



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

For Immediate Release

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NJ Department of Education to Host Virtual Equity Conference on August 3

Trenton, NJ – More than 1,000 educators will take part in the New Jersey Department of Education’s (NJDOE) third annual statewide equity conference, “Critical Conversations for a More Equitable Future,” from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesday, August 3.

The virtual conference is designed to highlight the educational expertise and promising practices of educators and students from across the state who are engaged in important conversations about equity, with an emphasis on the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“This year’s conference continues the much-needed discussion about equity for all of New Jersey’s students,” said Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan, Acting Commissioner of Education. “Equity in education is a crucial issue, especially with so many students emerging from a year of remote and hybrid learning. This conference will feature critical conversations and it will include new strategies that can be implemented in New Jersey schools.”

The keynote speaker will be Dr. Edward Fergus. Dr. Fergus is an associate professor at Temple University and is a former high school teacher, evaluator, and community school program director. His work explores the effects of education policy and practice on the lives of populations living in vulnerable conditions, with a specific focus on Black and Latino boys’ academic and social engagement outcomes, disproportionality in special education and suspensions, and school climate conditions. His publications also include data workbooks focused on monitoring policy and practice changes.

The program will feature 30 sessions, which will be open for pre-registered members of the media. Some of the sessions will include:

- Post-Pandemic Family Engagement Through a Trauma Informed Lens
- How to Have the Hard Conversations About Race in Your Classroom
- Culturally Affirming Literature
- Confronting Equity and Race as Educational Leaders
- Putting Equity into Practice in Our Classrooms
- Fostering a Safe Environment for LGBTQ+ Students and Staff
- Equity and Excellence for Specialized Populations
- Using an Equity Audit to Create Systemic Change
- From Soil to the Stars: Discovering the Strengths of Latin American Students

The NJDOE will also announce the newest cohort of districts and schools that earned the Lighthouse Award.

Media coverage: Credentialed members of the media interested in covering the program should contact [Michael Yaple](#) or [Shaheed Morris](#) of the NJDOE’s Office of Communications to register in advance.

Educators and other community stakeholders can obtain more information, including registration information, on the 2021 Statewide Equity Conference [webpage](#).

“We are excited to be hosting our third annual Statewide Equity Conference,” said Dr. Tonya Breland, Acting Deputy Assistant Commissioner of Academics and Performance for the New Jersey Department of Education. “Each year the conference shines a spotlight on the equity work that is taking place in classrooms, schools, and districts across the state.”

