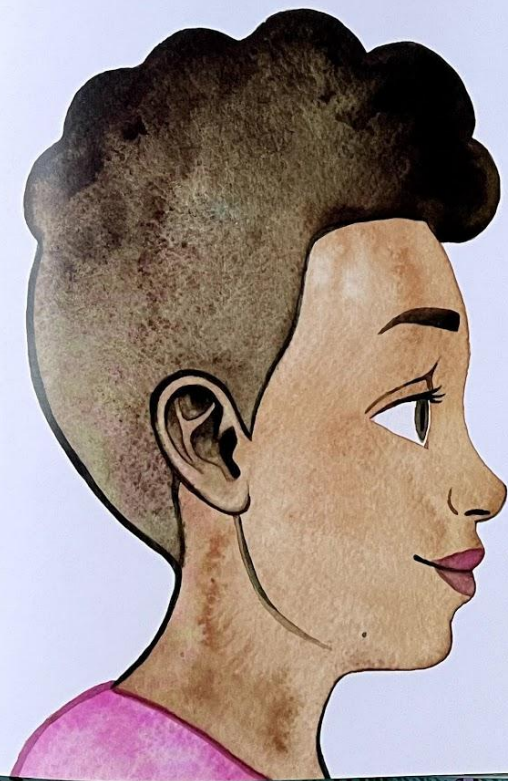
When Alex was born, everyone thought Alex was a girl, but Alex is both boy and girl. This is Alex's gender identity.



This is Alex's friend JJ.



JJ is **NEITHER A BOY NOR A GIRL.**



Ever since JJ was very little, they never felt exactly like a boy or a girl—they just felt like themselves. This is JJ's gender identity.

Alex and JJ are both **NON-BINARY**.
Just like there are many different ways to
be a boy or a girl, there are many different
ways to be non-binary—too many to fit in a
book!



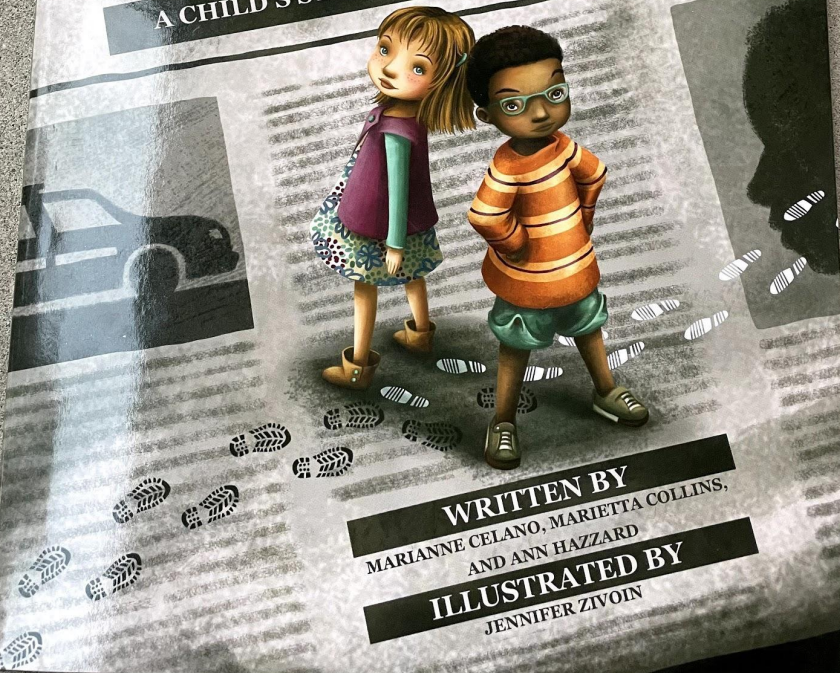
Some kids feel like girls. Some kids feel like boys.
Some kids feel like a little bit of both—part boy, part girl.



Some kids don't feel exactly like a boy or a girl—
they feel like neither. Some kids feel that their
gender identity isn't always the same—
it's often changing.

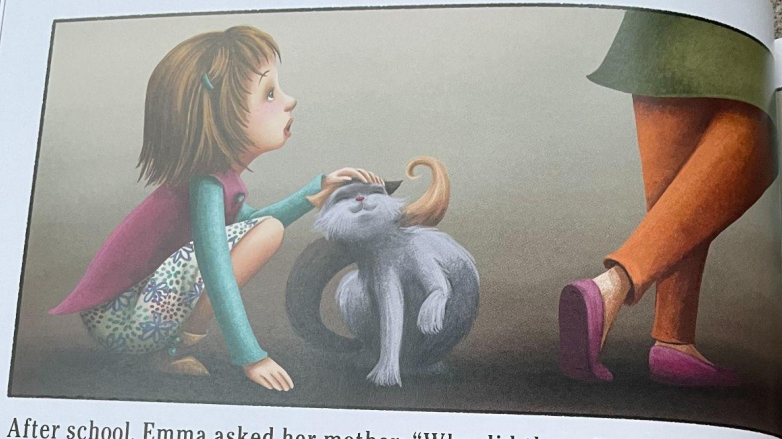
SOMETHING HAPPENED IN OUR TOWN

A CHILD'S STORY ABOUT RACIAL INJUSTICE



WRITTEN BY
MARIANNE CELANO, MARIETTA COLLINS,
AND ANN HAZZARD

ILLUSTRATED BY
JENNIFER ZIVOIN



Some
in fol
Black
a poli
an. I
ung c
st
apor
acia
o m
ut
ne
p

After school, Emma asked her mother: "Why did the police shoot that man?"

"It was a mistake," said her mother. "I feel sad for the man and his family."

"Yes, the police thought he had a gun," said her father.

"It wasn't a mistake," said her sister, Liz.

"The cops shot him because he was Black."



“But he won’t go to jail,” said his father.

“Why not?” asked Josh.

“Cops stick up for each other.” said
Josh’s brother, Malcolm. “And they
don’t like Black men.”

Josh was confused. “Why not? Some
police are Black.”

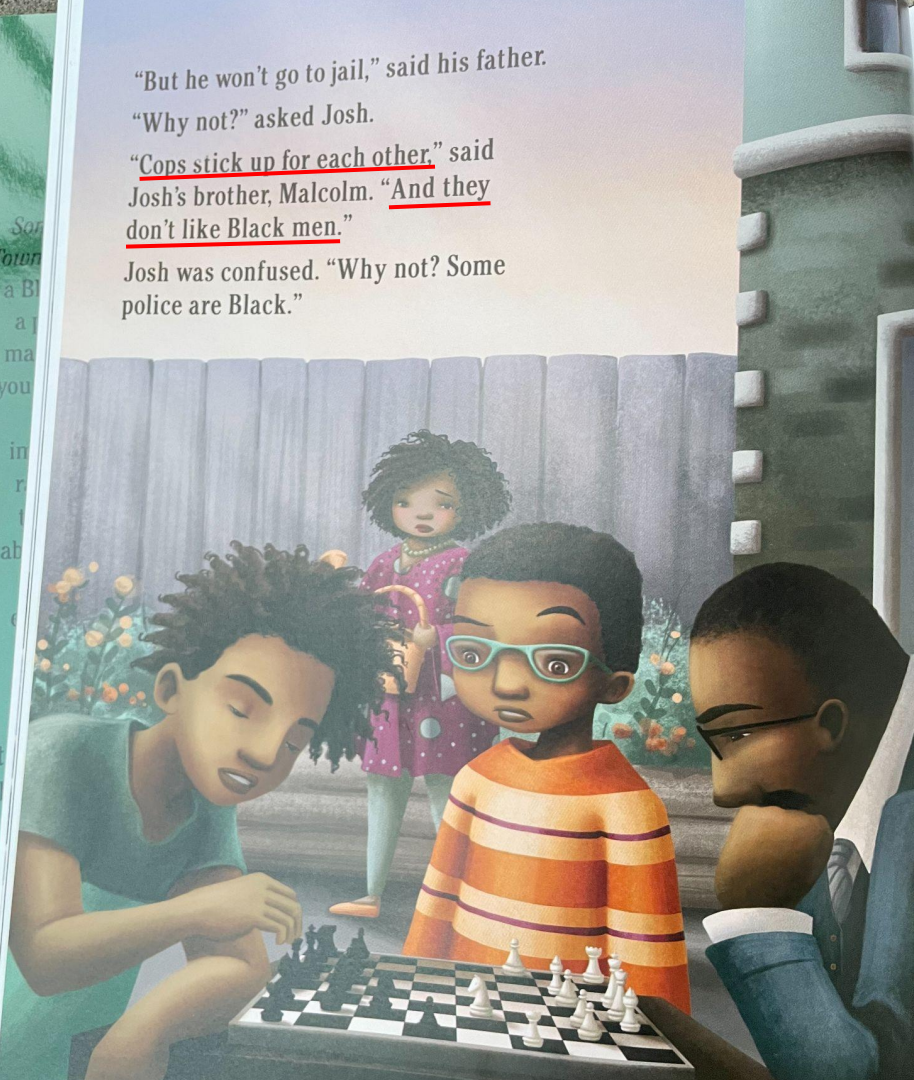
So
Town
a B
a p
ma
you

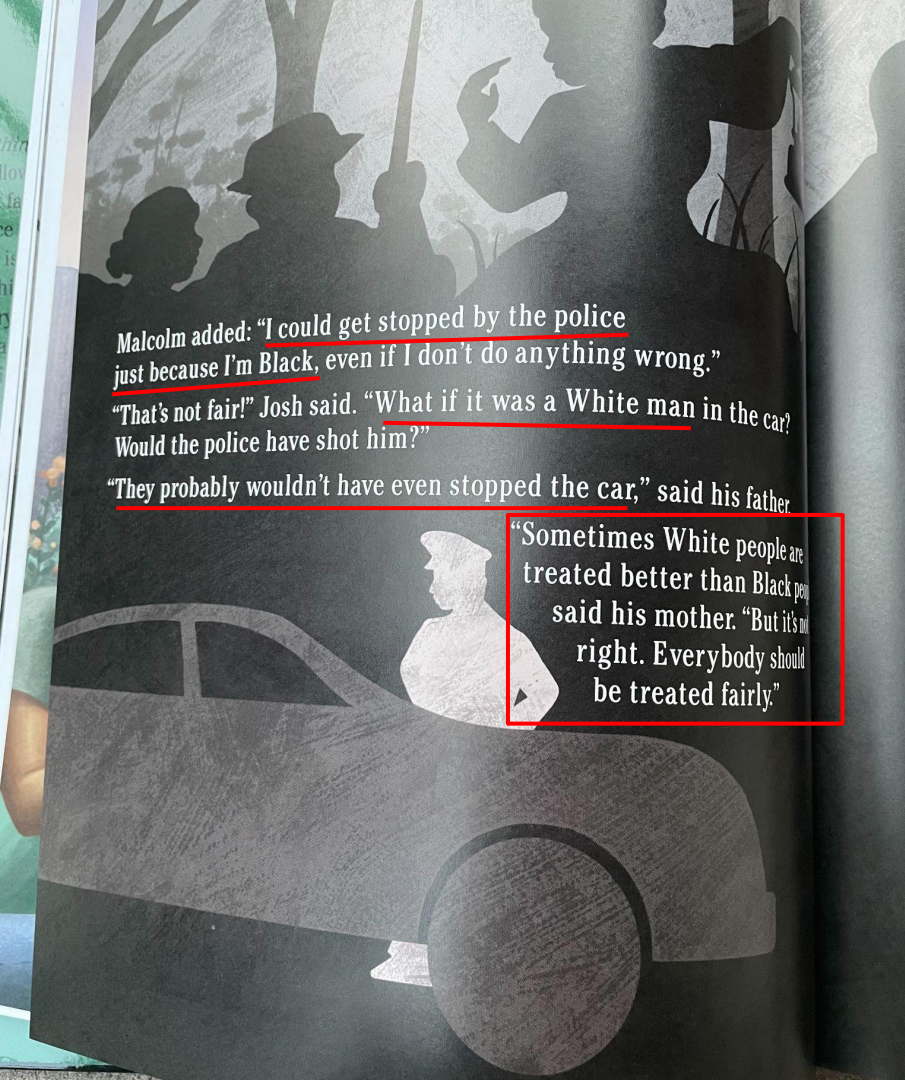
in
r
t
ab

t
t

e

t

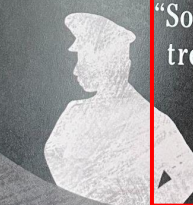


An illustration on a dark background showing silhouettes of several people in a field. In the foreground, a car is partially visible. The silhouettes include a woman, a man in a hat, and a man in a suit. The background shows trees and a field.

Malcolm added: "I could get stopped by the police just because I'm Black, even if I don't do anything wrong."

"That's not fair!" Josh said. "What if it was a White man in the car? Would the police have shot him?"

"They probably wouldn't have even stopped the car," said his father.

A small illustration of a man in a uniform, possibly a police officer, standing next to a car.

"Sometimes White people are treated better than Black people," said his mother. "But it's not right. Everybody should be treated fairly."

**Welcoming Schools - One
of the websites to which
teachers were directed in
Professional Developments
on Equity.**

Welcoming Schools Resources

<https://www.welcomingschools.org/resources/lesson-plans/lgbtq-inclusive-schools/lgbtq-with-books/>

Welcoming Schools

A PROJECT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION



MAKING DECISIONS: ALLY OR BYSTANDER

SUGGESTED GRADE LEVEL: 3 – 8

LENGTH OF TIME: 45 minutes

GOALS

- To increase ally behavior in the school community.
- To define the complexity of what it means to show ally behavior and train students in these skills.
- To increase students' empathy and compassion for those who are targeted for name-calling and bullying.
- To encourage students to articulate their beliefs regarding behavior toward others and to think about intentional ways to take care of other members in their school community.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will explore their own roles in incidences of bullying, harassment and name-calling.
- Students will talk about bullying, harassment and name-calling.
- Students will consider different responses to bullying behavior and how that might change depending on the situation.
- Students will discuss alternatives to ignoring bullying, harassment and name-calling.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly. (Also SL.3.1, 5.1 and 6.1)

EDUCATORS' NOTES

This discussion with students will explore how all of us, at one time or another, have had to make a decision about whether or not we will intervene or take a stand when we witness name-calling, bullying or harassment of a friend or a stranger. Often we make these decisions in the moment, reacting to situations as they come up.

In this lesson, students take the time to explore many different situations that could be seen at school and think about how they make decisions around allyship, such as speaking up in the moment, getting help from a caring adult, talking to the person in private or walking away. This activity can be done multiple times using different situations to increase your student's ability to be an ally.

ALLY OR BYSTANDER?

INTERVENE MYSELF
TALK TO THE PERSON
IN PRIVATE

SEEK HELP FROM AN ADULT
OR SOMEONE OLDER

IGNORE THE SITUATION
OR WALK AWAY



Welcoming Schools

A PROJECT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION

THE GREAT BIG BOOK OF FAMILIES: DISCUSSION GUIDE

SUGGESTED GRADE LEVEL: K - 2

LENGTH OF TIME: 30 - 35 minutes

GOALS

- To use literature to explore family diversity and increase the sense of inclusiveness in the classroom.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to define what makes a family and describe a variety of families.
- Students will learn that families have similarities and differences.
- Students will be able to identify common characteristics within many families.

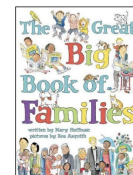
ACADEMIC STANDARDS

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text. (Also 1.1 and 2.1)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.1: Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups. (Also 1.1 and 2.1)
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media. (Also 1.2 and 2.2)

EDUCATORS' NOTES

"When someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked in the mirror and saw nothing." – *Adrienne Rich*

Written by Mary Hoffman, author of the well-known children's book, *Amazing Grace*, *The Great Big Book of Families* showcases diverse families and their lives together. When students do not see their reality reflected in any of the materials used in school, it is like having no mirror or relevance. This book provides mirrors for many students while providing a window for others into many kinds of families expanding their understanding of the world. *The Great Big Book of Families* provides a rich tool to include and celebrate the broad scope of human experience with family across differences including race, ethnicity, economic class and family structure.



Creating Safe and Welcoming Schools

HRC Foundation's Welcoming Schools is the most comprehensive bias-based bullying prevention program in the nation to provide LGBTQ+ and gender inclusive professional development training, lesson plans, booklists and resources specifically designed for educators and youth-serving professionals. Our program uses an intersectional, anti-racist lens dedicated to actionable policies and practices. We uplift school communities with critical tools to embrace family diversity, create LGBTQ+ and gender inclusive schools, prevent bias-based bullying, and support transgender and non-binary students.



Sign up for the Welcoming Schools Newsletter

Stay up to date on the latest Welcoming Schools resources and events by signing up to receive our monthly newsletter!

[Sign up now >](#)



Be Prepared: Responding to Kids' Questions on LGBTQ+ Topics

Children ask a lot of questions, and some are challenging to answer quickly or succinctly. Check out these responses to help ensure that you are prepared to give your children or students the answers they need.

[Learn More](#)



What Does Non-Binary Mean? What Does Transgender Mean?

Ever wondered how to define an LGBTQ+ word for a student?

Check out these resources to help you out!

[Learn More](#)



Great Diverse Children's Books with Transgender, Non-Binary and Gender Expansive Children

Find recommendations for both picture books and middle grade books.

[Download Now](#)

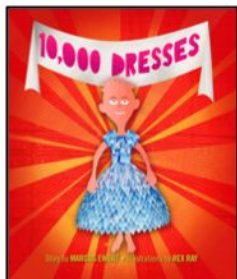


Welcoming Schools

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN FOUNDATION

welcomingschools.org

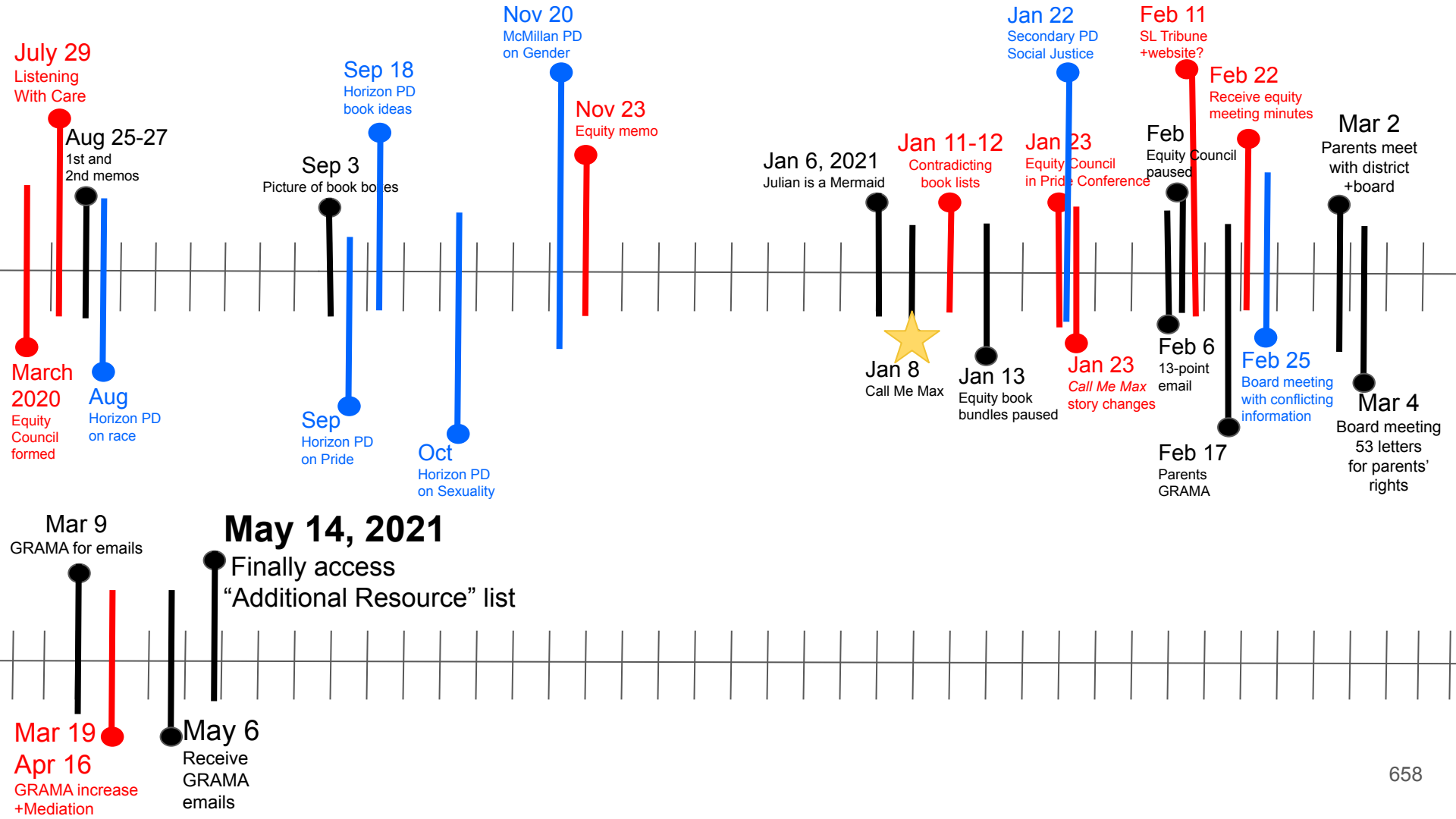
Diverse Picture Books with Transgender, Non-Binary and Gender Expansive Characters



10,000 Dresses. Marcus Ewert. (1 – 3) A modern fairy tale about becoming the person you feel you are inside. While Bailey dreams of beautiful dresses, no one wants to hear about it because he is a boy. Then an older girl comes along who is inspired by Bailey and they make beautiful dresses together.



The Adventures of Tulip, Birthday Wish Fairy. S. Bear Bergman. (K – 2) Follow Tulip



July 29
Listening With Care

Aug 25-27
1st and 2nd memos

March 2020
Equity Council formed

Mar 9
GRAMA for emails

Mar 19
Apr 16
GRAMA increase +Mediation

May 14, 2021
Finally access "Additional Resource" list

Aug 25-27
1st and 2nd memos

Aug
Horizon PD on race

May 6
Receive GRAMA emails

Sep 3
Picture of book boxes

Sep
Horizon PD on Pride

Sep 18
Horizon PD book ideas

Oct
Horizon PD on Sexuality

Nov 20
McMillan PD on Gender

Nov 23
Equity memo

Jan 6, 2021
Julian is a Mermaid

Jan 8
Call Me Max

Jan 11-12
Contradicting book lists

Jan 13
Equity book bundles paused

Jan 23
Equity Council in Pride Conference

Jan 23
Call Me Max story changes

Jan 22
Secondary PD Social Justice

Feb
Equity Council paused

Feb 6
13-point email

Feb 17
Parents GRAMA

Feb 11
SL Tribune +website?

Feb 22
Receive equity meeting minutes

Feb 25
Board meeting with conflicting information

Mar 2
Parents meet with district +board

Mar 4
Board meeting 53 letters for parents' rights



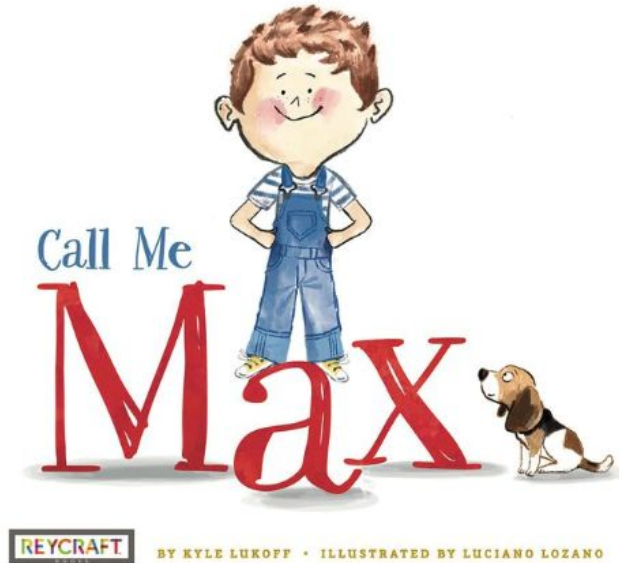
FRIENDS, ALLIES, AND MENTORS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

FAM Rally

**Salt Lake Tribune
article announcing
FAM Rally**

May 13, 2021

Alli Martin and John Arthur: Rally to support our LGBTQ students



(Photo courtesy of Reycraft Books) Pictured is the book cover of "Call Me Max" written by Kyle Lukoff and illustrated by Luciano Lozano. The story is about a transgender boy.

