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Loudoun County School Board, Equity Committee Meeting, Thursday, February 6, 2025

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Place	Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV)
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- Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): https://player.vimeo.com/video/1054300029?rel=0 - BoardDocs (School Board): https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public	

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[00:01:18] Good evening. Calling the February meeting of the equity committee to order. If I could have one of the persons to close the door on both sides. Thank you. I'm calling the equity meeting to order

[00:01:52] at 534 and I really appreciate all of you for being here. So before we start the order of business as is on the agenda, I'm going to ask Dr. Bergen to come up and give you some words of Welcome. I was concerned you were going to say wisdom, and I was going to have to come up with them. No, I'm kidding. Here, let me step around so I'm not talking to your backs, if that's all

[00:02:27] right. So I am Mark Bergen. I am the incoming chief of staff for Loudoun County in my second month. So I started right after the holidays during Snowmageddon, and I'm really, really excited to be part of Team Loudoun. My most recent position prior to coming here was superintendent in Bedford County and prior to that I was the chief of staff in Virginia Beach. So as I've said as I've introduced myself in other places while I'm new to Loudoun County I'm certainly not new to the work. I have lots of energy and enthusiasm and excitement about the work and right now I am all

[00:03:07] about learning about Loudoun and learning our traditions and our history and what we value and how I can support that and I can't think of anything more important than what we're doing right here in this room right now in supporting our commitment to equity for all for all students for all staff for all of our citizens of Loudoun County thank you to our committee members for being here today for for valuing

this work prioritizing your time to be here thank you to everyone who is with us on both sides also here in support of this work to observe thank you to our board members that I see around the room for your ongoing commitment not just to our

[00:03:46] board, but to this work and your service in this work to Loudoun County. And thank you, Dr. Deans, for your leadership as well. I think I saw some elected officials to come in. I think I see Board of Supervisors Chair, Chair Randall. I also see the President of the NAACP,

[00:04:19] Pastor Michelle Thomas. And if I've missed anyone, please help me before I leave tonight so I won't be in trouble. The first thing on the agenda is public comment. And I think we have one person for public comment. And we want you to know and want the IT person to help us, that each person

[00:04:57] will have one minute for public comment. And of course, after that public comment, we will go on with the remainder of the agenda. So there's one person for public comment. Andrea? Good evening.

[00:05:36] First thing I see there are handouts. Could you please attach those to the agenda because otherwise I have to FOIA them and the person has to get them for me on FOIA. Second, I saw that subcommittees met in January. If that is the case, are there minutes to those meetings?

[00:05:55] And maybe I don't know all of Robert's rules of order, but I would like to know when subcommittees are meeting and who is on them, if I'm allowed to have that information. A third, last time it was obvious that the speaker from the Adams Center avoided discussing the anti-Semitic river to the sea.

[00:06:20] I would suggest you ask why and think about why they avoided discussing it. Finally, anyone in here who does not support DEA needs to leave. Thank you. May I share with the speaker as well as Evan, there are handouts on the back table that contain the information about the subcommittee that met.

[00:06:53] The subcommittee has not finished its work. It is a subcommittee to discuss what the new charter for the equity committee will be. There was discussion, but there was a small number of members present.

[00:07:09] As a result, other members have called me, many members have called me about that. So we are going to forego that until next month's meeting. But the summary of the subcommittee you may find on the back table as a handout.

[00:07:29] And all committee members, please get one before you leave. Okay, our next agenda item is, of course, approval of the draft minutes for the December 5th meeting.

[00:07:54] I think you all have a copy, and you were sent a copy electronically. Do I hear a motion to receive those minutes from the December meeting? So moved.

[00:08:09] it's been properly moved i get a second um i'm sorry dr jeans i don't think i attended the last meeting i don't believe i attended the last meeting okay do i get a second from any commitment committee member i second it's been properly moved and seconded that we received the minutes from the last committee meeting all in favor of receiving those minutes and you have a copy of them tonight as well all in favor of receiving those minutes let it be known the committee

[00:08:45] members, let it be known by saying aye. Aye. All who oppose, nay. Then those minutes will be filed with the clerk and will be kept on record for five years. In terms of our committee, we always bring

[00:09:19] you something from the senior staff or from the administration, and then we bring you a guest speaker. Before we get to our guest speaker tonight, we are going to have remarks by Dr. Ashley Ellis from our senior staff related to the work that has been going on with them and the board and the community. Thank you, Dr. Deans. Good evening, everybody. I'm Ashley Ellis, Chief Academic Officer. It's good to see so many familiar faces and new faces. This evening, Dr. Deans asked that

[00:09:55] I talk a little bit about the assessment and grading policy that's currently under review to make sure you are all aware of the review process and your opportunity for providing feedback. Your feedback as different roles in the LCPS community is very important in this policy and so I appreciate the time to present this information. So I'm going to share an update with you and then again the steps to provide feedback and some of you are very familiar with providing feedback to policies and I hope that you've had a chance to look at this. So the assessment and

[00:10:35] grading policy is policy number 5030, and it was revised previously in 2018-2019. And since that time, we have heard significant feedback on a couple of specific areas in the policy, particularly the 50 floor, the retake component of the policy, and formative assessments. Those three topics have risen to the top as areas that need clarification or modification in the policy so that's really what the curriculum and instruction committee has been focusing on

[00:11:11] so we started this review process in august of this year i'm sorry of this school year so we shared the timeline with the committee and got their input on anything in particular they wanted to get out of the process they wanted to make sure that we had as much community input from teachers and students and parents as possible. So in September, we shared information back to the CNI committee from a thought exchange or a survey of those stakeholder groups. And we presented

[00:11:46] themes from those stakeholder groups and came up with the themes that I just described, the 50 floor, the formative and summative assessments and the retake policy and the from those themes we conducted focus groups which was also a priority of the CNI committee and those focus groups were again we had parent focus groups staff focus groups and a student focus group we also gathered research on the process on assessment and grading current research we had done this in the past in 2018 but

[00:12:21] but it's a topic that is ever-evolving, so we wanted to make sure we had current research to present to the committee. And then we took all of that feedback and presented it to the C&I committee in December. We got their own input, and then in January, we presented a draft revised version of the policy, and that can be found in a couple of places online.

