DISCUSSION GUIDE
This guide is designed as a tool to promote dialogue and deepen understanding of issues raised in LOVE THEM FIRST: Lessons From Lucy Laney Elementary.

This is not meant to be a comprehensive overview of the topics the film raises. Instead, it’s offered as a starting point for discussions in the community, in classrooms and online.

If you’re just learning about the film, a good place to start is lovethemfirst.com.

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THE FILM

One year. One principal. One heartbreaking setback as her failing elementary school struggles to get off “the list.”

KARE 11 journalists Lindsey Seavert and Ben Garvin were on assignment when they first met principal Mauri Melander Friestleben. The news out of the neighborhood around Lucy Laney Elementary was often about violence. Friestleben defied this as both an honest observer of the neighborhood’s problems and fierce protector of the children living there, and she exhibited an unrelenting love toward those students.

Seavert and Garvin heard the power in her voice and realized that a short news report could not reveal the full fragility and beauty of the community, where complex problems were often reduced to a negative headline.

The journalists wanted to know Friestleben’s story. KARE 11’s leadership allowed them to spend a year inside Lucy Laney Elementary. The goal: provide an in-depth look at the challenges facing failing schools.

Lucy Laney has been tagged with that label for 18 years. It serves nearly 500 students, from Pre-K through fifth grade. Most live at or below the poverty line and are Black, in a state that has the largest achievement gap between Black and White students in the nation.

In spite of the challenges, student standardized test scores at Lucy Laney Elementary have risen steadily over the past four years. So have attendance rates. At the same time, suspensions declined more than 90%.

The film examines the principal’s dynamic leadership, her sometimes unconventional approach to education, and the effects of poverty, trauma and discipline on children. It also shows the power of creating a school identity and positive culture.

LOVE THEM FIRST: Lessons From Lucy Laney Elementary, tells the story of a principal’s determination to raise her school and her students from the educational depths – and make history along the way.

“People from all walks of the earth have little to no hope for public education, and little to no hope for children of color, period. But I choose hope. I choose to believe, and even if I’m proven wrong, I will go down believing.”

– Mauri Melander Friestleben
LOVE THEM FIRST: LESSONS FROM LUCY LANEY ELEMENTARY | DISCUSSION GUIDE

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THE FILMMAKERS

KARE

KARE 11 is a national award-winning leader in local news and information that serves greater Minneapolis-St. Paul and western Wisconsin on television, online and on mobile platforms. KARE 11 has been honored 17 times with the National Edward R. Murrow award for Journalism Excellence from the Radio Television Digital News Association.

LINDSEY SEAVERT
Reporter, KARE 11
*Love Them First* Co-Director, Writer

Lindsey Seavert is an Emmy and Edward R. Murrow Award-winning reporter – and the daughter of Minnesota public school teachers. She graduated from Indiana University’s Ernie Pyle School of Journalism and worked as a reporter at five news stations, from Northern Minnesota to, Nevada to, Ohio, before coming home to the Twin Cities. She’s been a storyteller at KARE 11 since 2012. She and her husband, Ian, have two children: A son, Stellan, who attends Minneapolis Public Schools, and a younger daughter, Phoebe.

Lindsey dedicates her work to her late father, Larry Seavert. She imagines he is smiling down on this project with pride, as he spent his career fighting for the rights of teachers and opportunities for students.

This is Lindsey’s first documentary as a director.

BEN GARVIN
Photojournalist, KARE 11
*Love Them First* Co-Director, Cinematographer, Editor

Ben Garvin grew up in Fayetteville, Arkansas, raised by parents who taught him the love of a good story.


Ben studied at the University of Arkansas and at the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York. He lives in South Minneapolis with his wife, Jessica, and children Arthur, Lewis, Bailey and Netta.

This is Ben’s first documentary as a director.
MEET THE SUBJECTS

MAURI MELANDER FRIESTLEBEN
PRINCIPAL

“Anytime anybody sees a child that looks forlorn, lost, not taken care of, spread your arms, scoop them up, ask questions later, but love them first.”

Mauri Melander Friestleben is a lifelong educator who started her career as a middle school teacher. She served as principal of Lucy Craft Laney at Cleveland Park Community School in North Minneapolis for 8 years.

In the 2019-2020 school year, Friestleben accepted a new position as principal of Minneapolis North High School. Many of Friestleben’s former Lucy Laney students will eventually attend North High, which has a rich 120 year history as the neighborhood’s community school.

