



# Somerville Public Schools Equity Update School Committee Meeting 2/7/2022

Assistant Superintendent, Chad Mazza  
Director for Equity and Excellence, Dr. Jessica Boston Davis



## Development

### Administration

- Ongoing Racial Equity Training
- Using YRBS data to guide training on LGBTQ+ inclusive schools

### Principals

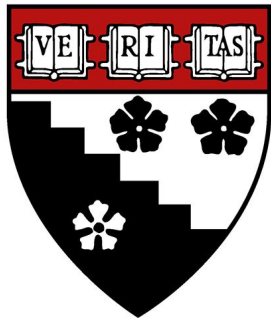
- DESE's framework for Antiracist Leadership

### All Staff

- Numerous PD opportunities offered from educators and partners on advancing equity



## Partnerships



**Harvard**  
Graduate School  
of Education



## Coming up ...

- Social Justice Day at SHS - Friday 2/11
- Diversity Recruitment Fair
- Equity Listening Tour
- Expansion of Equity Teams
- Lots of development opportunities for all staff



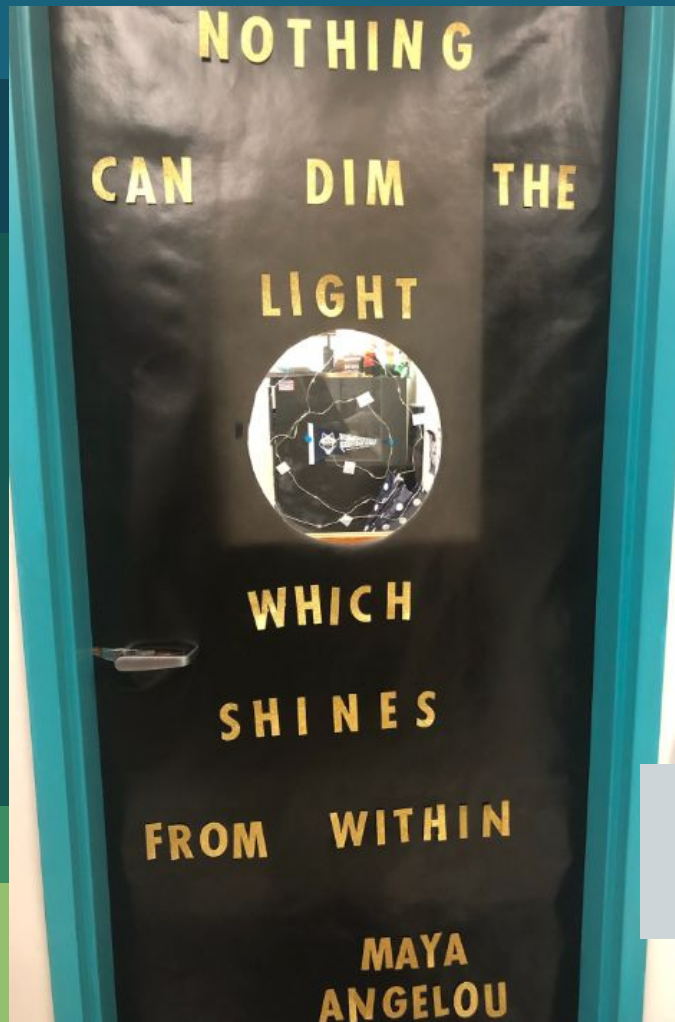
# Black History Month Celebrations

# Black History is American History

**All Schools: Resource guides for educators from Equity Specialists which include books, videos, podcasts, lesson plans, instructional guidance, and more.**