[00:12:45] It can be found in the C&I, or the Curriculum and Instruction, meeting minutes, and it can also be found on the LCPS policy webpage for your review. So that policy is currently online, available for public feedback.

[00:13:02] If you have not provided feedback on a policy before, it's a simple Google form. I recommend printing a copy of the redline policy so you can have it in front of you when you write into the Google form. And then I also wanted to show you, actually, before I do that, So tentatively, we plan to present this back to the committee for their approval, and the board will ultimately be the ones to approve this policy.

[00:13:29] Our timeline is that we hope to have a revised policy in place in April, so that gives staff time to develop communication plans for families, training plans for staff, and so the policy can be fully implemented at the start of the 25-26 school year.

[00:13:53] And then the other thing I wanted to point out to you as you are reviewing it and if this is something of interest to you is a document in the December C&I committee. Actually, I'm sorry, the January C&I committee.

[00:14:09] There is a document entitled Policy 50-30 Outline of Draft Revisions. Because it's a lengthy policy and we did make significant revisions, we did a crosswalk of the old policy and the new policy. We started with a simple reorganization of the policy because if it is a policy you've read start to finish, it doesn't really make much sense, the order of operations.

[00:14:31] It's a little choppy and confusing, particularly to teachers trying to use the policy. So we did reorder the policy. And then we took the nine recommendations from the feedback report, from all of the feedback that we had received to date.

[00:14:48] And we explained on the right-hand column where, if we recommended a change based on that feedback, where it is in the policy, or if it will be in a regulation. So you can see that crosswalk as well. It just may be helpful for you to review this prior to providing any feedback.

[00:15:06] And for the teachers in the room, you will hopefully be happy to know and maybe even willing to participate. We do plan to put together a workgroup of teachers to develop a secondary assessment and grading handbook that would accompany the new policy for even greater clarification.

[00:15:29] So I encourage you to provide feedback either as an individual, or I know the committee also provides feedback. You can do it both ways. We really want to hear what you have to say to make sure we incorporate feedback into the revisions.

[00:15:45] And Dr. Deans, I'll turn it back to you. And the feedback is one of the things that we would ask all of you to do, not just the ones on the committee, but the public as well.

[00:16:00] On the website, there are steps that you can take to give feedback to policies, and the division definitely gives you that opportunity. But if no one chooses to do it and they move forward with the policy, then we won't have an opportunity to indicate what it is that concerns us.

[00:16:23] May I share with you that the Equity Committee is monitored by the DEIA department. And we have Mr. Mohammed here tonight from that department that is here to support us.

[00:16:41] And so having said that, I just want to share some indications, some research with you. DEIA directly supports student success. Research consistently shows that schools with strong DEIA initiatives see higher student achievement and better graduation rates across all demographics.

[00:17:07] A 2020 study from the American Educational Research Association found that schools with inclusive policies see higher student engagement and improve test scores. According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, closing racial and socioeconomic achievement gaps could increase the U.S. GDP by \$2.3 trillion over time.

[00:17:37] So investing in DEIA is not something that Loudoun County Public Schools is ready to give up. And so it is that the Equity Committee is here tonight. But also, so it is that we have someone here tonight to speak to you concerning what the fighting for equity has produced over the years.

[00:18:04] So we have with us tonight Dr. Robert Greene. This is Dr. Robert Greene. This is his wife, Lettie Green.

[00:18:22] This is his son, Kurt Green. And this is his son, Kevin Green. And I just want you to know that I have some books here that have been written by Dr. Green.

[00:18:45] If anyone would like to get one tonight, I have some. Or I have them with me later, tomorrow, tomorrow, and tomorrow. And you can get one at your pleasure. But I want you to know that once my dear staff aide sent me the article from the Ashburn magazine, I knew I had to find this Dr. Robert Greene because he sounded like somebody that I knew way back when.

[00:19:15] And so it is that I showed up at his door and rang his doorbell and they let me in. So I am so happy that they were as kind to me as I want you to be to them tonight.

[00:19:33] Dr. Green is going to speak to you, and if you have questions, we're going to have microphones to walk around the room and get your questions so that he can answer them. He was in the throw of civil rights with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

[00:19:53] I am 76 years old, so therefore, am I 76 or 75, Joy? Oh, I'm 75. My daughter says I'm 75, so I must be 75. uh i am 75 years old so that means i was during that time my mom said linda don't let me see you marching on those tv shows but i've made all those signs for all my classmates to march so i just want you to know that i grew up during this era and now dr green is going to talk to us

[00:20:28] about his experiences during that era thank you very much uh dr dean for that very kind can you am i can you hear me okay uh i'm very happy to be here in virginia with you tonight and uh dr dean you are a wonderful person uh and uh i've enjoyed i haven't known you very long

[00:21:06] but the short time that i've known this lady here i've enjoyed it and by the way she can talk do you know she can talk if anybody doesn't know she can talk stand up but she always has good things to say. I'm very happy to be here tonight, and what I thought I might do is maybe take more than, you know, more than 15, 20 minutes about my work with Martin Luther King Jr., and then open it

[00:21:40] up for questions, because usually the questions will bring out issues that I may not necessarily think about. So I won't be long, and I will start by saying Martin Luther King Jr., I think, did something that no other civil rights leaders did. And remember this, write it down. All of you got

[00:22:13] pens. I say, get your pen right now. Kid, of course. Martin Luther King Jr. taught black people not to be afraid I can't think of and I knew most of I'm 91 years of age so I knew most of the old civil rights leaders Roy Wilkins and you name them but King was the one more than anybody that taught us don't be afraid don't be afraid to fight for freedom don't be afraid to fight for

[00:22:50] justice. So Martin Luther King Jr., if you're listening tonight, if you're not, you probably are listening. I want to thank you publicly in Virginia for encouraging me to be the person I became. And secondly, my son, Kevin. Kevin is my youngest son. Nice young man. Very nice. And always told, I taught school for a while, years ago. I would always teach, talk to teachers about being decent and good to little kids.

[00:23:29] I could say, one day those little kids are going to be big kids. And I took good care of you. And you're taking good care of me and your mom. Next to me is my wife, Letty.