Friestleben lives in Brooklyn Center, with her husband, Mike Friestleben, a retired Minneapolis police officer. They married in 2017 and have four daughters.

MAURI’S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION:
“Being both soft and firm, having high expectations with high support, along with having a no-excuses approach contrasted with grace, are just a few of the many balances needing to be struck when leading any school, but especially a school like Lucy Laney. Socially and generationally, our children of color, primarily Native and African American children, have been recipients of a hostile educational American experience. Minimizing that hostility to maximize their success within that experience is nothing short of a lifelong commitment and passion. Enlisting a group of people, staff, who also embody and live out that same belief is not about race, religion or upbringing. It is rather about character and grit. Together, we can create a highly functional educational environment that loves first, yes, but then provides a robust and rigorous academic experience second.”
LISA PAWELAK
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

“I believe really firmly that where you bloom, and you plant roots, plant seeds. The more and more my eyes were opened to the garbage that happens, the racism, the inequities, all those different things. I just knew I couldn’t leave.”

Lisa Pawelak became Lucy Laney’s new principal in the 2019-2020 school year after Mauri Friestleben’s departure for North High School.

She is originally from Illinois but came to Minnesota to attend college. She has worked in Minneapolis Public Schools as a longtime assistant principal and school social worker.

“To me, a strong and positive climate and culture starts with the staff. Doing things that will cause the staff to feel safe and taken care of, holding them to high expectations but also having high support.”
— Lisa Pawelak

EDWARD DAVIS
SCIENCE TEACHER

“When you come into our classroom, I accept you for everything you bring.”

Edward Davis grew up in inner-city Milwaukee and was the first in his family to attend college. He holds a bachelor’s degree in therapeutic recreation from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. In 2012, he started working for Minneapolis Public Schools as a special education assistant, where he realized his life’s calling to serve students of color. He pursued a teaching license through Minneapolis’ Grow Your Own, a one-year program created to help diversify the district’s teaching workforce.

In the film, you see Davis as a mentor to many of his students, often balancing humor and structure in a unique style of teaching that has drawn awards and accolades from the district. He lives in Minneapolis with his wife and three children.
MORGAN McDonald
STUDENT SUPPORT SPECIALIST

“I’m from the streets, honest truth, I’ve been there. Like no water, I’ve been there. Like no food. Mom on drugs. Shootouts. I’ve been on that side of the fence. It’s just this side of the fence feels better.”

Morgan McDonald is the “first responder” of discipline at Lucy Laney, where he handles suspensions and behavioral referrals. McDonald, a native of inner-city Chicago, says he relates to the trauma many of his students face. He credits mentors and coaches with helping him find the right path as a college graduate and is driven to give students the same hope that inspired him to become an educator.

In the film, McDonald is often the calm in the storm for struggling students. He has created a successful boxing program at Lucy Laney to help students diffuse anger. He lives in Minneapolis with his children.

PHEBE CARR
KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

“I teach kindergarten because this is the beginning, the first school experience many of these kids will have. They have real reasons to struggle. But when they walk into my classroom, it’s a safe place, a happy place, a place where they can do great things.”

Phebe Carr began teaching more than a decade ago at a charter school and as the film opens, is beginning her seventh year teaching at Lucy Laney. She grew up in Becker, Minnesota and attended North Central University in Minneapolis.

Carr says she chose Lucy Laney in part because she knew she could become a powerful role model to her students as a Black woman willing to put in the work to provide a learning environment that empowers them to achieve.

In the film, Carr demonstrates the grit, patience and love required to succeed as a teacher at Lucy Laney. She and her son, Elias – a Lucy Laney student – live in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota.
SOPHIA
FIFTH-GRADER

“You can always find light in the darkest places.”

Sophia attended Lucy Laney elementary starting in 2012, joining the High Five program as a Pre-K student when she was just four years old and eventually became student council president. At the start of the school year, she is being raised by her great-grandmother but learns that she and her two younger brothers, who also attend Lucy Laney, are going to be placed for adoption.

NASHYA
FIFTH-GRADER

“A lot of teachers started helping my mom look for a place to live. A lot of other schools wouldn’t do nothing.”

Nashya shines on the school dance team, is adored by her teachers and easily makes friends. Her mother, a single parent of seven kids, struggles to find stable housing during the school year.

