

# Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty: After backlash, Wisconsin high school walks back segregated “Back-To-School Events”

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**The News:** Appleton East High School is now welcoming all students to a back-to-school event styled as the “Freshmen Students of Color Meet and Greet.” The Appleton Area School District has issued a public statement opening the formerly segregated event to all races following widespread criticism from the public as well as the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty (WILL).

**School District’s Response:** Last week, neither the high school nor the district explained why they planned these segregated events. Instead of explaining themselves, the district issued following statement “clarifying” that the “Freshmen Students of Color Meet and Greet,” is, in fact, open to all races:

*“The Appleton Area School District has clarified the intent of the Freshmen Meet and Greet with the East Cultural Advisor and emphasized the event is open, and has always been open, to all incoming 9th-grade Appleton East students and their families. This clarification was shared earlier this week, on Tuesday afternoon, with Appleton East 9th-grade families. We also reminded East families of the four additional opportunities for 9th-grade students that have the purpose of setting them up for success in their high school careers and connecting them with the staff that will help them to ensure that success,” said AASD.*

**WILL Responds:** In response to the new statement from the school district, WILL Deputy Counsel, Dan Lennington, stated, “We welcome the response from the

school district but would encourage them to do even more to be inclusive to every student in the school district. We should be teaching children the foundational principles of equality enshrined in our Constitution. The district and its employees should emphatically reject all forms of race discrimination and explain why equality is always better than bigotry. By doing so, parents, students, and educators can build a true sense of community, not division.”

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