

December 11, 2021

Mr. Matthew Ferron
Superintendent
Hanover School District
188 Broadway
Hanover, MA 02339

RE: School Committee Meeting December 8th, 2021
List of Concerns in the ADL Peer Leadership Manual as requested by Ms. Libby Corbo

Dear Mr. Ferron,

We, the Motherlode and associates, would like to thank you for considering our concerns.

We have attached for your perusal as requested a list of 98 statements, actions and/or videos within the ADL Peer Leadership Manual that we have found concerning. We would also like to address some of the concerns that were brought up at the meeting.

1. Lisa Adams, who is the parent of Henry Adams one of the 10 students, was not given a permission slip for Henry to participate in the 18 hours of coursework the ADL would be teaching
2. The parents were not given the opportunity to review the manual prior to the students participating.
3. We believe Opting Out of this course is unrealistic since it teaches the 10 core students to disseminate the curriculum throughout their peers, while monitoring and correcting the behavior of peers, faculty, and the community. This course has an all-inclusive ripple effect in coercion and culture cancelling throughout our community.

We would once again like to state that we believe every student should have a safe and inclusive environment where they can thrive and pursue to be their best selves.

Sincerely,

Lisa Adams

Cathy Campo

Kellie Puleo

Laurie Heffron

Kara Dougherty

Julia Leone

December 11, 2021

ADL Peer Leadership Training Manual

List of Concerns by Page Number

Page 12

Peer Trainers will model social inclusion, use anti-bias language, engage in ally behavior, challenge bias, report incidents.

Peer Trainers will develop the ability to disseminate knowledge and skills throughout the school community to promote respect and inclusion.

Peer Trainers will increase their understanding of their own identity and how it impacts their thinking and behaviors.

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Peer Trainers will increase their abilities to assess bias incidents and to select safe and appropriate responses.

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Anti-bias education is an approach to teaching and learning that increases understanding of differences and their value to a respectful and civil society.

From our earliest days of life, we get messages

about our own and others' identities. These messages are often subtle and learned

unconsciously- from family, friends, school, and the media- and they can have a lasting impact.

Anti-bias education develops knowledge and skills in the following areas: personal and cultural identity; basic vocabulary relating to bias and discrimination; cultural influences on communication; and recognizing and challenging bias and discrimination in oneself, others and within institutions (schools, companies, organizations, etc.).

Finally, anti-bias education supports schools in their important role of teaching about our country's democratic ideals and in preparing young people to be successful in today's world.

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When recording participants' responses on chart paper, summarize what they say but be mindful to use their own words as much as possible.

Record all responses and ask for clarification if you are unsure about what a participant has said.

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An important element of a successful program is creating a safe environment where participants feel they can freely share their feelings and personal experiences about bias and discrimination.

Participants need to feel confident that what they share will not be repeated by Peer Trainers or other participants outside of the workshop session.

Anonymity means one is not identified by name. During training sessions, this means that names or other identifying information about real people should not be included when personal experiences or incidents at school are discussed.

In other words, you must make every effort to protect the identities of students, teachers, and other members of the school community.

If you break the confidentiality rule, then others will do the same.

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Plan for Conflict. These are difficult, sensitive issues for which there are no easy solutions or answers.

Do not allow biased remarks to go unaddressed. If a participant makes a biased or insensitive statement, ask the group, "How do people feel about what was said?" or "Does everyone agree with the last statement?" If no one responds, you might say something like, "I found the last statement to be hurtful."

Through the dialogue process, conflicts can emerge as these various perspectives come to light. Below are some strategies Peer Trainers can use to manage conflict during a session. Seek help from the adult in the room if you are unable to handle a conflict that comes up while you are facilitating.

Page 23

What if one person is doing all of the talking?

If there is not one that connects directly to this behavior, you can add a ground rule during the workshop by saying, "We want to make sure that everyone's voice is heard so I am going to add the ground rule of *share space*."

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What if only one point of view is being shared

Provide an alternative point of view by saying, "Let me present another perspective to get your reactions...:"

What if someone shares misinformation?

Don't let misinformation stand unchallenged because that may imply that you agree with it. Present accurate information to counter falsehoods or wrong information.

Page 70

Freedom Dreaming is the process of imagining a future world that does not yet exist. This practice was created by Black radical thinkers as a tool to visualize and create a better and brighter future. This activity invites participants to dream of a world in which justice exists.

Page 99

Explore who we are- give participants a chance to think about their own identities and how they relate to their experiences and viewpoints.

Highlight ways that we are similar to and different from one another- build participants' understanding of others' identities.

Explain how identity and bias are connected-explore how our perceptions are influenced by bias and prejudice.

Encourage participants to share, but don't force people to reveal information if they don't want to. It's their decision if and how to be part of the discussion. Remember that people can learn just by thinking about the concepts and hearing from others.

Page 103

Share a time when you were not allowed to or were discouraged from doing something because of a part of your identity (for example, because of your gender, race, language, ability, etc.).

Page 107

Gender/ Gender Identity: Often with gender, we may not consider whether a person is transgender or gender nonconforming.

Remember that a person cannot be "diverse;" and the inclusion of one person does not make a group diverse.

Page 108

GENDER: The socially defined "rules" and roles for men and women in a society. Dominant western society generally defines gender as a binary system- men and women-but many cultures define gender as more fluid and existing along a continuum.

Page 109

(3)what they can do to create a sense of community in which members' identities are respected and valued; and (4) what it means to suppress or give up a part of one's identity.

Page 112

This activity gets participants to reflect on three things: (1) what identity groups they belong to, (2) what aspects of their identity are important to them, and (3) the similarities and differences among their peers. Participants will learn about the importance of identity and be more motivated to learn about other people's identities.

