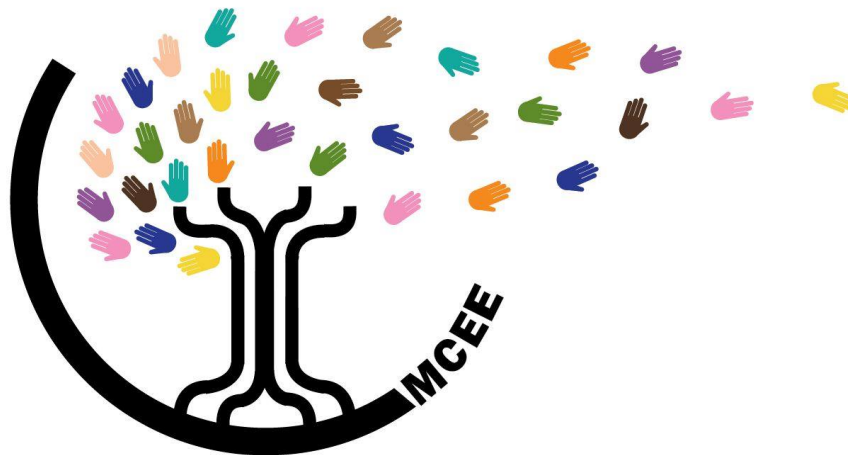


MONTHLY REPORT

The Minnetonka Coalition for Equitable Education



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What is the MCEE?

Minnetonka Coalition for Equitable Education (MCEE) is a student led organization working collaboratively with alumni and parent supporters who advocate for equitable education in the Minnetonka School District.

The MCEE was founded in 2020 as a call to action in response to police brutality throughout the country. In these attacks against Black and Brown people, our students saw their own personal experiences mirrored back to them, from when they had been the victims of microaggressions in the classroom, verbal abuse from their classmates and erasure of their cultural contributions to this country.

When one student spoke up the community was mobilized. A series of listening sessions transformed into the MCEE's 11 Imperatives. In these imperatives the MCEE advocates for systematic policy changes, stating our role as an educational resource. Our imperatives are meant to inspire and equip students with critical thought, inclusivity and resilience necessary to resist fear and oppressive manipulation.



Deepti Pillai at MCEE's March for Equitable Education, Sep. 25th, 2020

As a student led organization, the MCEE is a space for students to use their leadership, verbal/written communication, relationship building and specialized skill sets (such as graphic design) to advocate for equitable education. To uplift marginalized groups, the MCEE ensures that the core leadership centers the voices of BIPOC, LGBTQ+, neurodiverse, disabled, immigrant, and religious minorities.

Student Stories

Read student stories like this one on the instagram accounts to the right.



@BIPOC_AT_TONKA
@TONKA.LGBTQ
@SPED.MENTALHEALTH.TONKA

I'm half asian, I have been asked if I eat dogs and cats, I have been asked if I had corona. One time, I was speaking to my korean grandma on the phone, and I said a word that means "you" (ni-ga) and someone started mocking me and telling me that I "said the n word" I have also been asked if I'm related to Kim Jong-Un

Class of 2025

my social studies teacher told the entire class that "racism wasn't even that bad" and that "some of the slaves were even treated as family." she barely talked about any of the bad things and tried to play it off like slaves weren't treated poorly. she was teaching the whole class false information. looking back on it i really should've spoken up but being one of the only black kids in the class, i was scared.

Class of 2023

Two Misconceptions about Equity

1. Diversity DOES NOT equal Equity

- People may argue that because a room is diverse it must be equitable, We see this in Minnetonka when people say "*The District has a zero tolerance policy and offers plenty of diverse cultural activities and classes, so Minnetonka must already provide equitable education.*"
- But diversity and equity are not interchangeable. According to the Oxford Dictionary, diversity means "the state of being diverse; variety" or "involving people from a range of different... backgrounds." Equity is defined as. "the quality of being fair and impartial."
- A room can be full of various and diverse people but that does not necessarily mean they will be treated fairly and impartially.

