



To: Emily Parks, Superintendent
From: Allison Borchers, Assistant Superintendent
Cc: Abigail Hanscom, Director of Student Services
Lemma Jn-Baptiste, Director of Business and Finance
Steve Ouellette, Director of Technology, Learning and Innovation
Date: January 5, 2021
Re: proposed leadership team training

One of our district-wide strategic priorities for the past several years has been to implement programs and instructional practices that recognize and support the needs of students and families in an increasingly diverse community. Since the fall of 2018, our efforts have focused on three key areas: 1) ensuring sure that our curriculum offers our students both “mirrors and windows”, i.e., opportunities to reflect on their own lives as well as to explore the wider world, 2) recruiting, hiring and supporting staff of color, and 3) providing professional development that supports culturally responsive classroom practices.

Westwood’s METCO Director Lateefah Franck has proposed leadership team training to help support the district’s work in this critical area. Details of the first proposed training appears below:

Course title: “Anti-Racist Decision Making for School Leaders” is a 6-hour course offered through IDEAS (Initiatives For Developing Equity and Achievement for Students), an EDCO collaborative program.

Instructor: Edward Byrne is a graduate of Harvard College (AB), Simmons (MPP) and Babson (MBA). Ed is currently the National Deputy Director for Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses at Babson College. He spent 10 years in the Cambridge Public Schools where he led student diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. Ed also spent two years on special assignment in the Cambridge Mayor’s office as a liaison between City Hall and the school district and developed a district wide equity plan while in that role. He served for two terms in the leadership of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth. He currently serves on the board of directors of GLBTQ Legal Advocates and Defenders (GLAD).

Participants: All members of the administrative council would participate. The case-study approach of the course might prove beneficial to directors and department heads, including the operations and food services departments, as well. Lateefah will explore these options with the course instructor.

Timing: Two three hour sessions in March/April.

Cost: Currently in negotiations. Cost is typically \$156 per member for participation in this course. Since we are proposing a WPS-specific session, we anticipate being able to negotiate a flat rate of \$3000 - \$4000.

The purpose of this particular training is to equip school and district leaders with the skills to analyze complex and challenging situations and make decisions that promote equity, diversity and inclusion.

We anticipate that the same team, or a subset of this group, might participate in additional training on supporting culturally responsive classrooms and schools as a follow up this summer or early next fall.