



## **Resolution of the Durham Public Schools Board of Education Opposing House Bill 187**

Whereas, House Bill 187 (HB 187) "Equality in Education" states that public school units shall not promote that (7) "A meritocracy is inherently racist or sexist," that (8) "The United States was created by members of a particular race or sex for the purpose of oppressing members of another race or sex," or that (11) "The rule of law does not exist, but instead is a series of power relationships and struggles among racial or other groups," and

Whereas, if HB 187 is enacted it would prohibit educators from discussing the full facts of U.S. American history when several Constitutional Amendments were created to redress racist and sexist beliefs and policies in the original U.S. Constitution for the purpose of restoring the rights of previously oppressed members of a race or sex, and

Whereas, HB 187 asserts that "the United States was not created by members of a particular race or sex for the purpose of oppressing members of another race"; however, the 13th Amendment of 1865 abolished slavery, a system in which members of a particular race had, in fact, oppressed members of another race, and

Whereas, HB 187 asserts that the United States was not created by members of a particular race or sex for the purpose of oppressing members of another race; however, educators would be prohibited to debate or consider teaching about the Jim Crow Era, in which a series of laws prevented African Americans from accessing rights such as voting or holding office, and

Whereas, HB 187 asserts that the United States was not created by members of a particular race or sex for the purpose of oppressing members of another race or sex; however, educators would be prohibited to debate or consider teaching that women were not granted the right to vote until 1920 under the 19th amendment, and even then, African American and Indigenous women were still routinely denied their voting rights, and

Whereas, a sound education, including accurate facts about all aspects of U.S. American History, including systemic racism and discrimination, is guaranteed for every North Carolina student in our state's Constitution, and

Whereas, more than sixty-five years after the Supreme Court ruling on Brown vs. Board, segregated schooling is a particularly profound and timely demonstration of the ongoing persistence of systemic racism, and

Whereas, in 2017 Durham Public Schools (DPS) created our Office of Equity Affairs charged with ensuring equity in educational opportunities for all DPS students regardless of race or ethnicity, and

Whereas, in 2018, DPS developed a strategic plan with a guiding principle which states “We believe in Equity: Our students and schools deserve equitable access to the resources and opportunities they need to succeed. Durham Public Schools and the community must distribute those resources in a manner that eliminates inequities,” and

Whereas, in 2019, the North Carolina State Board of Education adopted a strategic plan which defined equity as an essential guiding principle, and

Whereas, in 2020, the North Carolina State Board of Education passed “A Resolution To Support Equity and Excellence In North Carolina Public Education,” and

Whereas, that resolution stated “that the State Board will review and appropriately revise its policies through an equity lens and commit to work with the Superintendent and the Department of Public Instruction to create and maintain an equity officer to ensure consistency and continuity with this essential guiding principle inside and outside the agency,” and

Whereas, in February, 2021, the North Carolina State Board of Education approved new social studies standards which were developed by educators to ensure that a more comprehensive, accurate, and honest history was taught to all students, including content on racism, identity, and discrimination, and

Whereas, the House of Representatives in the North Carolina General Assembly recently voted along party lines to advance House Bill 187, and

Whereas, these bills are partisan, divisive, and are the result of coordinated work by the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) and the Heritage Foundation, and

Whereas, HB 187 attempts to restrict and prohibit honest conversations about race, conflicting with existing state and local education standards, and infringing on the free speech rights of students, educators, and staff, although the bill states that it cannot violate freedom of speech rights, and

Whereas, DPS follows the North Carolina Standard Course of Study (NCSCOS) and teachers in DPS have the support of administrators, department chairs, curriculum

specialists, and instructional coaches as they plan lessons that help students master the content of the standards.

Whereas, in DPS, our curriculum and trainings include a race equity lens and culturally responsive instruction, as well as these trainings are offered from content expert consultants as we work together to dismantle racism and work together towards a more just future, and

Whereas, DPS Board of Education Policy 3100 affirms that our board “recognizes that curriculum development must be an ongoing process in order to continually address the changing needs and diversity of all students and to fulfill the educational goals of the board. Culturally responsive curriculum is critical to achieving this goal and to nurture the cultural well-being of the students and reflect the long-term interests of the community.”

Whereas, DPS continues to unanimously approve equity-based policy and resolutions to advance practices of diversity, equity, and inclusion to support all of our diverse students and staff to create a more equitable and inclusive experience where Black students, families, and staff can be affirmed and can express themselves in a safe and positive way.

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Durham Public Schools Board of Education urges members of the North Carolina General Assembly to vote “No” on HB 187 and

Be it further resolved that the DPS Board of Education urges members of the NC General Assembly to focus on developing a robust public education budget with an equity toolkit that fully supports students in North Carolina, and

Be it further resolved that the DPS Board of Education urges members of the NC General Assembly to focus on the following shared recommendations from the DPS BOE legislative agendas to address statewide equity concerns including, but not limited to:

1. Fund dedicated Equity Directors for every local education authority (LEA) to develop and share best practices statewide. (2021-2022)
2. Adopt a comprehensive, anti-racist, and inclusive curriculum for every school. (2023)
3. Fund professional development that includes diversity, equity, social emotional learning, inclusion, culturally competency, and anti-racist training. (2023)
4. Expand the NC Teaching Fellows Program, especially at HBCUs, and increase representation of teachers of color. (2021-2022)

5. Support all students, families, and staff including people of color, LGBTQIA+ students and staff, students with exceptional needs, immigrant students and families, and people experiencing homelessness and poverty. (2023)

6. Expand Title IX protections to protect students against sexual assault. (2021-2022)

Signed this 9th day of March, 2023

Bettina Umstead, Chair

Emily Chávez, Vice-Chair

Natalie Beyer

Jovonia Lewis

Millicent Rogers

Alexandra Valladares