HOW TO CHALLENGE THIS MISCONCEPTION:

1. Even if Diversity does create Equity (which it doesn't), Minnetonka would not have the diversity to be equitable - it is 94% White.
2. **You can ask:** If a room is full of various types of people, does that guarantee they will all be treated the same?
3. **You can ask:** If Minnetonka has a zero-tolerance policy, then why are all these marginalized students reporting discrimination and harassment? It is not easy to speak out so there is obviously an issue.

2. Equity is not political or bipartisan.

- Several Minnetonka community members claim that equity is politically charged and thus should not be incorporated into the Public School system. For example, one parent said at the Minnetonka School Board Meeting, 10/1/20, "words like 'equity,' 'systemic racism,' and 'Black Lives Matter' fall strictly on one side of the political aisle that [would be] forced into our community."
- If "equity" falls on one side of the political spectrum (the left) that means that the other side (the right) does not have equity. If that's the case, it's no longer a political spectrum it's a spectrum of human decency. If we want to teach our students how to be decent, kind and respectful then we ought to teach equity and provide equitable education.
- By keeping issues like "Black Lives Matter" and "systemic racism" out of our schools, we do our students a disservice by providing one-sided education that lacks critical thinking skills and empathy. By teaching equity issues, students learn all perspectives so they can accurately form their own opinions.

HOW TO CHALLENGE THIS MISCONCEPTION:

1. **You can ask:** How does teaching students more about different cultures, skills, and knowledge bases harmful? Don't you think to prepare a child for living in a global economy and an increasingly integrated world, they need to know about different cultures and experiences?
2. **You can ask:** If equity is political how could anyone with basic human decency argue for the political side that does not support equity?

Monthly Committee Updates

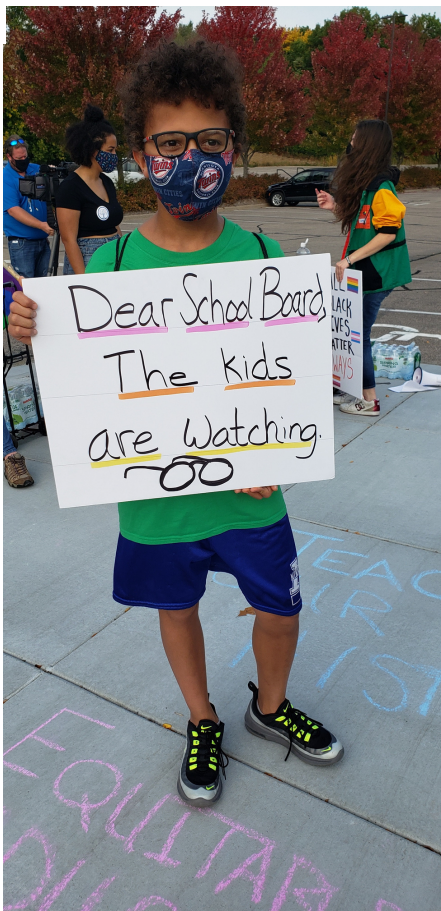


Above. Sumayah Elmi addresses the Minnetonka School Board, Oct. 1, 2020

Social Action

Our September March for Equitable Education put pressure on the Board to follow through on their Goal 2: Excellence and Belonging. While change at Tonka traditionally takes time, our Social Action committee learned to efficiently push our

anti-racist advocacy into policy. Our committee has personally marked up and edited current School Board policies so we can present them at School Board meetings. We will continue to attend all School Board meetings to hold the Board accountable and stay on top of any new advancements. We encourage all MCEE followers to also tune into these meetings to stay educated about what is happening in our district. Meeting dates, times, links and agenda can be found on the Minnetonka Schools website.



Above. Leo, age 11, at th Minnetonka March for Equitable Education, Sept. 25th, 2020

Community Engagement

The goal of the Community Engagement committee is to forge relationships among students, parents, and other community members. Our group has been successful in reaching out to Parent-Teacher Associations and Organizations as well as individual schools, like Minnetonka Middle School West and Excelsior. Soon we will begin our monthly "Community Discussion": a forum moderated by our student and alumni leaders to educate the public on anti-racism and equity within education.

