



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
**SOUTH LAKE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

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Dear South Lake Elementary School families,

Our school has a commitment to fostering learning environments in which all students, families, and staff feel a sense of belonging. Recognizing the racial disparities that have persisted in how students experience school and access opportunities, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) worked collaboratively with the Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC) to examine policies, practices, and structures that must change to ensure schools create the conditions for all students to thrive.

Over 130,000 students, staff, and families shared insights over the course of two years. Our school has been analyzing the survey results from our own students, staff, and families. 203 students, 98 families, and 44 staff members at South Lake Elementary School took the survey. The full results will be posted to our school [website](#) on May 26, 2023. We are writing to summarize our survey results so that we can work together with families to gain deeper insights into what our data mean for actions we must take to improve continuously. We studied the specific results where we saw the most significant differences in the experiences of students, staff, and families by racial group. A summary of our work so far is below.

#### **WHAT WE EXAMINED**

- Student responses to questions about attitudes toward school and learning; learning about race; climate and safety; and access to enrichment courses, career readiness programs, and college planning
  - examined responses about culturally relevant curriculum
- Family responses to questions about school culture; curriculum; family and community engagement; and equity and achievement
  - elevated awareness about culturally responsive instruction
- Staff responses to questions about school culture and conditions; curriculum; workplace culture and conditions; family and community engagement; and instructional practices
  - examined responses about culturally relevant curriculum
  - elevated professional learning around culturally responsive instruction

#### **WHAT WE LEARNED**

- A majority of students (85.7%) are proud of what they learn in school
- A majority of students (81.2%) report their teachers make them feel capable and successful
- Some students (55.5%) report that what they are learning in school reflects the experiences and contributions of people from their ethnic, racial, or cultural backgrounds
- A majority of families (84.4%) feel that the school sets high expectations for all students regardless of race, ethnicity or culture.
- A few families (11.7%) believe that their children are not taught about the negative effects of racism in their classes.
- A few families (22.1%) believe that their children are treated differently at school because of their race, ethnicity, skin color or culture.
- A majority of staff members (88.4%) believe that racial, ethnic and cultural differences are



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valued

- A majority of staff members (72.1%) report that the content of the MCPS curriculum fails to reflect the experiences and contributions of people of historically underrepresented racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. .

### **OUR NEXT STEPS**

- Continue to examine our practices and structures using an anti-racist lens
- Meet with groups of students, staff members, and families to further unpack and clarify the survey responses
- Gather student voice data to ensure that we have the most current information
- Explore areas in our curriculum where we can enhance the inclusion of the experiences and contributions of people from our community's ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds
- Continue to offer varied ways families can participate in the life of our school, such as parent cafe, and curriculum training and support.
- Continue to encourage parents to provide input about the school climate and instructional program.

### **HOW FAMILIES CAN HELP**

- Talk to your child about racism, justice, and fairness
- Support perfect attendance; students must attend every day
- Attend meetings about what your child is learning (such as: Back to School Night, Literacy Night, Math Night)
- Volunteer for at least one activity during the school year (help in the classroom, support special activities at school, chaperoning a field trip)
- Maintain communication with the school and ensure that the school will be able to reach you at any time
- Strive to understand how to best support your child to be successful in school
- Communicate any concerns about your child's learning
- Tell the teacher or school when you do not understand something that is sent home
- Talk to your child about what is happening in school and about the importance of working hard in school

We look forward to continuing to engage with families as partners in designing and monitoring a school improvement plan that includes actions we will take as a result of our data. We are confident that by working together we can increase our students' access to opportunities and ensure that all students, staff, and families experience a sense of belonging in our school community.