



Script of Dr. Block's Equity Audit Video May 12, 2023

Hello. I am Matt Block, Superintendent of Schools. Thank you so much for visiting our equity webpage.

After two years of collaborative discussion and deliberation, our district formulated a five-year strategic plan. That plan is set to guide our work as a District through 2027. The plan covers five areas of focus for LPS over the next five years. One area is "Community and Culture." The committee envisioned that we would optimize our efforts to "Promote global citizenship, community involvement, and multiculturalism." From this vision, a goal was developed which says that we will work to, "Foster an environment in which people of all different backgrounds have the freedom to express themselves without judgment or bias."

After several years of focused work in diversity, equity, and inclusion we must now try to get a comprehensive global view as to how that work is paying off, and areas that need more attention. We need to know what is working well, where there are gaps, and what our priorities should be as we work to move forward as quickly and effectively as possible.

To accomplish this, the District has hired an experienced, independent, third-party consulting firm that specializes in equity work, to conduct a full equity audit of the district. The auditors are connected with Rowan University and have worked with other districts to do the same type of study. They will be looking at all aspects of the district's operations, talking to as many members of our school community as possible, and looking to the greater Livingston community as well.

Key to the success of the work of our highly-regarded auditors will be ensuring their independence. While the administration will help to facilitate access to information, people, and resources, we will not interfere with their process or influence the information they are collecting. The two leaders of the audit, Dr. Zion and Dr. Oswald are third-party consultants and are here to help us. Please know we will be looking at multiple areas of diversity and equity such as cultural, racial, sexual orientation, gender, neurodiversity, and others.

The audit is beginning now, in mid-May, and will likely continue well into the Fall. All we ask of you is to please carefully complete any survey that might be sent to you, to participate in focus groups that may be advertised, and to provide honest and thoughtful feedback if and when asked. This equity audit will give us a sense of whether our policies, practices, and people are most effectively creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all in our school. The only way to ensure the success of the audit is to be sure everyone who is asked to participate, participates thoroughly, honestly, and with the idea of helping our district improve and move forward in this key strategic area.

Thank you, in advance, for your assistance with this important venture.