By John Arthur and Alli Martin | Special to The Tribune | May 13, 2021, 1:00 p.m.

Imagine you're a child in school and your teacher tells you to pick a book off the shelf about a kid like you. You look at the titles. There are books about athletes and orphans, stories of vampires and zombies and talking animals, but nothing about a kid who is transgender. So, you grab anything and sit back down.

But then, a classmate pulls a book out of their backpack about a transgender boy and asks your teacher to read it to the class. She says yes, and you listen as this boy in the book owns his identity, finds a community, and is lovingly accepted by his friends, family, and school.!

The next day, you find out your teacher is in trouble for having read that one book about you. That book doesn't belong in our schools, they say. But if that book doesn't belong in our schools, what does that say about you?

Students and teachers in the [Murray School District](#) were recently told that a picture book whose main character is a transgender boy is unsuitable for school, and the teacher was wrong for having read it to the class. The message to our children was clear: LGBTQ identities — their own identity or the identity of their friends or family members — are wrong and unacceptable in school.

That's wrong.

Every child deserves to feel welcome in school and celebrated for who they are. That's why we do "get to know you" activities on the first day each year, why teachers build lessons around what we learn about each student, and why we take bullying so seriously.

Recent attacks on LGBTQ students, particularly transgender students, have been devastating. When state leaders and Utah State School Board members attack teachers for supporting all students, those leaders don't just harm the teachers — they harm every LGBTQ child we serve.

Our LGBTQ children are hurting right now. Data shows that LGBTQ students are more likely to get lower grades, miss school, and perform poorly on tests. These students are also four to ten times more likely to die by suicide. Each statistic is a student in class right now, and they are desperate for us to do something more to support them.

Imagine you're that transgender child again, but now you're in high school. Your science teacher is telling the whole class about Alan Hart, a transgender scientist who pioneered a tuberculosis screening program that saved thousands of lives. Suddenly, you're seeing how someone like you fits into the bigger world. The student sitting next to you is also benefiting from knowing that trans people have contributed positively to our world in countless ways. Inclusion for one student improves the education for all students!

According to the [2019 GLSEN School Climate Survey](#), over 70% of LGBTQ students reported avoiding school functions and extracurricular activities because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable. Well, if they don't feel comfortable coming to a school pep rally, we educators are going to bring the rally to them!



Please join us at the Utah State Capitol on May 18 for a rally in support of our LGBTQ students and educators. We'll be joined by special guest Kyle Lukoff, who will read his book "Call Me Max" and speak about the power of representation. After a long, difficult year, it's time to celebrate together and uplift our kids — every single one of them.



Alli Martin is an Assistant Principal at Horizonte Instruction and Training Center

Alli Martin is an assistant principal at Horizonte Instruction and Training Center. She earned her doctorate from the University of Utah in educational leadership and policy.



(Rick Egan | The Salt Lake Tribune) John Arthur Utah's teacher of the year, says a few words before First Lady Jill Biden's speech at Glendale Middle School, on Wednesday, May 5, 2021.

John Arthur, *Bluffdale*, teaches sixth grade at Meadowlark Elementary in Salt Lake City, and is the 2021 Utah Teacher of the Year.



FRIENDS, ALLIES, AND MENTORS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

Dr. Allison Martin (she/her/hers): Alli works as an Assistant Principal at Horizonte Instruction and Training Center in Salt Lake City School District. She earned a doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy from the University of Utah. Alli serves as a member of the Board of Governors for the Human Rights Campaign and is a co-founding member of Friends, Allies, and Mentors of the LGBTQ community (FAM). Through her work with FAM, Alli regularly provides professional learning experiences to educators on issues of intersectionality and LGBTQ youth.



**Greg Marchant's
Email to MCSD
Regarding FAM Rally**

May 15, 2021

Utah F.A.M. Rally

From: Greg

To: jcovington@murrayschools.org; jcooper@murrayschools.org; bjohnson@murrayschools.org; kanderson@murrayschools.org; epayne@murrayschools.org; gmerrill@murrayschools.org

Date: Saturday, May 15, 2021, 05:21 PM MDT

Dear Ms. Covington and Board Members:

After reviewing many of the documents that were produced from our GRAMA request, our frustration has become bewilderment. Not only do certain educators seem fixated on pushing personal agendas without parental approval or consent, but their utter contempt for parents who disagree is inexcusable. When one parent raised concerns, an administrator reassured the teacher she didn't need permission to read transgender materials to young children without parental consent. In fact, according to that administrator "maybe public school is not the correct place" for a child whose parent asks questions or raises concerns about these types of materials being read in classrooms without notice or consent.

These teachers are pushing books about transgenderism, like *It Feels Good to Be Yourself*, into elementary school curriculum, while removing *Charlotte's Web* because the protagonist is "white and Christian". We are so discouraged that these types of revelations do not seem as shocking to you as they are to us since you are being paid to protect and advocate for our children and, as you keep reminding everyone, to "keep them safe."

We have been forced to spend an inordinate amount of time and money investigating issues that the School District should have been investigating. It is clear from all of the GRAMA-requested documentation that *Call Me Max* was NOT an isolated incident. All of the red flags should be just as clear and alarming to you as they have been to us. We have spent thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours to do the work YOU should have been doing as soon as parents' concerns were brought to your attention.

With this in mind, we'd like to bring up further information which has alarmed parents. This Tuesday, May 18, at the State Capitol, Utah F.A.M. (Friends Allies and Mentors of the LGBTQ+ Community) is holding a rally featuring a reading from *Call Me Max* author Kyle Lukoff. The claimed purpose of this rally is "to support and include LGBTQ+ identities in Utah schools." However, we have seen emails from UEA members telling that at least part of the true purpose of this rally is to protest the concerns that have been raised by parents about the reading and discussion of *Call Me Max* in Murray School District.


Parents now need to know if you were aware that Cara Cerise is one of the leaders of Utah F.A.M., along with Kody Colvin who provided training to teachers at McMillan early in the school year (based on Cara's recommendation), and Amanda Darrow who presented in Murray board meetings with the MCSD Equity Council? Were you aware of this rally planned by Cerise and her colleagues for this Tuesday? Were you further aware that Utah F.A.M.'s expressed goal is to "empower teachers to embed LGBTQ+ practice into Utah schools and classrooms," and that during this rally "FAM is making LGBTQ+ 'book bundles' available for Utah educators to place in [their schools]" and that they are providing the books for free as long as educators agree to place these books in their classroom and explain how they will "embed this literature into [their] classroom?" Please see attachments.

Were you aware of these things? Do you support Ms. Cerise's obvious slap in the face to parents and the intentional infusion of LGBTQ+ agendas into our children's classrooms? If previously you were unaware, now that you do know, parents would like to know your position. Parents demand to know whether the District supports one of its employees actively pushing for educators to commit to embedding controversial and sensitive LGBTQ+ materials, that are outside of approved curriculum, directly into the classroom. And parents deserve to know whether the District stands behind one of its educators helping to organize a rally centered around the reading of *Call Me Max*, which has stirred so much controversy in our District. This issue is about much more than *Call Me Max* - this is about an obvious and proven pattern of certain District teachers and administrators pushing personal agendas into the classroom in violation of Utah law.

Will your allegiance continue to favor those who flaunt personal agendas in violation of the law regarding allowed materials and approved curriculum? Or will teachers/administrators be held accountable for being activists rather than educators, while simultaneously ignoring parents' rights under the law? We anxiously await your reply.

Sincerely - Greg Marchant, April Despain, and Laurel Fetzer of the Murray Parents Rights Council

 May-18-LGBTQ-Inclusion-Rally-at-Capital-Poster.jpg
348.4kB

 SLEA Invite to F.A.M. Rally.JPG
142.4kB

 LGBTQ+ Book Bundle.pdf
233.7kB

**Laurel Fetzer's
Email to MCSD
Regarding FAM Rally**

May 16, 2021

More information about the FAM rally

From: Laurel Fetzer

To: jcovington@murrayschools.org; jcooper@murrayschools.org; bjohnson@murrayschools.org; kanderson@murrayschools.org; epayne@murrayschools.org; gmerrill@murrayschools.org

Date: Sunday, May 16, 2021, 08:43 PM MDT

Dear Ms. Covington, School Board Members,

We would like to supply you with a little more information about what is happening on Tuesday at the FAM rally- according to the FAM posts. There is a speaker line up, and one of our teachers and former chair of the MCSD Equity Council, Cara Cerise, is speaking. The books that are being given away to be used in our schools include *Call Me Max*. They are committing all educators who receive these book bundles to use them in their classrooms.

Additionally, here's a link to an article published in the Salt Lake Tribune this past Thursday, May 13: [Alli Martin and John Arthur: Rally to support our LGBTQ students](#). This article was clearly written in reference to the rally coming up on Tuesday. It was also written in reference to the issue that has come up in Murray School District this past year over the reading and discussion of *Call Me Max*. It seems, according to the article, that the law and parents' views are irrelevant when it comes the curriculum of our own children.

This event is very obviously seeking to promote disregard for Utah Law and parents' consent when it comes to teaching children about sexuality and gender. We'd like you to be aware of these details so you can act accordingly. Do you support parents' rights? Do you support Utah law? Or do you support activists seeking to promote their personal agendas within the classrooms of our children?

Sincerely,
Laurel Fetzer, April Despain and Greg Marchant of the Murray Parents Rights Council

<https://www.sltrib.com/opinion/commentary/2021/05/13/alli-martin-john-arthur/>

FAM Friends, Allies, and Mentors of the LGBTQ+ Community - FAM
14h · 🌐

This Tuesday 5/18 come celebrate LGBTQ+ identities in schools with these amazing speakers! FAM Rally to support LGBTQ Inclusion in Utah Schools

#mystorybelongs #utahfam

Lineup for the Rally:

Kody Colvin	Student Bill of Rights
Bianca Mittendorf	John Arthur
SPA - performance	Cara Cerise
Emily Lowder	Bree Taylor-Lof
Kyle Lukoff	

UTAH PRIDE CENTER

FAM FRIENDS, ALLIES, AND MENTORS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

LGBTQIA+ Inclusive School Book Drive with FAM

18% complete \$10,000

\$1,841.64 Donated | \$10,000 Our Goal | 23 Donors

[Donate Now](#)

MCS D response to Greg and Laurel regarding FAM Rally

May 17, 2021

From: Jennifer Covington <jcovington@murrayschools.org>

Date: May 17, 2021 at 3:55:06 PM MDT

To: Greg

Cc: Belinda Johnson <bjohnson@murrayschools.org>, Elizabeth Payne <epayne@murrayschools.org>, Glo Merrill <gmerrill@murrayschools.org>, Jaren Cooper <jcooper@murrayschools.org>, Kami Anderson <kanderson@murrayschools.org>, Scott Bushnell <sbushnell@murrayschools.org>, Darren Dean <ddean@murrayschools.org>

Subject: Re: Utah F.A.M. Rally

Mr. Marchant:

Thank you for sharing this with us.

The District does not support or limit groups or organizations that educators belong to or attend on their own time, outside of work.

The district does have a policy regarding books and materials used in the classroom that all educators are required to follow. We will continue to remind our educators of these policies.

Jennifer Covington - Superintendent

Murray City School District
5102 S. Commerce Drive
Murray, UT 84107
801.264.7400

From: Jennifer Covington <jcovington@murrayschools.org>

Subject: Re: More information about the FAM rally

Date: May 17, 2021 at 3:52:46 PM MDT

To: Laurel Fetzer

Cc: Belinda Johnson <bjohnson@murrayschools.org>, Elizabeth Payne <epayne@murrayschools.org>, Glo Merrill <gmerrill@murrayschools.org>, Jaren Cooper <jcooper@murrayschools.org>, Kami Anderson <kanderson@murrayschools.org>

Mrs. Fetzer:

Thank you for sharing this with us.

The District does not support or limit groups or organizations that educators belong to or attend on their own time, outside of work.

The district does have a policy regarding books and materials used in the classroom that all educators are required to follow. We will continue to remind our educators of these policies.

Jennifer Covington - Superintendent

Murray City School District

5102 S. Commerce Drive

Murray, UT 84107

801.264.7400

**April Wilde Despain's
Emails to MCSD
Regarding FAM Rally**

May 16, 2021

• Re: More information about the FAM rally



• **April Wilde**



Tue, May 18, 2021 at 10:03 AM

To: Jennifer Covington, Jaren Cooper, Belinda Johnson, Elizabeth Payne, Kami Anderson and 2 more...

Cc: Greg Marchant, Laurel Fetzer, Tony Despain

Ms. Covington,

Thank you for the information. We're following up to receive some clarification. It's a little confusing that you say the District does not support these groups or organizations. On Friday, Nov 20, 2020, it's our understanding that educators at McMillan were trained by Cody Kolvin from Utah F.A.M. It seems this would definitely indicate District support since receiving a training from this organization would mean we paid them with our District funds, and our District's teachers would be following the ideas put out by this organization. So, is this an indication that you do support Utah F.A.M. in Murray City School District? Were you aware that our teachers were trained by F.A.M. (per Cara Cerise's recommendation), and if so, do you support this training for our District?

Thanks,
April Despain
Greg Marchant
Laurel Fetzer
of the Murray Parents Rights Council

● Re: More information about the FAM rally



● **April Wilde**



Tue, May 18, 2021 at 10:42 AM

To: Jennifer Covington, Jaren Cooper, Belinda Johnson, Elizabeth Payne, Kami Anderson and 2 more...

Cc: Greg Marchant, Laurel Fetzer,

Ms. Covington,

One more question: Knowing that Cara works for F.A.M. and that F.A.M. has trained our teachers, and that F.A.M.'s expressed goal is to "empower teachers to embed LGBTQ+ practice into Utah schools and classrooms" through (at least in part) book bundles neither reviewed nor approved by any school board, does this mean you support Cara, as an educator in our district, trying to push illegal materials/curriculum not approved by the school board directly into the classroom? It seems like an incredible conflict of interest, seeing that she's an educator who has agreed to follow the laws and, as Darren Dean explicitly stated in the Feb 25 board meeting, regularly receives ethics trainings via the Utah Educator Professional Ethics Standards (found in R277-515). I'm sure you can look into these standards yourselves and see if there are any conflicts of interest going on here. We anxiously await your answers to these questions in this email and the former.

Thanks,
April Despain
Greg Marchant
Laurel Fetzer
of the Murray Parents Rights Council

**No response
from MCSD**



FRIENDS, ALLIES, AND MENTORS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

[Utah FAM](#) [Blog](#) [Workshops](#) [Events](#) [Resources](#) [Contact Us](#)



F.A.M. and the Utah Pride Center will be doing a fundraiser to put more LGBTQIA+ inclusive books in schools! All donations will go directly to funding LGBTQIA+ books and the F.A.M. educator socials and [events](#).

[Support LGBTQIA+ Inclusive School Book Drive with FAM](#)

EDUCATOR ALLIES FOR LGBTQ+ YOUTH

Founded by Kody Colvin, Alli Martin, and Tyson Price in 2016, Utah FAM works to make Utah schools better for LGBTQ+ teachers and students. Utah FAM has delivered hundreds of professional learning workshops, seminars, and trainings at schools, companies, and homes. We organize monthly educator socials via Zoom open to teachers across the state. We make new friends, celebrate successes, share ideas and resources, and provide individualized support.

Utah FAM educators seek to empower LGBTQ+ teachers and allies to embed LGBTQ+ affirming practice into schools and classrooms.

Please explore the resources on the Utah FAM site, and connect with educator allies in your district. We invite you to use the [Contact Us](#) page to be added to the Utah FAM newsletter, to get the Zoom link for our monthly educator socials, and to share your ideas, questions and inspiration.

Join our growing Utah FAM and help us make the road better for our LGBTQ+ youth.

Utah FAM Leadership



Kody Colvin (he/him/his): Kody Colvin started his career as an elementary educator before entering school administration. In addition to his work responsibilities, Kody co-founded a group called Friends, Allies, and Mentors (F.A.M.) of the LGBTQ Community in 2016. The goal of F.A.M. is to provide professional learning experiences for educators to better support their LGBTQ stakeholders in school. In 2017, SLCSD, in partnership with F.A.M., created a task force to develop and implement policies and procedures that would better support our LGBTQ stakeholders. Kody is a doctoral student at the University of Utah in the Educational leadership & Policy program.

Dr. Allison Martin (she/her/hers): Alli works as an Assistant Principal at Horizonte Instruction and Training Center in Salt Lake City School District. She earned a doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy from the University of Utah. Alli serves as a member of the Board of Governors for the Human Rights Campaign and is a co-founding member of Friends, Allies, and Mentors of the LGBTQ community (FAM). Through her work with FAM, Alli regularly provides professional learning experiences to educators on issues of intersectionality and LGBTQ youth.



Bianca Mittendorf (she, her, hers) holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Cultural Anthropology, a Bachelor of Science degree in Special Education, and a Master of Human Resource Management. She is currently completing an Administrative Licensure program and aspires to become a superintendent. Bianca is currently the Title IX Coordinator of Davis School District and has taught special education at the elementary and middle school levels. Advocating for social and racial justice is her passion and thus she is active in various community organizations. In her downtime, Bianca enjoys spending time with her family, traveling and reading.

Cara Cerise (she, her, they, them) is an out and outspoken LGBTQ+ identified elementary educator. She has a bachelor's degree in Sociology and Spanish from Westminster College and a master's in Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language from the University of Alcalá de Henares. Cara was recognized as the 2021 Utah NAME (National Association for Multicultural Education) Educator of the Year and is deeply committed to creating inclusive and affirming environments for all students to learn, grow, and thrive.



Amanda Darrow (she/her/hers): Amanda holds a master's degree in Education and a bachelor's degree in Clinical and Counseling Psychology, both from Westminster College in Salt Lake City, Utah. She is passionate about inclusion and social justice. Amanda began her advocacy with her research on, "The Effects of a Heteronormative Classroom Environment on LGBTQ+ Students." Before the Utah Pride Center, Amanda worked in higher and elementary education. Amanda works at the Utah Pride Center as the Director of Youth, Family, and Education. She focuses on making homes more accepting and welcoming for our youth and families, schools and community spaces more inclusive for all, and educating the current and future generations about our incredible LGBTQIA+ community.

Tyson Price (he/him/his): Tyson currently resides in Fresno, California, and works as an Instructional Coach for new teachers in Fresno Unified School District (FUSD). He recently completed his Master of Education Degree from Southern Utah University. Before relocating to California, Tyson taught elementary in the Salt Lake City School District for five years and was a literacy coach for one year. In 2016, Tyson co-founded Friends, Allies, and Mentors (FAM) of the LGBTQ+ Community. Currently, Tyson is part of FUSD's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Steering Committee which supports Cultural Proficiency training for all of FUSD's 10,000 employees.



For current events happening in Utah, check out our [blog!](#)

FAM Friends, Allies, and Mentors of the Lgbtq+ Community - FAM

14h

This Tuesday 5/18 come celebrate LGBTQ+ identities in schools with these amazing speakers! FAM Rally to support LGBTQ inclusion in Utah Schools.

#mystorybelongs #utahfam

Lineup for the Rally:

- Kody Colvin
- Bianca Mittendorf
- SPA - performance
- Emily Lowder
- Kyle Lukoff
- Student Bill of Rights
- John Arthur
- Cara Cerise
- Bree Taylor-Lof



TUESDAY
9:30am
Utah State Capitol

6

4 Shares

May 18, 2021



FRIENDS, ALLIES, AND MENTORS OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY

LGBTQIA+ Inclusive School Book Drive with FAM

18% complete \$10,000



\$1,841.64 Donated	\$10,000 Our Goal	23 Donors
-----------------------	----------------------	--------------

Donate Now

Friends, Allies, and Mentors of th...



Like Comment Share



Like Comment Share



**FRIENDS, ALLIES, AND MENTORS
OF THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY**

5/15/2021

LGBTQ+ Book Bundle

If selected, will you be able to pick up the bundle at the FAM rally Tuesday, May 18 at 5:30 PM (Utah State Capitol) *

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Do you agree to place these books in your school/classroom? *

- I agree
- I do not agree

Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google. [Report Abuse](#) - [Terms of Service](#) - [Privacy Policy](#)

May 18, 2021

How will you ensure students get exposure to these texts? (i.e., Way you will embed this literature into your classroom/school)

Your answer

Name

Your answer

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfgHW8W72uG4MUo0iJkbTUvmO0jBQGhmSMK-QDnOxa8bKZDA/viewform>

1/3

5/15/2021

LGBTQ+ Book Bundle

Email *

Your answer

What school or district do you work for? *

Your answer

What grade-level(s) do teach? *

- K-2
- 3-6
- Middle
- High School
- Other:

May 18, 2021

FAM Rally May 18, 2021



**Did parents
“shame and harass”
Cara and her colleagues?**

From our GRAMA request, we saw NO emails to Cara regarding these issues. None of us emailed her directly except when April asked to join the Equity Council.



To: April Wilde

Hi April,

Thank you very much for your message. I can definitely provide more information about joining. How did you hear about the Equity Council and what interests you about participating? What are you hoping to bring to the council? What are you hoping to gain by being involved?

The group has a mission, vision, and set of core beliefs, as well as a set of group norms. I will include them attached to this email. These act as the foundation of our work and each council member is expected to adhere to these norms during meetings. If this sounds good to you, we'd be happy to have you join our next meeting. It is on February 11th from 3-4:30 p.m. on zoom (sometimes we end earlier). I will be sending out the invite at the end of next week or on Monday Feb. 8th. We will be discussing our newsletter and information on the district website.

Let me know if you have any specific questions.

Thanks,

Cara

On Wed, Jan 27, 2021 at 3:26 PM April Wilde [REDACTED] wrote:

Hello Ms. Cerise,

I've heard recently about this equity committee and that you are the chair. I would like to become a member of this committee. I'm a parent of students who attend Horizon Elementary School. Can you tell me how I go about being added to the committee?

Thank you.

-April Despain



Mission, V....docx

Mission: The mission of the Murray City School District Equity Council is to build a diverse, equitable, and inclusive district by providing all students, families, and employees with a community of care, respect, and belonging.

Vision: The MCSD Equity Council envisions each school in our district as a safe and empowering place to learn and grow for everyone.

Core beliefs*:

- We believe in fixing the systems that create marginalization, not fixing individuals who are marginalized by the systems.
- We believe in centering those most directly impacted by marginalization in our curriculum, discussions, staffing, policies, and practices. This includes People of Color, People with Disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer People, Immigrants, Refugees, people from low-income households, members of minority religious groups, and other marginalized populations.
- We believe in developing an intersectional approach to create equitable educational environments within a larger inequitable society. An intersectional approach acknowledges the complex way our identities and experiences overlap to influence the prejudices and privileges we face.
- We believe that self-reflection of worldview and personal bias is an ongoing process and essential to engaging in any kind of equity work.

*Adapted from RE-Center *Race & Equity in Education*.



To: April Wilde

Hello April,

I just wanted to inform you that the meeting this week has been cancelled.

Thank you,

Cara

On Wed, Feb 3, 2021 at 1:35 AM April Wilde [REDACTED] wrote:

Hi Cara,

Thanks for the info. I have been meaning to reply to your email since I got it, but time has just gotten away from me. I wanted to look through the paper you sent before I replied, and I feel like I haven't done it thoroughly yet. So I might have some more questions after I look at it more. But I just wanted to answer your questions before 5 more days passed by!

