



THE
PENNSBURY SCHOOL DISTRICT

134 YARDLEY AVENUE • P.O. BOX 338 • FALLSINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA 19058-0338

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY AUDIT REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

APRIL 2021















DR. CHERRISSA GIBSON
Director of Equity, Diversity, and Education



The Pennsbury School District is committed to fostering an inclusive educational environment that understands, respects and embraces individual differences as assets that serve to enhance our school community. Educational equity – the practice of distributing resources, access and opportunity based on fairness and justice regardless of race, ethnicity, color, age, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, language, disability or socio-economic status – will serve as the foundation of all decision-making to ensure equitable outcomes for every learner.

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MISSION STATEMENT

Recognizing our proud traditions and diverse community, the Pennsbury School District prepares all students to become creative, ethical, and critical thinkers for lifelong success in a global society.

VISION STATEMENT

PROMOTING ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND RESILIENCY IN ALL STUDENTS

- Every student will become their best intellectual and ethical self.
- Every student will persevere to reach their highest social, emotional, and academic potential.
- Every educator will inspire students to strive for academic excellence and strength of character.
- Every school will develop engaged, professional learning communities to support the Growth Mindset.

SHARED VALUES

CORE BELIEFS

We believe...

- a culture of caring is essential for learning;
- respect for self and others is fundamental because all individuals possess inherent worth and dignity;
- taking responsibility for one's actions elevates civility;
- a safe educational environment promotes a sense of security and willingness to take risks;
- strong character fosters good citizenship;
- every student deserves the opportunity to develop their potential to learn and grow;
- intelligence can be developed through attitude, effort, and perseverance.

DIVERSITY IN PENNSBURY SCHOOL DISTRICT

2020-2021 DISTRICT STATS

9,979

ENROLLMENT

24%

PERCENT OF STUDENTS
ECONOMICALLY
DISADVANTAGED

26.5%

PERCENT ARE STUDENTS
OF COLOR

22%

DIFFERENT LANGUAGES
SPOKEN

2019-2020*

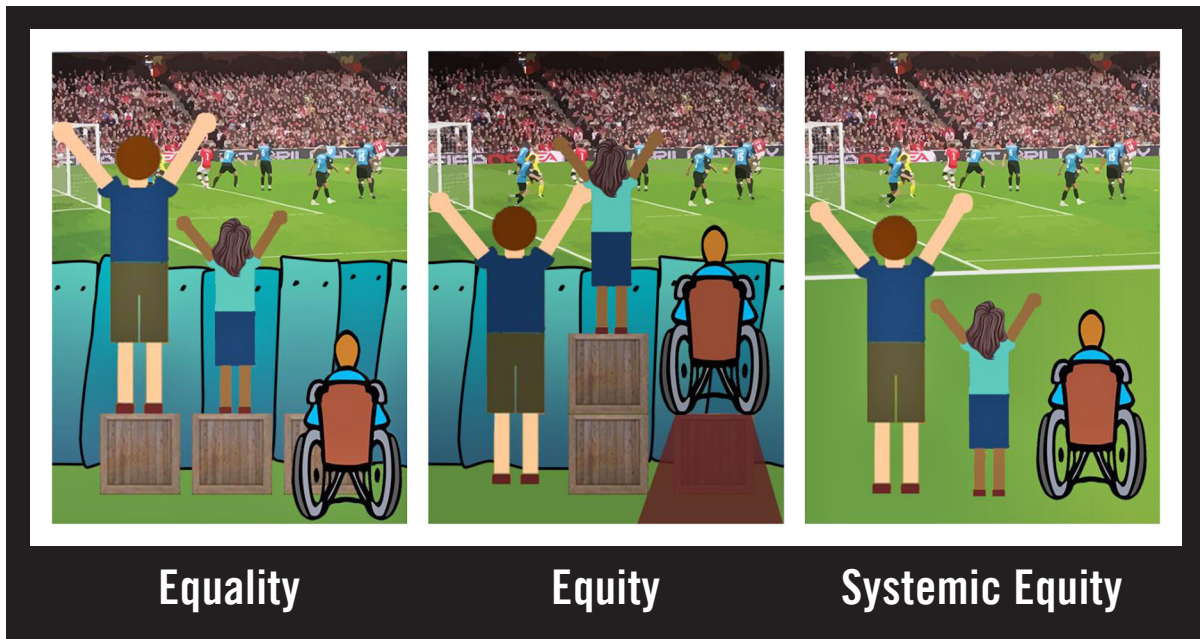
21.6%

PERCENT OF STUDENTS
IDENTIFIED FOR SPECIAL
EDUCATION

* MOST RECENT PDE DATA



DEFINING EQUITY



“The quality of being fair and impartial.”

