

Milton Public Schools

Behaving Equitably

March 18th, 2021

Asian Americans Pacific Islanders (AAPI)

Join the Milton Public School District as we stand in solidarity with AAPI in condemning any and all racist, hateful and violent acts against the AAPI community.

As an Asian immigrant woman whose parents survived a genocide, the struggle to be included, heard, and seen is a real struggle every day. South-East Asians' journey in this country is fairly new compared to other nationalities. We arrived in this country during the 1980's in search of refuge from our war-torn countries. The genocide of Cambodia was due in part of the [secret bombing](#) by the American Government. This story was never told in my k-12 education. This bombing was used as [propaganda for the Khmer Rouge Regime](#). This Regime ended up killing over 2 million Cambodians. Many of us had no choice but to flee our beloved country and seek refuge in countries like America. After finding out that America was a factor in the demise of one quarter of the population of my birth country, becoming an American Citizen was a confusing, hurtful, bittersweet but ultimately a rewarding journey. I love America but I have accepted that America has a lot of growing, healing, and retribution to do.

Organizations like the [Southeast Asian Resource Center \(SEARAC\)](#), [Providence Youth Student Movement \(PRYSM\)](#), and [Alliance for Southeast Asian for Education \(ARISE\)](#) have been trying to elevate the problem around the [model minority myth](#). The myth that ALL Asians are model citizens and we are doing well and thriving in this country. SEARAC [reported](#) that "In fact, our [Southeast Asian] students face multiple barriers and challenges in school: language barriers, insufficient support for parent engagement, gaps in mental health treatment, race-based bullying and harassment, and socio-economic barriers that prevent students from accessing and completing higher education. Only 14% of Laotian, 17% of Hmong and Cambodian, and 27% of Vietnamese Americans have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with 54% of Asian Americans overall." In addition to the disparities, the Southeast Asian population also faces a high [rate of poverty, prison to pipeline and deportation](#).

Asians being targets of violence and unfair treatment in this country is part of the American History. Did you know that the first significant law that restricted immigration was to restrict Chinese immigration in this country? The [Chinese Exclusion Act](#) was meant to "placate worker demands and assuage prevalent concerns about maintaining white "racial purity." History.com reported that in "An 1854 Supreme Court Case, People v. Hall, ruled that the Chinese, like African Americans and [Native Americans](#), were not allowed to testify in court, making it effectively impossible for Chinese immigrants to seek justice against the mounting violence."

The fight to be included and treated as an equal part of the community is also OUR story.

Crimes against Asians have been on the rise. In a [White House memo](#) condemning crimes against AAPI, it was stated that “During the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, inflammatory and xenophobic rhetoric has put Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) persons, families, communities, and businesses at risk.” According to [CBS](#), “while hate crimes fell overall by 7% in 2020, a new report published this week found that Asian Americans experienced a [150% surge in attacks](#). In July 2020, there were more than 2,100 anti-Asian American hate incidents that were directly related to the pandemic.” [NBC](#) also reported that there have been over 3800 reported Anti-Asian racist incidents in the past year. In cases that involve hate and violence, we know that the number of actual incidents always surpasses the number of reported incidents.

On March 16th in Atlanta eight people were killed. [USA Today](#) reported that “Seven women and one man were killed in the string of attacks; the majority were of Asian descent.” Although law enforcement stated that they have not concluded this was a hate crime, the fact still remains that the businesses that were sought out were Asian businesses and six out of the eight who were murdered in this case were of Asian descent.

The information I shared in this newsletter is only scratching the surface of the struggle Asian Americans, Asian Immigrants, Asian Persons experience. I highly recommend you conduct your own research to better understand the depth in how much American History has been left out of our educational experiences.

Here are some additional resources that might also shed some light into how much our struggles are woven into US history.

- [Asian Americans Then and Now](#)
- [Asian American History Timeline](#)

We know that these national incidents have left many of us in our community confused, hurt, traumatized, sad, angry, frustrated, and with many other intense emotions.

Here are some resources available:

- [A resource guide](#)
- [Report a Hate Crime](#)
- [Hate Crime Task Force and Pro-Bono Legal Services](#)
- [OCA National](#)
- [Action Guide](#)

AS RACIST HATE CRIMES CONTINUE TO RISE
IN THE AAPI COMMUNITY, WE STAND WITH
OUR FELLOW ASIAN AMERICAN & PACIFIC
ISLANDER COLLABORATORS, PARTNERS, AND
COLLEAGUES AGAINST RACISM, HATRED,
AND VIOLENCE.

#STOPAAPIHATE
#STOPASIANHATE



Please look for communication from your school leaders about school level supports and resources that can help you and your families process these events.

Quality Review

Calling ALL!

Complete the survey by April 6, 2021

This year, we are embarking on a district-wide quality review with an equity lens. Thus far, we have identified a partner, Cambridge Education and together we have finalized a framework and rubric for our audit and identified the data gathering tools we will use to answer the following essential questions:

- Does the district foster a diverse and inclusive learning environment?
- Do the district's administrative and fiscal policies and practices ensure an equitable working and learning environment?
- Do the district's resource practices and policies create an equitable and inclusive working and learning environment?
- Do the district's curriculum and instruction policies and practices cultivate an equitable work and learning environment?
- How can the district support improvements to learning, teaching, and curriculum?
- Does the district effectively manage change to create and sustain equitable policies and practices?

We are now beginning the information-gathering process, where we collect and examine data from district systems, surveys, focus groups, interviews, and virtual observations. We would like to hear from you! Please take part in the review in the following ways:

Surveys:

We have invited all families, staff, and students at the middle and high school levels to participate in a survey. Please look out for an email from contact@cedu.io with your survey link. If you are a parent or staff member who did not receive an invitation to the survey, please use these links to access:

Parents:

<http://milton-parents-signup.cedu.io/>

https://app.cedu.io/survey_sign_up/MPS01/1384

Focus Groups: (If you want an opportunity to provide more depth about your experience in Milton Public Schools. Please volunteer to be part of the focus group interviews)



If you have any questions/concerns please reach out to Somaly Prak-Martins @sprak-martins@miltonps.org

We will be conducting focus groups of staff, parents, and community groups. If you would like to be part of a focus group, please email renee.chandonnet@mottmac.com by April 6, 2021.

Student Surveys

As shared in previous communications the student surveys are finally underway. The surveys have been distributed to the middle and high school level students. All surveys and survey questions are **optional**. When your child logs in this is the message he/she/they will see prior to taking the survey. If you are concerned with your child's ability to understand this message please explain his/her/their rights to them prior to taking the survey.

Demographics questions including items about sexual orientation and gender identity are included in the surveys. You do not have to answer these questions, and if you do your response is completely confidential. No responses for any individual students will be shared with anyone at school or anywhere else.

Although these questions are personal, we ask because we want to know if school experience is different for LGBT students. We know from research that students who identify as LGBT are sometimes harassed, bullied, and suspended from school more often. If this is happening at your school, we want to know so that we can make changes to make school experiences better for all students.

*We do understand, however, that not all students are comfortable answering. If that describes you, please skip these questions and complete the remainder of the survey. Further, you should skip over **any** item if you are unsure or uncomfortable answering.*

The Milton Public School District wants to hear and learn from ALL students and families. The equity here is providing ALL students and families a choice to share their experiences and stories. If you choose not to share your story, that decision will be respected. However, if you choose to share your story, we appreciate the trust and time that you have invested in our journey to making Milton Public Schools equitable for ALL.

If you have any questions and/or concerns about this, please reach out to Somaly Prak-Martins the Director of Education Equity at sprak-martins@miltonps.org.