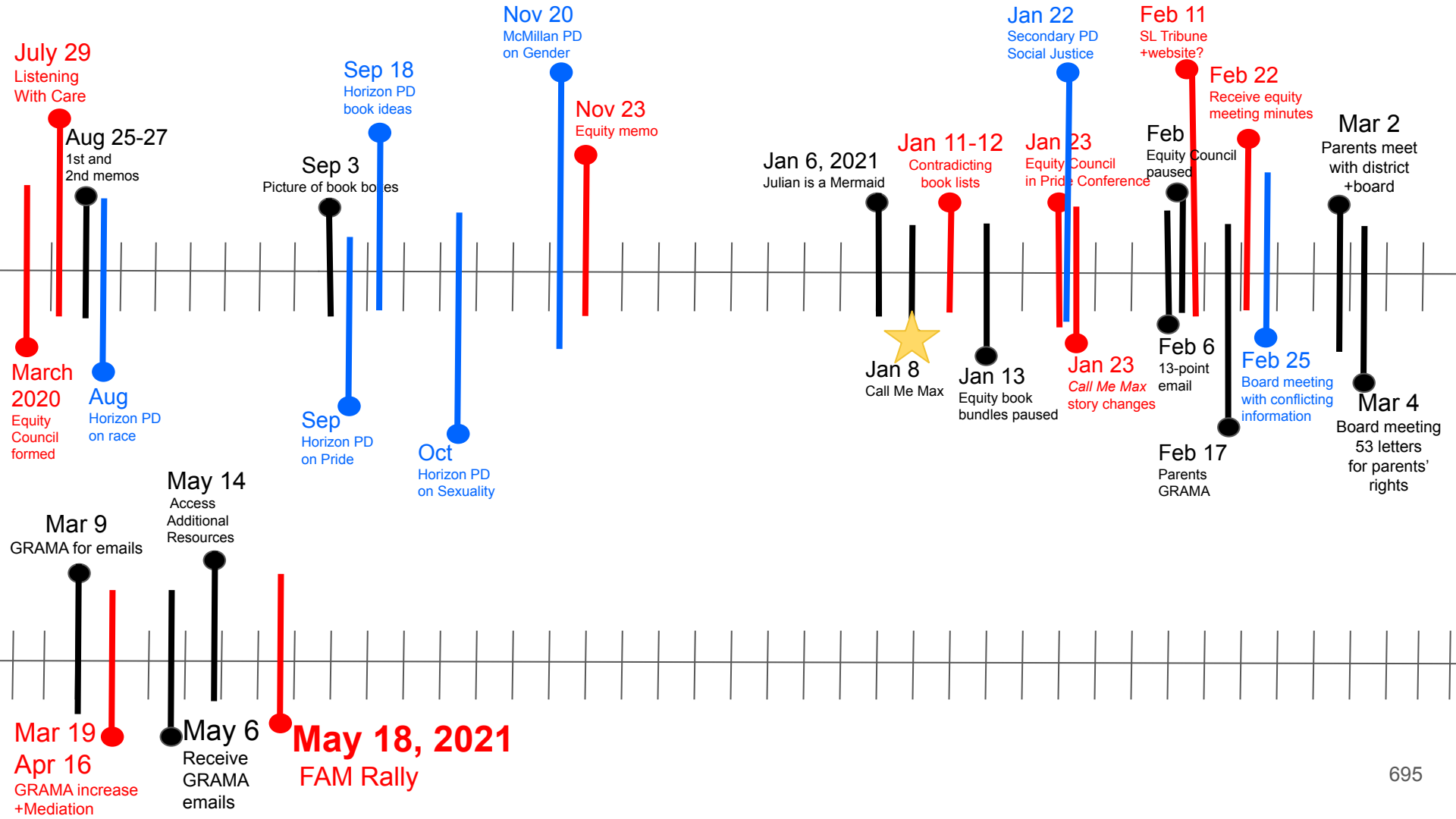
I heard about the Equity Council through some issues that happened in our school, and then I also watched your presentation on the "Pride, Not Prejudice" conference. As for what I'm hoping to bring to the council, I'm just a parent of two (next year will be three) students in our district, and I would like to bring a parent perspective. I also have lived in Murray my whole life and attended several schools myself growing up in the district, and I know a lot of people around the district, so I think I could be somewhat representative of Murray's perspective (though of course through my own bias). What I'm hoping to gain by being involved is more awareness of what the Equity Council is doing and what it's about. I know a lot of parents in Murray feel totally uninformed about this and they want to feel like they know what's going on and feel like they have a part in it, so I think I'm hoping to fill some of that need, at least for myself.

Like I said, I feel that I haven't thoroughly looked over the paper you sent me, so I want to do that before I comment on any of it. But thank you for getting back to me and sending me the information. Please let me know if you have any other questions for me. And I'll let you know what questions I have about the mission, vision, core beliefs and group norms, once I look through them more.

Thanks again.

April

When parents want to know the truth about their district's equity program, is that considered “shaming and harassment” to the Equity Council?



Ongoing Concerns

2021 - 2022

School Year

Literature Review Committee

Is parental input valued?

376 Books on the Approved list for secondary schools



**MURRAY CITY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

We Are Murray!

MCS D APPROVED BOOK LIST FOR SECONDARY

TITLE	AUTHOR	GRADE LEVEL TAUGHT	LEXILE LEVEL	DATE REVIEWED/ APPROVED
1984	Orwell, George	12	1090	May 2018
Acorn People	Jones, Ron	7	720	
Across Five Aprils	Hunt, Irene	8	1100	
Acts of King Author and His Noble Nights, The	Steinbeck, John	10	990	
Adventures of Huckleberry Finn	Twain, Mark	10, 10H	830	May 2012
Adventures of Tom Sawyer	Twain, Mark	7	950	
Adventures of Ulysses	Evslin, Bernard	9	860	
After the Dancing Days	Rostkowski, Margaret	8	650	
Alas, Babylon	Frank, Pat	9	840	
Alchemist, The	Coelho, Paulo	10	910	May 2019
Alice's Adventures in Wonderland/Through the Looking Glass	Carroll, Lewis	8H	890	June 2012

All American Boys by Jason Reynolds

All American Boys, by Jason Reynolds and Scott King Author Honor Book. There's racial tension, and violence includes a boy beaten by an adult (with severe injuries described), fights between boys, and threats. There's also positive activism in the face of brutality, which should inspire tweens and teens. (Some strong language includes "s--t" and f--k.")

The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas

Angie Thomas' *New York Times* best-selling book *The Hate U Give* won a 2018 Coretta Scott King Author Honor, a Michael L. Printz Honor, and the Oddysey Award for best audiobook for kids and teens. Inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement, it involves the police shooting of an unarmed black teen. The book covers topics of race, interracial dating, political activism, grief, friendship, wealth disparity, police brutality, addiction, and the media's depiction of African Americans. Parents should be prepared to discuss recent and past instances of police shootings, how they were covered in the media, dealing with grief, and possible reactions to the trauma revealed in the book. There is some swearing ("s--t" and f--k"), additional violence, sexual situations, and drug use in the book, but it's not gratuitous.

Dear Martin by Nic Stone

Nic Stone's *Dear Martin* tells the story of an Ivy League-bound African-American student named Justyce who becomes a victim of racial profiling. He struggles to reconcile the fact that he's a "good kid" with suddenly being in police handcuffs. In the months that follow, Justyce confronts injustices and micro-aggressions he experiences at his mostly white prep school and the fallout from his brief detainment. There's violence, including boys getting into fights with punches thrown and lips bloodied, police brutality, a teen shot, an officer killed offstage, and racist experiences. There's some swearing (including "f--k" and "s--t"), teen drinking, and grief. Parents should be prepared to talk about current events, the Black Lives Matter movement, underage drinking, and stereotypes.

Monster by Walter Dean Myers

This book is about a teen on trial for murder. While part of the story is told as a movie script, it employs highly realistic writing, with both poor and proper grammar used appropriately for each character. Grainy photographs contribute to the realistic atmosphere. There is some gritty

Hillcrest Jr. High English class: Only 3 of the 15 books on this list were from the approved secondary book list

is terrified of being
reluctant
related issues,

Hey Kiddo by Jarret J Krosoczka

Parents need to know that *Hey, Kiddo* is by Jarrett J. Krosoczka, author-illustrator of a host of very funny and imaginative middle grade and picture books, including the graphic novel series *Lunch Lady*, but the target age for this book is teens. It's a frank but very moving memoir of growing up with a mom addicted to heroin. Though all is not bleak -- Jarrett's grandparents take him in, provide stability, and encourage his talent as an artist -- there's serious content. The mom is mostly absent -- she became addicted as a young teen and is in and out of rehab, halfway houses, and jail. The grandparents, though loving, are boozers, and when the grandmother hits the sauce, she swears and engages in coarse name-calling. Still, the overall feel of the book is hopeful and uplifting. Krosoczka gives credit to his grandparents and influential teachers, and even to his mom, in reproductions of actual letters and artwork she sent him at the time. This book will resonate strongly with kids affected by family substance abuse, but all can be stirred by this very moving redemptive human story.

Long Way Down by Jason Reynolds

Parents need to know that this is a graphic novel adaptation of Jason Reynolds' award-winning novel in verse. As he rides the elevator down from his sixth-floor apartment, Will remembers his older brother, recently killed in a street shooting. On each floor, Will meets various people who have been shot to death, and he must make up his mind whether to commit murder in return to avenge his brother's death. Each chapter depicts a shooting, and the illustrations are sometimes disturbing. There's mild swearing -- one or two instances of "hell," "damn," and "s--t" -- and little sexual content -- a reference to boys bragging about their experiences with girls. Teens sell drugs on the street. Riders in the elevator smoke cigarettes.

American Born Chinese

Parents need to know that Gene Luen Yang's *American Born Chinese* is the first graphic novel to be nominated for a National Book Award and the first to win the American Library Association's Michael L. Printz Award for young-adult literature. It's easy to see why: The art, clever story lines, and thoughtful messages about tolerance and acceptance make it a winner. There's some sexual innuendo, potty humor, kung fu fighting, and a fairly graphic scene in which a monk is impaled on a spear and put on a spit over a fire, though he's rescued. An over-the-top, stereotypical depiction of a

Chinese character -- and each of the protagonists' search for acceptance -- make this a better fit for teen readers who have the same struggles.

Wintergirls by Laurie Halse Anderson

Parents need to know this is a very, very intense and disturbing book. The two main characters, the "wintergirls" of the title, both have emotional problems that lead to and exacerbate their disorders. The book starts with Cassie dying from repetitive vomiting. The very graphic detail about their physical deterioration as the girls starve themselves is painful to read. Parents may find this award-winning book educational -- not only about the pressures today's teens feel, but also about the way these girls maintain their lies and how others enable them to do so.

The Impossible Knife of Memory by Laurie Halse Anderson

Parents need to know that The Impossible Knife of Memory is about a girl living with her father, a veteran of Afghanistan and Iraq who suffers intense post-traumatic stress disorder. He recalls the horrors of war, including seeing a woman with no face after an explosion and bombing a house full of women and children by mistake. An alcoholic, he's also violent at home, punching the wall, stabbing the furniture, getting in bar fights, and attempting suicide. His daughter, Hayley, remembers him shooting a TV set in a hotel room. There's some swearing, teen drug experimentation, and an encounter in which Hayley and her boyfriend nearly have sex but don't. The book could spark thoughtful discussions about veterans and how to best support them and their families.

Turtles All the Way Down by John Green

Parents need to know that Turtles All the Way Down is best-selling author John Green's first novel since 2012's runaway success, The Fault in Our Stars. While that book tackled the issue of teens with cancer, this book centers on a protagonist suffering from anxiety and obsessive-compulsive thoughts and behavior. Green, who has publicly shared he also has OCD, based the main character's struggles on his own lived experience. As in all of Green's books, the teen characters are unabashed nerds: incredibly intelligent, well read, and able to discuss everything from architecture and visual art to philosophy and microbiology with as much ease as they talk about Star Wars trivia and the joys of fanfiction. There is nothing age-inappropriate in the book, so expect a smattering of strong language (including occasional use of "f--k" and "s---t") and some brief kissing scenes, but no sex. Parents who read this book with their teens should have a host of topics to discuss with them, starting with the importance of adolescent mental health.

Memory of Light by Francisco X Stork

Parents need to know The Memory of Light, by Francisco X. Stork (Marcelo in the Real World), tells the story of Vicky, a teen who has been unknowingly grappling with depression. The story follows Vicky as she recovers from a suicide attempt and works to understand how to move forward with her life. She meets other teens who are dealing with different forms of mental illness, and all have challenges in their home lives. Readers get an unflinching take on what it's

like to live with mental illness and how hard it is to explain it to friends and family. The book has a strong cultural fight involving a diverse cast of characters, including a transgender character, a character with a stutter, and a character who uses a wheelchair. The book also features a character who is a member of the LGBTQ+ community. The book is a great choice for readers who are looking for diverse characters. At the end of the book, the author provides several resources for suicide prevention.

Hillcrest Jr. High English class: Only 3 of the 15 books on this list were from the approved secondary book list

Highly Illogical Behavior by John Corey Whaley

Parents need to know that Highly Illogical Behavior by John Corey Whaley (Noggin') is the story of a teen boy with agoraphobia (fear of open or public places), anxiety, and panic disorder who hasn't left the house in three years. Lisa, a teen girl who witnessed the meltdown that preceded his decision to never leave home, decides to seek him out, but she has an ulterior motive. She wants to cure him and use the experience in a scholarship application essay. When she enlists the help of her boyfriend, things get a little more complicated. What follows is a story of friendship, duplicity, and coming of age. The book is filled with positive messages and characters, as Solomon has a great support network in his family. Some teens kiss. There's no violence. Characters swear infrequently (including "s---t," "f--k," "a--hole," "bitch"). No drinking, drugs, or smoking are shown. There's a positive portrayal of a boy coming out as gay to his friends and family.

Challenger Deep by Neil Shusterman

Parents need to know that Challenger Deep is a stand-alone novel by Neal Shusterman, author of The Windward Dystology. It deals frankly with issues surrounding teenage mental illness. Caden, the narrator, experiences paranoid and delusional thinking and is hospitalized. A character attempts suicide. Violence in the book is mostly imaginary and centered on a fantastical ship on which the captain and his parrot want to kill each other. Language is mild, with an instance or two each of "hell," "damn," "bastard," and "ass." Sexual content is limited to hand-holding and one night of cuddling in bed. Caden's parents are mildly intoxicated in one scene. Caden takes a "cocktail" of prescribed medications, and the regimen helps him heal.

Darius the Great is Not Okay by Adib Khorram

Parents need to know that Adib Khorram's utterly captivating cross-cultural coming-of-age novel Darius the Great Is Not Okay chronicles a few life-changing weeks in the life of Darius Grover Kellner, a half-Persian half-American sophomore at a Portland, Oregon, high school. Darius is fat, taking medication for clinical depression, verbally bullied, and friendless. And it's just not at school where Darius feels left out. His relationship with his father consists of watching a single Star Trek episode together each evening. But when the family makes a trip to Iran to visit his mother's dying father, Darius unexpectedly makes a friend. The story stays away from politics (one character has a father who's a political prisoner) and focuses instead on family, friends, and the rhythm of everyday life in Iran. This is a must-read for any teen who's ever felt left out or struggled to fit in. The novel has won numerous awards, including the 2019 Morrison Award,

Hillcrest Jr. High English class: Only 3 of the 15 books on this list were from the approved secondary book list

presented by the Young Adult Library Services Association to an outstanding first-time author writing for teens.

I am Malala: Young Reader's Edition by Malala Yousafzai

Parents need to know that *I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up For Education and Changed the World* is a memoir by Malala Yousafzai, co-written with Patricia McCormick. Malala was born in Pakistan in 1997 and became a household word in 2012, when she was shot at point-blank range by a member of the Taliban on her way home from school for advocating education for girls. She later was a co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize and now lives in England with her family because it's not safe for them to return to Pakistan. Malala tells of being inspired at a young age to stand up for what was right, encouraged by her schoolteacher father; of the scary realities of life under the Taliban; and of squabbles with her brothers and tiffs with her friends as she becomes a symbol for the right of girls (and all kids) to get an education. She doesn't remember anything about being shot, and there's little gory detail. The underlying violence of life in Pakistan, particularly against people the Taliban don't approve of, looms throughout and may be too much for sensitive kids. It's an inspiring first-person story of what one teen can accomplish – and what it costs her and her loved ones.

Riverview Jr. High, 9th grade English class, only 4 out of 14 books are from the approved list:

9th Grade Term 2 Literature Circles 2021-2022

Parents and Guardians:

In past years, ninth-grade students at Riverview Jr. High have read *To Kill a Mockingbird* as a class. In more recent years, we have organized literature circles in order to provide more student choice in reading. *To Kill a Mockingbird* is still available for students to read, but we are also offering some other current young adult novels. A few of the book choices available have strong language and/or mature content. For this reason, I would like my students to discuss these books with a parent or guardian before making their top three choices. Below are descriptions of each novel, in case you are concerned about content. Please discuss the book options and fill out the form together. If you have any further questions or concerns, please email me at jcuka@murrayschools.org.

Directions:

Step 1: Read through and discuss the books listed below together.

Step 2: Write down your top three book choices on the attached form (in order of preference).

Step 3: Turn in your form by Tuesday, Nov. 23.

Book Choices:

1. *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee (district approved)
Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* examines racism through the eyes of children Jem and Scout Finch in Great Depression-era Alabama, when a black man goes on trial for the rape of a white woman. There's some intense material in this Pulitzer Prize winner, first published in 1960: A drunk breaks a kid's arm and is killed with a knife; the children are stalked; and Atticus and his children face down a lynch mob in the middle of the night. But this is a true American classic and one of our most eloquent appeals for tolerance and justice. Be aware that the n-word is used in the novel.
2. *Mississippi Trial 1955* by Chris Crowe (district approved)
At first Hiram is excited to visit his hometown in Mississippi. But soon after he arrives, he crosses paths with Emmett Till, a black teenager from Chicago who is also visiting for the summer, and Hiram sees firsthand how the local whites mistreat blacks who refuse to "know their place." When Emmett's tortured dead body is found floating in a river, Hiram is determined to find out who could do such a thing. But what will it cost him to know? *Mississippi Trial, 1955* is a gripping read, based on true events that helped spark the Civil Rights Movement. Be aware that the n-word is used in the novel.
3. *Genesis Begins Again* by Alicia D. Williams (district approved)
Genesis Begins Again, the debut novel by Alicia D. Williams, received a 2020 Newbery Honor and the 2020 Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe Award for New Talent (Author). It's about a 13-year-old African American girl in Detroit who learns to love herself despite two main problems: her father's gambling and alcohol addictions, which lead to the family's repeated evictions, and her family's "tradition" of prizing the light skin of her mother and grandmother and looking down on the dark skin of Genesis and her father. There are some potentially disturbing scenes of Genesis trying to lighten her skin by rubbing lemons on it, scrubbing herself raw with exfoliant, bathing in bleach, and using commercial

skin-bleaching creams. There's occasional strong language by the parents ("damn," "hell," "Oh, God!") and slurs and mean nicknames about people's skin color.

4. *Just Mercy* (young adult version) by Bryan Stevenson
In this young adult adaptation of the acclaimed bestselling *Just Mercy: A True Story of the Fight for Justice*, Bryan Stevenson delves deep into the broken U.S. justice system, detailing from his personal experience his many challenges and efforts as a lawyer and social advocate, especially on behalf of the most rejected and marginalized people in the United States. A man's execution is described briefly. There is some mention of sexual abuse, but the author does not go into detail.

5. *Dear Martin* by Nic Stone

Dear Martin tells the story of an Ivy League-bound African-American student named Justyce who becomes a victim of racial profiling. He struggles to reconcile the fact that he's a "good kid" with suddenly being in police handcuffs. The book contains violence (a teen shot and an officer killed), swearing (including "f-k" and "s--t"), teen drinking, and grief. It mentions the Black Lives Matter movement and racial stereotypes.

6. *Born a Crime* by Trevor Noah

Born a Crime is a memoir written by Trevor Noah, the host of the *Daily Show*. Noah grew up as the ultimate outsider: the son of a black South African mother and a white European father, at a time when laws under Apartheid made it illegal for mixed-race couples to marry or have children. The book explores gender roles, and the relationships between different factions within the black community, as well as between blacks and whites and "colored" (mixed race) people. There are incidents of disturbing violence against Trevor and his mother, who's beaten and shot by his stepfather. Abel, the stepfather, is frequently drunk and has a history of marijuana use. Trevor describes the petty crimes he committed as a young adult, as well: He and his friends were loan sharks and music pirates before Trevor began his career as a comedian. The book contains profanity in English and in other languages.

7. *Call Me By My Name* by John Ed Bradley

Set in Louisiana in the 1960s in a town slow to desegregate. Three students form a friendship that is accepted on the football field, but is not accepted off the field. As the town learns to accept a black quarterback, some changes may be too difficult to accept for this town. Some swearing.

8. *Getting Away with Murder* by Chris Crowe (To be read with *Mississippi Trial 1955*)
Crowe (*Mississippi Trial, 1955*) revisits the subject of his debut novel, this time as nonfiction, with an even more searing impact. He builds a strong argument that "the outrage that followed [Emmett's] death and the acquittal of his murderers finally launched the movement to combat racism in the United States." The opening scene, reconstructed from court statements and documents, tells how 14-year-old Emmett Till was taken from his great-uncle's Mississippi home, where the boy was visiting from Chicago, to be killed by two white men. Emmett's crime: he had allegedly whistled at and made "ugly remarks" to a white woman" in a 1955 segregated South where whites were still bristling from the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. The narrative then slows a bit to paint the historical scene, but quickly gains

Riverview Jr. High, 9th grade English class, only 4 out of 14 books are from the approved list:

momentum again as Crowe compellingly describes Emmett's perspective, coming from an experience of comparative freedom in the north, as he entered the world of his southern relatives, thus setting a backdrop for tensions to unfold.

9. *Does My Head Look Big in This* by Randa Abdel-Fattah

Amal, who lives in Australia, faces religious and racial prejudice, including kids on the playground who tell the "darkies" to go home. She gets frustrated trying to explain that every Muslim is not a terrorist. The book addresses Islamic religious practices and customs, including misconceptions, and is very positive about the symbolism of the hijab that Amal decides to wear to school, emphasizing how empowered she feels wearing "this cloth [that] binds us in some kind of universal sisterhood." Amal doesn't drink or date boys, though other teens in the book drink and smoke.

10. *All American Boys* by Jason Reynolds

All American Boys, by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely, is an eye-opening view of an assault by a police officer on a 16-year-old boy as seen through the alternating perspectives of the abused and a teen witness to his beating. It was named a 2016 Coretta Scott King Author Honor Book. There's racial tension, and violence includes a boy beaten by an adult (with severe injuries described), fights between boys, threats, and swearing (including "s--t" and "f--k").

11. *Warriors Don't Cry* by Melba Pattillo Beals

The story is Melba's autobiography. She signed up to Integrate Central High, an all white school in 1957, times were very tough they needed the national guard to protect the black students in the school from the rebelling white community. There is some violence and discussion of rape, but not described in detail. Be aware that the n-word is used.

12. *Saints and Misfits* by S. K. Ali

15-year-old Muslim American teen Janna Yusuf is trying her best to navigate fitting into the new families created by her Egyptian mother and Indian father's divorce, a tough math class, mean girls, and a crush on a boy who might not be right for her. Janna has decided to wear a hijab, but for the ethnically diverse friends and neighbors that inhabit Janna's life, her religion is simply one part of what makes up the kind, smart, and strong girl they know. When Janna's secure world is shattered by an attempted sexual assault, she first struggles and then becomes determined to fight back and hold her attacker accountable. There's some strong language ("h--l," "bulls--t," "a--hole," and "b--ch").

13. *Blended* by Sharon Draper

A multilayered story about 11-year old Isabella, who's growing up biracial, dealing with divorce and co-parenting, and navigating micro-aggressions as a person of color. A girl is shot and blood is shown. The book discusses family dynamics, being an ally, and police brutality. No language concerns.

14. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* by Sherman Alexie

This National Book Award winner presents a powerful look at the life of Native Americans on reservation, and the struggles one teen faces in an effort to escape. There is some gritty material

December 9, 2021 - Email from Murray Parents Rights Council

Finally, some teachers are circumventing the literature committee book review process by putting unapproved books into the classroom through small groups. We believe this practice violates IN 304. Books that are read in a small group in conjunction with a classroom assignment are "non-textbook primary instructional materials." That definition specifically includes novels "that are read in their entirety either for class assignments or read aloud to the class for discussion." When teachers are giving students an option to read a novel from a book list, as part of a small group, the novel is still being read in its entirety for a class assignment. As non-textbook primary instructional materials, any books read and discussed by a small group should first be approved by the District through the literature review committees.

In our view, books assigned by teachers for small groups are not independent reading materials because they are not just "reading materials, which are stored in classrooms and available for self-selection." The term independent reading materials refers to books "made available" to students for independent reading and not to books being read and discussed by a small group as part of a reading assignment. We look forward to your re-consideration and re-evaluation of IN 304 and how it is currently being applied.

Sincerely,
Murray Parents Rights Council

January 2022 - Robin Williams' reply

Dear MPRC:

Thank you for your patience with the holiday and our very packed schedule.

