
Re: My Letter

email: [REDACTED] Monday, June 20, 2016 at 8:17:43 AM Eastern Daylight Time
[REDACTED]
to: email: "lteta@bostonpublicschools.org Tata, Lynne"

Thank you, Lynne.

[REDACTED]

On Mon, Jun 20, 2016 at 5:56 AM, Teta, Lynne <lteta@bostonpublicschools.org> wrote:
Hi [REDACTED]

I have no suggestions. It's heartfelt and important. You may also wish to send to Dr. Chang.

LMT

On Sunday, June 19, 2016, [REDACTED] wrote:
Hi Lynne,

Attached is the letter I am planning to send. Please let me know if you advise any changes.

Best,
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Lynne Mooney Teta, Ed.D.
Head Master

Boston Latin School
78 Avenue Louis Pasteur
Boston, MA 02115

617-635-8895

Rshuster@bostonpublicschools.org

June 15, 2016

Ms. Shuster
Assistant Superintendent of Equity

Dear Ms. Shuster:

I am writing with extremely serious concerns about the proceedings by the Office of Equity, during its investigations at Boston Latin School. I experienced this process as disrespectful and unprofessional. I am one of over a dozen teachers who has received letters from the Office, alleging that

- (I) *(I) may have violated the Boston Public Schools Non-Discrimination Policy (EQT-4) and Student, Family, or Other Third Party Reports of Discrimination or Harassment - Uniform Procedures (EQT-3) on the basis of race.*

This particular letter also stated:

(II) [REDACTED]

I am an educator, [REDACTED] who has devoted my life, professional practice and creative writings to furthering empathy, respect and understanding towards others: students, faculty, administrators and readers. Therefore, I was stunned at these allegations. I was further alarmed when, upon receiving a second letter, the Office alleged:

[REDACTED]

These devastating allegations continued to intensify with the Office's interview on [REDACTED]. The Office of Equity panel, led by Ms. Juna Pierre, chose a very public place to proceed: [REDACTED] filled with students, teachers and staff who observed me (and others before me) waiting to be questioned. Once inside the room where the Office was holding hearings, I was asked such slanderous questions as:

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]

Had I been guilty of any of these egregious accusations, I would not deserve to hold the title of teacher. I must state emphatically and without any shred of doubt, these allegations are falsehoods. **I do not make biased comments or slurs about anyone. Ever.** I have lived a life enduring such anathemas. Others who are cursed with ignorance and hate have

also objectified me countless times; therefore, **I do not objectify my students, nor would I ever use them as “props.”**

In stating that I experienced this process as disrespectful and unprofessional, I would point to the very public nature of the interviews, the presumption of guilt which had the feel of an inquisition as opposed to inquiry, the assumption that the Office could pull teachers from classes without thought to adequate coverage for those classes, and the lack of transparency about the entire procedure.

Upon reflection of this process, I have identified questions that have been troubling me. I wonder how the information from students was gathered and whether people who are trained in unbiased and objective interviewing questioned those students who made statements. I am interested to know if the three members of the Office of Equity have spent time, as teachers, in the classroom, and what qualifications they hold as members of this investigation. Finally, what is the official protocol for these investigations and why were teachers left out of the process of agreement to them?

Students have been very brave in naming a climate that they have experienced as racist. Their actions have successfully opened a long needed dialogue about race and racism at our school. It is essential that we have this information in order to come together as a community to keep all our members, children and adults, safe and celebrated for who we are. While the intent of this current inquiry was meant to move us forward in our fight against racism, prejudice and bigotry, I believe that the impact has been otherwise. The atmosphere in our school is now one of fear and distrust. These interviews are driving a wedge into the heart of our very fine school, a school where our Headmaster, our teachers and staff are doing all we can in a very short time to implement anti-bias understanding for all as a part of our best practices. I am a teacher and I am a student, always seeking to expand my base of knowledge, particularly around issues of bias and while I welcome constructive criticism toward my growth as a teacher, I do not welcome being treated as a criminal, which is what this experience has felt like. I believe many of my fellow teachers feel similarly.

I thought it was imperative that you, in your position as the Assistant Superintendent of Equity, hear about my experience, which I trust reflects that of others as well. I believe that the Office of Equity has alienated allies in the fight against racism in our schools. We are the very ones that need to unite in battling the haunting cultural specter of ignorance, bias and hatred in our school, our city and the country we love.

Most Sincerely,