Equality and equity are not the same. **Equality** is providing the same, one-size-fits-all approach to all students, despite their unique needs. Educational equity is not a one-size-fits-all approach; **equity** is acknowledging that one-size-fits-few and meeting student needs with responsive strategies, structures and supports. Further, in some cases, requiring equality actually reproduces inequity by creating or perpetuating policies and practices that serve as barriers for groups of students. In short... equality is a focus on sameness; equity is a focus on fairness and justice.

Educational Equity is a journey of continuous growth and learning.

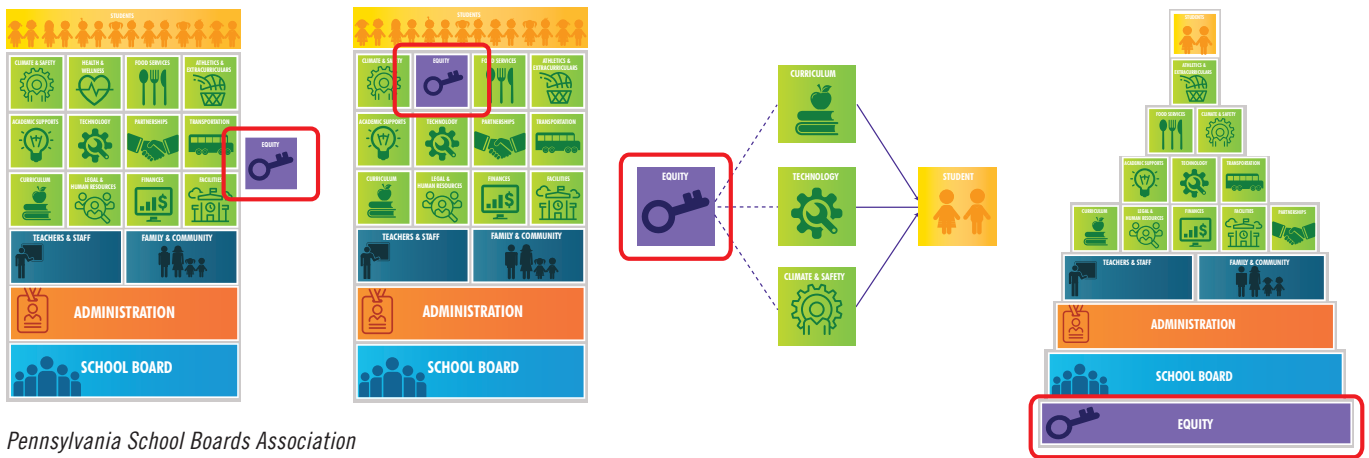
***“Not everything that is faced can be changed,
but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”***

~ James Baldwin



COMMITMENT TO EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE & EQUITY

Intention vs. Impact



Pennsylvania School Boards Association

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) defines equity as “every student having access to the educational resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, family background and/or family income” (PDE, 2021).

In July 2020, the Pennsbury Board of School Directors appointed the District’s first Director of Equity, Diversity, and Education position and charged the Equity Office with coordinating and guiding all District efforts to define, understand, assess, foster, and cultivate equity among the District’s students, faculty, staff, and community members. PSD committed to conducting a comprehensive equity audit to assess the current state of the District and take steps to establish equity as the foundation of all decision-making.

Equity audits are intended to help educators understand the inequities that exist in their District and schools, identify gaps in practice, and inform the development of systemic solutions (policies and practices) to address them. The PSD Equity Audit was conducted from August 2020 through February 2021.

The purpose of the PSD Equity Audit was to identify the common causes of inequities that exist in the District. This report represents data collected from stakeholders, including students, parents, faculty, staff, administrators, and community members. The audit summarizes current progress and identifies areas of growth pertaining to educational equity. The findings of the PSD Equity Audit outline specific goals and recommended actions based on the data reviewed to ensure the District’s intended actions align with the impact on student growth and progress.

