



LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Henry J. Mroz Central Administration Offices
155 Merrimack Street
Lowell, MA 01852

Latifah Phillips
Chief Equity and Engagement Officer

Tel: 978-674-4326
Fax: 978-674-2142
Email: lphillips@lowell.k12.ma.us

To: Dr. Joel Boyd, Superintendent of Schools
From: Latifah Phillips, Chief Equity and Engagement Officer
RE: Portrait of a Graduate – Lowell Public Schools Critical Participatory Research Request, with Training and Support Lead by a Research Team at Harvard’s Graduate School of Education
Date: May 15, 2020

Over the coming year, through the Portrait of a Graduate grant, the Lowell Public Schools will bring together our students, families, educators, employers, and community partners to create a bold new vision for Lowell’s graduate. The “portrait” will define success for Lowell students, including the values, knowledge, skills, and work habits they will need to thrive as learners, workers, and leaders in the 21st century.

To ensure that this process is community-driven and equitable, the district will use the Critical Participatory Act Research (CPAR) approach and partner with community organizations to conduct authentic community engagement that connects communities in Lowell to the Portrait of a Graduate Initiative.

CPAR is an approach to research where a university researcher partners with community members to investigate questions of interest to these local community members. In this case, the CPAR project will look at how different community members visualize and imagine what they dream for graduates of their district.

The findings of the CPAR project will help the Portrait of a Graduate design team to present a final “portrait” that truly reflects the voice and input of our students, families and community members.