

# EQUITY IN EWSD

THE BEGINNING OF A JOURNEY





# RECOGNITION, GRATITUDE & RESPECT TO THOSE WHO HAVE COME BEFORE

- ▶ Our work has been built by those who have dedicated their lives and careers to studying, living, understanding, and seeking to change the inequities baked in to our educational systems.
- ▶ Our students are central to initiating and sustaining this work. Without them, we would be lost.
- ▶ In the words of Dr. Luvelle Brown, this work is about love.

**EWSD Equity Policy Background:** The Essex Westford School District approaches equity through recognizing and redressing the impact of racism in the United States. This nation would not have evolved as it has without the genocide of the indigenous people, nor would the economic infrastructure exist as it does without the enslavement of native African people and their descendants. In an effort to recognize and undo the harm of centuries of systemic inequities and oppression, we begin with this lens and framework.

# THE BEGINNING

Deep listening

1

# EWSD: REVISIONED

- ▶ CCSU + ETSD in 2017
- ▶ A Nellie Mae Grant connecting community and schools
- ▶ A new vision from our community that centered equity.

# EQUITY LEADERSHIP

A necessary component - and yet it is everyone's work, how does that work?



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“If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time, but if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”

~ Aboriginal activist Lilla Watson



# STUDENTS CENTERED

- ▶ EHS Equity Retreat
- ▶ Four areas of focus developed by students:
  - ▶ Curriculum change
  - ▶ Bias response
  - ▶ Diversifying the educator workforce
  - ▶ Hearing different voices and stories of those most impacted



# COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS OF LEADERSHIP

Hiring and Human Resources

EWSD/EPD Relationship

Curriculum Audits

Professional Learning

Equity Report

**Policy and Decision Making**

Bias Response

Community Connections

Student Leadership





# THE ROLE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

## CLARITY & COHESION

Centering equity in all decisions and discussions, even when it is hard, even when acknowledging inequities is necessary and challenging to change.

## COURAGE

Being willing to call people into conversations, recognize your own contributions to inequities of the past, and receive feedback. The courage to learn publicly. Let students lead.

## TRUST

Trust your students, trust your parents, trust those who share stories even when they are hard to hear. Trust teachers, trust leaders. And be willing to see inequities as opportunities to change within those relationships.

# POLICY

## The EWSD Policy Development Process: A Story

- ▶ *'Model'* Policies
- ▶ Traditional Policy Development Process & White Supremacy Culture
- ▶ A New Way Forward
- ▶ Community Challenges & Critical Race Theory
- ▶ The Passage of a Policy - Questions, Answers & Accountability
- ▶ The Importance of External Partners

# EWSD EQUITY POLICY



# RESOURCES

- ▶ [EWSD Equity & Inclusion Website](#)
- ▶ [Board and Community FAQ in Equity Policy Consideration Process](#)
- ▶ [Equity Monitoring Board Presentation 12.15.21](#)
- ▶ [Allyship versus Co-Conspirator: Dr. Bettina Love](#)

# THANKS!

Any questions?

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