

Diversity & Inclusion Update

May 2024

Dr. Maisha Gillins, Chief Equity Officer

The Office of Equity continues to be intentional in our efforts in assisting schools in eliminating all gaps.

Commemorative Months

Anne Arundel County Public Schools is committed to fostering learning environments that honor, respect, and support the diversity of the AACPS student body. The Office of Equity rolled out the Commemorative Months site this school year. The goal of the site is to provide age-appropriate materials, resources, and activities so that teachers can explore with students the rich histories of the various groups that continue to contribute to our American story. The Office of Equity emphasizes the following statement from Dr. Tiffany Mitchell Patterson, Assistant Professor of Social Studies at West Virginia University:

"If we're really moving toward anti-racist, anti-biased curriculum, then we have to make these histories a part of the natural fabric of education. When students only hear about these histories during designated months, it seems as though these stories aren't a thread throughout American history, or that these lives aren't really embedded in our society."

Summer Professional Learning

We are excited to inform you about the collaboration between the Office of Equity and Professional Growth & Development in hosting the Summer RISE Conference on July 30 and 31. The focus will be on re-envisioning instruction and strategic supports for educators.



In the Community

Local History Workgroup Initiative

In October of 2020, the Office of Equity spearheaded the AACPS Local History Workgroup Initiative in partnership with the Social Studies Office. This initiative is a collaboration between Anne Arundel County Public Schools and representatives from various educational, community, and civic organizations. The purpose of the AACPS Local History Workgroup is to curate a collection of local history resources to integrate into our existing K-12 curriculum. These resources are used to help students become communicators, synthesizers, and critical consumers of content as part of the curricula experience. The aim is to do more than teach about local history but teach THROUGH the history.

Caucus of African American Leaders Student Recognition

The Office of Equity is proud to partner with The Caucus of African American Leaders (CAAL) of Anne Arundel County to recognize the achievements of African American students in AACPS. Each month, The Office of Equity selects one high school student to be celebrated at the CAAL meeting for their accomplishments both in the classroom and in their community.

The Joint Commission on the Opportunity Gap

The JCOG was created by Executive Order in May 2021 to further the work of the Joint Initiative to Eliminate the Opportunity Gap, a partnership with Anne Arundel County Public schools which commenced in September 2019 and resulted in four priority recommendations, 14 goals, and 78 potential strategies. The report was formally presented to the public in November 2020. The commission is composed of 15 appointed members representing the County, school system and community and is the result of a collaborative effort to meet the first priority recommendation in the Joint Initiative to Eliminate the Opportunity Gap report. The Commission is empowered to provide ongoing review and oversight of structural and systemic racism that contributes to the opportunity gap in AACPS and the County, and to recommend changes to address equity issues in academics and discipline. For more information visit: <https://www.aacounty.org/boards-and-commissions/jcog/>.