

Roxanne Maher

From: Beth Smith <fraugurusan@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 8, 2025 1:45 PM
To: BOE@ledyard.net; boemembers@ledyard.net; Jay Hartling
Cc: Roxanne Maher; Town Council Group
Subject: Protect and Support Students

To whom it May Concern:

The hard work you have done on the BOE budget is valued. As a former school administrator and elementary teacher I appreciate the work you do for our schools and students. Thank you.

I am writing because the latest federal directive from the current administration regarding DEI in our schools is of great concern to me. The Ledyard Public Schools Equity Statement is very clear in its statement that LPS *will hold itself accountable at every level, to intentionally allocate resources and expand opportunities to achieve equitable student outcomes*. Banning diversity, equity and inclusion practices will be in conflict with the LPS Equity Statement and its values. As you await direction from the State Department of Education I urge you not to take any action regarding removal of any DEI initiatives or wording from LPS policies. New York Public Schools have said they won't comply with the Education Department's DEI order. I hope that Connecticut will stand strong and do the same.

To further quote the LPS Equity Statement, *As a public school district, we recognize our collective power to make change and improve student experiences. That power includes validating injustices, recognizing the value of diversity, and embracing policies and practices that ensure ALL students, especially those who have been historically marginalized based on race/ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender, age, socio-economic status, immigrant status, educational status, or religion have equitable experiences that eliminate the opportunity gap.*

May you stand strong in recognizing your collective power to make change and improve student experiences; that you see this DEI order as an injustice that will not eliminate the opportunity gap for ALL students but deeply widen it. Thank you.

Kind regards,

Elizabeth Smith
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Ledyard