Alumni Team

The Alumni Team has been busy the last month deciding our goals for the community. We decided we want to provide mentorship, help advocate for teacher training, and improve student life. We have recently created a College Application Mentorship Program which features former Tonka Alumni holding 1-1 virtual sessions for BIPOC and diverse seniors who feel overwhelmed with the college admissions process. Our LGBTQ+ members will be holding a panel for current Tonka students about their careers, life experiences, and embracing self-love. The alumni recognize the opportunity to empower and educate current Minnetonka students in a safe forum. The virtual forum will be Tuesday Oct 27th at 6:00 pm.



Left. An MCEE supporter waves an LGBTQ+ flag at the MCEE March for Equitable Education, Sep. 25th, 2020

Research Team

The Research Team's major goal is to educate our followers and produce resources for MCEE's Social Action and Community Engagement committees to use in their work. Our Research Team constructs our weekly videoscribes. We like to research a topic once a week, learn from the experts in the field, and then create a video. If you ever have a topic you want us to cover, let us know! The Research Team has also started to produce 'Equity Starter Kits'. These kits are designed for curious individuals who want to learn more regarding equity. The kits include books, films, introspective exercises, podcasts, and more! The Research Team also created our "Mobile Library". The program is a book loan service in which you can subscribe to read the books MCEE members own (see page 8 for more info).

Social Media Team

MCEE has started sponsoring Theme Weeks on its social media platforms. The October themes are:

- **Hispanic Heritage**
- **Intersectionality**
- **Racial Autobiography**
- **Dyslexia**

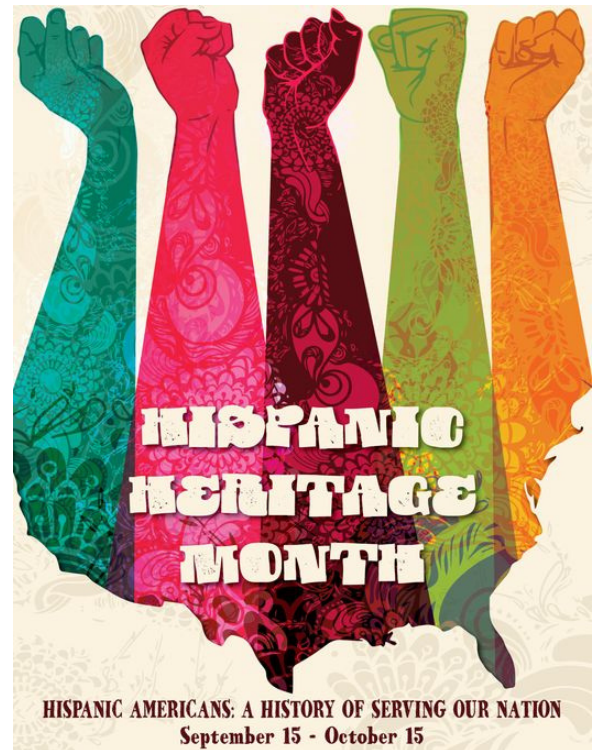
Most social media posts in a given week will relate somehow to that week's theme. Fridays are reserved for promoting a local event that may be of interest to MCEE members. A special treat in October has been the posting of a variety of speeches given by various MCEE members. These speeches seem quite popular on MCEE's social media sites, but they often also get shared in the community. This enables MCEE's messaging to reach further into the community. Some of the speeches were given at Minnetonka School Board meetings, while others were given at rallies.

Right. An infographic about intersectionality posted to the MCEE's social medias.

