

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Monthly Message: April 2025

Last week we enjoyed a morning-long training from poverty-informed educator **Chad Dull**. I found his presentation to be helpful and eye-opening and it left me with a lot to think about.

To provide a bit more context around poverty and food insecurity, both at LSC and in our greater Duluth community, I share the following data and information:

- 41% of students at LSC are Pell-eligible (those who demonstrate exceptional financial need), including 61% of students of color. This is why intersectionality is an important concept for us to remember. Additionally, international students and migrant students on visas other than a Permanent Residency Green Card are not eligible for FAFSA.
- Fall-to-fall persistence drops off significantly for Pell-eligible students (62%) versus students who are not low-income (74%).
- The completion rate for students who do not receive Pell grants is 59% versus 45% for students who do qualify for Pell grants.
- The achievement gap between Pell recipients and those who do not receive Pell grants is our largest gap at LSC (more than race, delivery method, age range, gender, etc.), meaning if we want to achieve greater completion rates, we must focus on our low-income students and their needs.
- IceHawk's Pantry serves an average of 96 students per week facing food insecurity.
- In Duluth, about 17% of our neighbors live in poverty. This is one of the highest rates of poverty in the state.
- 20.5% of children in Duluth are food insecure.

Some great takeaways for all of us to consider from Chad's presentation include the following concepts or idea:

- Ethics are easy when life is good.
- Our interactions with students should first focus on relationship building and then goals.
- The "audacious courage" it takes to pursue education when even your basic needs are tenuous.
- That we need to focus on the move from making students feel "welcome" to making them feel "wanted."
- Absolute right and absolute wrong are tough concepts. Additionally, our policies and practices in classroom and school-wide practices should consider varied lived experiences.

Personally, I will be implementing Chad's idea of including three things in my email that I can help students with so they know what I can do for them and feel more comfortable approaching me for those needs.

If you'll be implementing something from Chad's presentation that you think colleagues may like to consider as well, please let me or anyone from the Professional Development Committee know so we can share your good work!

Our **April Narratives for Change** media club topic is the documentary [Love Them First](#). This 1h30m film features the story of Lucy Laney Elementary School in Minneapolis and how they shifted their strategy to first let the students know they were valued, and how success rates climbed for students after that. Parts of this documentary may require you to have Kleenex nearby!

Ready to sign up? [Link is here](#). Watch the documentary on the website link provided above and join us for a discussion on Friday, April 25th from 10-11 a.m. on Zoom. This month's session will be hosted by me, Sarah Lyons.

The LSC Council on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion's **Narratives for Change** media club is a twist on your traditional book club. Think 'book club' but not books—podcasts, documentaries, movies, art, etc. Each month we'll share the topic of the month and where to access the media. At the end of the month, there will be a Zoom meet-up to discuss the media. If you are unable to join the Zoom session, we'll send some reflection questions your way. The moderator will change each month and we welcome suggestions for different topics!

Upcoming events:

- **Bite-sized Equity is back!** Join us (nearly) for 30 minutes of building knowledge around topics like biases, authentic apologies, having difficult conversations & more! Sessions will be held from 8-8:30 on Wednesday mornings on Zoom. Session dates are April 16, 23 and 30, and May 7. If you would like me to share calendar invites, just ask. [This is the Zoom link for all sessions!](#)
- The LSC Student Senate and PTA Club will be hosting an all-campus **Food Drive** from Monday, April 21st to Friday, May 9th. Watch the monitors for more information on how you can support both their organizing efforts and IceHawk's Pantry!



Current LSC Pantry Needs: Size 4 & 5 diapers, rice, canned beans, canned vegetables, dental floss, shampoo