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# Equity and Family Engagement Newsletter

January 2025

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## Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

“The ultimate measure of a [person] is not where [they] stand in moments of comfort and convenience, but where [they] stand at times of challenge and controversy.” - Martin Luther King Jr.

As a youth, I remember first learning about Dr. King, like everyone else, through his famous “I Have a Dream” speech. During January it was always embedded in how we are taught to judge others not on their external and social identifiers, but by the quality of their character; and to be brave enough to envision a world in which we are all in beloved community together. As someone that always valued love, compassion, and empathy, Dr. King and his teachings had and still hold great alignment for me.

Through my personal and professional life, I would see that dream as my north star and would gradually learn that for that dream to not be a dream deferred, great risk and discomfort is required. To fulfill Dr. King’s dream, being an anti-racist is required. Anti-racism is the verb, not the noun. It is the active praxis of reflection and action, and the undoing of systems and ideologies that contribute to racism and all inequalities. It is the tough-in-the-moment decisions that are minimal for us but have lasting effects on others. It is having those difficult discussions with those close to us and potentially sacrificing your relationship in the process. It is risking and dreaming differently, contrary to what policies and procedures have to say.

In 2020, I saw one of Dr. King’s last interviews (link below) regarding the “new” phase of the Civil Rights movement, which encompassed his observations of the aftermath of the movement. His words impacted me as they were very fitting then, and most certainly now:

Honesty impels me to admit that America has broad racist elements still alive, racism is still existing in American society [...] we have to see that vacillation has always existed, ambivalence has always existed, and in this to me is the so-called White backlash. It is a new name for an old phenomenon [...] Many of the people who supported us in Selma and Birmingham were really outraged about the extremist behavior towards Negroes, but they were not at that moment, and they are not now, committed to genuine equality for Negroes. It is much easier to integrate a lunch counter, than it is to guarantee an annual income, for

instance, to get rid of poverty for Negroes and all poor people. It is much easier to integrate a bus, than it is to make genuine integration a reality and quality education a reality.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., 1967

I invite you to explore where you may have vacillation or ambivalence in your life. Whether it is intentional or not, fear-based, and/or ignorance—where is this vacillation coming from? Where do you see this in our district? How can you create and sustain your impact? Dr. King endured and witnessed so much blatant discrimination and injustice, that when it was time to step up, he did not vacillate or was ambivalent. The risk was blaringly obvious, and he and his loved ones had to pay the ultimate price, but the collective action he inspired continues to inspire us all.

I invite you all to not only continue to talk about Dr. King and the numerous leaders who have set the foundation for the fight for equity, but to inspire our youth and community to be unapologetic, determined, and hopeful to continue this fight.

“We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.” Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr

Catherine Cruz

Family Engagement and Outreach Coordinator

### In this issue:

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## Community News

### 2024 Toy Drive and Distribution Event

The 2024 LWSD Toy Drive and Distribution event was a success! The outpouring of donations from our community was a sight to behold and helped us to ensure over 800 students had a new toy this winter season.

Our volunteers came happy and ready to assist families with toy selection and check-out process. The wonderful team at the JHS Family Connection Center was also able to distribute clothing items to many families.

One parent wrote us after the event to say, "All staff and volunteers were kind and welcoming. The line was long, but those working at the event helped it move quickly. [We] were warmly greeted; non-stop plates of wonderful, holiday Cookies were served as we waited in line. The actions of staff and volunteers spoke [to] their desire of acceptance and gratitude, and a history of warmth trust and respect. This event was definitely a celebration of Equity and Family Engagement."

Much appreciation to the individual donors, LWSD staff, volunteers, the Lake Washington Schools Foundation, the Salvon Ahmed Safehouse Foundation, City of Kirkland, and F45 Kingsgate. This event would not have been the success it was without you!





### **CPR Event at Old Redmond Schoolhouse**

Each year, the families in Head Start at ORSH express interest in different educational activities. This fall, one of those activities was to learn CPR/First Aid. The team at ORSH made it happen.