In response to your questions regarding **library books**, please note that board policy, *IN 303*, allows for a parent to restrict their own child's access. Our *library administrative procedures* ensure we follow the legal precedents while allowing a parent to request reconsideration of materials which eliminates access for all students.

The use of literature circles, which provide options for reading within a classroom falls under *Independent Reading Materials, IN 304*. These literature circle books have been reviewed by teacher teams to ensure they meet standards and objectives. At times, the principal and myself have also been involved. Teachers are expected to notify parents when students are selecting *INDEPENDENT READING MATERIALS* for a literature circle. Subsequently, you're encouraged to work directly with your child's teacher if you would like to request an alternative for your child.

Lastly, I have shared your suggested list of titles with our three secondary librarians and they have assured me they will consider your list.

Kind regards,

Robin Williams

Other emails regarding parental consent

Is parental input valued?

Date : 1/10/2021 9:00:29 AM
From : "Vanessa Jobe"
To : "Sarah Paul"
Cc : "Whitney Anderson"
Subject : Re: Books read for the Equity Class

Hi Sarah! No this was correct. You do not need permission to read that book. This email is interesting... Do we need parent permission to talk about cisgender students? That is pretty much what the parent is saying right there.

Also please wait for Whitney to check out the response below before you send it. :)

So here is how I would respond.



Thank you for reaching out with your concern. As a school and district we are focusing on equity and antiracist work. Reading books about all people is part of this. Additionally, we learn about equity during our Wednesday Second Steps curriculum. If you would rather not participate in the lessons we can work something out.

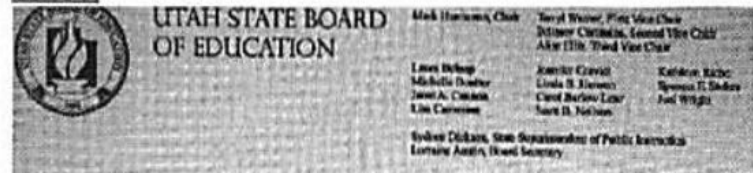
Learning about transgender, gay and straight people in developmentally appropriate ways is part of our district and school. Here is a link to Julian is a Mermaid. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E44zjYyxnWg>

Please let me know how I can support you further. Principal Anderson and Vice Principal Jobe are also more than willing to support with this as well.

We also follow state administrative code and guidelines around transgender issues: I attached some of the guidelines below.

Thank you again for reaching out with your concern,
Sarah

<https://www.ksl.com/article/50024398/state-school-board-urged-to-engage-in-anti-racist-practices-so-students-feel-safe-and-welcome-at-school>



Date : 1/13/2021 7:42:04 AM
From : "Darren Dean"
To : "Vanessa Jobe"
Cc : "Jennifer Covington", "Whitney Anderson"
Subject : Re: Response I did not send

Not asking for parent consent to talk about transgender students. Just the continued transparency and advanced notification.

Thanks - Darren :)

On Tue, Jan 12, 2021 at 7:01 PM Vanessa Jobe <vjobe@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Yes and Whitney and I are happy to communicate in that way. We have done equity practices since the start of school.

I want to ensure we are not asking for parent consent to talk about transgender students because we do not ask for parent consent to talk about any other students represented in our classrooms. A big part of her concern was "sexual preference and sexual orientation;" when reading about students in the LGBTQIA+ community we never sexualize them, just as we do not sexualize female students. Or male. That would not be appropriate whatsoever. The only time there is any sexualization of students is maturation.

All the books and all the calendar items were communicated via parent square in September. We will add them to our website to continue advanced notification.

Here is a great document for the reasoning around these practices if the board would like to take a look:

Fact Sheet (US Department of Education Policy):

<https://www.transequality.org/sites/default/files/ED-DCL-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

The last message I sent the parent was this:

Yes, it is a great idea to have the equity topic announced on teacher's weekly communication. We will work on doing that as a school! We appreciate the support of all of our students and furthering these conversations at home.

She messaged me and said that this was a great start and thank you 3 times.

Thank you

On Tue, Jan 12, 2021 at 4:54 PM Darren Dean <ddean@murrayschools.org> wrote:

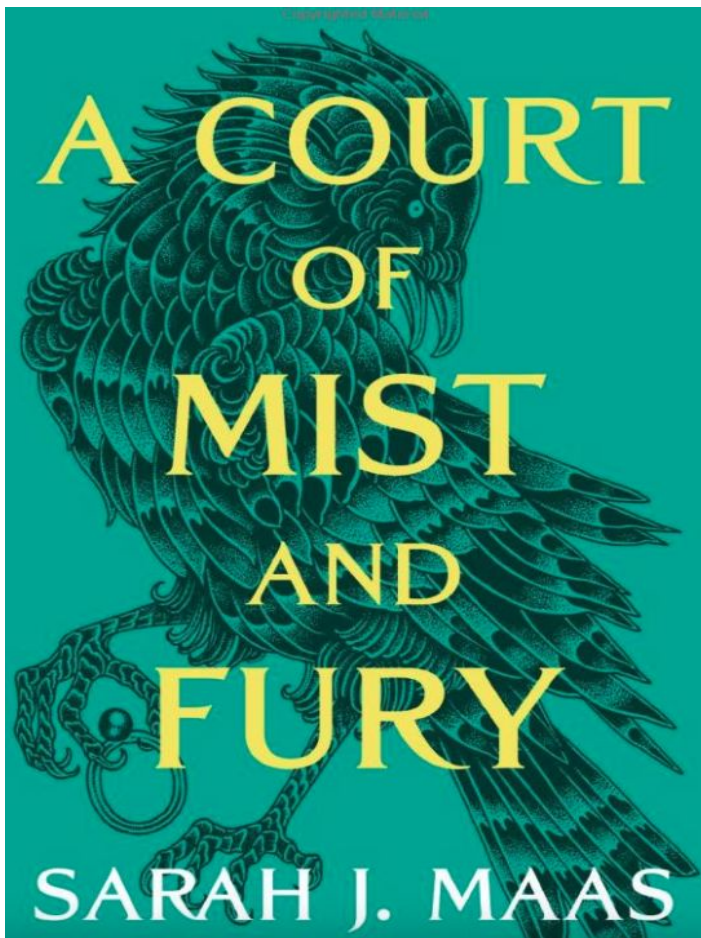
After reviewing the email thread and books, I believe that this parent wants transparency when equity topics are being pursued that might utilize additional resources. Meaning, the parent would be notified in advance if an equity topic is going to be discussed further using additional resources (e.g. book, video clip), so that they can be prepared to have a discussion with their student. The advanced notification would be our best practice.

Thanks for all the work you are doing around equity and for making sure every child is valued!

Darren :)

Darren Dean
Director of Personnel & Student Services

Pornographic Books in our School Libraries



Found in Murray High

Sample paragraphs below.

Wholly naked, I watched as he unbuttoned his pants, and the considerable length of him sprang free. My mouth went dry at the sight of it. I wanted him, wanted every glorious inch of him in me, wanted to claw at him until our souls were forged together.

He hardened against me, and I groaned into his mouth. The sound snapped whatever leash he'd had on himself, and Rhysand scooped me up in a smooth movement before laying me flat on the table—amongst and on top of all the paints. He deepened the kiss, and I wrapped my legs around his back, hooking him closer. He tore his lips from my mouth to my neck, where he dragged his teeth and tongue down my skin as his hands slid under my sweater and went up, up, to cup my breasts. I arched into the touch and lifted my arms as he peeled away my sweater in one easy motion. Rhys pulled back to survey me, my body naked from the waist up. Paint soaked into my hair, my arms. But all I could think of was his mouth as it lowered to my breast and sucked, his tongue flicking against my nipple. I plunged my fingers into his hair, and he braced a hand against my head—smack.

'So charged with pain
and wonder that the
novel becomes poetry'

New York Times

The Bluest Eye

Toni
Morrison

AUTHOR OF BELOVED

VINTAGE

The tenderness welled up in him, and he sank to his knees, his eyes on the foot of his daughter. Crawling on all fours toward her, he raised his hand and caught the foot in an upward stroke. Pecola lost her balance and was about to careen to the floor. Cholly raised his other hand to her hips to save her from falling. He put his head down and nibbled at the back of her leg. His mouth trembled at the firm sweetness of the flesh. He closed his eyes, letting his fingers dig into her waist. The rigidity of her shocked body, the silence of her stunned throat, was better than Pauline's easy laughter had been. The confused mixture of his memories of Pauline and the doing of a wild and forbidden thing excited him, and a bolt of desire ran down his genitals, giving it length, and softening the lips of his anus. Surrounding all of this lust was a border of politeness. He wanted to fuck her – tenderly. But the tenderness would not hold. The tightness of her vagina was more than he could bear. His soul seemed to slip down to his guts and fly out into her, and the gigantic thrust he made into her then provoked the only sound she made – a hollow suck of air in the back of her throat. Like the rapid loss of air from a circus balloon. Following the disintegration – the falling away – of sexual desire, he was conscious of her wet, soapy hands on his wrists, the fingers clenching, but whether her grip was from a hopeless but stubborn struggle to be free, or from some other emotion, he could not tell. Removing himself from her was so painful to him he cut it short and snatched his genitals out of the dry harbor of her vagina. She appeared to have fainted. Cholly stood up and could see only her grayish panties, so sad and limp around her ankles. Again the hatred mixed with tenderness. The hatred would not let him pick her up, the tenderness forced him to cover her. So when the child regained consciousness, she was lying on the kitchen floor under a heavy quilt, trying to connect the pain between her legs with the face of her mother looming over her. (162-163)

Found in Murray High

milk and honey

rupi kaur



even when you undress her
you are searching for me
i am sorry i
taste so good
when the two of you
make love it is
still my name
that rolls off your
tongue accidently



i am learning
how to love him
by loving myself



you
have been
taught your legs
are a pit stop for men
that need a place to rest
a vacant body empty enough
for guests but no one
ever comes and is
willing to
stay

Found in Murray
High

"This sexy, smart, tender romance thrums with punk rock and true love.
Readers will swoon for Eleanor & Park"

- Gayle Forman, *New York Times* bestselling author of *If I Stay* and *Where She Went*



rainbow rowell

"Sit down," he said. It came out angrily. The girl turned to him, like she couldn't tell whether he was another jerk or what. "Jesus-f*ck," Park said softly, nodding to the space next to him, "just sit down."

"It so f*cking does!" Steve shouted behind him.

"Drunken Money style, man, it's a real f*cking thing. You can kill somebody with it...." You're full of sh*t." "You're full of sh*t," Steve said. "What the f*ck does Sheridan know about kung fu?: Mikey said. "Are you retarded?" Steve said. "His mom's Chinese." Mikey looked at Park carefully. Park smiled and narrowed his eyes. "Yea, I guess I see it," Mikey said. "I always thought you were Mexican." "Shit, Mikey," Steve said, you're such a f*cking racist."

"Do you think we should get in the back seat? She pushed off of him and slid over the back seat. God, it was huge, it was glorious. Not even a second later, Park landed on top of her." Ch. 45, Pg 275.

"Suck me off." Ch 48, Pg 282

Found in Murray High and Riverview Jr. High

"A mesmerizing, punch-in-the-gut story."
—LAURIE HALSE ANDERSON



"I tiptoed toward the door, peering through the window at the boy — his pants around his ankles — squeezed between April's straddled legs as she lay on top of a teacher's desk," the passage reads.

"I gripped his arms and flipped him around, pushing him against the wall," another excerpt reads. "I took a deep breath before dropping down on my shaking knees, the ground cold."

Other passages tell of severe domestic violence scenarios in which the narrator justifies brutally beating, starving, and keeping a young woman captive.

"I came home early from babysitting and see her coming out of some car in these tight-a** little shorts, talking fast, telling my she's about to leave me. I grabbed her by the neck and started punching her. She wanted to be all big and bad, trying to face me like a grown-a** woman, she's gonna get beat like a grown woman," the book reads. "I threw her in the closet for a couple of days. She kept on screaming, begging to be let out, begging for water. Every time she made too much noise, I'd walk in and kick her."

**Parents make public
comment about
pornographic books in
Murray School Board
meeting**

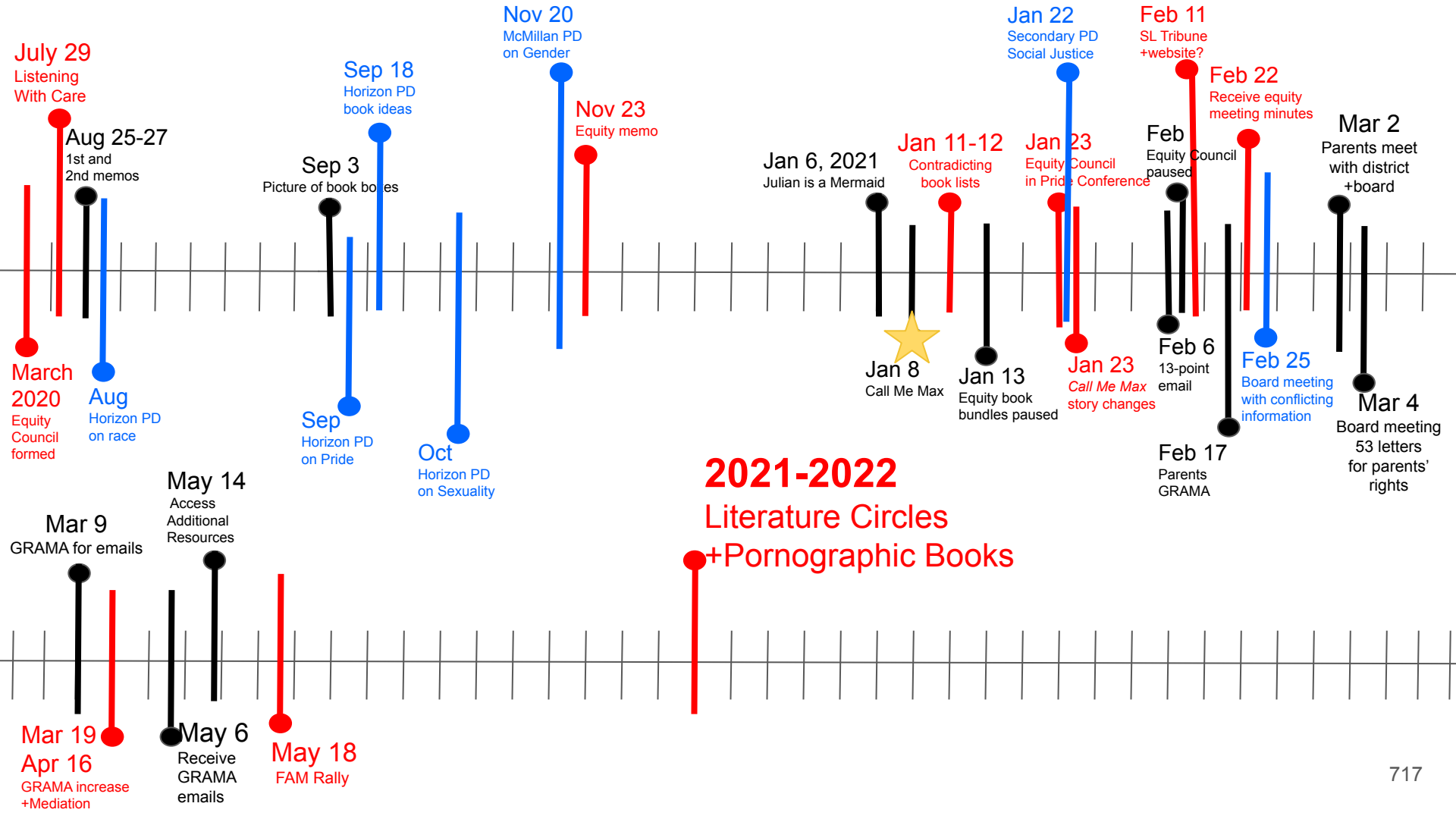
January 13, 2022

A Zoom meeting is taking place in a conference room. Several people are seated around a long wooden table. A large projection screen at the front of the room displays a presentation with horizontal lines. The room has recessed ceiling lights and a white wall. A text overlay is centered on the screen.

**Unfortunately, two of my children
have also been sexually
assaulted. My**

zoom

Zoom Meeting



**Is EQUITY “inclusive”
of everyone?**

Email from parent to Jen Covington. Thu, Jan 28, 2021

I also know that there have been parents who have asked to be on the district equity committee but were told no because they weren't "diverse" enough. This blows my mind honestly. What is the vetting process for this committee? In Murray's presentation at this convention, they shared that you should get "like-minded people" on your committee. That seems like a step backwards to me especially when it comes to equity and concerns me that they can pick and choose who they want and do whatever they want (Even break state and federal law concerning parental rights and sexually based education.) In an equity committee, I feel you should have people from all walks of life and be accepting to those who are willing to join you.

Date : 9/9/2020 2:35:18 PM
From : "Vanessa Jobe"
To : "Karen Peterson" , "Whitney Anderson" , "Jamie Booth"
Subject : My White Child is Being Left Out By Learning About Other Cultures Response :)

Hi!

I have had two concerns with this language "My white child will feel lesser learning about antiracist education. I need more information". Here is my response to it. If this looks okay to you guys maybe we can just use it as a go to? Or make corrections! What do you think?

Thank you for reaching out with your concern. The following book list is all books included in the bundles beginning in Special Education and then building from 1st through 6th grade. Each grade level has 5 books. These lessons are taught during our Second Steps lessons on Wednesdays.

I understand that you are concerned that your white child will not have space or feel lesser in learning about other cultures. The purpose of these book boxes is to appreciate our differences in order to identify empathy of experiences of others and find commonality with those differences. Antiracist education does not demean or leave out white students. The great thing about our restorative lessons with the book boxes is that children have time to reflect on their own culture as they learn about another culture. We are celebrating all backgrounds with the access of the new books. Please reach out if you have further concerns.

Date : 1/10/2021 8:40:09 AM
From : "Vanessa Jobe"
To : "Sarah Paul"
Subject : Re: Julian is a Mermaid

Sarah! I am so sorry I am just seeing this. Do you have my cell number? [REDACTED]

I will come find you first thing on Monday and will support you with a response. Or I am happy to call the parent myself. :)

No I don't think it will turn into a bigger issue. And if it does maybe public school is not the correct place for their child.

We read about people who are transgender because there are inclusive laws... and it is the right thing to do. You did perfect. I will help you!
Vanessa

On Sat, Jan 9, 2021 at 7:37 PM Sarah Paul <spaul@murrayschools.org> wrote:

Hi Vanessa,

Sorry to bother you on the weekend, but I'm freaking out a little. Last night I forwarded you an email I received from a parent about me reading Julian is a Mermaid to the class. This parent was upset, and believes transgender conversations are too mature. Hers is the only email I've received so far, but I know parents all talk to each other. I don't know how to proceed or make things better.

I am getting in my own head a bit worried about how this will all turn out. Do you think this will turn in to a big thing?

Sorry again,
Sarah Paul

--
Vanessa Jobe, Ed.D.
Horizon Elementary Assistant Principal
(she/her/ hers)
801.264.7420

Date : 1/13/2021 8:53:24 AM
From : "Vanessa Jobe"
To : "Sarah Paul"
Subject : Listen

Nooooo worries Sarah. You supported your transgender students. If they do not like that they are welcome to leave Horizon. We do not shift equity practices. We support all students.
Hang tough do not be alarmed!

Vanessa

--

Vanessa Jobe, Ed.D.
Horizon Elementary Assistant Principal
(she/her/ hers)
801.264.7420

Date : 10/13/2020 4:21:10 PM
From : "Cara Cerise"
To : "Vanessa Jobe"
Subject : Chapter books
Attachment : Inclusive book project.docx;

Hello again!

Question for you. I have been keeping a list of inclusive picture books and chapter books that I want for my classroom/life. I have checked a bunch of them out at the library and have listened to a few on Audible. I am trying to get Heather N. to buy some class sets for novel studies and wanting to pick 2 or 3 really good chapter books.

When I got to 3rd grade here they read Charlotte's Web (white Christian girl on a farm), Stone Fox (white boy, also in a rural setting. There's a whole bunch of problematic shit about Native American stereotypes), and Because of Winn-Dixie (a beautiful book but also featuring a white Christian protagonist in a small town).

I have kept Because of Winn-Dixie but got rid of the other two. We were able to buy a class set of Save Me a Seat (protagonist is from India and moves to the U.S.) and I also read A Boy Called Bat with my class last year (protagonist is on the Autism Spectrum. He is also white). I would love to add some awesome chapter books with protagonists of color and LGBTQ characters. I have a list of several I have looked up but I haven't read all of them yet.

Anyway, this is all to ask you if you have any suggestions. I am going to be doing some more research over fall break.

I want some good ones for whole class study and smaller literature circle groups. I cannot stand only being able to pick from the Box Car Children, Ramona Quimby, Frindle, Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing, Third Grade Angels, Sarah Plain and Tall, Judy Moody, etc. EVERY SINGLE MAIN CHARACTER IS WHITE (if not every character in the entire book)! Not to mention able-bodied, from English speaking backgrounds, and with heteronormative families.

I'll attach the list I have if you're interested. They're organized by picture books and chapter books. You'll notice a lot of the titles.

Not urgent. Just thought I'd ask around!

Thanks!

Date : 2/19/2021 9:10:23 PM
From : "Jaren Cooper"
To : "Jennifer Covington"
Subject : Re: Records Request for Equity Leadership and Council Meeting Minutes

Jen,

Thanks for sharing these. After my first reading I have a couple of thoughts. please recognize that it may be hard to understand the full intent of a discussion just off reading the minutes.

1. I do think we should share this with all board members as any one of us could be approached and asked questions related to these minutes and I don't think any of us have reviewed them. Which isn't any different from any other committee within the district.
2. I think there are some things that are very positive with respect to what an equity council can do to support underserved and marginalized populations..
3. I would agree that there may be some areas of concern regarding some topics or the amount of emphasis on some topics, while not addressing others. Again, that just may not be represented in the minutes.
4. I appreciate that they mentioned parent involvement and I know it said that they would reach out to schools for names. I believe they did based on there being at least a few parents involved. While they talked about getting more parents involved. It hadn't perhaps got to that point of having more parents being involved and I question if that should have happened before we rolled out as quickly as we did.
5. Minutes seemed to be focused on a few of the leadership within the council and not much from other general members. But I may not be aware of who everyone is that is mentioned on the council.
6. It's disappointing that an equity council is being asked to educate district staff and students on how to dialogue in a safe and inclusive manner. Mention the Board as "a few white folk" when they received pushback on some aspects. Just seems counter to what they are claiming to stand for as a council. I truly believe that we are trying to find the best way to make all staff and students feel safe and included within the District. Without unintentionally marginalizing or making judgements based on anyone's race.

I agree that we need to consider a structure that ensures inclusiveness for all and provides resources for staff, students and allows for reasonable involvement of parents.

Thanks for all you are doing to work through this.

Jaren

----- Forwarded message -----
From: Jaren Cooper <jcooper@murrayschools.org>
Date: Thu, 11 Feb 2021 10:00:13 -0700
Subject: Re: Equity Council/Books
To: Elizabeth Payne <epayne@murrayschools.org>

Elizabeth,

This has been a very complex issue for the District leadership. The decision to suspend the book bundles was not something we voted on because we never voted to accept them. The District had not made the Administrative decision to proceed yet some teachers/administrators proceeded to incorporate them into their classrooms. So the stopping of the book bundles was to make sure the District had a solid process in place for what books are determined to be appropriate in our classrooms for each grade level etc.

I was contacted about what the district wanted to do with some of the books that were associated with the this new "Book Bundle". It wasn't a vote type of decision but to make the Board President aware and ask my opinion if we thought they were okay to continue to use. Many of these books are related to black history. The district wanted to make sure we were supportive of Black History Month during this challenge time. I was supportive. I didn't move forward with asking others as I felt confident that you and other Board members would be supportive of allowing these books to be used as many of them had been in our libraries for years.

The Equity Committee is on pause with moving anything else forward partly due to how the book bundles were presented at the conference and to parents. Secondly, I don't think there was a solid communication process put in place for how information regarding anything related to the Equity Council was going to promote or address equity in the classrooms to our community. Hence much of the backlash from the community occurred as they start to fill in the gaps. Lastly, due to how some of this occurred and some of the initial communication to parents at a school(s) the District felt like they needed put a more formalized reporting structure in place. This is to ensure we don't unintentionally violate policies or create situations that are misrepresented or interrupted different than what truly occurred or is happening.

