



July 5, 2022

For Immediate Release

From its inception, Action4Equity has been dedicated to systems change and dismantling the patterns and practices that create inequities in our public schools. The launch of the Embedded Mentoring Program (EMP) in December 2021 was aligned with both our Strategic Framework and our Policy Platform, namely: to support the grassroots as the central voice and driving force for change, and to end exclusionary discipline, while creating culturally affirming learning environments. The EMP was always - and will remain - a ***program based in and driven by the community***; we have always believed that this position is what empowers an initiative such as this one to be an instrument for the change that is needed. That is apparent, now more than ever.

Recent events have led some in the community to question the integrity of our work with this program and our capacity to protect our youth while also serving their interests in access to an equitable education. **Nothing is of greater importance to us than the safety of our students, and the safety of our children who we fight for daily and who we are so privileged to serve as part of the EMP.** That care and concern has guided ***every move*** that we have made in this program. Those who have been busy spreading rumors on social media and elsewhere are misrepresenting facts and engaging in unwarranted speculation. We know our work, and we stand on the reputation that we have labored so hard to build with our community.

There is much that we cannot share publicly at this time because of ongoing investigations, but we remain committed to the transparency with our community that has consistently characterized our way of being. We will not waver from it, and we cannot leave these children behind - at this moment or ever. The steadfast support of our community is what has brought us thus far, and it is what will carry us through in the days that lie ahead. No one is free, until all of us are free.