Every family was notified of the event in multiple ways, including ParentSquare, flyers, emails, phone calls, and in-person.

The ORSH staff contacted an instructor that has worked with Puget Sound Educational School District, PSESD (who manages Head Start) to conduct the course.

Their extensive, personal outreach helped staff to know who was coming ahead of time, so they were able to ensure they had the needed interpreters and the correct amount of childcare.

The event served 17 parents and provided childcare for 12 children. Major thanks to the staff at ORSH for identifying what families need and want, then delivering!

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## Upcoming Community Events

### Northwest African American Museum Annual King Day Celebration

Monday, January 20, 2025

10AM - 5PM

Family-friendly event that will feature two new exhibitions, a resource expo, community conversations, family activities, storytelling, book giveaways, and more! NAAM will partner with over 20 organizations whose inspiring efforts and dedication to their mission are advancing the local landscape.

### King County Annual Celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Tuesday, January 14, 2025

6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Renton Ikea Performing Arts Center

400 S 2nd St, Renton, WA 98057

*Will also be broadcasted virtually by KCTV*

### Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration - Washington State Historical Society

Monday, January 20, 2025

11:00am - 5:00pm

Greater Tacoma Convention Center

1500 Commerce St. Tacoma, WA 98402

### Build healthy forests on MLK Jr. Day with Green Kirkland at Everest Park | United Way of King County

Monday, January 20, 2025

10:00am - 12:00pm

Everest Park

500 8th St S

Kirkland, WA 98033

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## Resources for Martin Luther King Jr. Day

### **King Holiday 2025 - The King Center**

The annual King Holiday Observance is a time that we celebrate, commemorate and honor the life, legacy and impact of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The King Center leads the charge to provide education and training in Nonviolence<sup>365</sup>; while serving as the vital living memorial of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

### **Martin Luther King Jr. Day classroom resources | PBS NewsHour Classroom**

You can use the following NewsHour Classroom resources to examine King's impact on civil rights and his ongoing legacy.

### **King: A Legacy Remembered Teaching and Learning Guide**

These lessons and resource guide are part of the National Civil Rights Museum's ongoing effort to educate the public about the Civil Rights Movement and the enduring legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

### **Black Washington App - Washington State Historical Society**

Black Washington is an award-winning app and educational platform that explores the vibrant statewide history of Black Washingtonians through captivating stories, influential icons, and significant landmarks.

### **The Best of Our Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Resources | Learning for Justice**

To help educators build upon and move beyond Dr. King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech, we've compiled some of our best MLK resources, as well as lessons and texts from our friends in the social justice education world.

### **Teaching About King's Radical Approach to Social Justice | Learning for Justice**

While Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s work is often sugarcoated, it's important to teach that King championed economic justice and taught Black self-love while also pushing back against neutrality, imperialism and systemic racism.

### **NAAM | Educational Resources**

Educational resources from the Northwest African American Museum.

### **Teaching about Martin Luther King Jr. — Civil Rights Teaching**

Lessons and Resources About Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement Beyond "I have a dream."

## Resources for Chinese American/Americans of Chinese Descent History Month

### **RCW 43.117.130: Chinese American/Americans of Chinese Descent History Month**

Washington State Legislature's RCW outlining Chinese American/Americans of Chinese Descent History Month.

### **A Chinese-American Experience.pptx**

LWSD staff Andrea Yee shares her family's story as first generation Hong Kong Chinese and the impact they made for their community in Seattle.

### **Washington-Americans of Chinese Descent Posters | OER Commons**

Educators can use these posters to celebrate influential Americans of Chinese Descent in the state of Washington.

### **Chinese Historical & Cultural Project - Virtual Library**

Chinese Historical and Cultural Project has accumulated information, exhibits, and demonstrations in a virtual library.

### **Becoming American: The Chinese Experience . Eyewitness | PBS**

The Chinese American story is still unfolding as arriving immigrants strive to assimilate while other Chinese Americans help define the United States — a country that continues to reinvent itself. Here are stories from people who have lived the Chinese American saga first-hand.

