

**LMTSD Work Session Meeting Comments and Questions  
February 2, 2021**

Name(s)	Comment/Question
Michael Fisher	<p>Are there plans to enable virtual school during snow days? If Philadelphia and Upper Moreland can enable it, what is preventing LMTSD? (I understand there are snow days built in but when they go unused those days get removed every year, our kids spend enough time at home during Covid Winter at least in June they can be outside and enjoy it!).</p> <p>I also understand that Power Outages (Upper Moreland and Philly just as susceptible) could happen but they can happen with a rain storm as well and we don't cancel school for that) can't students be given work to do asynchronously (most charged Chromebooks will go all day).</p> <p><i>Response: Thank you for your question. There are certainly more options for how to address snow days in this current pandemic environment. After careful consideration of the best option for the district, we settled on having another day of in-person instruction in June versus an asynchronous day now, especially since these days are already built into the 2020-21 academic calendar. When power goes out, so does wifi capabilities in homes. Now that assignments and learning are dependent on Internet capabilities regardless of whether they are synchronously or asynchronously completed, and since not all students have hotspots to connect to, the district felt it could be challenging for all students to connect.</i></p>
Rhea Isaac, Sarah Jae Leiber, Lilianne Simons, Gavin Dorval, Sarah Brodsky, Ruth Thomas	<p>I am submitting the following comment as a member of the Pop the LM Bubble collective:</p> <p>Dear members of the school board,</p> <p>Thank you for hearing the community's thoughts and concerns at the productive listening session on January 21st, and thank you for following up with action rather than any further disengagement. In response to the talking points on the roster for tonight's meeting, we at Pop the LM Bubble had a few thoughts for clarification we hope you won't mind addressing.</p> <p>While we appreciate that the board has taken the step to hire a cultural proficiency consultant and join a local equity consortium, we wonder what your specific plans are for regaining the community's broken trust. The outpouring of responses from parents, current students, alumni, and Lower Moreland educators has shown the incredible depth of hurt and anger your inaction has caused; how will the work with these consultants and organizations trickle down to the community? How will we be able to hold you accountable? And, most importantly, how will this work make its way into Lower Moreland schools?</p> <p>We are also wondering what the selection process looked like for this cultural consultant, and for the board's choice</p>

	<p>of equity organization. When were these decisions made, and who vetted them? We would appreciate more transparency, and more availability for community input, going forward.</p> <p>We also want to highlight the distressing situation that was brought to light by a Black mother during the 1/21 meeting. While her son went through a similar situation involving hate speech &amp; targeted racism, she was not given a voice or a platform to express her concerns. Rather, she was met with silence from Dr. Davidheiser and the school board. Action should not only be warranted when public outrage demands it, this mother and her son deserve to be heard. Has action been taken to reach out to this mother and rectify this situation?</p> <p>Once again, we appreciate the time you've devoted to these issues, and we look forward to continued dialogue.</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p><i>Response: Thank you for your question. The cultural proficiency consultant organization, Dr. Barbara Moore Williams and Associates, LLC, has many Montgomery County school districts with whom they work, including: Cheltenham, Lower Merion, Hatboro-Horsham, and North Penn School Districts. They will help us form a diversity committee that is representative of the many stakeholders within our wider community and through whom the district will develop its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan. The hiring of the cultural proficiency consultant is just one step in what will be a permanent, ongoing change in the district.</i></p> <p><i>At this evening's Work Session, the district will share a bio of Dr. Barbara Moore Williams and she will present to the Board.</i></p> <p><i>The Delaware Valley Consortium for Excellence and Equity is part of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania and serves 38 school districts in the area.</i></p>
Serena Nguyen	<p>"The following comment is from myself as an individual:  I do not know who Dr. Barbara Moore Williams is, nor why you chose her.  I do not immediately think I feel represented by her, nor do I have reason to.  I would have preferred that the LMTSD board present me and the rest of the community with a list of potential consultants with Dr. Williams among them. That would have been a clear action by the board to work with the community to address racism.</p> <p>I believe that the board needs to be more transparent and serious about accountability with regard to the inexcusable, normalized racist behavior that has always been a part of LMTSD's environment. Despite increase in outreach from the community to the board (which should be the other way around), to my knowledge, the board has not reached out to marginalized communities to get their help with making decisions that will affect everyone in the LMTSD.</p>

Accountability must be defined by the board and community together, not just by the board.