MCS D has always tried to make sure the community/parents had a method to provide input or participate in councils. While there were a few community members on the council the district heard that there may have been others excluded from the council. It was unclear why they might have been excluded. Which is a little ironic if you are talking about a council that wants to encourage inclusiveness and fairness to all students.

So in order to simply get the council moving forward. It was felt that a temporary pause was necessary in order to get these issues addressed.

Much of this is an administrative level issue. There may be a few policies that will need to be reviewed and updated as a result of these events. That's when we will have the opportunity to truly vote on anything related. That being said, I can do better at keeping you in the loop. Also, please don't hesitate to reach out to me directly.

We will probably have a few parent statements read tonight expressing concerns on both sides of the argument. Our agenda is quite full so we will not have much discussion on this for tonight's meeting. We plan to use the Study Session in a couple of weeks to discuss this more thoroughly.

Jen, If I have missed anything or misstated please feel free to clarify.

Jaren

**How do teachers
feel about
equity?**

Are teachers in trouble if they don't go along?

Date : 1/13/2021 12:52:09 PM
From : "Vanessa Jobe"
To : "Darren Dean"
Subject : :)

Yes, we will call you after Whitney talks to the parent. I think it would be nice on Whitney and I's end to have some clarification about these two things.

1. Board Member Johnson said it was conveyed to her that teachers were informed in a faculty meeting that the administration didn't want parents informed about the books that are being read/discussed during the equity lessons.

The whole point of our equity work is to include everyone. Our community included. Do we have specifics on who that came from or do we need to address this as a full staff? Missy was at the meeting where we talked about LGBTQIA+ as a faculty. I said that parent consent was not needed to read about students of different backgrounds; but all the books, lessons were already communicated via parent square. That could be where the break down in communication happened.

2. Am I reading that it is expected that we going to keep a list of people who are opting out of their students learning about transgender and gay students?

Thanks for everything Darren. I really like your ideas on complete transparency but not consent.
Vanessa

--
Vanessa Jobe, Ed.D.
Horizon Elementary Assistant Principal
(she/her/ hers)
801.264.7420

Date : 1/15/2021 1:45:52 PM
From : "Whitney Anderson"
To : "horizonteachers"
Subject : New supports to Equity book bundles: please read

Teachers,

As I reflect on our equity work and book bundles I want to say thank you for knowing your students and needs of your classroom. Thank you for braving the unknown and being willing to have new conversations with students.

With that being said, I want to make sure that each of you feel confident in the material. Please know that if you do not feel comfortable (for any reason or at anytime) I would like to be able to navigate that with you. These topics and these books are in no way, shape or form meant to put pressure on teachers, students, or parents. If you have hesitations, I want to listen and work through it with you.

With this reflection I would like to put our book bundles on hold until I am able to make sure we are being proactive and not being reactive. First, I want to have conversations with teachers and make sure I understand where everyone is in this process. I would like to brainstorm ways we can make things better. Second, I would like to put a process in place to make sure we are transparent and communicating clearly with teachers, parents, and other community members. I'd like to discuss this plan with each of you in our grade level PLC.

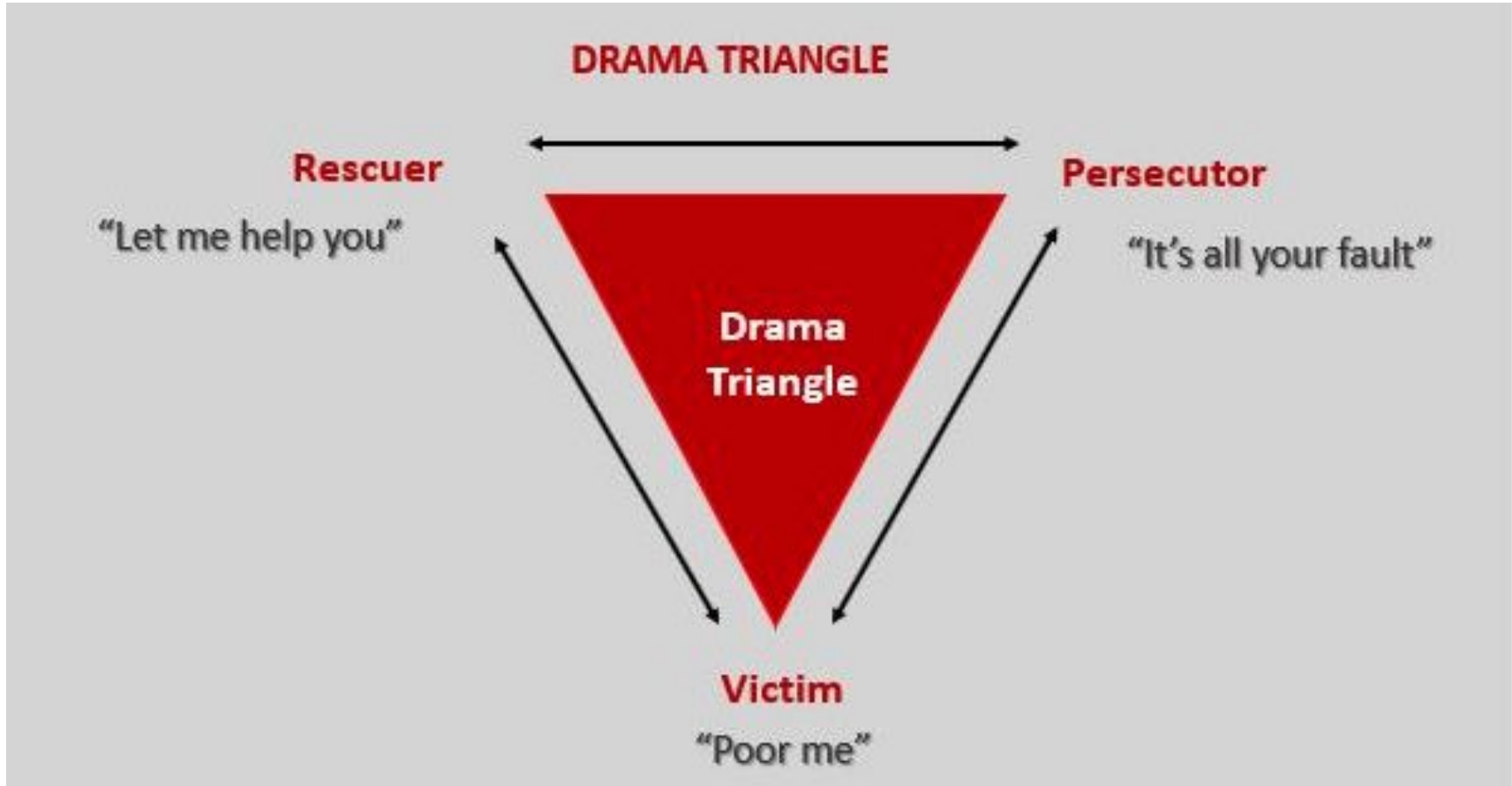
Please know that I am always available to talk and meet you where you are. Thank you for being part of HORIZON!

Mrs. Whitney Anderson
Principal - Horizon Elementary
801.264.7420



Diagram for dysfunctional and manipulative relationships

Commonly accepted, taught, and used in therapy. Developed by Stephen Karpman, 1960's



NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

HOW TO
BE AN
ANTIRACIST
IBRAM X.
KENDI

NATIONAL BOOK AWARD-WINNING
AUTHOR OF
STAMPED FROM THE BEGINNING



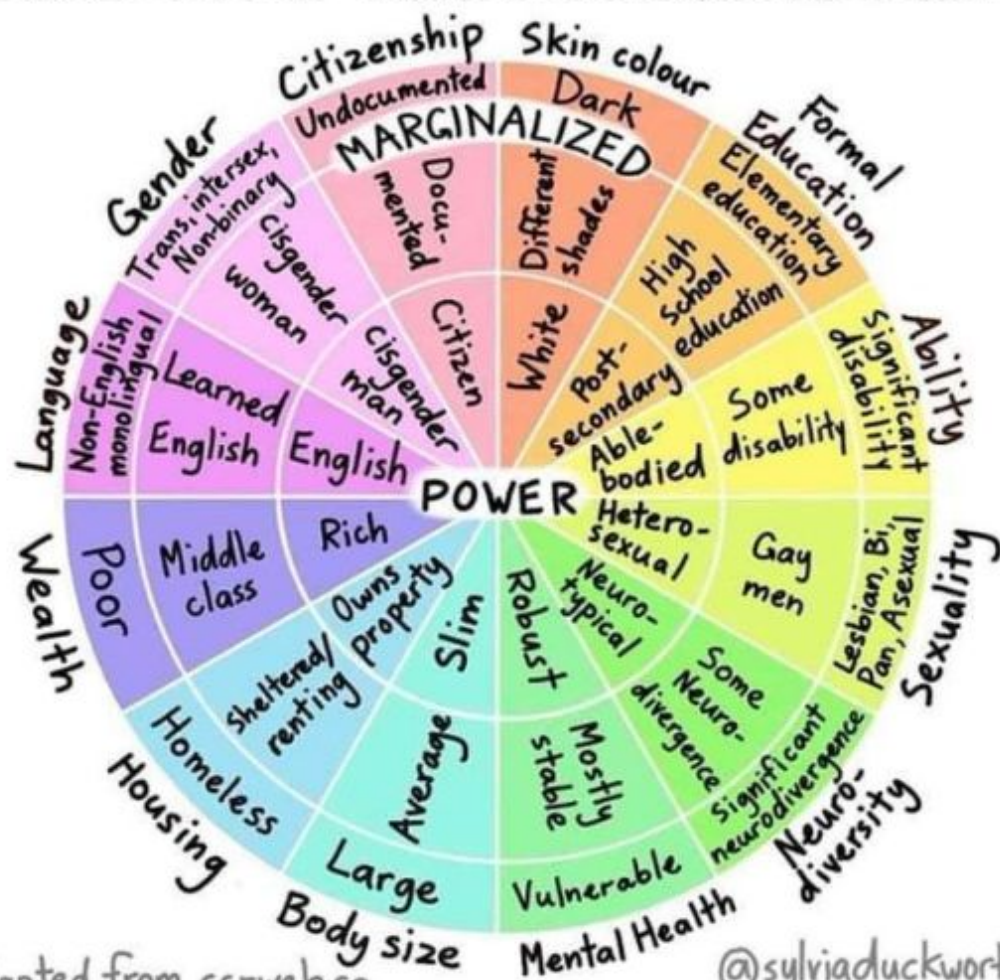
racial group, they are carrying out a policy or taking advantage of the lack of a protective policy. We all have the power to discriminate. Only an exclusive few have the power to make policy. Focusing on "racial discrimination" takes our eyes off the central agents of racism: racist policy and racist policymakers, or what I call racist power.

Since the 1960s, racist power has commandeered the term "racial discrimination," transforming the act of discriminating on the basis of race into an inherently racist act. But if racial discrimination is defined as treating, considering, or making a distinction in favor or against an individual based on that person's race, then racial discrimination is not inherently racist. The defining question is whether the discrimination is creating equity or inequity. If discrimination is creating equity, then it is antiracist. If discrimination is creating inequity, then it is racist. Someone reproducing inequity through permanently assisting an overrepresented racial group into wealth and power is entirely different than someone challenging that inequity by temporarily assisting an underrepresented racial group into relative wealth and power until equity is reached.

The only remedy to racist discrimination is antiracist discrimination. The only remedy to past discrimination is present discrimination. The only remedy to present discrimination is future discrimination. As President Lyndon B. Johnson said in 1965, "You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bring him up to the starting line of a race and then say, 'You are free to compete with all the others,' and still justly believe that you have been completely fair." As U.S. Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun wrote in 1978, "In order to get beyond racism, we must first take account of race. There is no other way. And in order to treat some persons equally, we must treat them differently."

The racist champions of racist discrimination engineered to

WHEEL OF POWER/PRIVILEGE

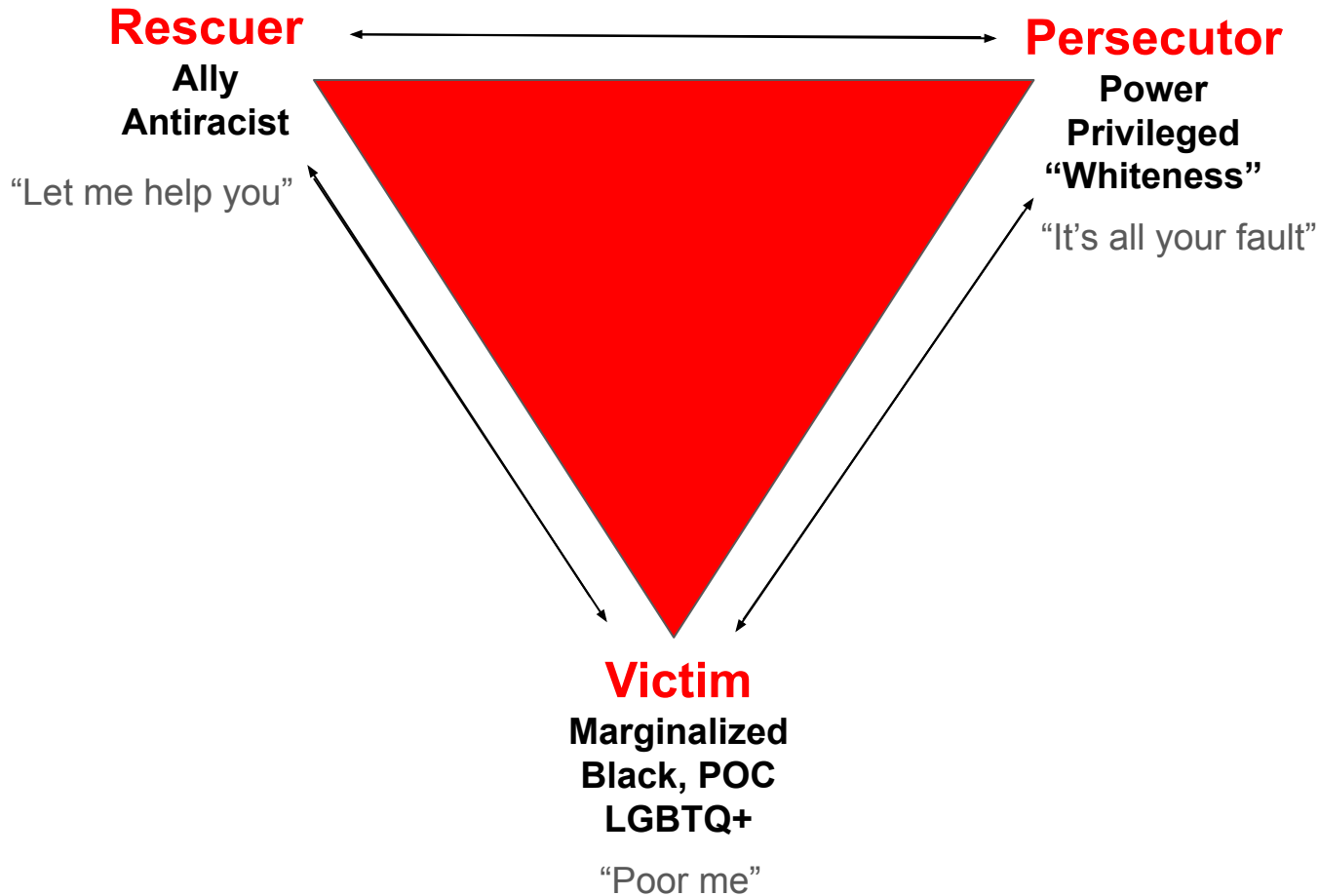


Adapted from ccrweb.ca

@sylvriaduckworth

Drama Triangle

through CRT and Intersectionality



Why is it called the
“DRAMA”
triangle?

What do we want?

Memorandum



Department of Personnel and Student Services

Murray City School District

Jennifer Covington
Superintendent of Schools

To: All MCSD Personnel
From: Darren Dean, Director of Personnel
Date: August 25, 2020
Re: First Amendment and Political Speech Issues

In recent months we have all been impacted by the unfolding of both cultural and political events in society. As we begin the 2020-2021 school year, the Murray City School District would like to remind all employees of expectations regarding the First Amendment and Political Speech.

Workplace Communication

All employees have a right to work and all students have a right to learn in a safe and welcoming environment free from discrimination or harassment. That right is protected by federal and state laws and regulations, and that right trumps the free speech rights of public employees in our schools and workplace. Comments about cultural and political issues that are disparaging, sarcastic, or otherwise insensitive have no place at work. This principle also applies to issues of mental and psychological problems, sexual behavior or orientation, religious affiliations or beliefs, and other legally protected subjects (see Utah Code §53E-9-203). Please be thoughtful, kind, considerate, and civil in your communications with your students, parents, patrons, and co-workers. Your example may be the most important lesson you teach.

First Amendment and Political Speech

As private citizens, we all have the right to speak out on issues of public concern in open forums where such speech is unrestricted. However, free speech rights are not absolute, particularly in limited forums such as schools. Employee speech is protected if the employee is speaking as a private citizen on a matter of public concern. However, if an employee is speaking in an official capacity (within the duties of the job), the speech does not have the same protections. For example, a public-school classroom is reserved for its intended purpose of imparting relevant instructions and is not an open forum for employees to engage in their own political speech.

Federal and state laws, as well as state and district rules, limit what a district employee says and how they say it. For example, Utah Administrative Code R277-515-6 Utah Educator Professional Standards provides that an educator “may not promote a personal opinion, personal issue, or political position as part of the instructional process in a manner inconsistent with law.” Educators hold a special position of trust, and therefore, educators should not advocate or encourage acceptance of any particular cultural or political belief or perspective, or any perspective related to the other protected subjects listed above. An employee may respond in an appropriate and restrained manner to spontaneous questions from students regarding the employee’s personal belief or perspective, but a skilled educator will, instead, use the opportunity to expand the conversation, clarify facts, allow students to draw their own conclusions and teach critical thinking skills.

Below is a list of school-related contexts and reminders regarding the First Amendment and political speech:

Classroom Instruction

School Boards have broad discretion in establishing the classroom curriculum and setting teaching methodologies and, therefore, may regulate classroom instruction for legitimate pedagogical purposes. School districts have the authority to control course content and teaching methods. A public school classroom is reserved for its intended purpose of imparting relevant instruction and is not an open forum for employees to engage in political speech. School employees may not use their position to endorse, promote, or disparage a particular political, religious, sectarian, denominational, agnostic, atheistic belief or viewpoint. (See Utah Code §53G-10-202; §53G-10-402).

Classroom Displays with Political Speech

Schools have the authority to control employee political speech and what happens in the classroom. Political speech may include classroom decorations, posters, displays, and personal political expressions, including t-shirts or buttons (e.g., MAGA, Biden 2020, Defund Planned Parenthood, My Body My Choice, etc.). Again, what a teacher says or communicates inside the classroom is considered speech communicated on behalf of the school district. Courts have allowed school districts to require teachers to remove in-class banners and displays with a political message.

Employee Speech on Social Media

In general, an employee's speech outside of school on social media that is not related to an employee's official duties and is a matter of public concern would be protected by the First Amendment. However, if the speech on social media is more of a private grievance with the employer and/or relates to comments about students, co-workers, school, or other work-related matters, or an employee engages in speech that negatively impacts their effectiveness as a school employee and impairs the efficient, disruptive-free workplace, the employee may be disciplined.

If you have additional questions, please contact your building administrator or the Director of Human Resources at 801-264-7400.

Laws cited:

Utah Code §53E-9-203 - Comments about cultural and political issues that are... insensitive have no place at work. This principle also applies to issues of mental and psychological problems, sexual behavior or orientation, religious affiliations or beliefs, and other legally protected subjects.

Utah Administrative Code R277-515-6, Utah Educator Professional Standards - An educator “may not promote a personal opinion, personal issue, or political position as part of the instructional process in a manner inconsistent with law.”

Utah Code §53G-10-202 - A public school classroom is reserved for its intended purpose of imparting relevant instruction and is not an open forum for employees to engage in political speech.

Utah Code §53G-10-402 - School employees may not use their position to endorse, promote, or disparage a particular political, religious, sectarian, denominational, agnostic, atheistic belief or viewpoint.

Date : 2/9/2021 1:52:15 PM

From : [REDACTED]

To : "ddean@murrayschools.org" , "jcovington@murrayschools.org"

Subject : Book Bundles and Equity...

Darren and Jennifer,

I want to thank you for your transparency over the last week with the response of the Equity council and the book bundles. While there are still many questions unanswered as to why and how these books got approved, I am grateful the district is looking into it more.

I as a parent and a nurse have multiple concerns about these books and topics of transgender being presented to younger children. I work in the Emergency Department and often see kids in mental health crisis'. I also have a child who struggles with mental illness and he is in second grade. I don't doubt without any fiber in my being that these books are going to cause unnecessary mental illness, confusion and questioning in kids who don't need to be worried about these topics of transgender. Also, why would this topic be presented to children who haven't even been presented maturation? I also question the ability of teachers to deliver this material in a way that is beneficial to any child. In nursing we call it "practicing out of your scope of practice". These are sensitive mental illness topics. These are subjects that professional psychiatrists and social workers deal with on a professional level. They are trained to recognize confusion, stress, anxiety, success as they work with kids in these situations. I know this because I have had multiple conversations with my Brother-in-law who is a Psychiatrist, and in my work in the Emergency Department. These symptoms are something teachers cannot monitor and recognize. Having teachers present these topics especially without parental consent or knowledge is what I believe practicing out of their scope of practice.

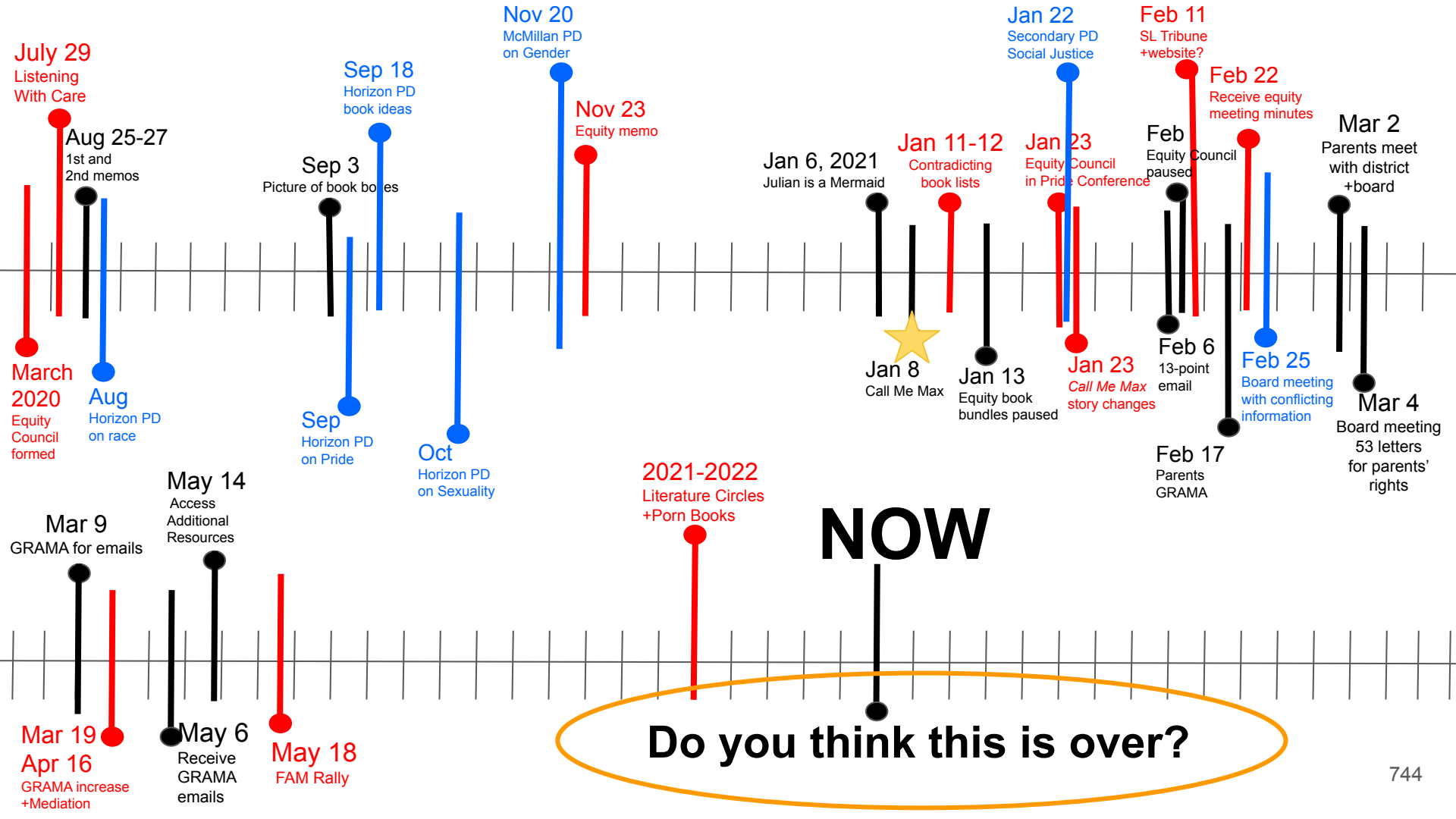
I have had a couple of positive conversations with Darren in the past about other situations and I know he has the best interest in mind for students and staff. I just needed to voice my concern of the events over the last two weeks. I would 100% opt my kids out of instruction on transgender. And if I found out teachers were teaching this without my consent or knowledge, I would highly consider pulling my kids out of the Murray School District. I don't believe the school system is the proper place for them receive education on this. Especially in elementary school. I do believe that this may benefit some students, but I don't believe it would benefit the majority. I do believe there are needs for the Equity counsel, but they need to be more transparent with the community. I watched the video from their first meeting, and there was a question asked on if they have received any pushback from the community. The basic answer was they had not, but that they really hadn't presented anything to the community. I think had the community known more about these books in the first place, they never would have ended up in the schools. I also had multiple concerns about Dr. Jobe's presentation. She said these books were out

Finally, I have said way more than I wanted to. I want to say that all of the teachers that we have had a Grant have been fabulous. We have been very impressed with everything in the Murray school district. We appreciate the computers distributed to each kid during COVID. I do believe Darren and Jennifer have the best interest in mind for all students. I look forward to seeing the positive changes from all of this.

