



Farewell Dr. Merkle

The Equity & Inclusion team must share the bittersweet news of Dr. Jackie Merkle's departure from the district. Dr. Merkle has led the charge in diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts and we are so appreciative for her insight, passion, and dedication to inclusive excellence over the last five years. She will be missed, but we wish her the best in her future endeavors.

We would like to reiterate our steadfast commitment to the continuation of programs, initiatives, and support our district has experienced over the years. The Equity & Inclusion team will continue this charge through the strategic objectives outlined in our [Equity & Inclusion Action Plan](#). We have forged meaningful relationships

UPCOMING EVENTS

[March Cultural Religious Calendar](#)

March 18, 6-7:30pm
District Diversity Committee Meeting (Virtual). [RSVP](#) and click [HERE](#) to join the Teams Meeting.

March 22

ONE Community Conference
[Online Store](#) Closes

March 27

and collaborative partnerships with stakeholders who are fully committed to promoting a safe and equitable environment where all students, staff members, and families can flourish. If you need anything, we encourage you to reach out to a member of the Equity & Inclusion Team.

Mikela Thomas, Heather Cole, and Shannon Griffin

Professional Development

Olentangy teachers participated in a district-wide professional development day on February 12th. The theme for this year is sense of belonging and anti-racism. For this PD day, we took a deep dive into how we can provide educational equity for all of our students. Staff were asked to consider how equity and equality are different and the ways we can make small shifts to our practices in order to be more equitable. Staff engaged in this discussion through two key opportunities. First, staff looked at the common routines they use in classrooms with students and analyzed them based on an equity rubric. In groups, they went through a collaborative inquiry cycle to find opportunities to make their routines more equitable for all learners. In the afternoon, staff investigated their teaching materials (lessons, standards, resources, etc.) and once again were tasked with engaging in the collaborative inquiry cycle to find opportunities for their materials to be more equitable for all. 83% of our educators found

ONE Community Conference
Series Event #4: District Service
Plunge [RSVP](#)

April 21

ONE Community Conference
Series Event #5: Virtual Student
Keynote, 6:30-7:30pm [RSVP](#)

May 1-31

Asian American & Pacific
Islander Heritage Month



Thank you to our Sponsors:



The Cole Group



the day valuable or very valuable to their professional growth.

ONE Community Conference Series 2021

This year we are hosting our first ONE Community Conference Series, "Healing Through ONE Community". Events take place monthly from January through May. We've had overwhelming participation and positive feedback about the events that have occurred so far:

- Our Olentangy community donated over 14,675 items to local nonprofit organizations at our MLK Day of Service.
- Over 500 people registered for the Elena Aguilar & Barbara Fant event in January.
- Last month, 390 families participated in the African American Read-In & Book Talks with Oge Mora and Matthew Carter.

Our next event is the inaugural District Service Plunge on Saturday, March 27, 2021. The goal is to connect our schools and the community through service-learning. Students and families can choose from 10 different service projects, engaging with community partners from across Delaware and northern Franklin counties. To view all District Service Plunge projects and to sign up to save your spot, view our [interactive notebook](#).

For more information about Olentangy Schools ONE Community Conference Series and to register for the remaining events, please reference the [timeline flyer](#) with clickable links.



Community members and volunteers are invited to purchase a ONE Community Conference t-shirt. The branded shirts can be worn to help promote the conference throughout the year. Visit the [online store](#) today to place your order before March 22. T-shirts can be picked up at the Olentangy Administrative Office for the two weeks leading up to the March 27 District Service Plunge.

ONE Olentangy Recipe Book

Liberty High School's Diversity and Inclusion Club is creating a Multicultural Cookbook. They are gathering recipes from the Olentangy community to create a collection that evokes happy memories and calls to mind a connection to family and heritage while providing opportunities to explore cultural differences. Recipes from all cultures and representations are requested! Submit your recipe by emailing the [recipe form](#) to

nance_heckman@olsd.us by the end of the day on Wednesday, March 17.



Teacher Spotlight

Learn about the work being done by our staff. View this edition of the [Teacher's Spotlight](#) featuring the following staff members:
Preschool: Shelly Bowles & Allison Watson
Elementary: Rachel Mentzer
Secondary: Amy Gestosani
CDL: Lauren Funk



Heritage Month

There were so many amazing events, trivia contests, assemblies, read-alouds, Schoology pages, student artwork pieces, guest speakers, and author visits that happened across the district for Black History Month. View the full [heritage month resource](#) document for more information.



Action Plan

The Equity & Inclusion team is currently working on action steps and a goal timeline for its [Equity and Inclusion Action Plan](#). There are 32 goals in the five areas: Measurement & Accountability, Policy & Handbook, Recruitment & Retention, Training & Education, and Stakeholder Engagement.

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