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# Book and Media Recommendations

Please be mindful that while these media sources can offer valuable insights into rich perspectives, they may not fully capture the diverse experiences of all people within a particular identity group. It is important to recognize that each student's and family's journey is unique and cannot be wholly represented by a single narrative.



## Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Reading Lists

### **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. resources by Martin Luther King III family**

Martin Luther King III, his wife, Arndrea King, and their daughter, Yolanda Renee King, offer this list of books about their father, father-in-law, and grandfather. "We selected these works because they inspire us, help us remember, and serve as a guide for the future."

### **Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Reading List**

Brooklyn Children's Museum published a booklist curated by The Conscious Kid National Children's Social Justice Library. There are books listed for children of all ages and adults.

## Chinese American/Americans of Chinese Descent History Month Book Recommendations for Children

### ***I Am an American: The Wong Kim Ark Story* by Martha Brockenbrough**

*I am an American: The Wong Kim Ark Story* is an important picture book that introduces young readers to the young man who challenged the Supreme Court for his right to be an American citizen and won, confirming birthright citizenship for all Americans.

### ***New Year* by Mei Zihan**

A moving picture book to read when we're missing family far away, set during Lunar New Year.

### ***Playing at the Border: A Story of Yo-Yo Ma* by Joanna Ho**

A picture book biography about the musician Yo-Yo Ma, immigration, and using music to build bridges.

### ***Auntie Yang's Great Soybean Picnic* by Ginnie Lo**

Jinyi and her sister love visiting Auntie and Uncle Yang's home where they enjoy dumpling-eating contests and backyard adventures with their cousins. One weekend, on a Sunday drive among the cornfields near Chicago, Auntie Yang spots something she has never before seen in Illinois. Could it be one of their favorite Chinese foods--soybeans?

### ***Living With Viola* by Rosena Fung**

This graphic novel from a debut creator is an exploration of mental health, cultural differences, and the trials of middle school.

### ***Stargazing* by Jen Wang**

Moon is everything Christine isn't. She's confident, impulsive, artistic... and though they both grew up in the same Chinese-American suburb, Moon is somehow unlike anyone Christine has ever known.

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## Chinese American/Americans of Chinese Descent History Month Book Recommendations for Teens and Young Adults

### *The Silence that Binds Us* by Joanna Ho

An exquisite, heart-rending debut young adult novel that explores timely themes of mental health, racism, and classism and will inspire all to speak truth to power.

### *Last Night at the Telegraph Club* by Malinda Lo

A story of love and duty set in San Francisco's Chinatown during the Red Scare.

### *The Downstairs Girl* by Stacey Lee

From the founding member of We Need Diverse Books comes a powerful novel about identity, betrayal, and the meaning of family.

## Holidays and Observances

This is not a complete list. As always, check in with students and families to ensure that their cultural celebrations are included.