[REDACTED]

**We want to teachers to stay
within “their scope of
practice.”**

**Let's focus on
ACADEMICS.**



July 29
Listening With Care

Aug 25-27
1st and 2nd memos

March 2020
Equity Council formed

Mar 9
GRAMA for emails

Mar 19
Apr 16
GRAMA increase +Mediation

May 14
Access Additional Resources

May 6
Receive GRAMA emails

Sep 3
Picture of book boxes

Sep
Horizon PD on Pride

May 18
FAM Rally

Sep 18
Horizon PD book ideas

Oct
Horizon PD on Sexuality

Nov 20
McMillan PD on Gender

Nov 23
Equity memo

2021-2022
Literature Circles +Porn Books

Jan 6, 2021
Julian is a Mermaid

Jan 8
Call Me Max

NOW

Do you think this is over?

Jan 11-12
Contradicting book lists

Jan 13
Equity book bundles paused

Jan 22
Secondary PD Social Justice

Jan 23
Equity Council in Pride Conference

Jan 23
Call Me Max story changes

Feb
Equity Council paused

Feb 6
13-point email

Feb 17
Parents GRAMA

Feb 11
SL Tribune +website?

Feb 22
Receive equity meeting minutes

Feb 25
Board meeting with conflicting information

Mar 2
Parents meet with district +board

Mar 4
Board meeting 53 letters for parents' rights



pride NOT PREJUDICE

An LGBTQIA+ Conference for Utah Educators, Students, and Caregivers

Pride, Not Prejudice: An LGBTQ+ Conference for Utah Educators, Students, and Caregivers

UTAH **pride** CENTER

PRIDE NOT PREJUDICE LEARNING SERIES

2.02.22
7-9 p.m.

Utah CommUNITY Leaders Panel

AMANDA SANDBERG
Utah Pride Center

TONY WILLIAMS
Utah Pride Center

STEPHANIE LARSON
Utah Pride Center

DR. ALLISON MARTIN
Utah Pride Center

CHRIS WHARTON ESQ.
Wharton & O'Brien PLLC
(City Commission, District 3)

JESSICA DINKLAGE ESQ.
Utah Pride Center

PAUL C. PIERCE ESQ.
Utah Pride Center

DR. BOYD COLLINS
Utah Pride Center

FGM
Utah's largest and oldest LGBTQIA+ community organization

EQUALITY UTAH

WHARTON & O'BRIEN

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

encircle

The 2022 Pride, Not Prejudice Education Conference has been postponed until September 17, 2022.

However, we know that our students, educators, families, and community members need our help to continue to build LGBTQIA+ inclusive schools now. That is why we will be hosting our FREE Virtual Pride, Not Prejudice Learning Series until the conference. The first learning series will be our Utah CommUNITY Leaders Panel on 2/2/22 from 7-9 p.m. The panel includes representatives from Utah Pride Center, Equality Utah, Human Rights Campaign, Encircle, and Wharton & O'Brien PLLC. These individual organizations are unified to support LGBTQIA+ inclusion in schools. From policies to curriculum these speakers are here to help you feel empowered to advocate for LGBTQIA+ students. Use the QR Code to register or click the link below. <https://pride-not-prejudice-learning-series.heysummit.com/>

SECOND STEP® ELEMENTARY

SEL for Today



Discover Our New Digital Program

Children benefit from social-emotional learning (SEL) at any time, but today it's especially important to help them develop the skills they need to connect and thrive. A leading SEL elementary school curriculum, Second Step® Elementary is research-based and easy to teach, adapt, and scale. The program now offers two options: the web-based and teacher-facilitated [digital program](#) and our print-based [classroom kits](#) supplemented by online resources.



MORE MEANINGFUL ENGLISH

**WIT &
WISDOM[®]**



Murray School District's new ELA program for all elementary schools for the next (at least) 5 years, starting 2022 - 2023

**Lesson plans from
Wit and Wisdom
collected by
“Moms for Liberty”
in Tennessee.**

Let's Talk Wit & Wisdom

A presentation of Parents'
Findings

(2nd Grad, Module 3 Focus)



Common Threads in wit & wisdom K-5

Bad White People

1st Grade

2nd Grade

5th Grade

Cannibalism

1st Grade

3rd Grade

4th Grade



Suicide Ideation

1st Grade

3rd Grade

4th Grade

5th Grade

Extreme Emotion

Kindergarten

1st Grade

2nd Grade

3rd Grade

4th Grade

5th Grade

Anti-Nuclear Family

1st Grade

4th Grade

5th Grade

Common Threads in Wit & Wisdom K-5

Dark Imagery

Kindergarten

1st Grade

2nd Grade

3rd Grade

4th Grade

5th Grade



Age-Inappropriate

Kindergarten

1st Grade

2nd Grade

3rd Grade

4th Grade

5th Grade

Anti-America

1st Grade

2nd Grade

3rd Grade

4th Grade

5th Grade

Graphic Death

Kindergarten

1st Grade

2nd Grade

3rd Grade

4th Grade

5th Grade

Age-Inappropriate Content

Kinder- Garten



Murder

1st Grade



Graphic Mating



Gender Fluidity

2nd Grade



Anti-Police



Anti-Fire Dept

Age-Inappropriate Content

3rd Grade

- ✓ Graphic Death
- ✓ Torture
- ✓ Anti-Church

4th Grade

- ✓ Rape
- ✓ Murder
- ✓ Adultery
- ✓ Scalping/Skinning
- ✓ Stillbirth

5th Grade

- ✓ Gore
- ✓ Excessive Violence
- ✓ Alcoholism
- ✓ Promiscuity, Harmful Relationships

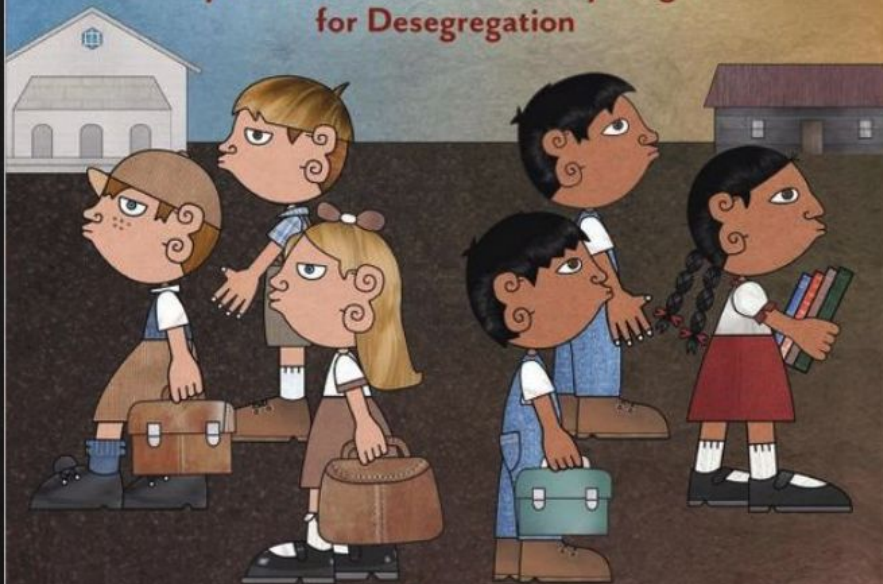
2nd Grade, Module 3
"Civil Rights Heroes"

January 4th – March 13th 2021
(9 Weeks)

Copyrighted Material

SEPARATE IS NEVER EQUAL

~ Sylvia Mendez & Her Family's Fight for Desegregation ~



DUNCAN TONATIUH

WINNER OF THE PURA BELPRÉ AWARD

Copyrighted Material

"For what other reasons do you send children to the Mexican school?" asked Mr. Marcus.

Sylvia and her family braced themselves to hear what Mr. Kent would say next.

"For their social behavior. They need to learn cleanliness of mind, manner, and dress. They are not learning that at home. They have problems with lice, impetigo, and tuberculosis. They have generally dirty hands, face, neck, and ears."

The Mendez family and others in the room stared at Mr. Kent in disbelief. What he was saying was not true! It was degrading.

"How many of the two hundred ninety-two children at the Mexican school are inferior to whites in personal hygiene?" asked Mr. Marcus.



"At least seventy-five percent."

"And in their scholastic ability?"

"Seventy-five percent."

"In what other respects are they inferior?"

"In their economic outlook, in their clothing, and in their ability to take part in the activities of the school."

"Do you believe that white students are superior to Mexicans in the respects that you have mentioned?"

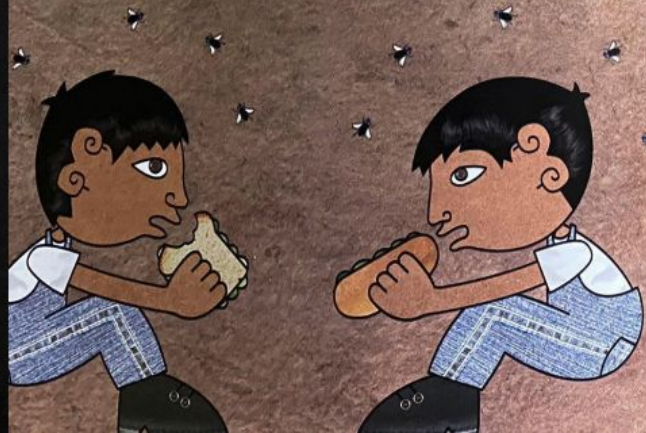
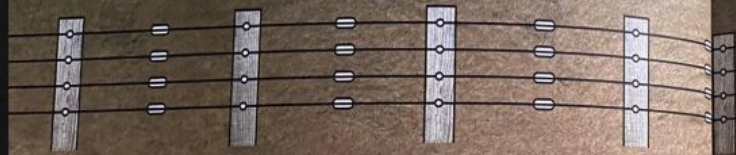
"Yes."

"And is that one of the reasons they are being segregated?"

"Yes."

Time and again, Mr. Mendez had asked, "Why can't my children attend the Westminster school?" Now he had his answer.





That fall, Sylvia and her brothers had to attend Hoover Elementary, better known as “the Mexican school,” on Olive Street in the city of Westminster.

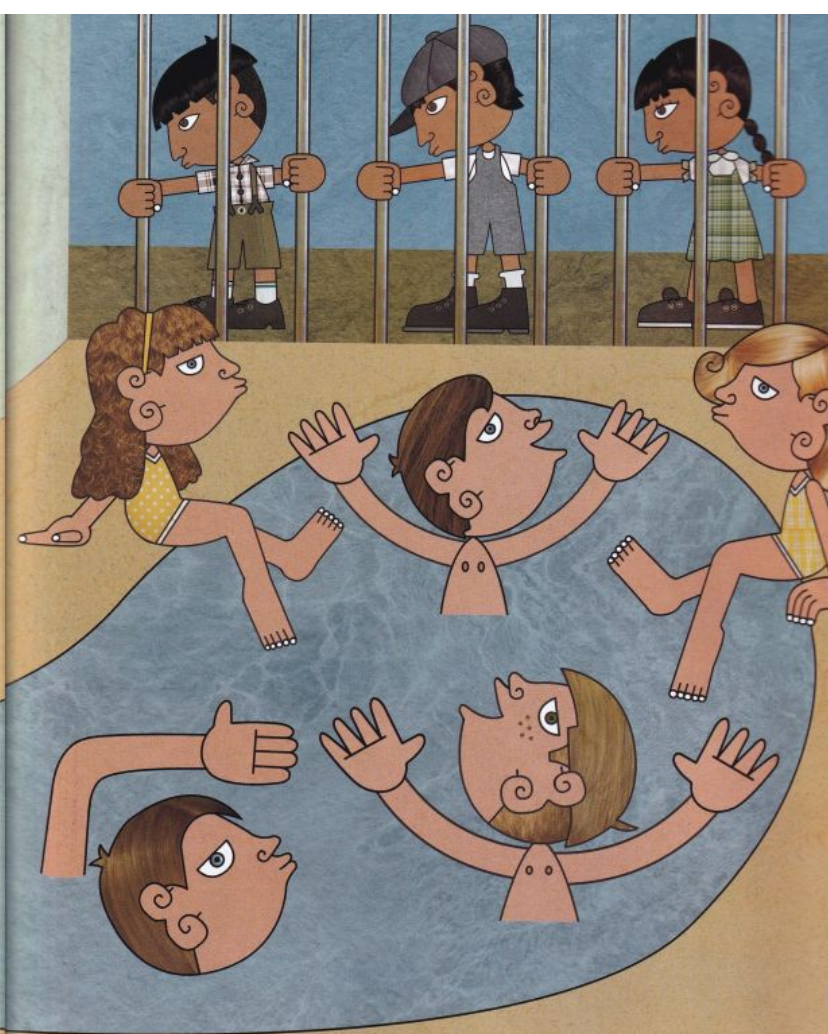
The building was a clapboard shack, and the halls were not spacious or clean. A cow pasture surrounded the school. The students had to eat their lunch outside, and flies would land on their food. There was an electric wire that surrounded the pasture to keep the cows in. If you touched it, you received a shock! The school did not have a playground—not even a swing.



One day, a truck driver overheard Mr. Mendez trying to convince a worker to sign his petition. "You know," said the truck driver, "you could file a lawsuit."

The truck driver told Mr. Mendez about a lawyer named David Marcus, who had filed a lawsuit on behalf of people in San Bernardino and had helped them integrate the public pools there. At that time, not only were schools segregated but also other public places as well, such as pools, parks, and movie theaters. Some businesses even had signs that read, NO DOGS OR MEXICANS ALLOWED.

Mr. Mendez decided right then and there to hire Mr. Marcus, even if it meant having to spend all of his savings to do so.



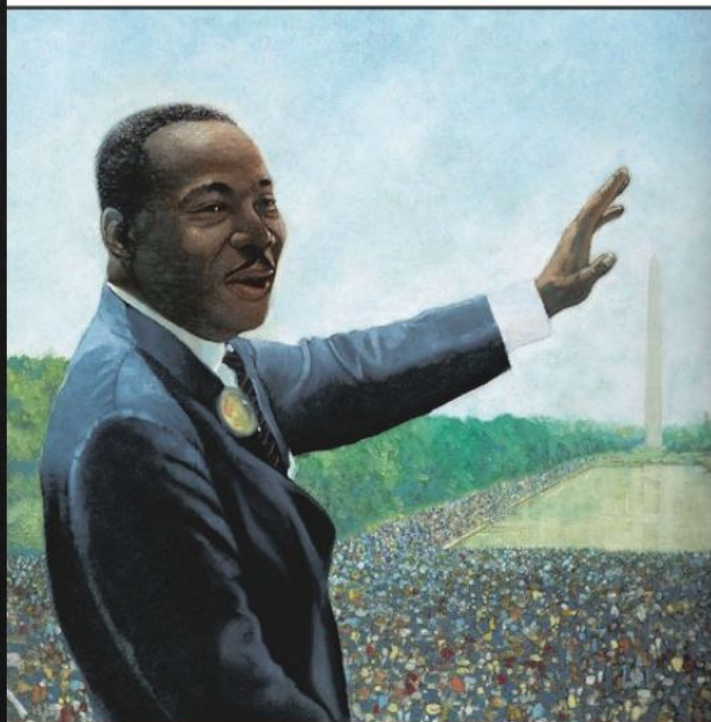


PENGUIN YOUNG READERS

LEVEL 3
TRANSITIONAL
READER

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

and the March on Washington



by Frances E. Ruffin

illustrated by Stephen Marchesi



There have been sit-ins in many cities.
At sit-ins, black people take seats in
“white only” restaurants or theaters.
And they refuse to leave.
Often they are dragged out.



Sometimes they are put in jail.
There have been protest marches
in many Southern cities and towns.
People hold signs.
They sing songs.



There are signs that say,
“For Whites Only.”
Even water fountains say
“White” or “Colored.”

Which of these fountains
looks nicer to you?





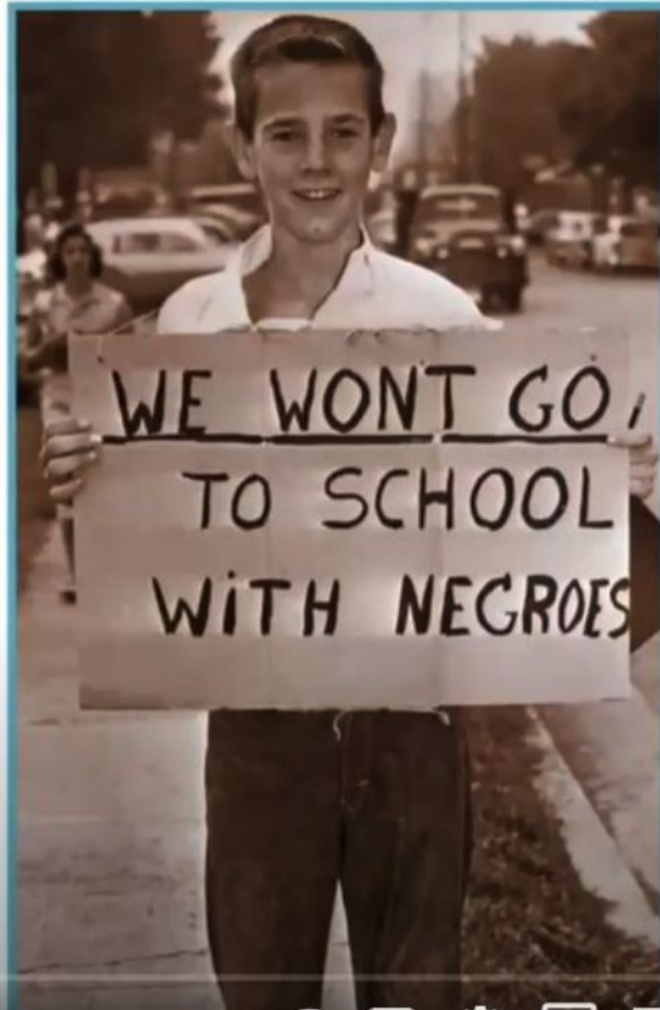
RUBY BRIDGES
GOES
TO SCHOOL
MY TRUE STORY

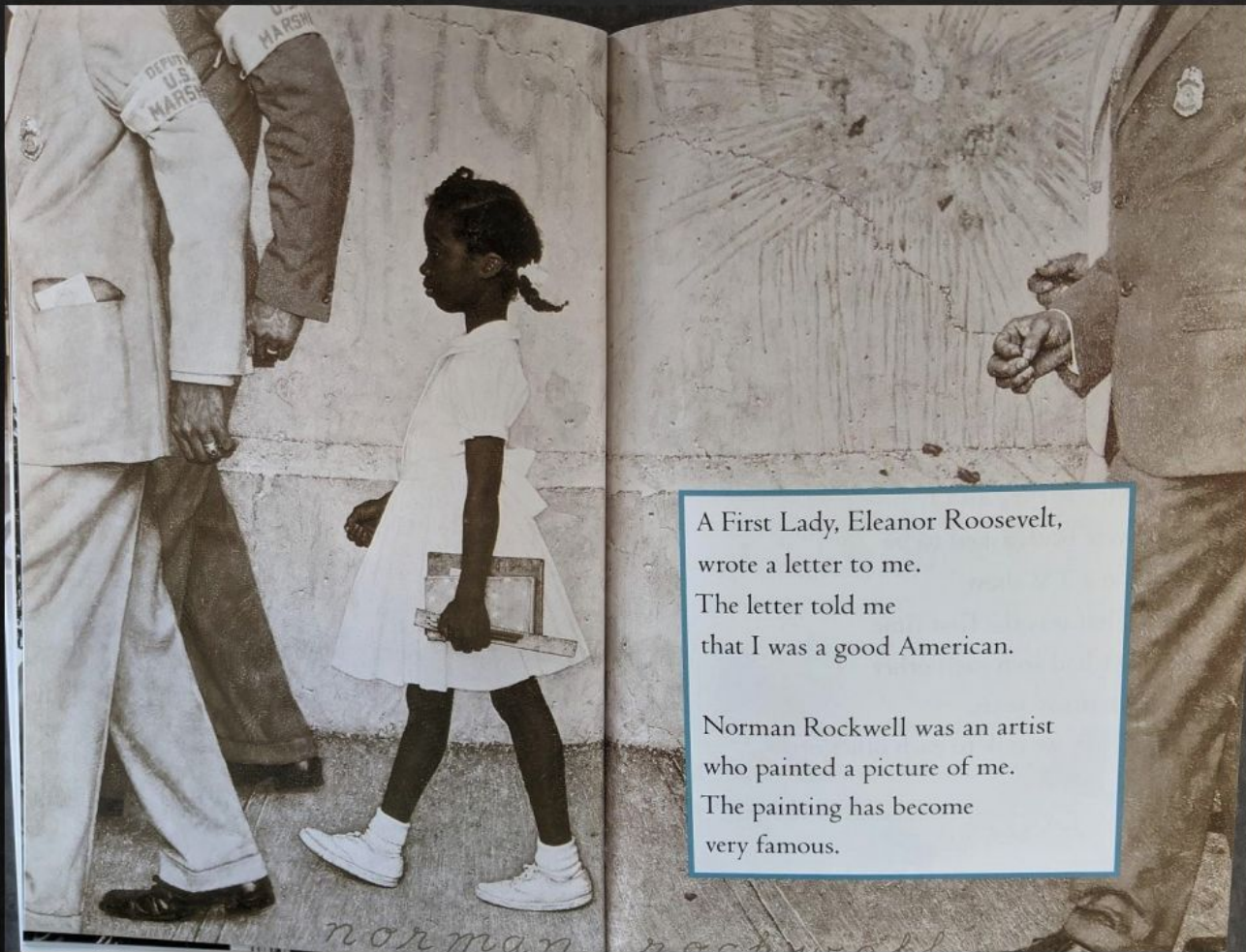
• BY RUBY BRIDGES •



A long time ago,
some people thought that black people
and white people should not be friends.

In some places,
black people were not allowed
to live in the same neighborhoods
as white people.





A First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt,
wrote a letter to me.
The letter told me
that I was a good American.