[00:23:49] I don't know how she put up with me, but she's been married to me, how many? 60, how many? 68 years. She's been with me. And men, all the men out there, let me give you a little tip. There's a song you need to learn how to sing is called Baby, Please Don't Go.

[00:24:11] They say James Brown wrote that song, but he got help from me. And so, no, I've got a good wife. She's just remarkable. She's a family member. And she even helps me with my nephew, Amos Hewitt, and his wife. And that's not easy.

[00:24:28] Hold your hand up. It's my nephew right there and his wife. And he's a fine young man. Let's see. Then I got Kurt. Kurt is my middle son. And Kurt is interesting.

[00:24:45] And he's the only one that would tell me, Daddy, you talk too much. Just be quiet. But Kurt's a fine young man. His background is finance, and he does whatever he has to do to help the family and keep us on the straight track, on the straight and narrow path, I should say.

[00:25:06] Okay, about King, Martin Luther King. I met King during an interesting period of my life. I was the first black to be certified as a school psychologist in the state of California.

[00:25:28] I had a master's degree in school psychology. And guess what? I couldn't get a job. People talk about liberal San Francisco. I said, wait a minute. Don't you tell me about liberal San Francisco because I know San Francisco.

[00:25:48] I drove a taxi cab in San Francisco, too, for about three or four years. So I know that city well. I know people there, and in a way, San Francisco is a fine place, but every community has its shortcomings.

[00:26:04] Every community has to work and struggle to do the right thing and to treat people fairly, and San Francisco is the place. I met King, Martin Luther King. He was the keynote speaker at the NAACP convention in San Francisco, I think about 1965.

[00:26:30] And I was so impressed. I had never heard a speaker like King. He brought the house down, and I sat there amazed. So when he finished speaking, I walked up behind him, and I tugged his coat tail.

[00:26:48] He jumped, he turned around, looked at me. I said, I would like to work with you. He said, really? He said, what do you do? I said, I'm finishing up my, I think I was finishing up my master's degree in school of psychology over at San Francisco State.

[00:27:06] He said, well, when you finish your master's degree, you come see me. I'll have a job for you. And so I was just impressed. And he was such a kind, decent person. Martin Luther King Jr., I think, not only did he, okay, number one, remember, the thing that he did for blacks and for women, all women in our society, is fight for freedom.

[00:27:36] Don't let anybody take advantage of you, and don't be afraid to fight for what's right. He used to preach that, don't be afraid. I heard it so many times, I don't think I would have been afraid of a tiger. Well, maybe I would have.

[00:27:53] But he would say, don't be afraid. Fight for what is right. Fight for justice. Fight for decency. Fight for kindness. Martin Luther King Jr. was just a tremendous person. Graduated from high school, from Morehouse, I think, college, at 15 years of age.

[00:28:13] He finished college at 15 years of age. He was a scholar, studied all the time, read all the time, and stayed on us young men to do the right thing. all the time. And I want to thank him for being the example for me that he was. He was tremendous.

[00:28:39] He and my dad were, and one other man, a man by the name of men, I know him, Dr. Benjamin Mays. He was president of Morehouse, you know, Morehouse in Atlanta. Those were three men,

and role models are important. It's important to be a good role model. Martin Luther King, My dad and Benjamin Mays, they were three men who happened to be black, all black, that I respected and I watched.

[00:29:08] I kept my eyes on them to see what they would say, what they would do, how they would treat people. And I never knew any of the men I just named to abuse anybody. They didn't abuse people. So I learned as a young man growing up in Detroit and later on in San Francisco that it's important to be honest and fair, especially for young people, because remember, those young people one day are going to be big people. And if you treat young people well when they're small,

[00:29:45] when they grow up, haven't you heard kids say, oh, I remember Mrs. So-and-so. She was my third grade teacher, but I didn't like her. You've heard kids say that. Then you've also heard young people say, oh, Mrs. Francis, she was my fourth grade teacher. She was so kind and she helped me learn how to read. I couldn't read. She didn't punish me. She took me in her office, sat me down and taught me how to read. Young people, remember. So those of you who are older in the room, remember, be good to your children, be good to young people and set a good example for them.

[00:30:25] Am I preaching? Am I preaching? Oh, I got so loud. I don't want to preach. My dad was a Pentecostal Church of God in Christ preacher, and he was preaching. My dad could play the piano, he could preach, he could sing, and he could play guitar.

[00:30:43] My dad used to go out on Hastings Street in Detroit, that was where all the blacks kind of congregated, and play his guitar. People would get happy, come listen to my dad, and follow him into the church. He went out on the street, okay, and I am moving a little further.

[00:31:04] I'll take five more minutes, okay. Kevin's my younger. He is a good young man, and I want to thank you for my three sons. I have a son in Michigan, these two.

[00:31:22] Thank you for those sons, and I thank you for my nephew there. That's my nephew, Amos Hugh, and his wife. I have worked hard to keep him on the track, too. You know, you can't let nephews go just because they're nephews. You have to stay with them, too.

[00:31:39] And I always remind them, in this day and age, try to do the right thing. Okay, King, what else you want me to say? I think the thing that I remember most about Martin Luther King Jr.

[00:32:00] was his honesty with people, his fairness. And he was not afraid. And when I say that, I was in a car. Coretta Kings, his wife's nephew, was driving a car in Grenada, Mississippi.

[00:32:19] And Grenada was a tough place. They had a sheriff by the name of Suggs, S-U-G-G-S, Suggs Ingram. I think Suggs might, I might have a picture of Suggs in the book. And Suggs didn't know it, but whenever a black person comes into a black community, Blacks will sometimes tell you things that they don't tell everybody.

[00:32:46] And I knew from the board of the black community that Suggs had shot and killed about four or five black men during his time as sheriff. And I wanted to know why. I said, what did they do to get shot and killed by the sheriff?

[00:33:04] People would look at me as if I was strange and silly. They didn't do anything. They might have been late for work. Might not have gone to work. And if Suggs found out about it, he'd take you out.

[00:33:21] And there's a picture on this book. There's a picture in this book of me shaking my finger at Suggs. And black people, oh, Andy Young used to say I was freedom high. Because I just wasn't afraid.

[00:33:38] I didn't think anybody would even have the gall to try to kill me. I just didn't do that. I just didn't believe that. And I, the picture of me shaking my finger at Suggs in Grenada, Mississippi.