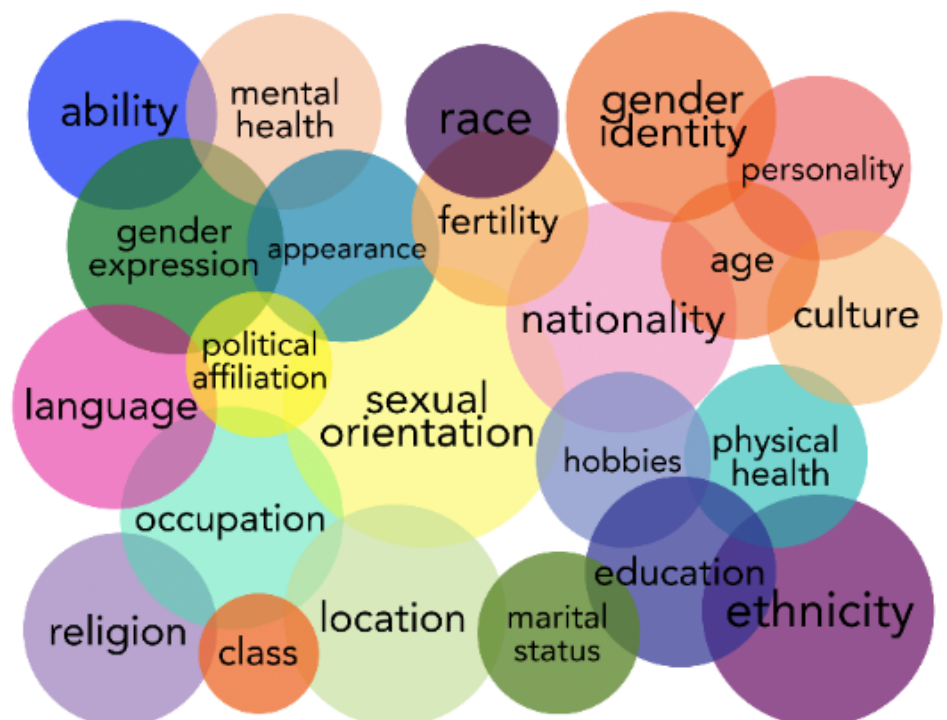
**FOLLOW OUR
SOCIAL MEDIA!**



@EQUITABLEMTKA



Above. Poster celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month posted to MCEE's social medias.



MCEE Resources

MCEE College Application Mentorship Program

The MCEE Alumni Team is proud to announce our College Application Mentorship Program for BIPOC and underrepresented students. We are offering virtual 1-1 zoom sessions with past Alumni who want to help create equity in their former home town.

1-1 Mentorship Meetings

The 1-1 Mentorships meetings will most likely take place over Zoom (due to Covid-19 concerns and some mentors being out of state). If need be, in-person mentorship can be provided. After completing the sign up, an email will be sent to the one you provide with a sign-up genius. Meetings will take place over the weekend during Saturday or Sunday. After you have signed up for a time, a zoom link will be sent out. When you arrive at the meeting, the admin will go over meeting rules and introduce the program. The admin will then create breakout rooms. Students will select a breakout room with mentors. After 30 minutes, the students will switch breakout rooms if they want to have another session. If students are fine with the single session, they can leave. You will be randomly matched with your mentors. Mentorship meetings will not exceed 30 minutes in length and students should come prepared with a specific issue or goal.



College Application Mentorship Program

The M.C.E.E. has gathered a list of alumni with a variety of careers who want to help BIPOC and diverse students with college admissions.

AFRAID OF THE COMMON APP? WE CAN HELP!

Sign Up Now!
Use this google form to Sign Up:
<https://forms.gle/m98dbeQFbeZkMJiW7>

Want to Learn More? Contact Us!
Email: equitablemtka@gmail.com or DM our Instagram @equitablemtka

Helpful links

- To learn more about this program and for other college application resources, go to: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1LKzufsam_GhL06j0mq2WE7z-RoZN4yThhleH4WI8IGE/edit
- To learn about the alumni participating, go to: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-FKzyOoD-L4_mCkl6CgFeVkBkqgpqFpnjeQAjcvZesk/edit?usp=sharing
- To register for this program, go to: <https://forms.gle/m98dbeQFbeZkMJiW7>

The M.C.E.E Mobile Library

The M.C.E.E. members have been collecting books which form the basis of our content creation and imperatives. Now, we would like to share those books with you!

What is a Mobile Library?

