



To: Joel D. Boyd, Ed.D Superintendent
From: Latifah Phillips, Chief Equity and Engagement Officer
Date: May 13, 2022
Re: Motion Response Relating to the Bias Based Incident Reporting System

This memo is written in response to a motion submitted by School Committee Member Stacey Thompson on March 16, 2022:

Motion for the Superintendent to supply the School Committee with a typical timeframe from the opening of a discrimination, racism, bullying or intimidation complaint until the investigation is opened. This will be to include what it means to have an investigation open, additionally who gets involved at both a school and administration level.

Per the request of School Committee Member Thompson, attached are the bias based incidents reports for the months of March and April. Starting in February 2022, the monthly reports are prepared for the second school committee meeting of each month. The March report is being included along with the April report this month given that the second school committee meeting in March was canceled during spring vacation week.

During the month of March, 65 incidents were reported using the online bias based incident reporting system, and 55 investigations were completed and uploaded into the database during this timeframe. As stated in the previous report, the investigation form is separate from the incident reporting form database; therefore, while the Equity Office has centralized access to the submitted incident forms, the Office does not have access to the investigation data until the investigation form is uploaded by a school-based investigator. A synopsis of the investigation findings and administered consequences has been included in the March presentation.

As relates to the typical timeframe from the opening of a discrimination, racism, bullying or intimidation complaint until the time an investigation begins, per our review of the data submitted in the March report as well as the February report, the average timeframe between a reported incident to the launch of an investigation is 1.5 days. Each school has a designated staff person who receives the reports once they're submitted online and is responsible for investigating the reports. If a student, staff or family is not satisfied with the investigation process or outcome, they can request that the Office of Equity and Empowerment review the investigation process and findings.

Since the time of the last report, Equity and Engagement Office staff have been coordinating with a subcommittee of the Lowell Student Advisory Council to work towards improving and

streamlining the Racism, Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination reporting process to make it more student friendly and student-centered.

During the month of April, 42 incidents were reported and 32 investigations were completed and uploaded into the database during this timeframe. A synopsis of the investigation findings and administered consequences has been included in the April presentation. The typical timeframe from the opening of a discrimination, racism, bullying or intimidation complaint until the time an investigation was initiated was found to be 3.9 days on average in April. This increased time frame may be attributed in part to reports being submitted before or during April vacation week.

Currently, the Office of Equity and Empowerment is preparing for the first school-community review team meeting, where a small team of staff, community DEI practitioners and parents will have the opportunity to analyze the reported data and administered consequences, and present recommendations for student and staff training, as well as improvements to the reporting process and data collection process.

Furthermore, on June 1, a select groups of students from each middle and high school in Lowell Public Schools will have the opportunity to review a revised student-friendly reporting form and develop a school-based communications and outreach plan to present to their school administration before the end of the school year, with the goal of increasing awareness of the purpose and available of the reporting form.