



# Join Lower Merion School District's Ongoing Equity Efforts

Programs and initiatives set in motion by students, staff, and community members as a means to provide outlets and resources that address the diverse needs in LMSD.

*The Lower Merion School District is committed to taking a leadership role in closing achievement gaps and ensuring the achievement of all students through a comprehensive array of programs, strategies and community partnerships. In 2009, LMSD became one of the first school systems in the region to target "closing achievement gaps" as a top priority in its strategic plan. Current efforts include expanded use of student data to identify and support struggling students, intensive staff development programs around cultural proficiency and differentiated instruction, summer enrichment programs, low-cost/reduced-cost tutoring programs, minority recruitment initiatives, and implementation of other research-based achievement strategies.*

*The District is a founding member of the [Delaware Valley Consortium for Excellence & Equity \(DVCEE\)](#) and facilitates community and parent engagement around local K-12 issues through the [Committee to Address Race in Education \(C.A.R.E\)](#). The District's minority achievement programs at the high schools ([Becton Scholars Seminar at Lower Merion](#) and [POWER Scholars at Harriton](#)) further engage, challenge and support minority students in achieving their maximum potential.*

*To continue to move this important work forward, and Ad-Hoc Committee on Equity and Anti-Racism was formed during the summer of 2020 by the Lower Merion Board of School Directors. This committee was formed to ensure that ongoing initiatives are coordinated and held accountable to the larger community.*



The Lower Merion Board of School Directors and Administration have long applied an Equity lens to decision-making and practices affecting students and staff throughout the District. This commitment is reflected in numerous District Policies, initiatives and practices. Currently, work is beginning on an Equity Policy and Equity Audit. Existing District Policies govern [Civility](#); [Equal Opportunity Program for School and Classroom/Employment Practices](#); [Controversial and Value Issues](#); [English Language Development](#); [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#); and [Harassment, Bullying and Hazing](#). Initiatives include the formation of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Equity and Anti-Racism, [CARE \(Committee to Address Race in Education\)](#), the [Achievement Imperative Task Force](#), ongoing review of curriculum and educational resources. All professional and support staff receive ongoing cultural proficiency training. [The Human Resources Department](#) has increased efforts to recruit and retain diverse staff, including staff affinity groups, so that every child in our District sees adults who reflect their identity.

Programs and initiatives set in motion by each school.



**ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

All LMSD elementary schools have yearly cultural proficiency plans and goals to which all staff are held accountable. They maintain websites for students, staff and families, where developmentally appropriate cultural proficiency resources are available. All students take part in CP4KIDS, cultural proficiency lessons for grades K-5, that use the social justice standards of identity, diversity, justice, and action. All elementary social studies programs are undergoing a curriculum review to ensure representation of diverse voices and viewpoints. The schools celebrate diversity through Cultural Heritage Nights, Black History Month and events honoring Asian American, Hispanic American and Native American traditions. Students are offered free 1:1 tutoring and participate in School Families. Students of color in grades 4 and 5 can participate in the RARE affinity program.



**MIDDLE SCHOOLS**

Both LMSD middle schools have yearly cultural proficiency plans and goals to which all staff are held accountable and maintain websites for students, staff and families, where developmentally appropriate cultural proficiency resources are available. Students of color are invited to join REACH at BCMS and EmPOWER at WVMS, which are safe spaces for students to engage in conversations and activities about race, empowerment, culture and excellence. The teacher-led Culturally Responsive Teaching Team encourages collaboration among staff about how to infuse anti-racism work within their classrooms and provides a safe space for staff to address their own unconscious biases.



**HIGH SCHOOLS**

Both LMSD high schools have yearly cultural proficiency plans and goals to which all staff are held accountable and maintain websites for students, staff and families, where developmentally appropriate cultural proficiency resources are available. Students of color are invited to join Becton Scholars at LMHS and POWER Scholars at HHS, which are affinity groups that help cultivate academic excellence and leadership and give students a safe space to engage in conversations and activities to voice their ideas, differences, goals, along with celebrating their cultural heritage. During the 2020-2021 school year, the Voices in African American Literature course was added at both schools and a Black Excellence course is set to be added in 2021-2022. Other student-centered activities include the Council for Racial Equity and Inclusivity, Black Student Union, the Diversity Leadership Council and LMHS's "Well-read Brothers," a book club for Black men.

*To learn more about LMSD's Equity and Anti-Racism efforts, visit [www.lmsd.org/Equity](http://www.lmsd.org/Equity)*