[00:33:55] And when that hit the newspapers in Mississippi and around the country, people said I had lost my mind. So you're supposed to be dead. I said, why? He said, because Suggs was supposed to shoot you. I said, Suggs was not going to shoot me.

[00:34:12] And that picture in this book, I had the nerve to shake my finger at him in his face. And I said, Suggs, the only reason that you're not shooting me is because all these CBS and NBC cameras are on us.

[00:34:30] See, in those days, the kind of behavior that I engaged in, I probably shouldn't have been alive.

[00:34:47] I made it. By the grace of God, I made it. And one of the reasons I left Dr. K, I was the only staff. Left the staff and went back to Michigan.

[00:35:03] My sons were worried about me. Kurt, my son on the end, didn't know it. But my wife whispered to me that Kurt watches the news every night to see if he was still alive. And when I heard that, I said, well, maybe it's time for me to go on back to Michigan.

[00:35:20] But I want to thank my two sons and my one son in Michigan for being good sons. I've got good sons. And I'll say it publicly, and you don't owe me anything. My sons have worked hard, and the main thing, they obeyed their parents.

[00:35:40] Letty didn't have a choice. My wife is tough. She's small, but she's tough. And I was gone a lot. I traveled. Letty, I want to thank you publicly for taking care of my three sons. Let's give her a hand. Okay, about Martin Luther King Jr. outside.

[00:36:04] Martin Luther King Jr., I have this little booklet here, was a smart kid. I talked to his dad at length. His dad, we called him Daddy King. He used to talk about how Martin read all the time.

[00:36:22] He used to read books, read books, read books. And he used his mind to think of ways to improve life for people in the community and elsewhere. King was, he was, he was very much that. And he, I wrote when he graduated from high school with honors at age 15, his father offered to buy him a convertible car. You know what he

[00:36:55] said? No. He said, I'm going to be a monk. I'm going to live the life of a monk. M-O-N-K. I don't want a car. But his daddy kind of pushed him along and he stepped out. But King was thinking early on about how he could use his behavior to improve society, to improve the life of people, to improve the life of those who he used to refer to all the time as the least of these.

[00:37:30] King would say, if you can't do something to improve the life of the least of these, those who are poor, those who are at a disadvantage, then you've got a problem. And he preached that time and time again. So Martin Luther King Jr. was a person who cared about others.

[00:37:52] And I wrote something in here. He was also, by the way, King was also a good athlete. And I don't know if you know the name, Andrew Young. Andrew Young was probably King's top assistant.

[00:38:10] And he knew Martin Luther King Jr. better than anybody. He knew King well. Andy, Dr. Keene was a good athlete, by the way. Andy Young challenged him to a race, right? Not far from here. There's a place, there's a resort area near here where people go for vacation.

[00:38:28] Can you think of the name of it? A resort area? Yeah, that might be it.

[00:38:47] Okay. Andy was on a swim team at Howard University, and he was a good swimmer. And he challenged Martin Luther King Jr. to a race, swimming.

[00:39:06] And we all, about 40 of us, crowded around. We were having a little seminar. And guess what? King burned him up. He burned him. So Andy said, okay, you beat me swimming. Let's race. Let's run a race.

[00:39:22] Same thing. King was very okay. Yeah, Farnville, that's the place. But Farnville was near. So Martin Luther King Jr. was one who was in favor of freedom for all, opposed to war.

[00:39:43] The first sermon I heard in detail about the war in Vietnam was at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. Martin Luther King Jr. preached a sermon for an hour and a half and not a person moved about the war in Vietnam.

[00:40:02] He was opposed to it. He said, we're killing women, we're killing children, we're taking advantage or disadvantage of a country. We need to get out of there. So my views on Vietnam came early on from Martin Luther King.

[00:40:19] And he was just a good man. He said to me, Bob Green, you're the only professor that has left a university and come to me and Mr. Forrest, I want to work full time for you.

[00:40:45] And I did. I took Lenny, of course, I took my three sons and Lenny with me. But we moved to Atlanta. And I devoted my time and my energy to freedom and to look at ways in which I could work to make sure that people aren't taken advantage of.

[00:41:10] And to me, that's a big point. When people are not in a position to defend themselves, you have an obligation to help defend them. Remember that. If you know somebody, right. And I always taught my sons that, and I believe that in my heart.

[00:41:35] And I learned that from King. King deeply believed in friendship. He would say, what does it mean to be a friend? A friend won't humiliate you.

[00:41:51] A friend will not hurt your family. If you have a friend, they will hold you up on a day-to-day basis. So just saying to somebody, I'm your friend, that's not love. You've got to demonstrate it.

[00:42:07] Demonstrate it by your behavior, the way you treat that person. And, you know, there are some families that have conflict. I guess I was pretty lucky. There was not a lot of conflict in my family.

[00:42:23] My dad was a tough old man. And he had one, we had five boys and four girls in my family. And there was one person in my family that I was a little upset with.

[00:42:41] That was my brother, John, because John wasn't afraid of my father. And he would talk back to my dad. And that would just hurt me so much. But guess what? When I published my first book, I found John, went to his house, spent the night with him, gave him a copy of the book, and I apologized to him.

[00:43:01] I said, John, I was angry with you for a long time because you stood up against my dad, but I said I love you. And guess what? We hugged. We hugged and made up. Repairing friendships is key.

[00:43:22] One more point. Kevin, I got you. Martin Luther King Jr. also gave that famous speech at Riverside against the war in Vietnam.

[00:43:43] Andy Young and I, we all, there was a lawyer by the name of Harry Wachtell. Harry Wachtell was a very prominent civil rights lawyer. He, Harry Belafonte, myself, and a group of folk, we met.

[00:43:58] And Andy and I, oh, King was going to give what became his most famous speech on April 4th of the year before he was assassinated. And six people in the room wanted King to speak, not speak against the war.

[00:44:24] I never will forget, even Harry Belafonte finally said, if you speak against the war, Lyndon Baines Johnson, who was president, will never have you in the White House again. You'll be shut out the White House. He said, fine. King said, fine.

[00:44:41] Shut me out if you can. Can you imagine somebody trying to shut King out? No. So anyway, those were the days and the times that were important to me, and Suggs Ingram, fear.

