

Dear Weston school community members,

As a public school system, we are responsible for providing all students with a high quality education. Weston maintains extremely high levels of student performance and ranks as a top district, and we still have more work to do to ensure that all students are meeting or exceeding Weston's high expectations.

This required work builds on clear directives from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the U.S. Department of Education's Equity Action Plan. In response to these directives, a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Advisory Committee was launched including students, families, community members, employees, and members of the school committee in 2020. Our district's current equity priorities align with [state-level equity frameworks](#), our [district's strategic plan](#) and annual action plans from [this year](#) and [last year](#). **This message will provide information on next steps our district is taking to best serve our students by continuing this required DEI work, including invitations from us to hear from all of you.**

The Weston Public Schools define educational equity as providing all students with the high quality instruction and support they need to reach and exceed high levels of achievement, and to fulfill their potential. Our equity work will raise the bar for everyone. It will not diminish academic rigor, excellence, or expectations for anyone nor will it dilute recognition for hard-earned achievement, as our learning community celebrates today.

Achieving the goal of educational equity for all students means that we:

- provide every student with access to high quality curriculum, support, and other educational resources.
- promote educational equity as a priority in professional development and educator evaluation.
- create schools with a welcoming and inclusive culture and environment.
- provide multiple pathways to success in order to meet the needs of the diverse student body and actively encourage, support and expect high academic and extracurricular achievement for each student.

Toward that end, members of the administrative team, school committee, and the DEI Advisory Committee identified the opportunity to conduct a fully grant-funded "equity audit" in Weston. Many local districts (such as Belmont, Needham, Dover-Sherborn, Acton-Boxborough, and Sudbury) have recently completed audits. The intent is to partner with students, families, and employees to gather data and generate ideas on how our schools can best serve all students. Our equity audit will focus on delivering tangible steps to improve instruction, opportunity, and support, as well as finding strategies to reduce access gaps through a student-and-family-centered process.

After an extensive selection process in early 2022, our district leaders and the DEI Advisory Committee selected [The Leadership Academy](#) (TLA) as the audit consultant. TLA's process

emphasizes deep engagement with students, families, and staff. This proven process begins with data collection, and is followed by a collaborative analysis phase that leads to recommending potential steps the district can take to address root causes of the most significant issues. Be assured that the administration and school committee will publically receive and deliberate over the recommendations from the audit, and changes will not be taken without comprehensive community engagement.

The core of the Equity Audit process is hearing from you, our students, families, and employees. The DEI Advisory Committee will hold a series of focus groups with 10-12 people per session, along with an optional and anonymous online survey. The focus groups invite Middle School and High School students, families, and employees respectively to attend hour-long listening sessions. Spots are limited, but for those who are not able to participate, the online survey will mirror the questions in the focus groups. These anonymous, optional surveys will be administered in compliance with federal educational privacy laws.

Thank you in advance for taking part in our district's equity audit. We look forward to hearing from each of you throughout this process, and appreciate your time and voluntary participation. Our exceptional school district's primary goal is excellence for all students, and to reach this goal, we must ensure inclusion and equitable access for all. The equity audit is a step toward that end.

If you have any questions about the equity audit process [take a look at this Equity Audit FAQ](#). You may also email Superintendent@weston.org or School Committee and DEI Advisory Committee Member Alyson Muzila (muzilaa@weston.org) for more information.

Signed,

Dr. Midge Connolly, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Kenneth Newberg, School Committee Chair
Ms. Alyson Muzila, School Committee Vice-Chair and DEI Advisory Committee Member