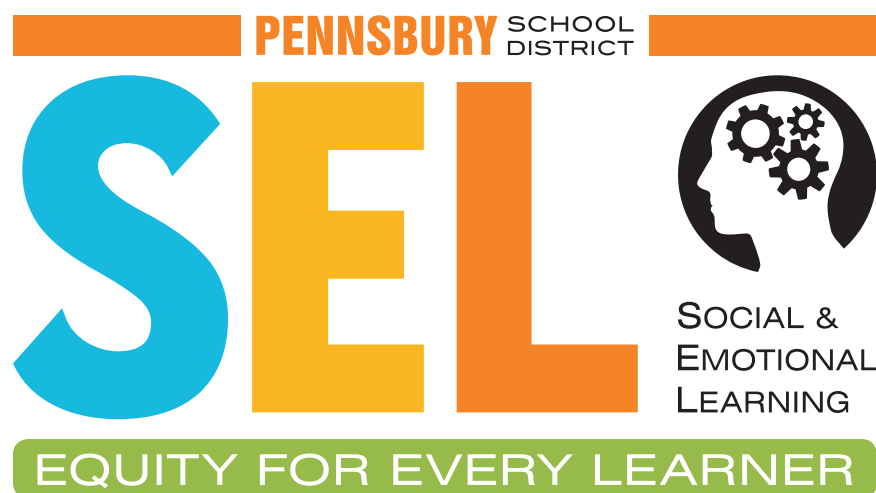


PSD EQUITY VISION & BELIEFS

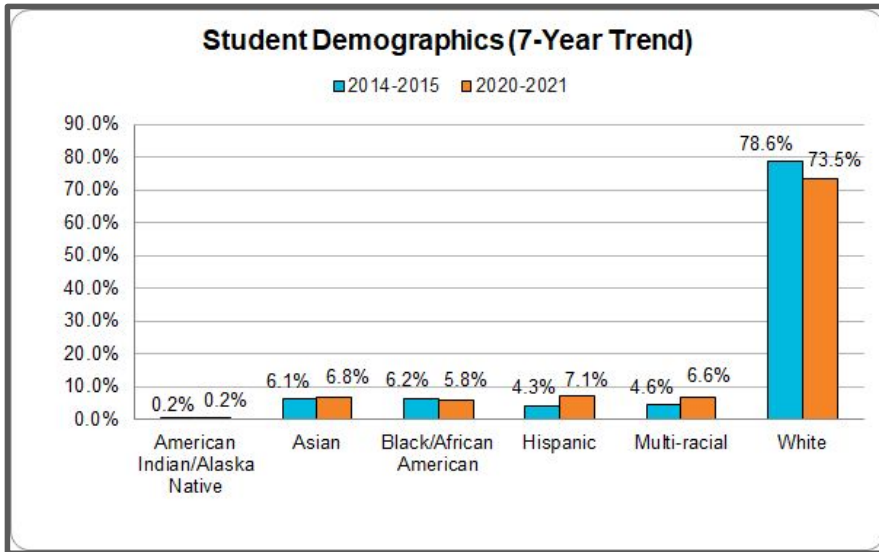
The Pennsbury School District is committed to fostering an inclusive educational environment that understands, respects and embraces individual differences as assets that serve to enhance our school community. Educational equity – the practice of distributing resources, access and opportunity based on fairness and justice regardless of race, ethnicity, color, age, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, language, disability or socio-economic status – will serve as the foundation of all decision-making to ensure equitable outcomes for every learner.

WE BELIEVE...