[00:45:09] Suggs, when I heard that Suggs had killed two black men, and I asked for what? People looked at me and said, what do you mean for what? Could be anything, maybe they didn't go to work on time.

[00:45:28] I had to deal with that in my heart and ask God to give me strength to be able to look at him and just say hello. Look at him as if he is a human being.

[00:45:46] But by the way, in this book, I've got a picture of Suggs in this book here. And Andy Young said, Bob Green, what's wrong with you? I said, you're asking for somebody to shoot me, shoot you.

[00:46:04] I said, no, I'm not. But I said, Andy, I'm not afraid. I said, Dr. King told you not to be afraid. And Andy Young was beaten so bad in St. Augustine, Florida, that he couldn't walk for a week because he integrated a swimming pool.

[00:46:23] And so sometimes the experience you have that's really very negative does not always bring you where you eventually will become. Okay, let me stop talking and say this. I, at 91 years of age, I've lived a good life, and I have been blessed.

[00:46:47] Curtis is going to get mad at me. He doesn't like me to say nice things about them. Curtis, don't say anything about us. Curtis has been a good kid, a fair kid, a smart kid. I'm going to tell you the schools he went to.

[00:47:05] And he's a good man. Kevin, my youngest son. Lacey knows Kevin very well. All of my sons know Kevin. Kevin will get you to do the right thing. Amos, will he get you to do the right thing?

[00:47:23] Yes, Kevin will. Kevin will get you. Then my other son, Vince, he's not here. Okay, I'll take a question or two or three if you have any. Somebody behind me? I also want you to know that Dr. Green's contributions didn't start with the civil rights movement.

[00:47:43] He went on to break barriers in higher education, becoming the dean of Michigan State University's College of Urban Development and later serving as president of the University of the District of Columbia.

[00:47:59] His fight for justice extended beyond protests and speeches. He led efforts to desegregate neighborhoods, schools, and ensure that future generations would have access to the opportunity that they deserve.

[00:48:16] So I just want you to know that he talked about the civil rights movement, but he has other accomplishments as well. We're going to have Jerry and Helen to walk around with the microphone.

[00:48:32] If you have questions, if you have questions for Dr. Green, please say them over the microphone so that we all can hear. I don't have a question, but I just have a comment. Dr. Green, I want to thank you.

[00:48:48] I'm right here. I am Charles Barrett. I am also a school psychologist. So when I heard you say that you were the first black school psychologist in California, that certainly did something for me. So I thank you for your service, what you did for children and young people, and it's an honor to hear you speak tonight.

[00:49:06] Thank you. Congratulations. I'm proud of you, and school psychologists are very important because a lot of our young people don't get what they need.

[00:49:23] and sometimes the parents do the best they can but they just don't know how and uh i'm i'm proud of you keep up the good work and uh always know that when you're good to young people those young people are going to be adults one day and they will remember you they will remember you they'll

[00:49:47] remember mr brown right okay okay i got it well good evening and thank you that was incredible and Thank you for all of your amazing work.

[00:50:10] I did find a picture of you putting your finger in Mr. Sheriff Scruggs' hand. It's right there. So the picture's online. So I saw that picture. Yeah, it is. I have a question. So Dr. King had many lieutenants.

[00:50:26] You, of course, were one, as was Jesse Jackson, Andrew Young, Benjamin Hooks, most especially Julian Bond. But since we lost Dr. King, I don't believe we've seen any other person. and what may be the exception, of course, of President Obama, in our community, rise to the stature and take on the responsibility that Dr. King has taken on.

[00:50:49] Why do you think that is, and how do you think the next person who rises to that stature, what would they look like, where would they come from, and what does it take to be that person? Now, of course, not to be a Dr. King, but his lieutenants. How does somebody become, you know, start on the path to be a Dr. King?

[00:51:11] And who do you think that person might be? Let me see if I got that correct. You're asking me how or what persons followed Dr. King that were basically good leaders.

[00:51:31] And even now, and even now, how does that, how do those, yes, yes, exactly. Okay. Yes, sir. Thank you. I would say it's hard for me to think of anybody who came behind Martin Luther King Jr.

[00:51:49] and accomplished even a little of what he accomplished. Because my mother was the one in my family.

[00:52:05] My dad was always worried about his sons being hurt. Boy, you go downtown, pay that bill, get on the streetcar in Detroit and come on back home. Don't talk to anybody. That was my dad. Don't talk to a soul, and especially white men.

[00:52:23] So I had that kind of training coming from my dad. On the other hand, my mother was more open, deal with people, engage them, try to understand what their needs are, what their concerns are, and do the right thing.

[00:52:39] So I had kind of conflicting views between my mom and my dad. But as I look back on the days growing up as a kid in Detroit, I would say that I really can't think of how I would do things differently.

[00:53:06] I worked hard, and I lived in an interesting community, a community of blacks, Italians, and members of the Jewish community. We all lived together, and we got along.

[00:53:23] There was very little conflict within the community itself as I was growing up. So I had that advantage. I didn't have the disadvantage of growing up in a community in which there was a lot of fighting and conflict between people of color and people of non-color.

[00:53:43] So as I reflect, when I read about Oakland, California, that bothers me, the conflict in Oakland between young people. I did my internship for my master's in school psychology with the Oakland Public Schools.

[00:54:06] And I knew their school system well. I knew the people there. When I got my master's degree, they wouldn't give me a job, but there were several. By the way, young man, the thing I learned early on is when you, a person of color in those days, never put your picture on an application.

[00:54:29] Just apply for the job, leave your picture off, because if your picture was there, you were done. Would you be done? You'd be done. So anyway, coming back, I'm rambling now, coming back to my days growing up in Detroit especially, I'm thankful for my dad and my mom who worked hard to keep their nine children on track.

[00:55:05] And as I said, I even made amends with my brother John. My brother John was the kind of person, okay, he ended up in the military, and he was a military guy.

[00:55:24] But when I think about that and all the background of the family, I guess we survived. And we survived because we had a good mom and a good dad. So young people, how many of you young people have children out there?

[00:55:45] Well, look at that. One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve. All right. Remember, be good to those young people, to children, your children, because one day those children are going to be what?