I also believe the board needs to address the roles of teachers, school faculty, and parents without removing any accountability from themselves.

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	<p><i>district will develop its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan. The hiring of the cultural proficiency consultant is just one step in what will be a permanent, ongoing change in the district.</i></p> <p><i>At this evening's Work Session, the district will share a bio of Dr. Barbara Moore Williams and she will present to the Board.</i></p> <p><i>The Delaware Valley Consortium for Excellence and Equity is part of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania and serves 38 school districts in the area.</i></p>
<p>Maureen Dudek</p>	<p>How is the school district reaching out to all of the students of color so they can share their experiences and fears. What are the plans so our children feel safe at school because my Hispanic child does not feel safe nor does she feel the school district will do anything about the current situation. Also, will the coaching staff be part of the diversity training program?</p> <p><i>Response: Thank you for your question. One of the first steps of our Diversity Action Committee will be reaching out to our families and students through a survey to learn more about their feelings of safety in the educational and extracurricular environments. This survey data will be used to inform the diversity training program, of which all staff, including coaches and club sponsors, will be a part.</i></p>
<p>Denise Mann</p>	<p>I am looking forward to hearing how you are planning to address the widespread racist, homophobic and xenophobic behavior in the school district and your response to the recent and continued racist behavior from one of your sophomores. I would strongly suggest to all of you not to quote her first amendment rights. We understand what they are but freedom of speech is not freedom from consequences and being held accountable for your actions. I work for a global company based in San Francisco and if a post like that appeared and referenced the company as the girl did with Lower Moreland, that person would be promptly fired. If someone threatened a specific group of people in the company, such as Asians or homosexuals, those people would find themselves unemployed. How do we expect kids to function in the real world if they are not held accountable for their actions? This is just a slice of what happens daily in the school and community and it's been here since I joined this community 20 years ago and has taken a turn for the worst in the last 4 years. Dr. Davidheiser and school board members, this is a terrible problem in our community as well as our school and while you all have no control over what goes on in people's home, there is a responsibility to partner with the community and for you take a FIRM and clear position on what you believe as a school district. More importantly, what you have to say must match actions. Please consider what some of your neighboring Blue Ribbon school districts do. <a href="https://www.lmsd.org/about-lmsd/inclusivity">https://www.lmsd.org/about-lmsd/inclusivity</a>. While Lower Merion is not without its issues, its position is strong and the actions and consequences follow. They sent out a firm letter following the horrific insurrection on January 6. While I don't think I can post the letter here- I will send a copy to your email and the school board's email. The letter clearly condones the actions of "the mob" calls out the racial disparity that happened with law enforcement and states that their school district teaches the Constitutions, and the values of civility, responsibility, and sportsmanship, and praised their students for taking a firm stand for injustice. If you all are clear on what you stand for, then holding people accountable becomes a lot easier and the community will get behind you. I know</p>

	<p>the people in this community- you will get the same vocal minority yelling and unhappy with you for taking a stand. Let me ask you this, do you want those that peddle racism and hate on your side, or do you want a caring and inclusive community? I think you could see from your listening session last week- the MAJORITY of the community cares and wants an inclusive and diverse environment. Last, I would like to thank everyone that took 3 hours last week to listen to the parents, students, and alumni. I would also like to thank those of you that were truly listening, as it was very clear to all of us who was not engaged. For those of you rolling your eyes and looking at the ceiling, show some respect for the community and stay engaged next time.</p> <p><i>Response: Thank you for your question. The Board will consider tonight adopting a resolution on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the February Public Meeting to affirm its commitment to the work on tolerance that must be done in the district. Then Dr. Davidheiser will lay out the short- and long-term steps that the administration is proposing to take on this multi-year action plan. The action plan will include a review of our policies and Code of Conduct to address hate speech and actions. It will also include the development of an anti-racism policy that will clearly articulate the district's stance and consequences for violating the policy.</i></p>
Jennifer Allen	<p>I am a parent of two children at the high school. I have been reading through comments made on social media. The number of children from our district who post how much they hate their school is distressing. How are you helping these students to feel connected to the school community? That is your number one job. You are not meeting the most basic needs of our children. Something needs to be done.</p> <p>I am submitting the following comment as a member of the Pop the LM Bubble collective:</p> <p>Dear members of the school board,</p> <p>Thank you for hearing the community's thoughts and concerns at the productive listening session on January 21st, and thank you for following up with action rather than any further disengagement. In response to the talking points on the roster for tonight's meeting, we at Pop the LM Bubble had a few thoughts for clarification we hope you won't mind addressing.</p> <p>While we appreciate that the board has taken the step to hire a cultural proficiency consultant and join a local equity consortium, we wonder what your specific plans are for regaining the community's broken trust. The outpouring of responses from parents, current students, alumni, and Lower Moreland educators has shown the incredible depth of hurt and anger your inaction has caused; how will the work with these consultants and organizations trickle down to the community? How will we be able to hold you accountable? And, most importantly, how will this work make its way into Lower Moreland schools?</p> <p>We are also wondering what the selection process looked like for this cultural consultant, and for the board's choice of equity organization. When were these decisions made, and who vetted them? We would appreciate more transparency, and more availability for community input, going forward.</p> <p>We also want to highlight the distressing situation that was brought to light by a Black mother during the 1/21 meeting. While her son went through a similar situation involving hate speech &amp; targeted racism, she was not given a voice or a platform to express her concerns. Rather, she was met with silence from Dr. Davidheiser and the school board. Action should not only be warranted when public outrage demands it, this mother and her son</p>