ALIYAH
FIFTH-GRADER

“There is someone in the world that really cares about us.”

Aliyah thinks deeply about her community and the stereotypes she and her fellow students contend with. She works hard to raise her test scores during her fifth-grade year.
Lucy Craft Laney Community school in North Minneapolis was named after an educator who in 1883, founded Augusta, Georgia’s first school for Black children.

She was born in Macon, Georgia in the days of slavery. She was African American but not the child of slaves: Her father was a Presbyterian minister and a skilled carpenter who had bought his own freedom 20 years before she was born. He bought his wife’s freedom when he married her.

She was chosen to enroll in the newly founded Atlanta University, where she was a member of the first graduating class in 1873.

For the next 10 years, she taught Black children in whatever school facilities she could find in Milledgeville, Savannah and Augusta. The keynote of her teaching seems to have been a boundless faith in children's ability to learn, combined with the highest expectations of what they should achieve.

In those days the education of Black children depended strongly on church affiliations, through which support could be gathered from wealthier parts of the country. Laney set out for the Presbyterian General Assembly in Minneapolis with barely enough money for a one-way railroad ticket. She was unable to get funds from the church, but she made a valuable friend in Francine Haines, then president of the Women’s Department of the church. Haines became her advocate and financial supporter.

Laney returned to Augusta to charter a new school, the Haines Normal and Industrial School. It led to:

• The first kindergarten for Black children in Augusta, and one of the first in the South
• The first nurse-training institute for Black girls, which later became the Nurses’ School of University Hospital
• The first football team from a Black high school in Georgia

The Haines curriculum combined traditional arts and sciences with job training, vocational programs and community service. Today, a high school in Augusta also bears her name.
ACHIEVEMENT GAP

While Minnesota has long enjoyed a national reputation for its high-quality public education, the state is also known for having the largest achievement gap between White students and students of color in the United States.

The Minnesota Department of Education acknowledges that students in poverty, English language learners and special education students have demonstrated lower math efficiency on accountability tests compared to more affluent, native English speakers. All ethnic groups have lagged White students in reading proficiency.

Eliminating persistent disparities based on race, ethnicity and income level has been one of the state’s highest educational priorities, according to Mary Cathryn Ricker, Minnesota Department of Education Commissioner.

“Schools across the state are employing numerous approaches to support their students to reach graduation, increase the value of reaching the milestone, and building a pathway to career and college,” Ricker said.

Minnesota’s high school graduation rate has steadily marched upward, improving to 83% in 2018, and rates have improved across all races and ethnicities. Over the past five years, Black students — whose scores went up 7% — saw the largest increase. But in a national comparison of graduation rates, Minnesota ranks in the bottom half of states. By racial and ethnic group, Minnesota ranks 50th for the graduation rates of Black and Hispanic students and 46th for the graduation of American Indian students.

The U.S. Department of Education approved Minnesota’s state plan under the new Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2018. In the plan, Minnesota set an ambitious goal that by 2020, 90% of Minnesota students will graduate in four years, and no single student group’s graduation rate will be below 85%.

SOURCES:
National Center for Education Statistics
Minnesota Department of Education
Minnesota Compass
STANDARDIZED TESTING
For nearly 20 years, Lucy Laney has been in the bottom 5% of all schools in Minnesota, because of low standardized test scores in reading and math. The school is among 34 identified for the highest level of support in Minnesota, which earmarks extra money and resources, such as more support staff. Parents must be informed of the failing-school designation and are reminded of their right to send their child elsewhere.

Since 2014, Lucy Laney students’ math and reading scores have improved year over year. The progress hasn’t been enough for the school to move off the state’s list.

Anne Gearity, a child mental health therapist at the University of Minnesota and Washburn Center for Children, considers standardized testing to be “an imperfect tool” for judging high-needs schools, where students are often not as proficient with test-taking skills, computer use or test format language.

Gearity adds that stress-packed home lives add to the problem. “Imagination is a function of feeling safe, and trauma often makes children frightened of new or challenging tasks,” says Gearity. “Educators can unintentionally add to this feeling of being endangered. When children have experienced chronic stress, their academic organizational skills are often compromised by more primary survival skills. But standardized tests don’t take this into account. This all goes beyond any gaps in the actual knowledge being tested.”
HIGH-NEEDS SCHOOLS
The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 defines a high-needs school as being “within the top quartile of elementary and secondary schools statewide, as ranked by the number of unfilled, available teacher positions; or is located in an area where at least 30 percent of students come from families with incomes below the poverty line; or an area with a high percentage of out-of-field-teachers, high teacher turnover rate, or a high percentage of teachers who are not certified or licensed.”