[00:56:05] They're going to be adults. Yes, ma'am. Dr. Green, I'm Pastor Michelle Thomas. I'm the president of the NAACP in Loudoun County. I'm originally from Atlanta, Georgia. I graduated from Benjamin Elijah Mays Academy of Math and Science.

[00:56:23] So I feel that deeply. There was a quote when we walked into the school, and this just kind of ties in how serious he was about education. There was a quote in our school from Dr. Mays, and it says, he that knows more than you is your master.

[00:56:41] He that knows more than you is your master. And that dawned every child as they entered that door and pushed us to a sale um off when we many people see um the civil rights movement and they think about dr king and his leadership they often think in terms of protest and um very overt things um because you were on his staff um what most people forget or they just really don't drill down on

[00:57:15] is how much of a negotiator he was, influencing often behind the scenes before he ever shows up to protest, which many times was for public record, right, and to draw attention, but the real work was done hours and days before.

[00:57:35] Could you please tell us what that sort of negotiation looked like And how did he brief his staff and bring you guys along as he was leading on the front side? Probably the person on Martin Luther King's staff that did the best job of preparing us for an event.

[00:58:05] I would think it would be Andy Young. And Andy had the poise and the know-how. That's why I wasn't surprised when he ended up at the United Nations.

[00:58:26] He had the poise and the leadership skills to deal with people. Andy Young could talk to Lyndon Bane Johnson. And Lyndon Bane Johnson, by the way, was a president that everybody was afraid of.

[00:58:43] I mean, he was tough. LBJ, as they call him, was tough. But guess who could relate to him? Andrew Jackson Young. And King, too. by the way. So again, it comes to leadership and it comes to strength and it comes to decency.

[00:59:10] And those were the qualities coming back to King that King had. He was a decent, kind person who took, he didn't take advantage of anybody. I never knew of anybody that King took advantage of or abused he was always the one to fight for freedom and to fight for the right cause and i told my

[00:59:42] mother that i i when we moved from the university in east lansing michigan down to atlanta uh dr king in a staff first staff meeting said bob i want you to come to church sunday i'm gonna preach And by the way, that was a Sunday that he gave that famous sermon about the war in Vietnam, which I knew a little about, but not a lot.

[01:00:16] So anyway, I'll take another question. You look like you have a question. You got your hand up there? Is that your son?

[01:00:32] He seems like a nice young man. Let's give him a hand. You know what? You can go home today saying that you uplifted a young black male.

[01:00:49] Everybody in here and you, young man, I can look at you and tell that someday you are going to be a leader and a leader that we'll all hear about, a leader doing good things. And you'll make your mama proud of you.

[01:01:07] She's proud of you right now. I know she is, but she will make her real proud. Okay. Kevin, I'm proud of you, too. no it's interesting i have three sons and uh if i tell you what they did they shoot me they won't they won't let me brag on them and so i won't brag on them i have one more question

[01:01:44] may i ask a question of your wife may i ask a question of you ma'am yeah miss letty may i have a question for you i have a question for you sure how was it for you to have your husband go out and whether he was scared or not were you ever scared for him and how was it for you to have your husband be a freedom fighter as you watched him go out the door every day you knew things could happen how did you how did you deal with all that he was doing um every day for yourself i just did

[01:02:22] i did i didn't even think about the fear part i just believed that you know they were going to do a good job and and i didn't have to worry and and plus i had i was busy with the three sons so i didn't have too much to think about but i really thought that they were doing a good job and i wanted them to follow on you know i still don't know how she did it during a march through

[01:02:56] mississippi mean mississippi i looked up one day she was in atlanta with the three boys that's where she's supposed to be there's my wife i couldn't believe it to this day even right now i ask her letty how did you get to mississippi of all places in america and she still won't tell me so i want you all to grab her when she goes out and ask her how did she get to mississippi

[01:03:32] she did it with those little boys so no let it's tough um ronda young lady right there hold your up she's my niece she's married to my nephew ronda knows letty very well and people know my wife is a very strong and very tough person and she was very close to coretta scott king she traveled with coretta's uh martin's wife and my wife by the way if you ever have a secret

[01:04:06] that you don't want anybody to know tell my wife to this day coretta king and letty went to She said, I want you to come go with me to Jamaica, Jamaica, and I want you to spend time with me.

[01:04:26] She and Coretta Scott King went to Jamaica for several days, and to this day, she hasn't told me what they talked about. So I need to know what they talked about. If you find out, would you let me know? Okay.

[01:04:43] No, my wife is a good wife. She did a good job with the boys. She knew the people in the movement, and people in the movement respected her because Lettie Green always did the right thing.

[01:04:59] Jesse Jackson called her Miss Lettie, and he himself said, Bob Green, you are blessed to have Lettie Green as a wife. So I want to thank you for marrying me. I want to thank you for staying with me.

[01:05:15] See, I'm doing it publicly. See, a lot of men won't do it publicly. All you men out there, listen to me. let me thank you for being my wife what can you tell us in this the people in this room how can we be freedom fighters in this moment right now how can we be freedom fighters right now in this

[01:05:42] moment how do we as freedom fighters right now push to do the right thing i my thought is what are the issues in the community that need to be addressed that are not being addressed addressed especially from an educational standpoint that was my my my thrust and concern was young children

[01:06:14] second third fourth fifth sixth grade because those are the young people that are going to play a leadership role for you later on so my my thought and my concern was always what could I do to help improve the life of young people.

[01:06:38] I think I mentioned that in here. There was a little boy who asked me, I really didn't know Martin Luther King. He was six or seven years old.

[01:06:55] I said, yes, I knew him. He said, you traveled with him? I said, yes, I did. I traveled with him. He said, you must be old. I said, how old do you think I am? And I prayed to him. He said, you're about 200.

[01:07:14] But he was an honest little kid. And anyway, again, raising young people in a community like this. This is a fairly well.

[01:07:31] You people don't know. You live in a fairly well-to-do community. Do you know that? I'm telling you, I know the data. I know the reading scores of 4th and 8th grade boys in Loudoun County.

[01:07:50] The reading scores of the 4th and 8th grade black boys in Loudoun County are among the highest in the country. Were you aware of that? This is the kind of community that you live in. And I think part of it, Kevin and I were talking about it, is the fact that unemployment is low.