## *Highlights*

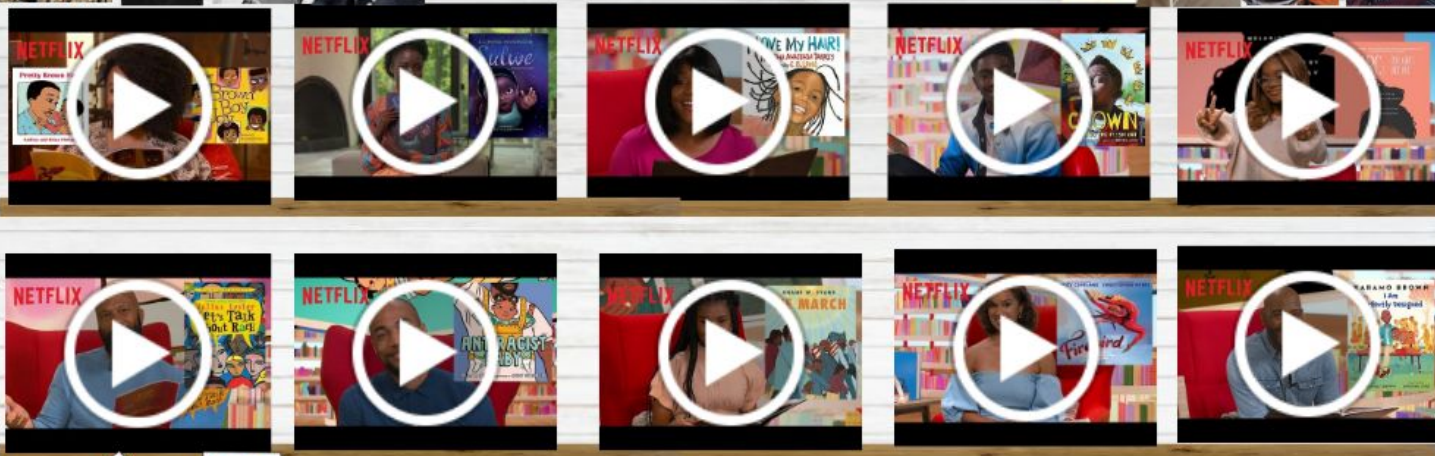
- West: school-wide door decorating project and then daily spotlights and weekly READ, WATCH, EAT recommendations.
- Capuano: Each classroom received a new text (The ABCs of Black History) and will have time at PD to explore the text and share new learning and relevance to their Anti-Bias work
- Winter Hill: One afterschool club is organizing a "Black on Broadway" musical review while another has been learning about the influence and contributions of Black people in the LGBTQ+ community. Also, 8th grade ELA is wrapping up the unit on speech and debate, which included speeches from Sojourner Truth, poetry by Langston Hughes and a viewing of The Great Debaters.
- SHS: Sharing of notable fact and contributions each day and a guest speaker on 2/28 (In addition to social justice day)



Doors from WSNS highlighting Black Joy

Epic code:

# Celebrate Black Voices



Resources created by Emily Bruneault and Leann Barczi,  
Kindergarten educators at Healey

WE ARE



# Art from the Harlem Renaissance

Created by Jill Ceballos





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Black History Month Calendar Suggestions for Grades PreK - 3				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<a href="#">Celebrate Black History Month</a>	<a href="#">The exceptional life of Benjamin Banneker</a>	<a href="#">Dr. Mae Jemison First Black Women in Space</a>	<a href="#">Create a Rocket Like Mae Jemison</a>	<a href="#">Dr. Mae Jemison Mini-book Activity</a>
<a href="#">Sit-In How Four Friends Stood UP</a>	<a href="#">Just Listen- Louis Armstrong</a>	<a href="#">Hidden Stories - Dorothy Vaughan</a>	<a href="#">I am Jackie Robinson</a>	<a href="#">The Power of her Pen The Story of Ms. Payne</a>
<a href="#">Celebrate Black History Month with Nickelodeon</a>	<a href="#">Loveliness in Diversity</a>	<a href="#">Black History Month: Who Inspires You</a>	<a href="#">Black History Coloring Activities</a>	<a href="#">Black Scientist and Inventors</a>
<p><b><i>Community Engagement Activities for PK-12</i></b>  <a href="#">The AIM Buddy Project   An ARTHUR Social, Emotional, and Character Development Curriculum</a>  <a href="#">Black Students Talk About Race</a>  <a href="#">ESPN - Black History Month</a>  <a href="#">Black History Month: African American- Little known Black Figures</a></p>				

## DO...

**Incorporate black history year-round**, not just in February. Use the month of February to dig deeper into history and make connections with the past.

**Continue Learning.** Explore how to provide an in-depth and thorough understanding of black history. Textbooks are notorious for omitting information about the struggles of communities, and what they include is limited, so use the textbook as one of many resources. While exploring multiple resources, allow for opportunities to learn along with your students.

**Reinforce to students that "black" history is American history.** Make black history relevant to *all* students.

**Relate lessons to other parts of your curriculum**, so that focus on Shuttlesworth, expands upon rather than diverts from your curriculum. The context of the struggle for civil rights and social justice should be addressed such issues across the curriculum.

**Connect issues in the past to current issues** to make history relevant.

## DO NOT...

**Stop your "regular" curriculum**, to do a separate lesson on Rosa Parks, on the Civil Rights Act or on Martin Luther King Jr. This trivializes and marginalizes anything you are teaching, making these leaders a token of their culture and ethnicity. Students will get the message that the diversion it is not as important as the "regular" curriculum.

**Decontextualize heroes or holidays**, separating them from the larger social movement or historical place. Great leaders don't make history all by themselves. For example, if you teach about James Farmer, you must also address the work of the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) and the Freedom Rides.

**Focus on superficial cultural traits based on stereotypes.** It's ok to celebrate black music, but teachers should also explore the political and social contexts that give rise to musical forms like hip hop.

**Talk about black history in solely "feel-good" language**, or as a thing of the past. This fails to help students examine how racism manifests itself today.

Learning For Justice  
*Do's and Don't of Teaching  
Black History*  
Source: [learningforjustice.org](http://learningforjustice.org)

# Thank You

Questions?