

SUPERINTENDENT'S LISTENING AND LEARNING TOUR

Parents of LGBTQ+ Students | Wednesday, October 13, 2021, 5:30 to 6:30 PM

Hosted by Levi Arithson

Participants: 15 (via zoom)

Language: English

Below is a summary of the feedback from this listening session. It may not reflect the views of all participants and stakeholders district-wide.

What is going well?

- **Levi's role (Program Manager of LGBTQ+ Equity Initiatives)**
- **Teachers are accepting and supportive across the board**
- **Students are accepting and welcoming in high schools**
- **Gay Student Alliances in secondary schools**
- **Ability to easily change pronouns in infinite campus**
- **All-gender bathrooms available in all schools**
- DPS policies are some of the best around
- The listening tour
- Inclusion comes from the top, starting with the school leader

What needs improvement?

- **Even though teachers are supportive and ready to learn about supporting LGBTQ+ students, they are lacking baseline training that leads to unconscious missteps**
- **Lack of baseline training creates situations where an LGBTQ+ student becomes a token, with teachers using the student as a learning experience**
- **Dividing kids by gender in elementary schools (for lines, lunch, bathrooms); this is psychologically harmful for non-binary students**
- **Troubling experiences have happened at Discovery Link, and there's no transparency on how to communicate or escalate**
- Wish for a stream-lined process for communicating pronoun changes to all staff, including specials teachers
- In elementary schools, LGBTQ+ students often feel like the only one in the world, because they are the ones who are out at their school.

Advice for Dr. Marrero

- **Signage and flags mean so much to the students and the families: consider mandating signage or flags to send a strong and welcoming message**
- Start with training, but don't forget about culture
- Keep providing opportunities for parents to have a seat at the table
- Call on parents to be resources for each other
- Create pathways for parents across schools to connect so they aren't recreating the wheel

Notes: The comments with the most mentions or agreement during the meeting are listed in bold at the top of each column.