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The Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) Storytelling Project is a community outreach program that introduces local high school and high school students to digital storytelling tools and techniques. Led by graduate students in our English faculty, the JCPS Storytelling Project helps young people express themselves through the art of digital storytelling. In its first year, graduate students helped Moore High School cultural dialogues develop the skills needed to create, edit and share their personal stories for a private YouTube channel. These stories culminated in #KnowMoore open night microphone, student-led evening poetry, storytelling, theater, and discussion that focused on the experiences of students as young people living their diverse identity in Louisville. This year's project participants are assisting students in storyboards, recordings, editing, and workshops for a short documentary that will be shown at speed cinema as part of the year-end showcase. I'm looking for participants! We are looking for graduate students who are interested in lending their time and energy for this project. In addition to helping young people express their own life stories, you will gain valuable experience in a community partnership dedicated to digital storytelling. You don't need to have previous experience in digital storytelling skills: we'll be targeting at the beginning of the semester to teach you the basic skills of iMovie and storyboarding. Our group meets with Moore's students on Thursdays from 2:30 p.m. to 4 p.m. However, there are plenty of opportunities to get involved outside of this regular time as well. Ease weekly conversations and separate documentary projects with Moore students working one-on-one with students to develop storytelling, recording and editing skills to provide recording support for school and/or cultural dialogue events (often held on Wednesdays or weekends) provide behind-the-scenes, off-site editing support with directional students continuing to support their students as they work to lines their stories ahead of #KnowMoore Film Festival. Contact Student Coordinator Of the Faculty Coordinator Fran McDonald: frances.mcdonald@louisville.edu Patrick Reviews: Working with Moore students was the most rewarding experience of my time at U L. Every week I feel more like a guest than a facilitator, as they invite us into their space, allow us to participate in their discussions and projects, and lead the way through individual and group projects. Students are so open, so busy, and so excited to tell their stories and give their opinion. I'm usually exhausted to drive there and inspired to drive home. These students inspire me to listen better, participate more and move away and as an employee. Renting them out Leadership and providing logistical support more than training has grown our partnership with cultural dialogues. We are designed to provide ongoing, sustained support and develop new, larger projects for the foreseeable future. Ashanka: The Moore Cultural Dialogue Project brings me to life as a teacher-scientist. I look forward to engaging, listening and learning and with these students who are always excited to see and chat with us about their ideas about current events, cultural issues that are important to them, and use audio and video technology to capture their stories. Students tend to take the lead; I take on the role of listening more than anything. Students are very determined and self-aware - they sincerely want to talk about what is often labeled as difficult topics, and do so in a supportive and open way. Caitlin: Almost a year ago, I went to Moore High School to help write down stories and poems read aloud by students. Since then, I've been going to Moore almost every school week. It was one of the most rewarding projects I was lucky enough to work with at the University of Louisville. Once a week we go to Moore's School during the Club of Cultural Dialogues, where students gather to discuss and make art in response to current and cultural events that affect them. We saw them, talked to them, and set up with them after the Parkland, Charlottesville, and other key moments last year. Highlights of our work at Moore included generating ideas with a group of high school students for a video essay about eating disorders, recording performance/discussions with the Okolona community at the South Central Public Library, and promoting a roundtable discussion after the Parkland shooting about student thoughts about safety and gun violence in their community. I am always amazed at the level of critical awareness and thoughtfulness that they bring to every meeting, and always looking forward to spending my Thursdays at Moore. Last week, our top-read story was about a controversial evangelical group that held a seminar at Gheens Academy, part jefferson county public school. Louisville-area Christian Teacher Support, or LACES, has rented a meeting place in Gheens. LACES is affiliated with the Southeastern Christian Church, and the seminar examined how evangelicals can act as missionaries in the classroom. Which led to us receiving a lot of emails. Sensational news of the LACES meeting - not at Insider Louisville - led to teachers and administrators calling JCPS headquarters, asking for