

To: Board of Education

From: Anna Stubblefield, assistant superintendent, educational support & equity
Leah Wisdom, assistant director, student services

Re: District Equity Update

Date: February 23, 2017

Background:

District and building administrators in Lawrence Public Schools (LPS) began book study discussions in 2005 to explore issues of racial achievement disparities as evidenced by the district's achievement data including graduation rates. The book, "Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools," by Glenn Singleton and Curtis Linton, served as a guide for these discussions. The Board of Education contracted with Glenn Singleton, the book's author, and the Pacific Educational Group (PEG) to provide professional development and technical assistance with the district's efforts. Through its Framework for Systemic Equity/Anti-Racism Transformation, PEG helps school districts address racial educational disparities, become aware of institutional racism, and develop strategies for closing achievement gaps.

Since 2009, USD 497 has been hosting Beyond Diversity seminars for all staff to attend. Nearly 1,500 teachers, support staff members, parents, and community partners, including all teachers new to the district, have participated in Beyond Diversity training through LPS. Beyond Diversity addresses the systemic thinking, proactive utilization of the Courageous Conversation tools and protocol, and the adaptive process needed to effect change.

Starting in the spring of 2011, each high school and all elementary schools initiated E-Teams, school equity leadership teams. These teams consist of eight to ten racial equity leaders who have completed the Beyond Diversity seminar. The E-Teams participate in additional professional development activities designed to prepare staff to develop and guide the implementation of their own school's Equity Transformation Plan.

Current Report:

Along with these highlights, this report will include the following:

- Update on the Community Conversation about Racial Equity in LPS
- Next Steps