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<p>Kaylee Yam</p>	<p>The publication of these racist videos does not mean that racism is just now happening in this community. It was always kept hidden by administrators who forced their students to stay quiet and to not take up space. It is called ignorance and privilege to erase your students' experiences so that you can continue to uphold your own status. Your silence shows how much you care, and it is not enough to easily write up an email or public comment saying that you have it handled. You have the responsibility not only to educate your students and community, but you have the responsibility to do it well and effectively. Otherwise, you continue to let students go out into the world preaching things like white privilege and systemic racism does not exist. These years they spend in LOMO are the years they need to learn about these things. Stop thinking that you are sheltering them; instead, you are purposely blocking out your BIPOC students while favoring your white students. It is not okay, and you need to do work that gives your BIPOC community space. Start by giving them the room and space to share their experiences, and be an ally. This does not mean picking up the mic all the time, it also means knowing when to put it down and let others lead. I hope that LOMO first acknowledges its wrongdoings and then makes progressive change.</p> <p>I am submitting the following comment as a member of the Pop the LM Bubble collective:</p> <p>Dear members of the school board,</p> <p>Thank you for hearing the community's thoughts and concerns at the productive listening session on January 21st, and thank you for following up with action rather than any further disengagement. In response to the talking points on the roster for tonight's meeting, we at Pop the LM Bubble had a few thoughts for clarification we hope you won't mind addressing.</p>

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James Lee	<p>Members of the School Board,</p> <p>Please provide response to the following questions and comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Please explain the administration's reluctance to use specific terms to describe the very real and difficult issues</li> </ol>

this community faces, thrown into stark view as a result of the administration's and community's response to the hate speech text thread from March 2020. The listening session conducted on 1/21/21 described a long-standing history of racist behaviors experienced by several members of the LM community. To illustrate, official communications to the community since mid January are peppered with weak, vague, non-specific language that bely the importance and impact of this and other events over many years:

"...inappropriate post..."

"...content is racist in nature..."

"...not condoned..."

"...inappropriate behaviors..."

"...negative effects that hate speech can have on a community."

"...ongoing negativity...creating a larger rift..."

"...creating more hurt..."

It is unfortunately very clear that the terms that we should be employing to allow for a direct, frank, and honest accounting of the hurdles our community face include: systemic racism, white privilege, threatening and violent hate speech, white supremacy. Knee-jerk, visceral reactions to such terms by a white majority (especially in positions of power and authority) only further illustrate the need for constructive conversations on these topics.

2. How do we as the community get a sense of individual board member's responses to questions and concerns? As you know, several board members are up for re-election this fall, and it behooves them to let the public know where they each stand on issues, specifically the hate speech text thread and the administration's handling of this issue over the last year.

3. Please provide rationale for the high school administration's reaching out for personal, directed feedback of individual parents via unsolicited telephone calls, in response to the hate speech text thread coming to light. How were these parents identified for response? Why were these parents asked for feedback and not others? This illustrates a haphazard, unorganized, selective response by the administration.