Page 123

An example of discrimination: A rule that excludes girls from the math club.
Explain that it should be a real example from their school life or personal life.

Page 125

This activity requires participants to think about their opinions about some difficult issues and to take a stand for their beliefs.

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3. When it comes to race, the United States lives up to its ideal of equal rights for all.
- 4.Anyone can become successful in the U.S. by working hard.
7. Everyone has the right to free speech- even organized hate groups.
10. I would feel comfortable if I had a gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or queer/ questioning parent.
- 12.Men have many advantages in our society that women do not share.
- 14.White people have advantages in our society that people of color do not have.
- 15.It should be legal for private business owners to refuse service to people whose identity conflicts with their religious belief.

Page 129

Participants may ask about or bring up "reverse racism" or "reverse sexism;" saying that prejudice against white people or men are examples of these.

While white people, men, straight people, etc. can experience individual prejudice and discrimination, the terms describe systems upheld by institutions, culture and history, meaning they are not "reversed" by individual prejudices.

Page 131

Systemic prejudice or discrimination includes cultural norms, policies and practices that are supported by power and authority (in institutions like schools, businesses, housing and government) both current and historical and that benefit some and disadvantage others

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EQUALITY: Having the same or similar rights and opportunities as others.

The United States was founded on a belief that everyone should have the same rights. This value is called __ . An example of this is when students are treated the same and given the same rights, regardless of their gender.

Many women are paid less than men for doing the same job. This is not fair because their pay should be equal.

This is called pay__.

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Derald Wing Sue's (2010) *Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation*.

Microaggressions are the **everyday slights, indignities, put-downs and insults** that people of color, women, LGBTQ populations and other marginalized people experience in their day-to-day interactions.

Nonverbal: clutching one's purse more tightly, as if to protect it from theft, when in the presence of an African American male.

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What could a bystander have said or done to intervene or address the microaggressions we saw in the video or in the experiences we discussed?

Page 151

Tell participants that they will be viewing a three-minute video produced by *The New York Times* called "Peanut Butter, Jelly and Racism" to learn more about implicit bias.

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As we learned in the "Peanut Butter, Jelly and Racism" video, we are exposed to biased messages throughout our lives, even though we are not always conscious of them. Our words and actions can be biased, too, often causing harm.

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A male student tells a guidance counselor that he just invited a date to prom, and the counselor asks, "Who is the lucky girl?"

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The activity gets participants to think about their own and others' perspectives on race and the bias that people experience in their schools and communities because of their racial identity.

Being 12: "People Think I'm Supposed to Talk Ghetto, Whatever That Is" (2015, WNYC.

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Example: Black students are suspended and expelled at a rate three times greater than white students according to the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

Page 245

A combination of policies, practices and structures that advantage white people while causing widespread harm and barriers to access and opportunity for people of color.

(1) is grounded in the **history** of our laws and institutions which were created on a foundation of white supremacy;

(2) exists in current **institutions** and **policies** (related to educational access, housing, health care, political access, job opportunities, criminal justice, etc.) that privilege white people and marginalize people of color. The following are some examples of racist tropes and how they show up in society.

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This conceals the fact that Asian Americans experience the largest income inequality gap as an ethnic and racial group in the U.S. One example of this is that Asian immigrants have the highest poverty rate in New York City.

Dehumanizing stereotypes of Black people, such as "savage" and "monkey" comparisons and (2) the criminalization of Black people and communities.

Prominent white figures, including Presidents Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Johnson, and Thomas Jefferson spread narratives that Black people were "mentally inferior" and "apelike in appearance"

In 1906, the New York Zoological Park (now the Bronx Zoo) exhibited a kidnapped African man named Ota Benga alongside a chimpanzee.

Prominent white people have compared public figures who are Black to animals.

Page 247-248

(1) The use of indigenous symbols and imagery and adoption of slurs into the dominant white culture and (2) the erasure of indigenous nations and people as the "noble savage" and past tense.

Images of indigenous people were adopted by teams and companies in the 20th century, including Boston Braves (1912), Cleveland Indians (1915), Land O'Lakes (1928), Washington Redskins (1937), and even the cover of a 1971 Beach Boys album.

Research shows that the use of these mascots in schools has a direct and harmful impact on indigenous youth, including their mental health and success in school.

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Participants determine what issues related to bias or injustice are important to them and then identify ways that they can engage in social activism to challenge these issues and promote justice and equity in their community.

You Can Play-Los Angeles Kings video (2016, Los Angeles)

Equity is everyone getting what they need in order to have access, opportunities and a fair chance to succeed. It recognizes that "the same for everyone" (equality) doesn't truly address needs, and therefore, specific solutions and remedies, which may be different, are necessary

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Brainstorm a list of problems or issues they care about related to bias, hate and injustice in their school or community. The list may look something like this:

Police violence against black and Latino men

Family separations at the border

Design and circulate a petition about police violence.

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Plan a school assembly, community forum, teach-in, peer education program or social media forum. Consider ways to share the information in interesting ways (writing, art, theatre, etc.) and give other students the chance to explore their own thoughts and feelings about the topic.

Create a Public Awareness Campaign that Includes Social Media

Blogs, social networking sites such as Instagram and Twitter, videos, memes and online petitions are just a few examples of how words travel fast in digital spaces and can lead to quick and effective action.

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Privilege

The unearned and often unrecognized advantages, benefits or rights conferred upon people based on their membership in a dominant group (e.g., white people, heterosexual people, men, people without disabilities, etc.) beyond what is commonly experienced by members of the marginalized group. Privileges include cultural affirmations of one's own worth, presumed greater social status and the freedom to move, buy, work, play and speak freely.