



Public Comment Responses Received During the WPS BOE Meeting on 2/23/2021

Below is the public record of public comment responses received during the 2/23/2021 BOE meeting.

PUBLIC QUESTIONS/COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS - No public comments were received on this item.

DISCUSSION

- 1. Health Update and School Reopening Model Update** - No public comments were received on this item. One test response was received.
- 2. Search Institute Survey** - Comments are posted exactly as they have been received.

First and Last Name	Address	Please state your comment/question regarding Search Institute Survey.
Hana and Don Chaney	14 Morningside Lane	We share Lee Goldstein's concern regarding personal information of our students getting into the wrong hands and being shared. If you must do surveys, consider going back to paper.

- 3. Equity Study** - Comments are posted exactly as they have been received.

First and Last Name	Address	Please state your comment/question regarding Equity Study.
Matthew Heiser	6 Smokey Lane	Part 1 of 3: Regarding the Equity Study proposed by the Board, could the Board elaborate on the specific reasons this study is needed? As the Board is aware, one of the issues with studies such as these is that they are often used to reach a particular result and to make recommendations so as to justify the time and expense spent. To what extent will the Board be addressing, in advance, the content and methods for the study as well as the definition of "Equity" used, so as to avoid commissioning a study that itself has implicit biases and serves only to push one idea of Equity. A cursory review of the NYU Metropolitan Center's website shows an organization with a strong leftist ideological bent.

Matthew Heiser	6 Smokey Lane	Part 2 of 3: While they might consider, for example, the effect of a lack of racial diversity among Westport faculty on minority students, they might not consider the effects of the lack of male elementary school teachers on the 50% of the elementary students who are boys, or the ideological makeup of the teachers themselves and how that affects "Equity". They will likely consider leftist concepts of equity and fairness, but not moderate or conservative ones, and they are certainly unlikely to broach the topic as to whether equity and fairness should always be pursued to the exclusion of other important values. Has the Board asked them these questions? Will it?
Matthew Heiser	6 Smokey Lane	Part 3 of 3: One way to address this might be for the Democrats and the Republicans on the Board to each appoint someone to oversee the study in order to ensure that it at least attempts to be ideologically neutral. In that way, the Board can ensure that the study is using methods, rubrics and definitions that strike a balance, and isn't just peddling a viewpoint that is rather obvious from the Metropolitan Center's website.
Candace Banks	RTM Representative, Dist. 6	An equity study of this kind was broached numerous times with both the previous Superintendent and interim Superintendent. Others tonight have mentioned the anecdotes brought forward by students of color via essays and letters publicizing specific instances of racism during the school day. Some students have taken the additional steps of testifying publicly in various town meetings about these incidents in a deeply personal way. The need for this data is clear. I hope the study will be completed as soon as possible. I also request that any written report is shared in its entirety with the RTM's Education Committee.
Harold Bailey	Regents Park, Westport CT	TEAM Westport fully supports Superintendent Scarice's proactive strategy for preparing all our students for the twenty first century via the incorporation of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in all aspects of the Westport Schools environment. The planned Equity Study with a team as renowned as NYU's is both a critical and excellent first step. Harold Bailey, Regents Park, Westport CT
Elizabeth Falk	Overlook Road	Thank you for your dedication to our students and for taking the next steps to make sure all of our students feel a sense of belonging.
Abby Tolan	1 Harbor Rd	Thank you for this work. It is overdue and so important for preparing our students for the diverse world they will be asked to navigate.

Tom & Zoe Tarrant	48 Myrtle Ave.	<p>If you are White and fighting against an independently and professionally conducted Equity Study in the Westport Schools, please ask yourself why? If there are no problems to hide, what wrong can come of collecting and analyzing the record of our school system? Westport students have been calling upon us as a community to address the problems of racism in our schools for years. We know that all of our students will benefit from addressing systemic inequalities and that addressing potential findings will help all of our students graduate Staples more fully prepared to contribute and thrive on the global stage. We fully support the Superintendent and the BOE in their pursuit of the Equity Study and thank you all for your efforts.</p> <p>Tom & Zoe Tarrant 48 Myrtle Avenue</p>
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4. **2022-2023 School Year Calendar** - No public comments were received on this item.
5. **Policy Committee Update and First Reading of Policy 4111.4, "Plan for Minority Staff Recruitment"** - No public comments were received on this item.