4. In response to the hate speech text thread, please detail the school board's and administration's specific steps taken to ensure a safe school environment for LM students of all ethnic minorities. Please explain to the community how these proposed steps directly translate to a safer school environment. For example, knowing there are multiple anonymous reporting mechanisms available for students does not directly result in increased safety.

5. What is the reasoning for such a limited time window for submitting online written public comment? As you know, many community members work and may not have access to a personal computer for submission of comments during the hours of 12pm to 4pm on one day. These are overly restrictive. Additionally, written English may not be the best nor most comfortable medium for community members to faithfully express their concerns. Can a

voicemail mechanism be established? If a written record is needed for the public record, a transcription can be generated. There are many free or low cost, accurate transcription services available.

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	<p><i>the district. The action plan will include a review of our policies and Code of Conduct to address hate speech and actions. It will also include the development of an anti-racism policy that will clearly articulate the district's stance and consequences for violating the policy.</i></p>
Annes Kim	<p>Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere"" - How poetic that the news of racial hate speech erupted around the weekend of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. It made it even more devastatingly clear that LM has not taken those words to heart and has not taken the right steps toward</p> <p>Now, it is Black History Month, and there is no announcement or post on any of your public platforms (i.e. social media, official website) that directly denounces racial injustice and promotes diversity, equity and inclusion.</p> <p>Please know - we see your inaction, and we hear your silence.</p> <p>I am now submitting the following comment as a member of the Pop the LM Bubble collective:</p> <p>Dear members of the school board,</p> <p>Thank you for hearing the community's thoughts and concerns at the productive listening session on January 21st, and thank you for following up with action rather than any further disengagement. In response to the talking points on the roster for tonight's meeting, we at Pop the LM Bubble had a few thoughts for clarification we hope you won't mind addressing.</p> <p>While we appreciate that the board has taken the step to hire a cultural proficiency consultant and join a local equity consortium, we wonder what your specific plans are for regaining the community's broken trust. The outpouring of responses from parents, current students, alumni, and Lower Moreland educators has shown the incredible depth of hurt and anger your inaction has caused; how will the work with these consultants and organizations trickle down to the community? How will we be able to hold you accountable? And, most importantly, how will this work make its way into Lower Moreland schools?</p> <p>We are also wondering what the selection process looked like for this cultural consultant, and for the board's choice of equity organization. When were these decisions made, and who vetted them? We would appreciate more transparency, and more availability for community input, going forward.</p> <p>We also want to highlight the distressing situation that was brought to light by a Black mother during the 1/21 meeting. While her son went through a similar situation involving hate speech &amp; targeted racism, she was not given a voice or a platform to express her concerns. Rather, she was met with silence from Dr. Davidheiser and the school board. Action should not only be warranted when public outrage demands it, this mother and her son deserve to be heard. Has action been taken to reach out to this mother and rectify this situation?</p>

	<p>Once again, we appreciate the time you've devoted to these issues, and we look forward to continued dialogue.</p> <p>Thank you.</p> <p><i>Response: Thank you for your questions and comments.</i></p> <p><i>The district does have a "Celebrating Black History Month" story on its main page to which we will be adding news and pictures from our schools as this month continues, and the district will be sharing this information on its social media platforms as well.</i></p> <p><i>The cultural proficiency consultant organization, Dr. Barbara Moore Williams and Associates, LLC, has many Montgomery County school districts with whom they work, including: Cheltenham, Lower Merion, Hatboro-Horsham, and North Penn School Districts. They will help us form a diversity committee that is representative of the many stakeholders within our wider community and through whom the district will develop its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Action Plan. The hiring of the cultural proficiency consultant is just one step in what will be a permanent, ongoing change in the district.</i></p> <p><i>At this evening's Work Session, the district will share a bio of Dr. Barbara Moore Williams and she will present to the Board.</i></p> <p><i>The Delaware Valley Consortium for Excellence and Equity is part of the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania and serves 38 school districts in the area.</i></p>
Bonnie Paul	<p>As the school board develops their strategy on diversity and inclusion regarding race and ethnicity, please also provide your plan to ensure inclusion of the student LGBTQ+ community. Like racism, it continues to be a source of hate and bullying I. The Lower Moreland community. Happy to provide more details privately.</p> <p><i>Response: Thank you for your comment. The district's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion action plan will include the LGBTQ+ community.</i></p>