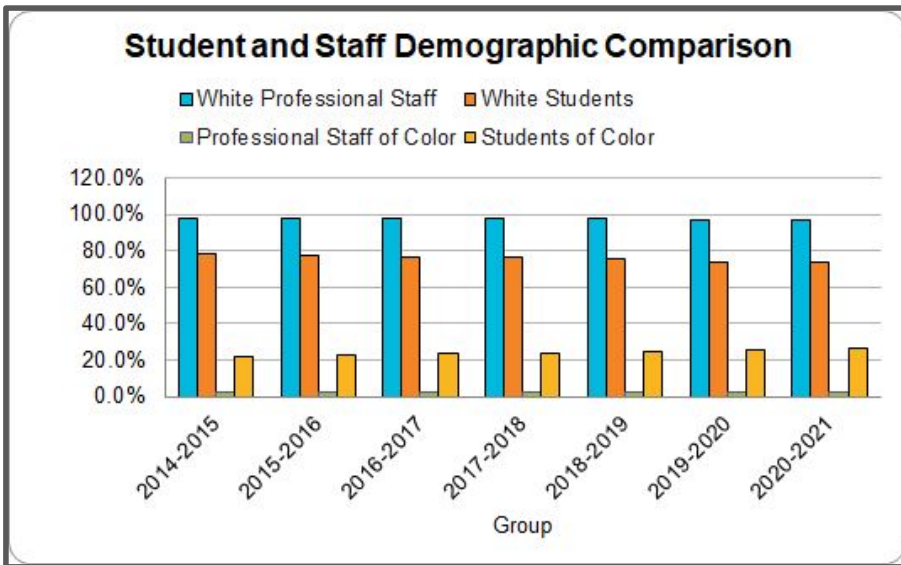
- caring, supportive relationships, feelings of belonging, and social emotional development are foundational to healthy identity development and meaningful learning.
- all students deserve access to and opportunity for academic excellence and positive identity development in school.
- culturally relevant curricula, universally designed instructional practices, and diverse extracurricular programs foster academic success, strong character, positive identity development, and civility in all of our students.
- faculty and staff composed of diverse backgrounds and talents are essential to supporting culturally responsive instruction and practice.
- strong, supportive family-school and community-school partnerships are essential to student success and an inclusive educational environment.
- learning is a lifelong process and intelligence can be developed through effort and perseverance.
- self-awareness, critical reflection of system processes, and data driven practices are essential to growth and accountability.



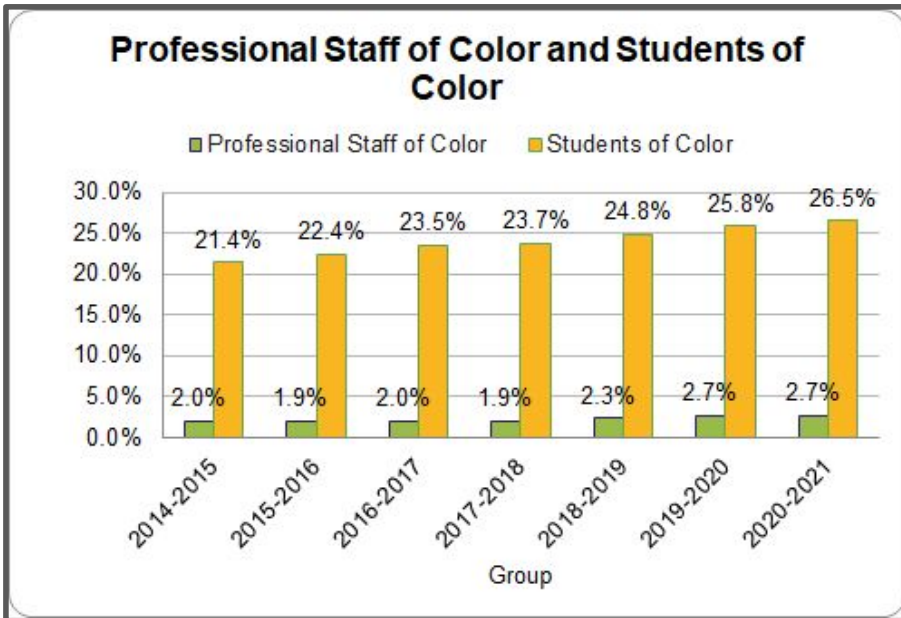
PSD DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY



Between 2014 and 2021, the student population continued to increase in racial/ethnic diversity.