[01:08:10] Employment is up here. People have jobs. And Kurt points out, what's those things you point out all the time? Anyway, I'm not trying to butter you all up, so don't get me wrong.

[01:08:30] Every community has its challenges and its problems. And I'm sure if we got people together, challenges and problems will be brought out. This is what we need to do that we are not doing. And, okay,

yes, ma'am.

[01:08:56] Hi, my name is Robin Burke, and it's my pleasure to serve as the first vice president of the NAACP Loudon brand. and I'm also the chair of the Education Committee, so I thank you again. You touched upon many reasons why DEI and the programs that come from this initiative are so important. You mentioned that you had a master's degree, yet still couldn't be hired. You mentioned that black boys here in Loudoun County have the highest reading scores, yet still have a difficult time getting into our competitive educational programs.

[01:09:37] I appreciate you giving us those two examples. And I happen to be one of those women of color that aren't afraid. And I thank you for setting that expectation and allowing me to come forth fearlessly and try to make change here in Loudoun County.

[01:10:00] I thank you and I appreciate you. Thank you. By the way, I have a book on expectations that I can get to you. You contact me on expectations and student achievement. Expectations are so high, I'm so important.

[01:10:19] And we communicate to young people our expectations about what we think they can and should do. And most young people can do a little bit more than we give them credit for.

[01:10:36] We need to keep pushing our young people to do the right thing and to stay on the right track, and especially our boys. I was watching TV the other day, and you see this commercial in which the black mother took her two children to school.

[01:11:01] And she hugged her daughter and kissed her and said goodbye. When she got to the son, she hugged him and she said, behave yourself. That bothered me.

[01:11:19] The daughter got a hug and a kiss and was ushered off. The boy was cautioned. And the mother meant well. She didn't mean, she didn't have any ill feeling. It was her son.

[01:11:34] But the fact is, sometimes we don't give our young men the opportunity and the support that we should give them. And the young men also, if you give them support, they'll pay you back.

[01:11:54] Be like Kevin. Kevin, buy me a hamburger when we leave, if I want to. I may have to pay for it. No, I'm serious. But on the serious side, it's important to be good to young people.

[01:12:14] and treat I don't mean spoil them I mean good in an honest and fair way because those young people that you're taking care of today they're going to be adults tomorrow and remember that they will be adults tomorrow and you want to say I did the best I could do I my three sons always and lady I said we did we did the best we could do with our sons and our sons have not No, it's been good, by the way.

[01:12:49] Dr. Green, I have a question. Since the DEI is the catch-all term to get rid of at this current time, what other term would you recommend for the initiatives that DEI accomplishes in a public school system?

[01:13:15] What is the goal of DEI? What is their goal? diversity, equity, and inclusion, and their goal is to teach the cultural lens through which all teachers would teach and all staff would portray as they interact with our young people.

[01:13:37] That's important. DEI is very important. Supporting our young people through DEI efforts is important and I know there's some conflict or disagreement about how we go about doing what's best for

young people but my position is and has always been try to do the right thing at the right

[01:14:17] time for young people always because if they believe that you are being fair to them and treating them in an honest and fair way, they'll be good people. It's been my experience that young people won't let you down if you don't let them down. It's another way. Young people, if you don't

[01:14:45] let them down, usually, not always, but usually they will not let you down. And I've been blessed was a great wife and she let me has done a remarkable job considering the fact that I was on I was on the road a lot I was a Martin Luther King Jr. I asked him one time I said what did I

[01:15:19] ever do to misuse you he said nothing I said well why didn't you assign me to Mississippi he assigned me to Mississippi for six months I had to deal with Suggs Ingram in the state of mississippi by the way he's in this book for six months and i saw a lot i realized that maybe i didn't have it so bad a lot of people suffered and had abuse and these little small hamlets

[01:15:52] in alabama and mississippi always say the two states where people of my color have had the most difficult time, a challenge in succeeding was Mississippi and Alabama. And anybody here from Alabama? No, no, no, no Alabama blacks. Okay. All right. But anyway, no matter what the challenge

[01:16:28] is, you still have an obligation to try to do the right thing. And don't judge all people the same because all people are not the same. All whites are not the same. All blacks are not the same.

[01:16:45] And I'll never forget John and Betty Dooley. They're both dead. They were a white couple who fought whites in East Lansing, Michigan, so we could buy a home. Can you imagine that? In East Lansing, Michigan, we couldn't buy a home.

[01:17:04] And it was Betty Dooley, a white female, her husband was John Dooley, that people were afraid of. I said, I asked her one day, I said, Betty, what do you know that I don't know?

[01:17:21] Because Betty Dooley would get in the face of the most racist whites and say you're wrong to deny that person an opportunity to buy a home in East Lansing. This was 30 years ago, 30, 40 years. And she would look at them and they would drop their head.

[01:17:39] and that was another indication of the need to try to do the right thing and to try to be free and never more not try to be free to be as long as you can't do you don't try to be free you be free you be free by doing the right thing. Jim you had a question? Hi there Dr. Green my name is Tom Ketchum I'm the representative from the special education advisory. Sure my name is Tom Ketchum

[01:18:13] I'm the representative from the Special Education Advisory to this Equity Committee and I also chair the Meaningful Inclusion Subcommittee as well. And I just wanted to comment that no matter what our ethnic identity or other racial identity that we might have, your work, your generation's work has had a profound effect on all of us and has uplifted all of us.

[01:18:36] And while the struggle continues, and as Dr. Dean mentioned, the current challenge against DEI initiatives and so forth continues, we wouldn't be where we are without you and your wife and your generation.

[01:18:59] So thank you very much. Thank you so much. I will tell you one thing that used to always amaze me. the most outspoken and sometimes hostile and angry whites towards blacks, white people, other whites, will go up to them and look them in the face and talk them down, stare them down,

[01:19:37] which would say to me they knew in their hearts that their position about housing, and that was a, you know, I don't know what it was about housing, but in East Lansing, Michigan, Bloomington, Indiana, Columbus, Ohio, I mean cities where I knew people.

[01:19:59] Blacks who had PhDs, highly educated, couldn't buy a home. We could not buy a home in those times, I'm telling you. And that, I think, that had an impact on me.

