



Dear WHPS families, community members, and educators,

The West Hartford Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Parent Group is deeply saddened, outraged, and frustrated by the recent acts of racism and social injustice. We are an activist group led by parents of color and allies that advocates for a more equitable, just environment for our children.

We see you. We hear you. We are you.

Recent events have been challenging for many Black, Hispanic, Asian, Indigenous, and other families of color. These last few weeks have been especially painful for Black families who are having difficult and transparent conversations with their children about racism -- yet again. No words can adequately express the pain and hurt we feel as we call for racial justice and accountability for the senseless murders of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and many more before them.

We are a group that brings together and amplifies parent voices who desire to advocate for West Hartford children and effect systemic change in our school community. We are here and ready to use our networks, relationships, and platforms to advance racial and educational equity in our community. We will continue to advocate for solutions to the ongoing, existing systemic racism embedded throughout our communities and institutions. The work of building our communities to be equitable, safe, and anti-racist will not happen overnight. Nevertheless, we will work together to make sure no one continues to feel marginalized or invisible.

In the coming weeks, we will provide a safe, healing space for families to connect as a community for support and recovery. Additionally, we will host community conversations with parents to discuss openly the recent events and how we can move forward together. We will provide additional information regarding dates, times, and meeting access once we have formalized the schedule.

During this emotional time, we encourage you to explore the "[Emotional and Crisis Support Resources](#)" section of the resource list provided by WHPS Pupil Services. There are organizations and contact numbers listed specifically for parent/caregiver needs as well. As your schools have communicated previously, you can also reach out to any trusted educator or school social worker to advocate for your child's emotional needs.

We encourage you to reach out to us at [westhartford.edi@gmail.com](mailto:westhartford.edi@gmail.com) -- we will work to provide a supportive and compassionate space for you. Please include your name and school(s) to ensure your school's EDI parent contact receives your confidential message.

With love,

West Hartford Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Parent Group

Nakia Alexander (Norfeldt)  
Kaleea Alston-Griffin (KP, Hall)  
Sara Barczak (Smith)  
Gigi Belen (Braeburn, Bristow)  
Ayelet Connell (Braeburn)  
Kate Bittinger Eikel (Charter Oak)  
Rebekah Hatch (Morley, KP)  
Yukiyo Iida (KP)

Nadia Kachwaha (Sedgwick)  
Anne Koneru (Bristow, Duffy)  
Amy Messinger (COIA, Duffy, Whiting Lane)  
Kari Nicewander (KP)  
Trisha Pitter (Aiken)  
Norah Pokorny (Smith)  
Amy Raider (Aiken)

Joy Russell (Sedgwick)  
Rebekah Seaton (Bristow, Conard)  
Shiyrah Suplita (Bugbee/ KP)  
Karen Walsh (Bugbee/Bristow)  
Sarah Willen (Aiken)  
Abby Fisher Williamson (Norfeldt)



### **What is the West Hartford Parent Community Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Group?**

The purpose of the West Hartford Parent Community EDI is to create a collaborative space for parents, educators, and community members to come together to listen, learn, and take action on equity initiatives for systemic change that will ensure all children have the opportunities for educational success.

In 2017, a parent-led Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion group was established under the Norfeldt Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Since then, six other EDI groups have been established at the following West Hartford elementary schools: Aiken, Braeburn, Bugbee, Charter Oak International Academy, Duffy, and Smith. We also have a relationship with the Community of Concern at the high school level to share information on related topics and events. This year the EDI groups collaborated with Roszena Haskins and the WHPS Equity and Diversity Council to create the Family and School Partnership Series--a space to bring together families, community members, and educators to build relationships and to collectively discuss and act on equity issues that impact our children.

We look forward to connecting with other families interested in the work of the EDI. If your school does not currently have an EDI group, we encourage you to contact us at [westhartford.edi@gmail.com](mailto:westhartford.edi@gmail.com).