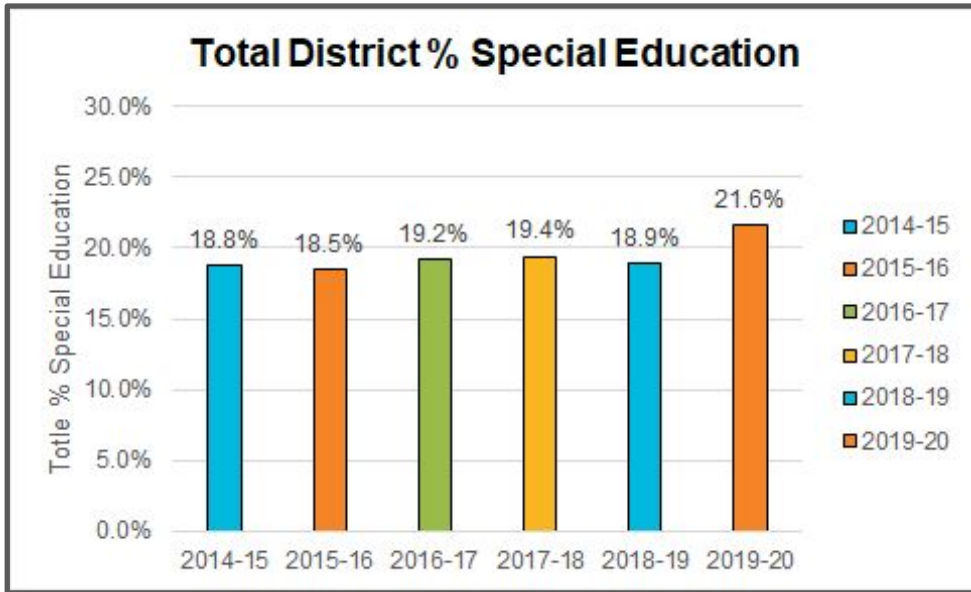
The composition of the professional staff remained relatively consistent from 2014 to 2021. Approximately 97% of the professional staff is white, 2.7% are staff of color.



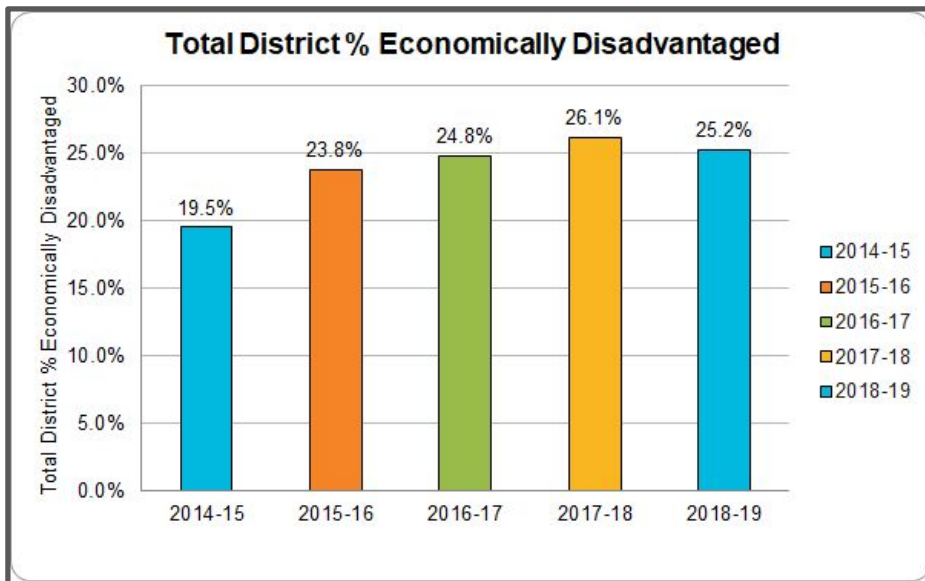
Compared with the makeup of the student population, there is an underrepresentation of professional staff of color.



PSD DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY (CONTINUED)