[01:20:16] It had an impact on me because my wife, lady, is a good housekeeper. And she always wanted a nice house. And I remember going from house-to-house neighborhoods in East Lansing and have people say, oh, we just sold a house.

[01:20:37] And I knew it was still for sale. But I said, okay, okay, thank you. We leave. But going through that kind of process with your family and with your children and your spouse will make you a stronger person and make you more understanding.

[01:21:04] I think I'm not an expert, expert, expert on race, but I don't think there are too many people, black, white, brown, yellow, that knows more about race and racial treatment of people than me. I've gone through it. I've lived it. I've lived it.

[01:21:25] And to come home and to not really tell your wife the truth, oh, they told me the house was just sold, but I don't think it was. And I'll never forget, I had a buddy, John and Betty Dooley.

[01:21:44] They would go to the house after we went there, and the people would offer them the house. So it's going through that process that can strengthen you. You can come out of that process a lot stronger. You can come out of it angry, but that doesn't work.

[01:22:02] Don't come out, don't let behavior of other people make you an angry person. Don't do that. Don't ever let them do that. And I always felt, and I've taught my sons, you go through a process that will enable you to be a stronger person when you come out of that process.

[01:22:34] And that's the way I've raised my sons. My wife and I have raised our sons. That you always try to do the right thing. Martin Luther King Jr., Kevin doesn't remember this.

[01:22:50] He was sitting, Kevin was sitting on Martin Luther King Jr.'s lap. He was about two years old, and he was talking to you. And he said, Kevin, are you going to be like your daddy? I don't think you were. You didn't quite know what he was saying.

[01:23:07] And you just smiled. And so you've got to be like me. You gave Martin Luther King Jr. the impression that you would be like me. Don't forget. Ronda, you reminded him of Ronda for me. That's my niece there. I introduced her earlier.

[01:23:24] Her husband had a meeting he had to go to. But that's a fine young lady. And I approve my nephew to marry her. Okay, I'm wondering now. My wife...

[01:23:41] Okay, I got it. Anybody? Did you have a question, young lady, with the yellow one? In summary, I think it's important for me to say, DEI is not about division. It is about unity. It is about ensuring that all students feel valued, respected, and supported in their learning journey.

[01:24:03] Parents overwhelmingly support policies that promote inclusion, and educators rely on these initiatives to better serve the unique needs of all of our students. Our responsibility as a board is to provide the best possible education for every child in our district.

[01:24:24] That means keeping programs in place that are backed by data, supported by families, and proven to create better outcomes. DEI is not an option. It is a necessity. I urge you to stand firm on our commitment in Loudoun to these values because we invest in equity.

[01:24:48] We invest in the future success of all of our students.

[01:25:09] That is so wonderful. And I want you all to know that Kevin, our co-author of the paper with me, And if one of you write me, I'll get you a copy of it. The fourth and eighth grade reading scores of black males is the highest reading scores of black males in, I was going to say in the country, but I got to be careful.

[01:25:42] When you make a statement like that, you had better be on target because people are going to check you out. But the fourth and, in the paper, Kevin, fourth and eighth grade boy, black boys in Loudoun County. I didn't know anything before we moved here.

[01:26:00] I didn't know anything about Loudoun County. It was the highest achieving students in the area of math and reading. So you need to know that from a national standpoint, people are looking at you. And they'll check your data out.

[01:26:18] Yeah. Yeah. The community supports DEI. And at this time, I'm going to ask one of our community members and one of the members of the equity committee to come and give Dr. Green an honorarium.

[01:26:39] The community has selected to do this. Not the school division, but the community. So I'm going to ask Anna to come forward at this point and present the honorarium. Oh, okay, sorry.

[01:26:58] Before I come and give you what we have for you, I want to say thank you so much, Dr. Robert Green, for sharing your experience and beautifully describing the person Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. really was. One of the things that you said about him that really stuck to me was he used his mind to think of ways to improve communities.

[01:27:20] With your emphasis on educating youth because they are the future, I thought it was important as a high school student to know that it is also important to teach kids to use their mind to think of ways to improve communities, to think like Martin Luther King, to use your mind and your potential for good.

[01:27:38] Because a lot of Loudoun County public school students are really smart and exceptional. Anyways, it's been an honor being here and listening to your stories. And this right here is a token from the Loudoun County, sorry, from the NAACP Loudoun County branch.

[01:28:00] This is a token of our appreciation, and we can never thank you enough for your service and your sacrifice. Thank you so much.

[01:28:32] To make this event successful, you have board members here.

[01:29:08] You have community people here. You have students who are here, and I'm just proud of you. This is a good community. And as I said, reading is so important.

[01:29:30] Reading is important. Keep your boys and girls stuck on books. Keep them stuck on books. Young men, listen to me. Read, read, read. Martin Luther King Jr. read all the time.

[01:29:47] That's why he was so smart. People thought King was just instantly brilliant. King read. King read, he always had a book in his hand, and he would educate us. He helped educate me.

[01:30:03] So I want to thank you. Thank you, young lady, for bringing that up. I appreciate it so much. Is that your mother? That's your mother right there. Okay. Mother, you're doing a good job raising that daughter.

[01:30:20] Stay close to her and make sure she finds a nice young man. You see what I said? A nice young man. Young. Okay, thank you all.

[01:30:43] To the equity committee, please, yes, to the equity committee, please do not leave without getting a copy of the draft charter that the subcommittee has come up with.

[01:31:00] Now, I got calls from many subcommittee members who couldn't make it that night. So that is a draft, and I've even invited the journalists to get a copy.

[01:31:15] But that is only a draft, and the remaining members of the committee will give input, and we will need to provide that information at next month's meeting. So can you please come back next month?

[01:31:32] You don't have to come back every month, but please come back next month. We need a quorum to vote on what we come up with. So we need the members of the committee to come back next month, and that's the first Thursday in March.

[01:31:47] And we'll have something else exciting for you next month to do as well, in addition to voting on the charter. So thanks again for coming. There's nothing else on the agenda, I don't think.

[01:32:05] There's nothing else on the agenda for the equity committee. So I call the committee adjourned at 7.05 p.m.

[01:32:23] Thank you for coming.



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