clarity, said Ben Jackie, JCPS communications specialist. Several television stations told LACES members telling teachers at the meeting that they had the right to teach creationism and intellectual design in a science class. Dr Donna Hargens, JCPS Was aware of some media reports, Jackie said, and decided to release an internal JCPS statement to make sure there were no gray areas, he said. As if happen, sources sent us that internal letter: From: XXXXXXXXXXXX Sent: Friday, May 10, 2013 K: Jcps-Principals-All Subject: A Guide to Religion in Public Schools Event held last night at the Durrett Auditorium was organized by a group called Louisville District Christian Educators (LACES) and was not the author of Jefferson County Public Schools. JCPS, as part of the Council's policy, allows community groups, religious and non-religious, to use district facilities after school hours. LACES has completed an application for the use of the facility. We have received a number of questions and comments from the community regarding media reports about the content of the event. As a reminder of your obligations under the law, please review the attached documents. The document states that public school employees are required to be religiously neutral in performing their duties as public servants of the school. - Public schools can teach students of religion in relevant courses, such as world history and literature; such studies are academic, not committed. - Creationism and intellectual design are not part of the state standards of the scientific program and are not taught. - Students have the right to pray individually in school, or in groups, or to discuss their religious views with their peers until they are destructive, and such prayer is not organized or led by staff. The accompanying guidance covers a number of issues relating to religion in public schools, including activities that staff can engage in. In the next phase of cultural competence training, we will address these issues in more detail with our administrators and teachers. Donna M. Hargens, Ed.D. Superintendent Jefferson County Public Schools VanHoose Educational Center in Southeast, Outlook, a story about LACES organizer and former assistant superintendent of JCPS Joe Burks quotes Burks saying that last week's meeting at Gheens was a focus on reaching students. The next generation is sitting in tables right now across the community, (Berks) said. Public school may be the largest missionary area we have, but many Christian teachers have begun to lose their passion, calling, and courage to be local missionaries. Cultural problems, legal precedents and obscure guidelines hinder, confuse and isolated teachers, diminishing their Christian witness. In a lengthy interview with a Louisville Insider, Burks said the Outlook article is misleading and that is designed to help Christian teachers not to cross the legal line between their right to live their beliefs and overt proselytizing. A number of IL readers have written to us stating that they believe that recently The Freedom Act is the catalyst for the formation of a southeast Christian-sponsored effort. So we called southeast. Michelle McGuffin, an outside media specialist at Southeast, did not immediately return calls for comment. Activist Honi Goldman, who opposed THE RIGHT outreach, said JCPS guidelines from Hargens look good on paper. Not only is there no enforcement mechanism, but there is no accountability mechanism. If the teacher (proselytism), who steps in? Goldman said: If a child is uncomfortable with a teacher's message: How do parents complain? Where does the parent or guardian go? If another teacher enters the case, how will this teacher report the problem without resigning? officials at the Jewish Community Affairs Council also sent out an email to their constituency in Louisville, citing their concerns. From this letter: Needless to say, this meeting, its contents and proposed plan, which cross the line separating the church and the state, is quite problematic for us. We have been in contact with JCPS and the Jefferson County School Board and have been assured that JCPS and their management were surprised by the content of this meeting and in no way endorse it. We hope that the agenda outlined at this meeting will not be implemented in JCPS schools, and we will continue to monitor the leadership of JCPS and their Board to ensure that the concerns of those who oppose the encroachment on religious doctrine in our public schools are properly addressed. Rabbi Robert Slosberg of the Aat Jeshurun Congregation said he was concerned about the overall impact on the wider JCPS community of laceS. The Jewish community is concerned, but I think the whole community should be concerned about that, Slosberg said. This violates the separation of church and state. I don't believe it's legal. He added that the school system, which allows the group to introduce religious messages into the classroom, risks a backlash from non-Christians and non-believers. How welcoming will we appear? Slosberg said. We need to attract as many people as possible from the strata of society and religious traditions and non-religious traditions. I don't think we should make the system any less attractive. JCPS has enough problems already. Already have.

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