

January 27, 1998

Dear Ms. Lloyd,

I am writing in response to your letter to Sharon Polak regarding "Black History Month." Mrs. Polak shared your letter and its concerns with me, so that I might have the opportunity to respond.

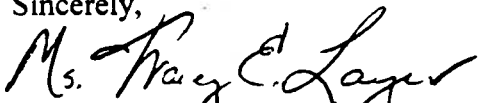
First, I need to let you know that "African American History Month" has been honored *nationally* since 1976. "Black History Month" was established for the purpose of honoring the accomplishments of African Americans, accomplishments which, until then, had largely been ignored by the public and private sectors.

Your letter astutely points out that a multitude of other groups have suffered (and may continue to suffer) injustices and persecution. And I agree with you that the accomplishments of all persons from all backgrounds and orientations should be celebrated. At Girard College our curriculum does endeavors to make room for as much history and acknowledgment as possible.

In the elementary school our students study the lives and cultures of Native Americans, Asians, Latin Americans, African Americans as well as various European groups. Attention to peoples from diverse backgrounds is given in our texts and supplemental materials. Our assembly programs, videos and library books all reflect the contributions of many peoples, cultures and countries. I invite you to spend some time in Mrs. Polak's class (or any other class) so that you can see our curriculum in action. Take a closer look at our materials if you wish and visit with our staff.

It is important that you feel comfortable with the educational opportunities your children are receiving here at Girard and your opinion is notable. Thank you so much for bringing your concerns to our attention. Please feel free to contact me regarding this matter or any other.

Sincerely,



Ms. Tracey E. Lauer, Instructional Coordinator