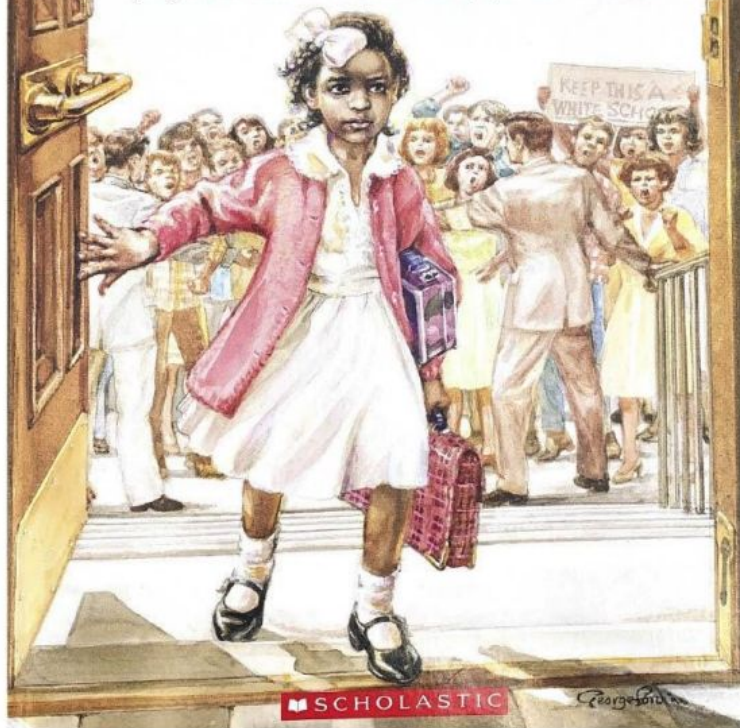
Norman Rockwell was an artist
who painted a picture of me.
The painting has become
very famous.

norman rockwell

True Story of a Civil Rights Icon

THE STORY OF RUBY BRIDGES

by ROBERT COLES • illustrated by GEORGE FORD



SCHOLASTIC

George Ford



On Ruby's first day a large crowd of angry white people gathered outside the Frantz Elementary School. The people carried signs that said they didn't want black children in a white school. People called Ruby names; some wanted to hurt her. The city and state police did not help Ruby.

The President of the United States ordered federal marshals to walk with Ruby into the school building. The marshals carried guns.

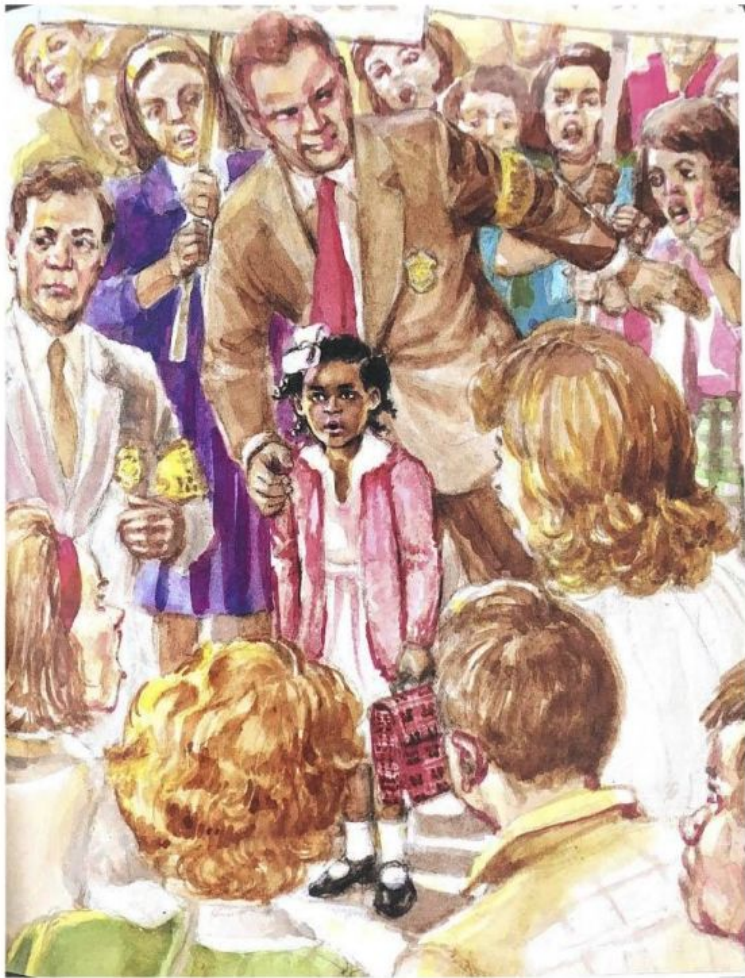
Mrs. Henry saw Ruby's lips moving and wondered what Ruby could be saying.

The crowd seemed ready to kill her.

The marshals were frightened. They tried to persuade Ruby to move along. They tried to hurry her into the school, but Ruby wouldn't budge.

Then Ruby stopped talking and walked into the school.

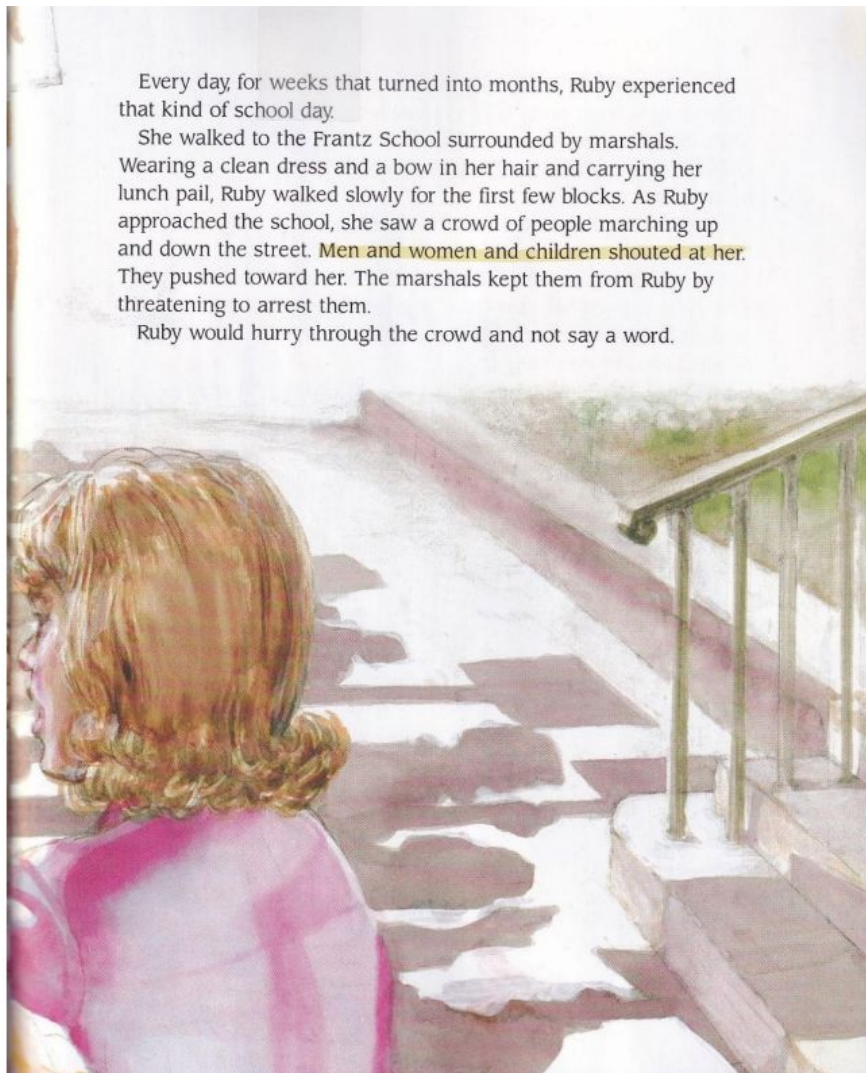




Every day, for weeks that turned into months, Ruby experienced that kind of school day.

She walked to the Frantz School surrounded by marshals. Wearing a clean dress and a bow in her hair and carrying her lunch pail, Ruby walked slowly for the first few blocks. As Ruby approached the school, she saw a crowd of people marching up and down the street. Men and women and children shouted at her. They pushed toward her. The marshals kept them from Ruby by threatening to arrest them.

Ruby would hurry through the crowd and not say a word.



But what does the
Teacher's Manual say?

Injustice for 2nd Graders

- 9 weeks are spent focusing on injustice.
- Teacher's manual mentions injustice 314 times in a book that is 478 pages
- "Develop a nonverbal signal for injustice"
- "Students should signal throughout the module as they hear examples of injustice."
- Lesson on prefixes: injustice, unequal, inequality, unfair
- Lesson on suffixes: segregation
- Vocabulary lesson: protest, refuse, and marching
- Day 5: "What makes a good protest song?"

DAY 1

- "Point out the word injustice."
- "Explain that unfair and injustice... mean the same thing."
- "Injustice is a stronger word."
- "Explain... how real people respond to injustice."
- "Explore the word injustice."
- "Reread...how can people respond to injustice?"
- "Echo read... What injustices did people face before the civil rights act of 1964?"
- "Point to the word injustice"

Injustice

- “Remind the class of the meaning of this word injustice”
- “Explain ... read ... about people fighting injustice.”
- “Remind the class of the meaning of injustice.”
- “How can people respond to injustice?”
- What does injustice mean?
- “What do you remember about injustice?”
- “What do you remember about... how can people respond to injustice?”
- “What is an example of injustice?”
- “Record the word injustice”
- “Add their example of injustice.”
- “Investigate the injustices people faced and how they respond to injustice.”
- Day 12: “What might a just world be?”
- Day 32: How can “children” respond to injustice?
- Day 33: “How can responding to injustice impact the world?”
- Day 34: “Why is it important to respond to injustices?”
- “What happens if we don’t respond to injustices?”
- “What will you do to make the world a more fair, or just, place?”
- Emphasize: “The struggle for equal rights continues to this day.”

Day 5:

Handout 5A: Lyrics to "Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around"

Directions: Use these lyrics to follow along with the song.

Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around

Ain't gonna let nobody turn me 'round
Turn me 'round, turn me 'round
Ain't gonna let nobody turn me 'round
I'm gonna keep on walkin' Keep on talkin'
Marchin' to that freedom land

Ain't gonna let segregation turn me 'round
Turn me 'round, turn me 'round
Ain't gonna let segregation turn me 'round
I'm gonna keep on walkin' Keep on talkin'
Marchin' to that freedom land

Ain't gonna let Jim Crow turn me 'round
Turn me 'round, turn me 'round
Ain't gonna let Jim Crow turn me 'round
I'm gonna keep on walkin' Keep on talkin'
Marchin' to that freedom land



Day 24:

"Children at the Mexican school are inferior to whites in personal hygiene ... and in their scholastic ability... [Mexican children are] inferior in their economic outlook, in their clothing, and in their ability to take part in the activities of the school...white students are superior to Mexicans..."

These statements are **NOT** denounced as false in the pages that follow.

Day 27 & 28:

These statements are read **again and again**.

Students are asked to "write a ... narrative from the point of view of Sylvia as she listens" to these words.

They must do this writing assignment **twice**.

Learn 53 MIN.

NOTICE AND WONDER WITH ILLUSTRATIONS 33 MIN.

Whole Group

TEACHER NOTE

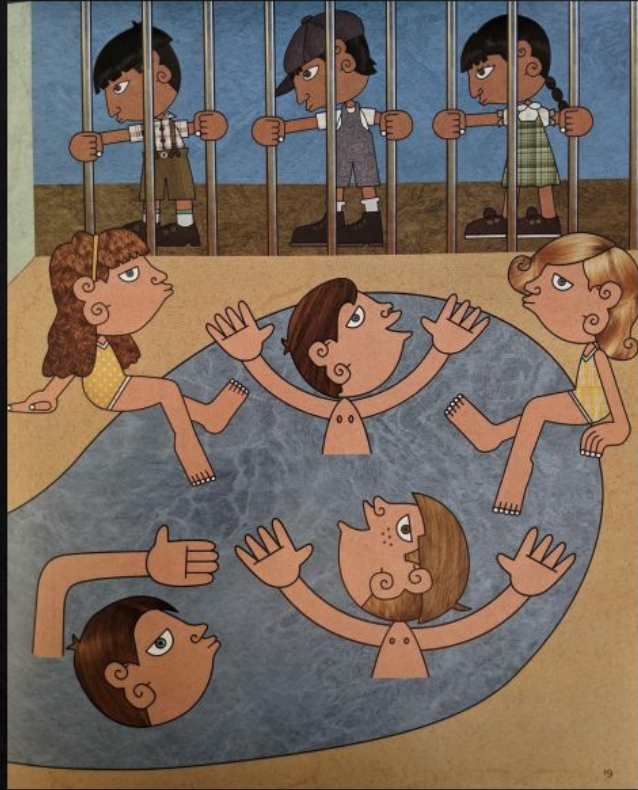
Because of the complexity of the text, introduce the text to students through the rich illustrations. Providing time for students to notice and wonder about the pictures alone will help them understand what is happening in the text and supporting comprehension when the story is read aloud in the next two lessons.

Post a blank Note and Wonder Chart and label it, "Separate is Never Equal."

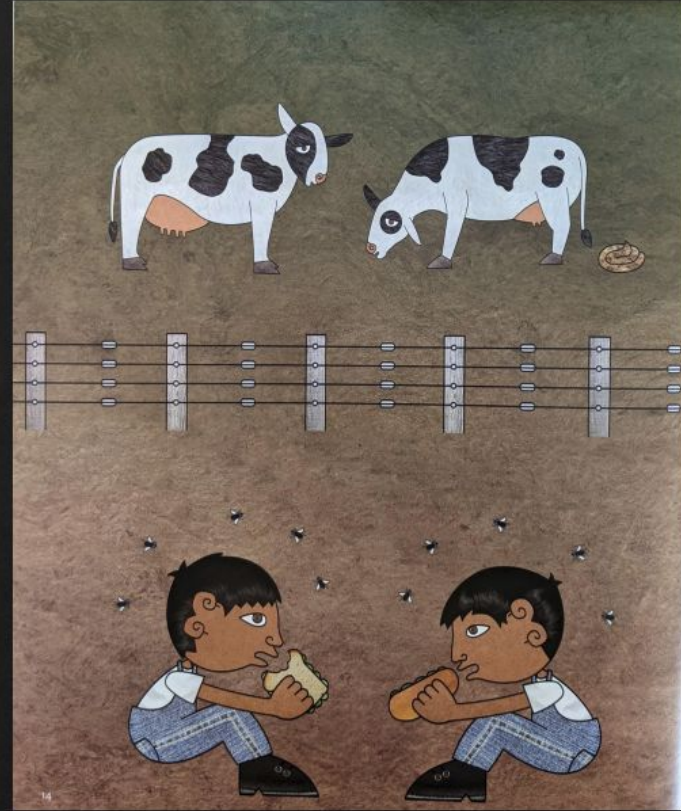
Tell students that before the text is read aloud over the next few lessons, the class will first Notice and Wonder *only* about the illustrations in the text. Explain that you will move through the book slowly allowing each child to look at the pictures. Keep students engaged by providing two sticky notes each to jot down ideas about their observations and their questions. Emphasize that students will have a chance to share their ideas, but that they should be silent as the class moves through the book, jotting down their ideas.

Another example of inappropriate lexile for the assigned grade. Teachers must read the story to the students for the next two lessons.

Heavy emphasis on imagery of "Separate is Never Equal."

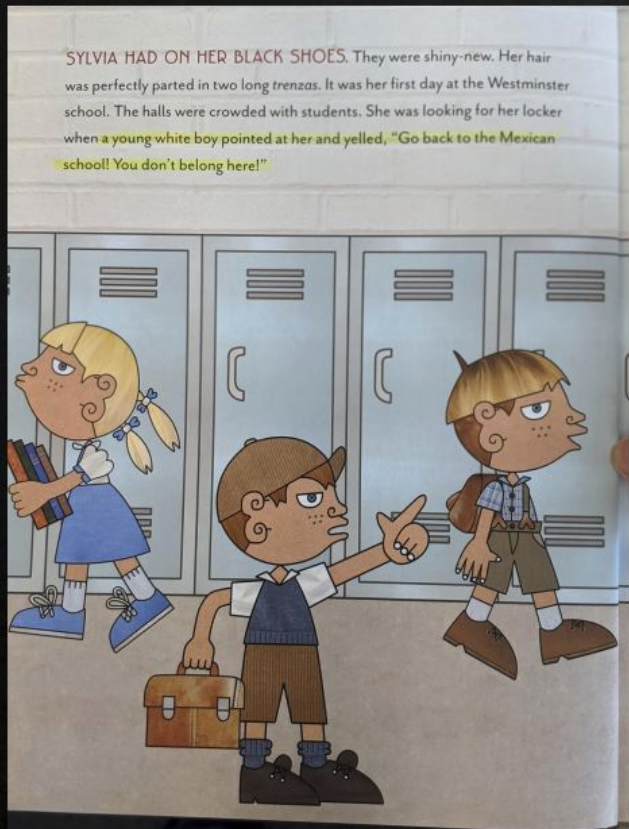


Day 24 & 25:
Observe and discuss
these illustrations



Day 24:

“A young white boy ... yelled, ‘Go back to the Mexican school! You don’t belong here!’”



Day 19:

“I see many white people yelling at us... Why are they being so mean? ... I want to cry...”

GE > P3 > Handout 19A - WT & WISDOM® FLORIDA EDITION

Name: _____

Handout 19A: Narrative Comparison

Directions: Read both narratives. First, highlight the elements of SCAPE in the first narrative. Then, underline Ruby's thoughts and feelings in the second narrative.

Narrative #1

I am going to the Frantz Elementary School. My mom is walking with me. I see many white people yelling at us and holding signs. They do not want me to go to this school. The marshals keep us safe. I am going to walk in to the school quickly. I made it inside!

Narrative #2

I am scared to go to Frantz Elementary School. It makes me feel better to walk with my mom. I see many white people yelling at us and holding signs. Why are they being so mean? I don't understand why they do not want me to go to this school. The marshals keep us safe. That makes me feel better too. I want to cry but I will be brave. We try to get in the school quickly.

Day 27:

Why did the Mendez family fight for desegregation?

Handout 27A: Response Cards

Beginning

Mrs. Mendez's actions and words

Sylvia, "¿No sabes que por eso luchamos?" **Don't you know that is why we fought?**



3 What does Sylvia's mother want her to understand when she says, "Don't you know that is why we fought?"

- “ They fought because they had to change the way people were thinking of Mexican people.
- “ **They fought so white people would stop thinking they were better than Mexican people.**
- “ She wants her to know that they changed the laws so Sylvia could go to that school.

Day 27:

Handout 27A: Response Cards

Beginning

Sylvia's actions and words

For the rest of the day, Sylvia did not speak or introduce herself in her classes. She kept her head down when walking in the halls. She told her mother, "I don't want to go to that school anymore. The kids are mean."



After Sylvia's family fought for desegregation, she says:

"I don't want to go to that school anymore.
The [white] kids are mean."

Day 31:



Name: _____

Assessment 31A: New-Read Assessment 4

Directions: Listen to the Read Aloud of “When Peace Met Power” by Laura Helweg. Then, answer the following questions.

When Peace Met Power

by Laura Helweg

illustrated by Giovanni Da Re

The children who marched, sang, and prayed **under blasting fire hoses were acting nonviolently.** They showed the world the power of peaceful protest.

Martin Luther King, Jr., had studied ideas of nonviolent protest since he was a college student. By 1963, nonviolence was a central part of his ideas. In Birmingham, he explained his ideas to the children. “Birmingham was a mean city today,” he said after the children’s first march. “We must meet hate with love.”

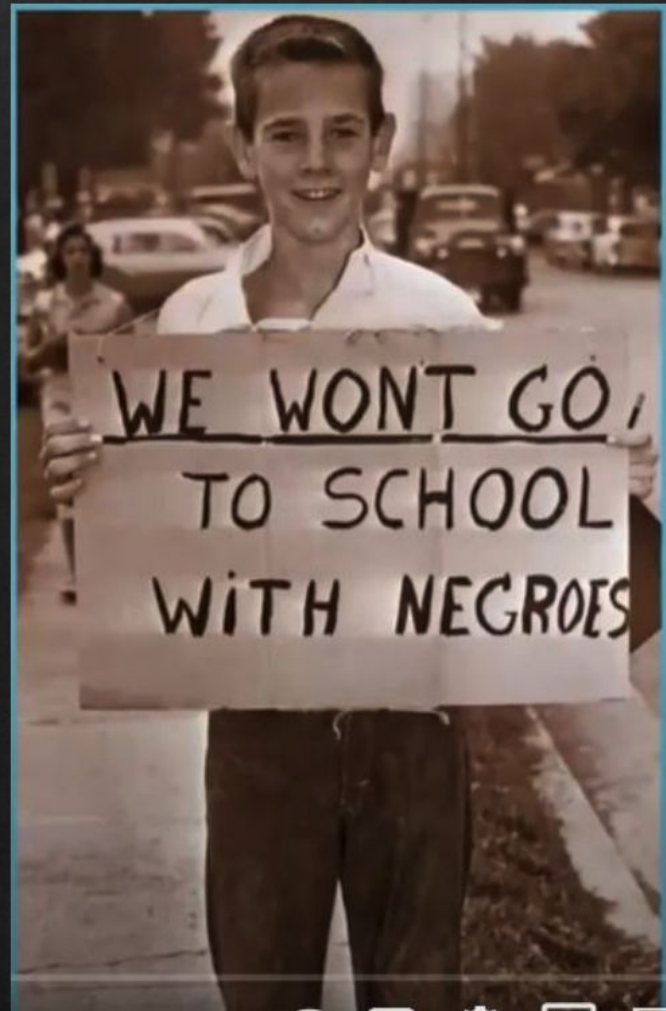
Nonviolence wasn’t an easy idea, especially for southern blacks. **They met hate every day, including from the all-white police force. They expected unfair arrests, beatings, or worse from police.**

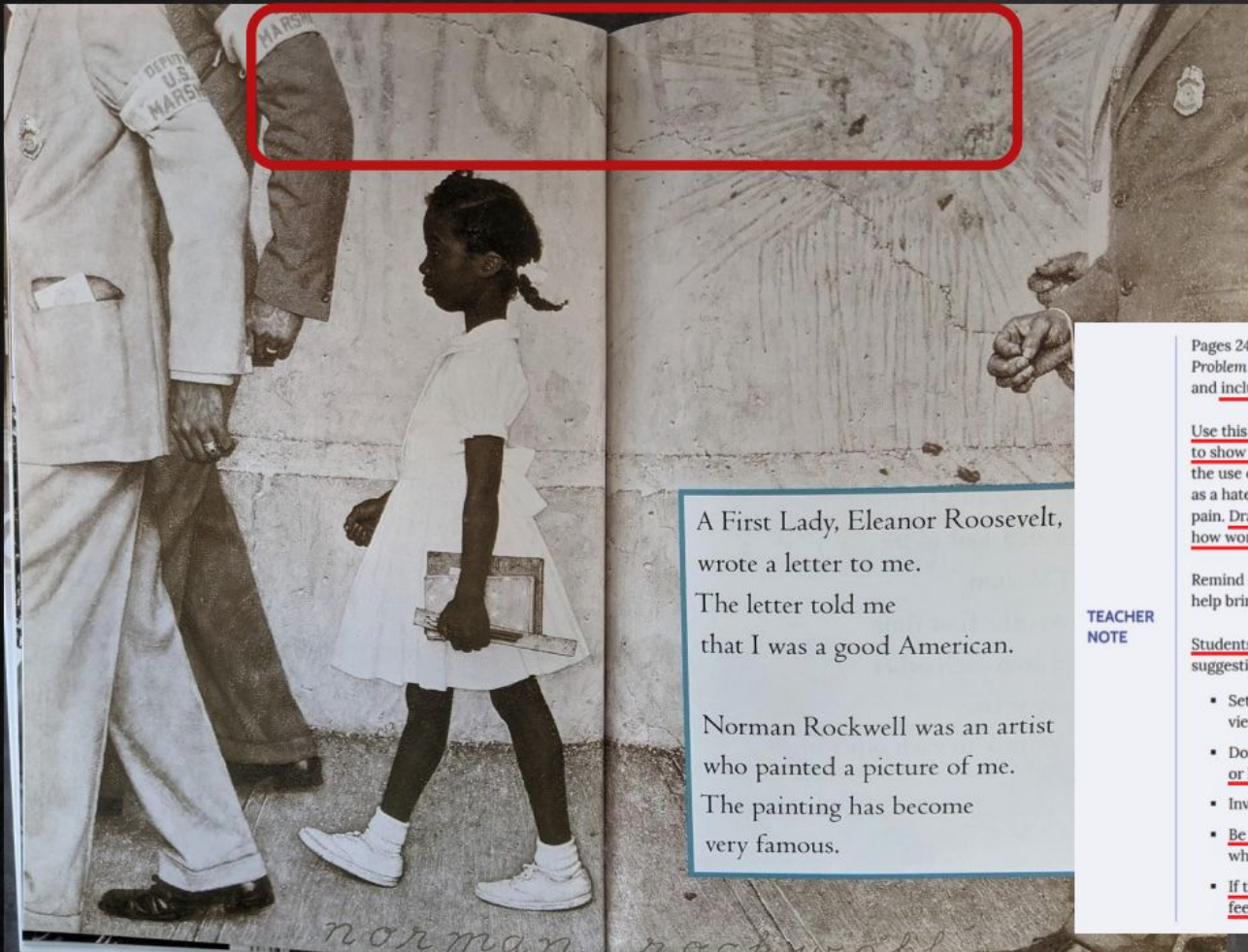
To the black community, one man stood for hate more than any other person in Birmingham. Eugene “Bull” Connor was the Commissioner of Public Safety. This meant that he led the police and fire departments. Connor used his job to maintain segregation and to bully blacks.