The Mobile Library is a service MCEE will offer to the larger Minnetonka community. Followers and supporters can peruse our collection of books, make a request, and we will deliver it!

How does the Mobile Library work?

Participants will look over our list of books here* and then make a request to the MCEE through our Facebook messenger or Instagram account. If the book is available for check out, we will deliver that book the following Saturday. An individual can only make one request at a time. The reader can keep the book for a maximum of 2-3 weeks before having to return it. In return, we ask that when you receive the book you post on social media tagging the MCEE.

What if I want to keep the book or keep it for longer?

If you weren't able to finish the book or want to keep the book indefinitely, we want to apologize in advance. We want to keep books available for others to read and at the time want to keep wait periods at a minimum. Hopefully in the future we will attain enough books to loan out books for longer.

How do you deliver the books?

We provide a mobile service so we drive! For safety during Covid-19, we would take in an address and then drop off the book in your mailbox! For people who may live farther away, we are willing to mail the book to you so long as you mail it back.

What if I damage the book or lose it?

If you damage or lose a book we ask that you replace it. A used copy from the internet is alright to replace it (we don't need a new one!).

What if I don't want to share my mailing address?

We recognize not everyone wants to give their mailing address out. We are willing to meet at public locations to exchange books but Covid-19 precautions must be followed. Meetings at public locations will only be made on special requests for parties concerned about safety.


M.C.E.E. Mobile Library

Peruse our selection,
check out a book,
and we'll deliver!
(Or meet at a safe
drop-off site!)



We want to share our
collection of equity
and anti-racism
literature with you...



 @equitablemtka

 Minnetonka Coalition
for Equitable Education

 equitablemtka
@gmail.com

*Book list can be found at: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1z0UHxVzHy-LAg3KjK3cvbe5_Qbao27Izj55InDukXeY/edit#gid=0



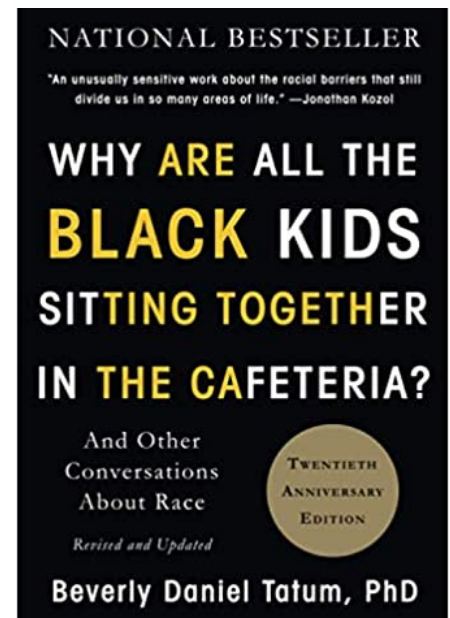
Above. Students march for equitable education, Sep 25th, 2020

Successes So Far

- The creation of our 11 Imperatives
- MCEE featured in KSTP's News Special and other media platforms
- MCEE hosts its first March for Equitable Education with over 100 supporters
- MCEE student leaders featured on Minnesota Public Radio
- The MCEE has 6 of our 11 Imperatives incorporated into the Minnetonka School Board's yearly goals as Goal 2: Excellence and Belonging – Diversity. Equity. Inclusion.

Take Action!

1. **Educate yourself.** Purchase a book, listen to a podcast. Attend a training.
2. **Email.** Advocate to the School Board and Dr. Peterson about equity issues in Minnetonka.
3. **Vote!!!** Voting in any and all elections you are eligible for can have a big impact on our community and beyond!
4. **Walk the Talk.** Have tough conversations about race with strangers, loved ones and acquaintances.
5. **Protest.** Show up to protests, marches and demonstrations happening all over the Twin Cities and West Metro.



Above. *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting together in the Cafeteria?* by Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, available in the MCEE's Mobile Library. (see page 8)

THE MCEE WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS GRATITUDE FOR OUR MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS CONTRIBUTING THEIR TIME AND RESOURCES TO THE FIGHT FOR EQUITY!