Essentially, high needs schools require teachers because they cannot fill job vacancies or retain teachers, or they have teachers who are not qualified or who teach in subjects outside their field. High-needs schools also serve communities of higher poverty rates, where classrooms are influenced by the difficulties of their students’ lives. Most high-needs schools are located in rural or urban areas.

Anne Gearity, a child mental health therapist at the University of Minnesota and Washburn Center for Children, says that staff and students, can often feel discouraged because they are not meeting standards.

“Traditionally, high-needs schools have been both shamed and supported with additional services that are supposed to fix them,” says Gearity. “These services are often not integrated into the school culture and are rarely systematic in ways that permit real change.”

The staff at Lucy Laney recognizes that “high needs” means “we have to do things differently.”

Gearity adds, “this represents an important paradigm shift about education and forces us to see inequality as endangering to students who benefit from the most support.”

ATTENDANCE
Lucy Laney Elementary has drastically boosted attendance year over year. A missed school day is a lost opportunity for students to learn. In this era of increased accountability for states, districts, and schools, the connection between student attendance and learning is being studied more than ever before.

Excerpts from The National Center for Educational Statistics’ guide “Every School Day Counts” says:

“High school dropouts have been found to exhibit a history of negative behaviors, including high levels of absenteeism throughout their childhood, at higher rates than high school graduates. These differences in absentee rates were observed as early as kindergarten, and students who eventually dropped out of high school missed significantly more days of school in first grade than their peers who graduated from high school.”

“The effects of lost school days build up one absence at a time on individual students. Penalties for students who miss school may unintentionally worsen the situation.”

SUSPENSIONS

At one point, suspensions at Lucy Laney were almost as high as the number of students in the school. Anne Gearity, a child mental health therapist at the University of Minnesota and Washburn Center for Children was brought in to help.

“Children need to be at school to learn,” says Gearity. Grade-school children learn from repetition and practice, and the more exposure they have to material, the better they can master it.”

Gearity adds, “Children also need to feel that they are part of a group of learners. Secure belonging and imaginative exploration of ideas emerge from feeling welcome and a part of school. When we talk about children doing school well, we include both active academic learning and engaging social participation.”

Gearity states that a family that is constantly moving or is struggling to get a child to school adds stress to the child’s life. “This creates another obstacle for students in schools like Lucy Laney and school policies can make the problem worse,” insists Gearity.

“When schools moved to zero-tolerance discipline policies, children in high-need situations were disproportionately harmed because their behavior was judged as having been ‘on purpose’ rather than reflecting stress or social disadvantage,” Gearity says. “This meant that children who most desperately needed to be at school were sent away.”

In Minneapolis and across the U.S., black students are suspended at three times the rate of their white peers.

“Laney’s staff realized that this affected the entire community, especially when suspensions appeared to have little effect,” Gearity says. So instead of sending students home, the educators began to try to keep disciplinary action within the school. This kept students who were in vulnerable situations in a place where they could learn to feel safe and keep learning.

Lucy Laney Elementary once had more than 700 student suspensions in one school year.

Over a five-year span, Lucy Laney decreased suspensions by more than 90%.

Credit: U.S. Department of Civil Rights, "Data Snapshot: School Discipline"
HOMELESSNESS

An estimated 10%-20% of Lucy Laney students are considered homeless or highly mobile. Before students can thrive a school, they need safe places to live. Research shows that homeless or unstably housed children are often absent from school, change schools frequently, have lower test scores, slower grade progression and are more likely to drop out of school, says the “Urban Institute.”

About 7% of Minneapolis Public Schools students – more than 3,000 kids – are experiencing homelessness, according to the office of Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey. “This is simply unacceptable,” Frey told the Star Tribune. “We can’t expect our students to learn and succeed in the classroom if they don’t have a room to rest their head at night.”