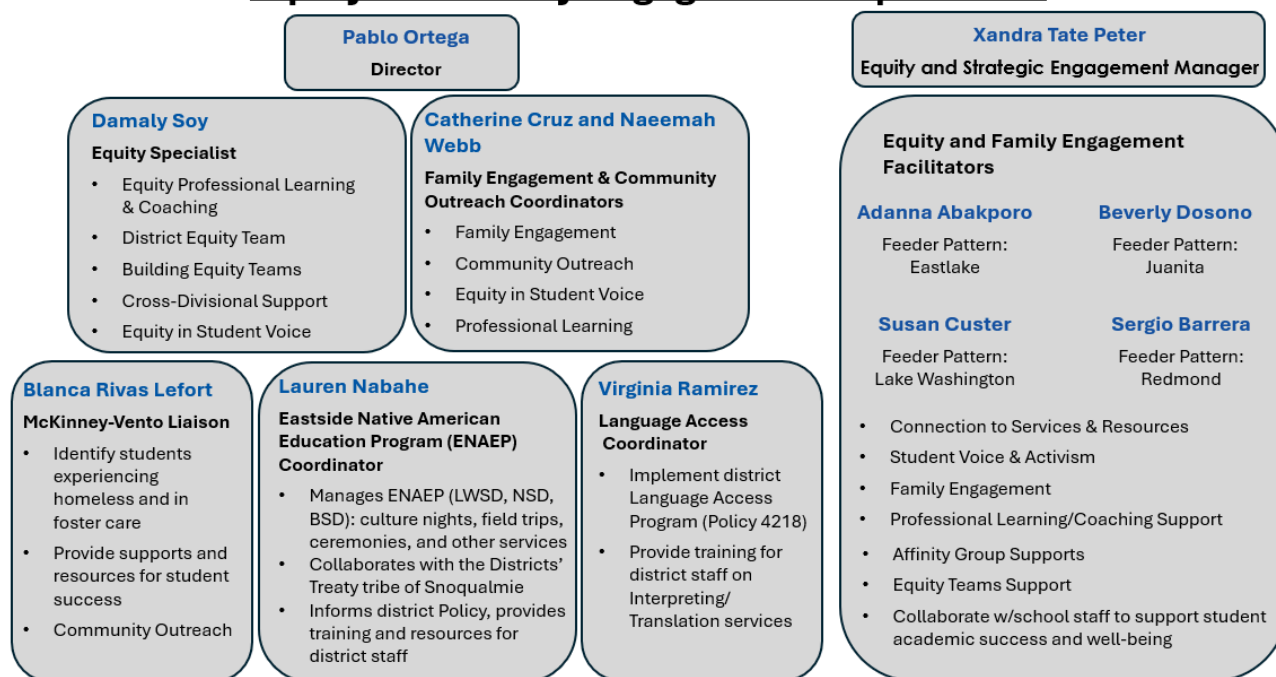
1/1	School Board Recognition Month	Honor and recognize school board members.
1/1	National Mentoring Month	Honor and recognize volunteers.
1/1	New Year's Day	
1/1	Shogatsu/Gantan-Sai	Japanese new year.
1/1	Navasard	Armenian new year.
1/1	Chinese American/Americans of Chinese Descent History Month	Recognize the contributions to the state's rich history and economy by Chinese Americans
1/4	Benjamin Rush's Birthday	Founding Father of the U.S. He was a physician, social reformer, educator and humanitarian.
1/6	Carl Sandburg's Birthday	American poet, writer, and editor who won three Pulitzer Prizes.
1/6	Armenian Orthodox Christian Christmas	Armenian Orthodox Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.
1/7	Orthodox Christmas	Eastern Orthodox Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.
1/14	Novy God	Russian new year.
1/14	Mahayana New Year	Buddhist new year.
1/17	Benjamin Franklin's Birthday	One of the Founding Fathers of the U. S. He was an author, printer, political theorist, politician, freemason, postmaster, scientist, inventor, civic activist, statesman, and diplomat.
1/20	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	A civil rights leader, minister and winner of 1964 Nobel Peace Prize.
1/20	Guru Gobind Singh Ji's Birthday	Sikh observance celebrating the birthday of the tenth Sikh Guru.
1/27	International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust	In memory of the victims of the Holocaust – observed with ceremonies and activities at United Nations Headquarters in New York and at United Nations offices around the world.
1/28	Christa McAuliffe Day	To commemorate the high school teacher who was 1 of 7 astronauts killed on the space shuttle Challenger when it exploded on this date in 1986.
1/29	Lunar New Year	Chinese New Year, Tết (Vietnam), Seollal (Korean New Year), Tsagaan Sar (Mongolia)



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# Contacts

## Equity and Family Engagement Department



### [Links to bios](#)

The Equity and Family Engagement Department is here to serve families and schools throughout the district. Below you'll find our roles and individual email addresses. Please reach out if we can be of assistance.

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Virginia Ramirez, Language Access Coordinator [vramirezromero@lwsd.org](mailto:vramirezromero@lwsd.org)

The department also has four Cultural and Language Liaisons to support LWSD families.

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Terri Gatts Dayton, [c-tdayton@lwsd.org](mailto:c-tdayton@lwsd.org)

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