Day 1:

- "What do you notice about the images?"
- "They should notice and wonder about the images."
- "Pause to give students extra time to notice the details of the photographs"





Teacher's Manual points out and teaches the N-word.

A First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt,
wrote a letter to me.
The letter told me
that I was a good American.

Norman Rockwell was an artist
who painted a picture of me.
The painting has become
very famous.

**TEACHER
NOTE**

Pages 24–25 of *Ruby Bridges Goes to School* features Norman Rockwell's *The Problem We All Live With*, showing Ruby Bridges surrounded by U.S. Marshals and including a racial slur in the background.

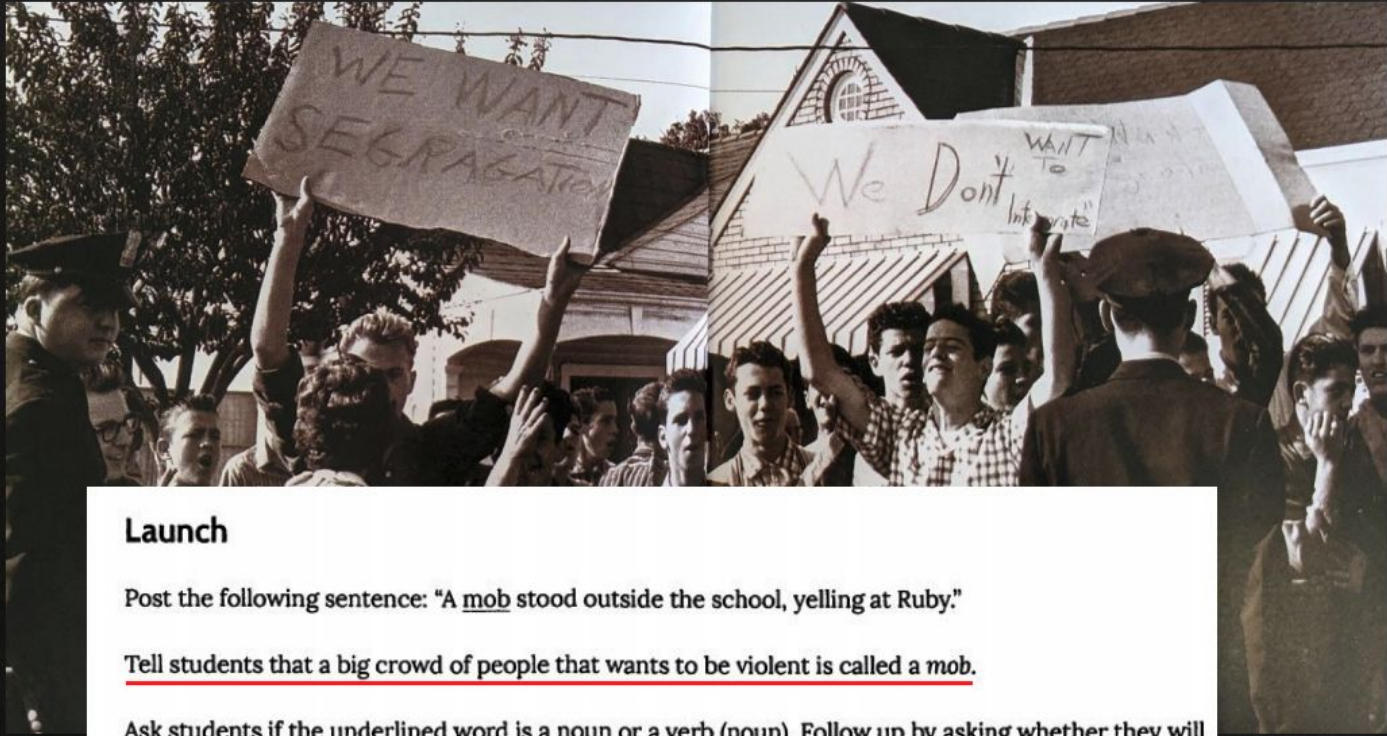
Use this opportunity to remind students that racial slurs are words people use to show disrespect and hatred towards people of different races. Point out that the use of this word was common at the time. People still use this word today as a hateful slur. Reinforce the power of language and how words can cause pain. Draw on students' knowledge of the Civil Rights Movement to discuss how words can be used to attack and disrespect people.

Remind students that considering their use of language is one way they can help bring more kindness and fairness to the world.

Students may or may not notice this word. As needed, consider these suggestions for discussing emotionally charged language:

- Set ground rules for the discussion, such as showing respect for all viewpoints.
- Do not expect an individual or group to serve as a "spokesperson" for his or her race, gender, or any other group.
- Invite outside experts or community leaders to give other perspectives.
- Be honest with students about your own feelings, and explain to them why it is important to explore the impact of language.
- If the class is initially hesitant to talk, try having students express their feelings through journal entries, free writing, or anonymous responses.

Day 14:



Launch

Post the following sentence: "A mob stood outside the school, yelling at Ruby."

Tell students that a big crowd of people that wants to be violent is called a mob.

Ask students if the underlined word is a noun or a verb (noun). Follow up by asking whether they will describe the word using an adjective or an adverb (adjective). Then, brainstorm adjectives as a class that could describe the mob (angry, scary, mean, loud).

Repeat this procedure with the following sentence: "Ruby walked to school."

Students should identify the word as a verb that should be described with an adverb (bravely, confidently, slowly, quickly).

Day 15:

Lesson on adjectives and adverbs.

To describe the white people again, the teachers are instructed to use: “vicious” and “rudely”

Model stretching out the sentence with descriptive language. Show students how you circle the verb *yelled* in the sentence. Ask students for one of the words they brainstormed to describe *yelled*. Show students how you add the adverb to the sentence using a caret. Draw an arrow from the adverb to the verb.

They rudely yelled at me to go away.

Explain that you just expanded, or stretched out, a sentence and that today, students will find their own sentences to improve with descriptive language.

Instruct students to repeat the process that they practiced as a whole class. Tell students to:

- Locate a piece in their Response Journals that they think would benefit from additional descriptive language.
- Circle a verb or noun they see that can be described further.
- Write the word down.
- Brainstorm two to three adjectives or adverbs to describe it.
- Choose a strong adjective or adverb to add using a caret ^.

✔ Students choose at least one adjective and one adverb to add to their work. Students use carets to add in their adjectives or adverbs and then draw an arrow from the adverb or adjective or the word it describes.

Ruby calmly walked through the crowd and didn't even cry. The vicious mob yelled at her to go away.

Land

Bring students together with their Response Journals.

Have one student volunteer read his or her original sentence without an adverb or adjective, and then reread the sentence with an adverb or adjective.

Ask students what changed and to describe how the adverb expanded and added detail to the sentence.

Mrs. Henry saw Ruby's lips moving and wondered what Ruby could be saying.

The crowd seemed ready to kill her.

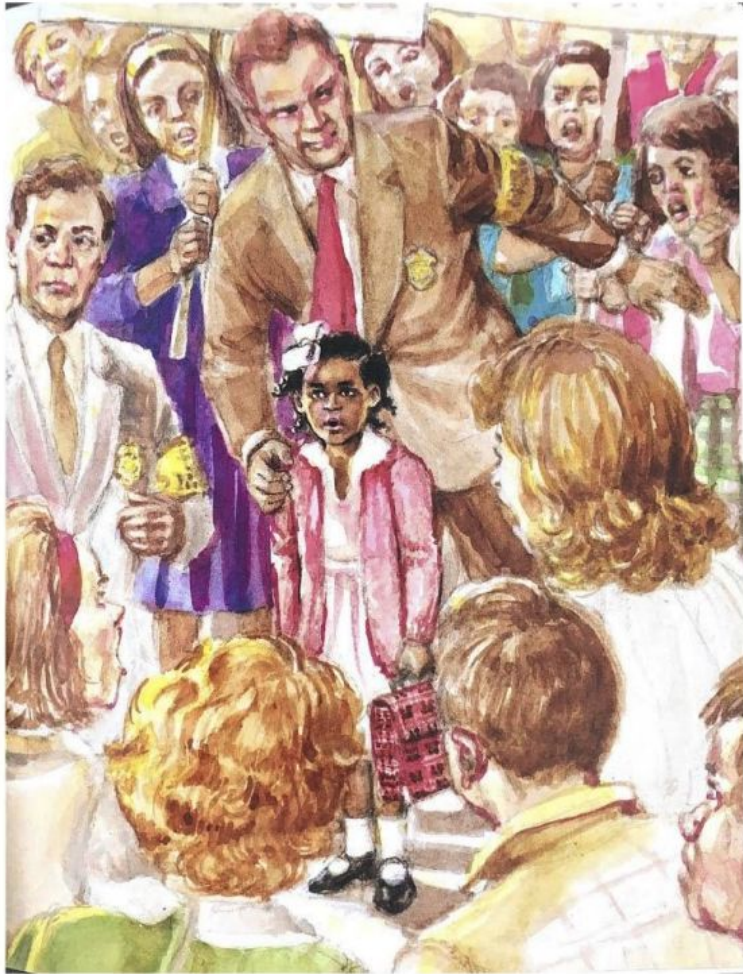
The marshals were frightened. They tried to persuade Ruby to move along. They tried to hurry her into the school, but Ruby wouldn't budge.

Then Ruby stopped talking and walked into the school.



On Ruby's first day a large crowd of angry white people gathered outside the Frantz Elementary School. The people carried signs that said they didn't want black children in a white school. People called Ruby names; some wanted to hurt her. The city and state police did not help Ruby.

The President of the United States ordered federal marshals to walk with Ruby into the school building. The marshals carried guns.



Every day for weeks that turned into months, Ruby experienced that kind of school day.

She walked to the Frantz School surrounded by marshals. Wearing a clean dress and a bow in her hair and carrying her lunch pail, Ruby walked slowly for the first few blocks. As Ruby approached the school, she saw a crowd of people marching up and down the street. Men and women and children shouted at her. They pushed toward her. The marshals kept them from Ruby by threatening to arrest them.

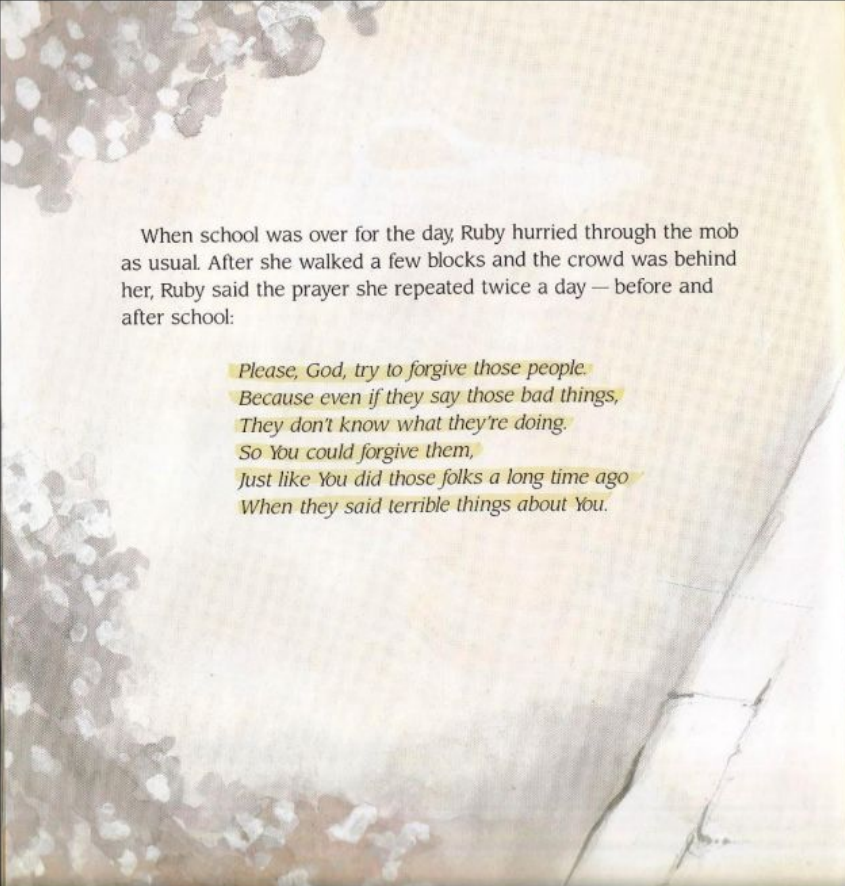
Ruby would hurry through the crowd and not say a word.

Day 16

Write “a narrative from the point of view of Ruby Bridges

Day 21

Students “role play” one page of her experience.



When school was over for the day, Ruby hurried through the mob as usual. After she walked a few blocks and the crowd was behind her, Ruby said the prayer she repeated twice a day — before and after school:

*Please, God, try to forgive those people.
Because even if they say those bad things,
They don't know what they're doing.
So You could forgive them,
Just like You did those folks a long time ago
When they said terrible things about You.*



Final page of the “The Story of Ruby Bridges” (1960) says nothing about the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the subsequent progress of the country towards a “more perfect union” or the ideals of MLK, Jr., as spoken in the 1963 “I Have a Dream” speech.

Instead compares white people to the Roman soldiers responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus.

Day 30

Only two options: students must write a narrative from the point of view of
1) Sylvia Mendez or 2) Ruby Bridges, thereby reliving the emotional trauma of each experience.

Option 1

*Reread page 34 in Separate is Never Equal by Duncan Tonatiuh. Write an exploded moment **narrative** from the point of view of Sylvia at the end of the book when she goes back to school. Show her response to injustice by describing her thoughts, feelings, and actions.*

Option 2

*Reread page 16 in The Story of Ruby Bridges by Robert Coles. Write an exploded moment **narrative** from the point of view of Ruby when she enters the empty classroom. Show her response to injustice by describing her thoughts, feelings, and actions.*

Anti-American Indoctrination

Without seeing the teaching materials involved in this module, one cannot begin to grasp the high level of manipulation being inflicted upon the young minds of impressionable second graders who do not yet have the level of maturity or capacity to think critically, nor enough knowledge of US history and experience to provide adequate context to the narrowly focused WW lessons.

For **9 weeks**, Wit & Wisdom focuses **repeatedly and daily** on very dark and divisive slivers of US history. The narrow and slanted obsession on historical mistakes reveals a heavily biased agenda, one that makes children hate their country, each other, or themselves.

The relentless nature of how these divisive stories are taught, the lack of historical context and difference in perspective, and the manipulative way the lessons were designed to be taught all work together to amplify and sow feelings of resentment, shame of one's skin color, and/or fear.

Targeting 7-year-olds with **34 daily lessons** on past injustices is indoctrinating the next generation to hate America, a country in which the Wit & Wisdom curriculum is pushing them to believe is currently still unjust and oppressive. Without highlighting the positive accomplishments, like unity and integration, students fail to learn and appreciate the continual progress in America and the overall improvement of our country since the civil rights movement.

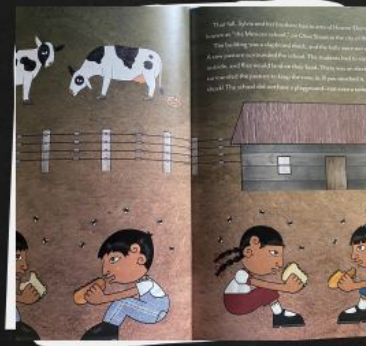
Could G2M3 Violate Anti-CRT Law?

HBO580/SB623



(1)

One race or sex is inherently superior to another race or sex



(6)

An individual should feel discomfort, guilt, anguish, or another form of psychological distress solely because of the individual's race or sex



(8)

This state or the United States is fundamentally or irredeemably racist or sexist



(10)

Promoting division between, or resentment of, a race, sex, religion, creed, nonviolent political affiliation, social class, or class of people

Hillcrest Jr. High's new principal



Murray School District UT

Mar 10 · 🌐



Tonight's board meeting...

- Welcome to Dr. Claustina Mahon-Reynolds
- Horizon Elementary PTA report
- MEA and MASA reports
- Public Comment
- Board Member Reports
- School Land Trust Amendments
- 2022-23 School Calendar Adjustment
- 2nd Reading for School Fees
- 2nd reading Overnight Travel Request

[#wearemurray](#) [#learningtogether](#)



Listening With Care - training on equity





Robin Williams

Our work so far

13

PD on Tough Kids, Behavior Interventions, SEL and Social Justice

14

Listening with Care..Unscripted Summer Listening Session with 12 community members

15

Listening with Care..Teacher training Michelle Love-Day, Dr. Jackie Thompson, Dr. David Dominguez

16

Listening with Care..Admin and School Board training Dr. Mahon-Reynolds and Ms. Zarnetske

17

Equity Council formation by teachers to address employee concerns

18

Equity Council presentation to board with Dr. Mahon-Reynolds, Dr. Thompson, Amanda Darrow

From Feb 25 board meeting



Listening With Care video removed

when Claustina Mahon-Reynolds is hired as Hillcrest Jr. High principal, March 2022



Video unavailable

[GO TO HOME](#)

Workshops and Strategies for Undoing Racism

Reach Out



© 2022 Process Forward, LLC

Follow Us



Dr. Claustina Mahon-Reynolds

Co-Founder



"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." - Maya Angelou

I have been in education for 21 years and hold a doctoral degree from The University of Utah in Educational Leadership & Policy. Starting in 2013, I have worked as a part-time adjunct in addition to my full-time work as an educator and administrator. My research interests include working with Black and Latinx women leaders of color, English Language Learners, promoting student self-advocacy, collecting data on student voice, educating professionals on equity literacy / equitable outcomes for ALL students (impact vs. intent), supporting parent outreach, and educating adults on bias, systemic racism and anti-racist practices within organizations, systems, and structures.

One of the things that brings joy to my life is spending time with the people I love and care about. I also enjoy the outdoors and being in nature.

So many words with double meanings.

Equity
Diversity
Inclusion
Social Justice
Antiracism
Ally
Belonging
Empathy
Democracy
Accountability
Social Emotional Learning
Gender/Sexuality
Race
Truth (Subjective, not objective)
Tolerance
Safe
Welcoming

And many more... The meaning of words are constantly shifting, so that we don't realize what we're implementing when we assume the original definitions as we write policies and rules.

What now?

What can you do?

Let's stand for our children!

The pdf of these slides will be found at

AprilForMurray.com

and

VoteLaurel.org

Questions or Comments?

**Please send an email to April Wilde Despain or
Laurel Fetzer at the following email addresses:**

AprilForMurray@gmail.com

Vote4Laurel@gmail.com

Sources cited:

1. <https://apnews.com/article/race-and-ethnicity-salt-lake-city-8841e0a58c5265ccc58b9f2e6ee6150e>
2. <https://www.sltrib.com/news/education/2021/02/11/utah-parents-complained/>
3. <https://www.fox13now.com/news/local-news/murray-school-district-suspends-diversity-book-program-over-complaints>
4. <https://www.dailywire.com/news/equity-book-program-suspended-after-backlash-from-parents-over-third-grade-transgender-book>
5. <https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2021/02/17/utah-school-district-suspends-reading-program-after-teacher-shares-transgender-tale-with-3rd-graders/>
6. <https://www.newsweek.com/transgender-boy-book-prompts-utah-school-district-suspend-program-1569346#:~:text=A%20book%20about%20a%20transgender.Horizon%20Elementary%20School%20in%20Murray.>
7. <https://www.theblaze.com/news/third-grade-transgender-book-suspend-equity-program>
8. <https://www.today.com/parents/texas-school-apologizes-book-about-transgender-child-t211557>
9. <https://www.sltrib.com/opinion/letters/2021/02/28/letter-murray-boards/>
10. Pride not prejudice announcement by FAM:
<https://utahfam.org/utah-pride-center-education-conference/>
11. Facebook event for Pride not Prejudice:
<https://www.facebook.com/events/online/pride-not-prejudice-an-lgbtq-conference-for-utah-educators-students-and-caregivers/2765882090407374/>
12. 1/13/2022 MCSD Board Meeting - explicit library books comments
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G5TfQCWO9uY>
13. Fam Rally at Utah Capitol video:
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=search&v=310605893938743>
14. Call Me Max read aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jcrPnaCbKrY>
15. Julian Is A Mermaid read aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHsixIARQPM>
16. Second Step SEL website url:
https://www.secondstep.org/elementary-school-curriculum?src=google&kwd=second%20step&campaignid=12706055247&adgroupid=121863551938&keyword=second%20step&device=c&gclid=cj0kcqjwr-ssbhc9arisanhzu159ik88fvv0k-25ugnjhv4wcde3jkrsebczvmndonvyifgr6gkcwzmaapxsealw_wcb
17. FAM website url: <https://utahfam.org/>
18. Kyl Myers website url: <https://www.kylmyers.com/>
19. Karpman Drama Triangle website url:
https://karpmandramatriangle.com/dt_article_only.html
20. Karpman Drama Triangle article published in 1968:
<https://karpmandramatriangle.com/pdf/DramaTriangle.pdf>
21. Utah code §53E-9-203: <https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title53E/Chapter9/53E-9-S203.html>
22. Utah Administrative Code R277-515-6, Utah Educator Professional Standards:
<https://www.schools.utah.gov/file/0b708139-7c75-4c25-afaf-35a72032000b>

23. Utah Code §53G-10-202:
<https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title53G/Chapter10/53G-10-S202.html#:~:text=School%20officials%20and%20employees%20may,or%20atheistic%20belief%20or%20viewpoint.>
24. Utah Code §53G-10-402:
<https://le.utah.gov/xcode/Title53G/Chapter10/53G-10-S402.html>
25. MCSD Equity Council presentation at the Pride Not Prejudice conference:
<https://rumble.com/v115188-mcsd-presentation-at-the-pride-not-prejudice-conference.html>
26. Listening With Care training that was removed from Jennifer Covington's MCSD youtube channel:
<https://rumble.com/v1152sm-mcsd-pd-training-for-teachers-listening-with-care.html>
27. Feb 25, 2021 MCSD Board Meeting Study Session: <https://youtu.be/Da0a832BojQ>
28. GLSEN website url for rise up:
<https://www.glsen.org/lgbtq-pride-rise-up-speak-out-and-take-action>
29. It Feels Good To Be Yourself read aloud:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ikfUujgFdYA>
30. 2 hour Parents meeting with MCSD board members and administrators audio:
https://youtu.be/ZQg_RjSqR6I
31. March 4, 2021 MCSD Board meeting with public comments from parents:
<https://youtu.be/cHEV9ZYgrjg>
32. Utah GRAMA request website url: <https://openrecords.utah.gov/>
33. Something Happened In Our Town read aloud:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pi7_Ps6Jf7Y
34. <https://web.archive.org/web/20210119090852/https://www.utahpridecenter.org/utah-lgbtq-community-calendar/category/education#>
35. https://web.archive.org/web/20210302163052/https://www.utahpridecenter.org/community_event/pride-not-prejudice-an-lgbtqia-conference-for-utah-educators-students-and-care-givers/
36. <https://web.archive.org/web/20210209033446/https://pride-not-prejudice-an-lgbtqia-conference-for-u.heysummit.com/>
37. <https://www.processforward.org/>
38. Pride Not Prejudice Captivating Reads presentation by Nathan Spofford and Cara Cerise: <https://rumble.com/v12k114-pride-not-prejudice-captivating-reads.html>
39. Identity Marxism - The Rise of Critical Race Theory:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q8cdsAolW3k>