Mayor Frey pushed for an aggressive program, called Stable Homes Stable Schools, to help. His office calls it “a pioneering partnership among the city, the housing authority, the county, and the public schools to provide stable, permanent housing to Minneapolis Public Schools students and families who need it most.” Over the next three years, funds will serve as many as 320 families and 650 kids, including students at Lucy Laney. The partners will evaluate its success with help from University of Minnesota researchers.

More information on Stable Homes, Stable Schools is available at mphaonline.org/stablehomes/.

SOURCES:
Homelessness and Housing Instability: The Impact on Education Outcomes, a brief for the Tacoma Housing Authority
Star Tribune: In Minneapolis, a bold plan to help homeless schoolchildren takes shape

STRESS AND TRAUMA

“Stress and trauma have long-term effects on physical and mental health for children and educators alike,” says Anne Gearity, a child mental health therapist at the University of Minnesota and Washburn Center for Children, who was brought into Lucy Laney to help the high numbers of students experiencing trauma.

Chronic stress can exacerbate feelings of helplessness and defeat. “For many children, trauma is not a single event but a series of events that become persistent and even inevitable. For these children, every place holds the potential for more danger, even school. When school feels stressful, body reactions and perceptions are colored by too much stress and leave children frightened,” says Gearity.

Gearity adds, “frightened children can appear scared, sad or helpless. They can also appear angry, self-protective and shut down. Why? Because all of us carry a biological imperative to be protective and fight back.”
SYSTEMIC/HISTORICAL INFLUENCES
As the film highlights, educating children of color has been fraught with prejudice and obstacles since the days of Lucy Laney herself.

Many factors burden schools in urban neighborhoods such as North Minneapolis, says Anne Gearity, a child mental health therapist at the University of Minnesota and Washburn Center for Children.

“Such neighborhoods have often been segregated in ways that perpetuate racial inequality,” says Gearity. “They are economically vulnerable with high degrees of housing instability, poverty and unemployment.”

Children bring their many stressors with them to school.

This means that while learning disabilities often go under-recognized, more children are identified as behaviorally struggling and special education services are stretched.

“Outside realities, like family disruption due to child protection involvement, place children at risk for uncertainty and worry,” she says. “And a seemingly enlightened policy — school choice — has sometimes become a hardship, as more capable children move to charter schools or better-performing schools, leaving the most vulnerable children clustered.”

“Such schools are not always desirable assignments for teaching staff,” says Gearity. “Systems don’t celebrate efforts but outcomes, and these teachers work hard but may not achieve outcomes immediately.”
"You give people linguistic power, not by telling people ‘You are wrong,’ ‘You are stupid,’ ‘You should only talk like this or that,’ but by giving people full command of all the different ways we can communicate, and helping them understand how the ways that they speak and the things that they save are woven together into rich tapestry of messages."

- Ben Munson
BUILDING A POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE
Lucy Laney is defined by an often literally embracing culture toward staff and students. Anne Gearity, a child mental health therapist at the University of Minnesota and Washburn Center for Children, says that at the school, creating a sense of belonging became a major focus of all staff efforts.

Children are welcomed and encouraged to be there not only at the start of the year but each day they arrive. They are actively coached about why they need to be at school and why letting teachers help will make school feel safer.

Staff worked hard to keep children in their classrooms, and in the building, where they could learn and practice what was expected but also what would feel safe.

One of the most significant markers of change is that suspensions were reduced 90%, Gearity says. “Children can be encouraged and taught to be responsible without losing their place at school.”

Gearity also adds, “teachers are allowed to be problem-solving partners rather than sending the child to the principal or other support staff.”

“Children do their best when they feel connected to the adults who expect them to do their best,” says Gearity. “Contracting out social-emotional learning regularly meant children would learn in isolation, feel estranged from their peers and often not build the important ‘in the moment’ skills. Lucy Laney shifted this responsibility back to the primary teacher, empowering the teacher to know your students, and students to count on your teachers.”

Lucy Laney also emphasizes the belief, “Learning makes you feel better about yourself, about your skills,” teachers are encouraged to teach in ways to value class participation and active exploration, and when life events are challenging, learning can become a soothing exercise, replacing events I cannot control with learning, “I can.”

Lucy Laney Elementary Students. Jemmire and Nuri. Photo: Ben Garvin, KARE 11
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you about Lucy Laney principal Friestleben’s philosophy to “Love Them First”?

2. Do you think that Friestleben’s method can be repeated at other schools, or do you think it is unique to Lucy Laney?

3. Lucy Laney teachers and staff adopted a conviction that stress and trauma affected their students — and themselves. What shifts did you see that potentially made school and learning feel safer?

4. How do staff backgrounds, attitudes and beliefs influence their participation to “Love Them First?” How do Friestleben and Vice Principal Lisa Pawelak get staff to buy into the ideas of change?

5. Friestleben’s personal faith is important to her. How does that motivate her mission? What keeps you motivated or prevents burnout?

6. How are the stories of Friestleben and Sophia the same? How are they different?

7. Friestleben validates the values of resilience and persistence to her students. Why does she do this?

8. At the beginning of the film, Lucy Laney staff members visit the homes of the nearly 500 incoming students. What did you learn from this scene?

9. Throughout the film, we get an inside look at how leadership at Lucy Laney Elementary builds a sense of culture within the school. In what ways was this realized? How does it affect the students?

10. In the film, there are examples of families struggling with home insecurity. What did you learn about from those scenes? How did the school support these children? How does the stress influence children’s learning?

11. Across the U.S., Black children are suspended from school three times more often than their White peers. Why do you think this happens? How, do you think, Lucy Laney has decreased suspension rates by more than 90%?

12. In the film, we learn that Lucy Laney remains on the list of underperforming schools. This ranking is based on the states standardized testing requirement. If standardized testing weren’t a measurement, what is a better way to assess learning? What examples of children learning did you see in the film?

13. The horrific killing of George Floyd has renewed conversations around the treatment of Black people in our country. In the film, Mauri references this by saying: “Yes, Black and Brown students are disproportionately disciplined. But they’re also disproportionately everything! They’re disproportionately in child protective services, they’re disproportionately poor. Like, we’re not talking about an island here. We’re talking about an entire generation of children, in our country. They are experiencing the worst of everything.”

What connections can be made between the disparities children face in school (like suspensions) and the realities we see playing out for adults?
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (continued)

14. How can adults help children process and respond to the killing of George Floyd and help them understand the complex causes of racial inequality, implicit bias, structural racism, white supremacy, police violence and injustice and then empower them to strive for solutions?

15. How can the community help support educators in sparking concrete reform in schools when it comes to challenging school or district policies that discriminate, target or police students of color?

16. How can you speak up and make a deliberate plan of how you will disrupt and dismantle racism within yourself and your circle of influence?

17. What actionable steps need to be taken to become anti-racist and to create anti-racist educational spaces?

UPDATE: June 2020

We spoke to Lucy Laney’s new Principal, formerly Vice Principal, Lisa Pawelak following the police killing of George Floyd and the racial uprising in Minneapolis and across the world.

Lucy Laney Principal Lisa Pawelak says the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis underscores the trauma-responsive work Lucy Laney is already doing. The school emphasizes social-emotional learning, hires Black teachers and teachers of color, and puts Black history at the forefront of teaching. It has also pushed back against zero-tolerance discipline policies and creates safe spaces to process grief and anger and hold difficult conversations.

Pawelak says the George Floyd killing serves as another example of how black boys and black men have been dehumanized.

“It’s also another example of why we have to choose hope and why we need our children to be in school,” said Pawelak.

When the 2020-2021 school year begins, Pawelak plans to begin a renewed focus on restorative justice practices and challenge her school staff members to become students themselves, not only educating themselves about the history of institutional racism but contextualizing current events with history.

Additional resources to talk to kids about race and racism:

Center for Racial Justice in Education
Education Minnesota
PBS Social
Box Tops for Education is grateful for the inspirational work that educators are doing to make a difference, every day, in communities and schools across the country.

Since 1996, schools have earned more than $913 million through the Box Tops Program. While we understand that it takes much more than funding to address systemic issues facing schools and their communities, Box Tops for Education are proud and driven to continue to offer a simple way to help educators and students.

Download the new Box Tops app and support your local school or the schools and educators that need it most, anywhere in the country, including Lucy Craft Laney.

Learn how to get involved at www.boxtopsforeducation.com.

DISCUSSION GUIDE CREDITS

This discussion guide has been created in partnership with KARE 11, Anne Garity, Mauri Friestleben, Lisa Pawelak and Minneapolis Public Schools. With contributions from the Office of Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey, the Lucy Craft Laney Museum of Black History, Ben Munson at the University of Minnesota and the National Center for Educational Statistics.

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