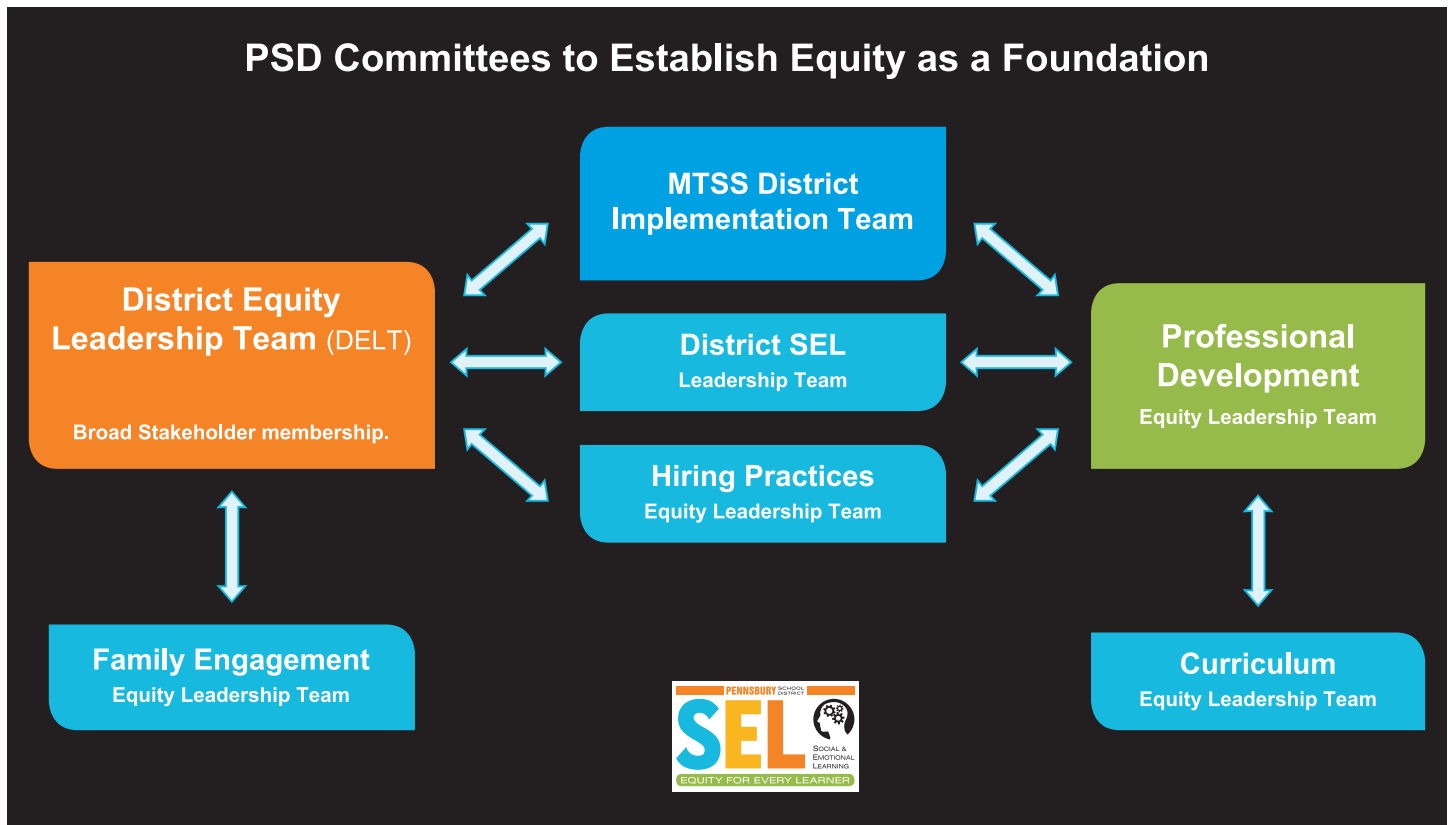
The percentage of students receiving special education services has increased since 2014.



The percentage of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds has steadily increased since 2014.



SYSTEMS APPROACH & BROAD STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT



Family Engagement Equity Leadership Team

December 8, 2020
 January 12, 2021
 March 9, 2021
 April 13, 2021

District SEL Leadership Team

February 12, 2021
 April 6, 2021

Hiring Practices Leadership Team

October 16, 2020
 November 19, 2020
 February 19, 2021
 April 7, 2021

District Equity Leadership Team

October 19, 2020
 November 16, 2020
 December 16, 2020
 January 25, 2021
 March 11, 2021
 March 22, 2021

Team members are identified on the next page.

Professional Development Equity Leadership Team

September 25, 2020
 October 20, 2020
 November 16, 2020
 November 23, 2020
 January 11, 2021
 February 8, 2021
 April 7, 2021
 May 5, 2021
 June 2, 2021

MTSS District Implementation Team

November 2, 2020
 November 30, 2020
 January 8, 2021
 January 14, 2021
 January 21, 2021
 March 5, 2021
 April 22, 2021

Curriculum Equity Leadership Team

February 25, 2021
 April 9, 2021

Stakeholder groups and leadership teams met throughout the year to review, analyze and respond to the equity audit data.



DISTRICT EQUITY LEADERSHIP TEAM MEMBERS

In accordance with research on educational equity practices and broad stakeholder engagement, the District Equity Leadership Team guided the work of the PSD Equity Audit. The team met throughout the year to review data, define educational equity for the District, and develop the PSD Equity Vision & Beliefs.

DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

- Dr. William Gretzula, Superintendent
- Dr. Cherrissa Gibson, Director of Equity, Diversity, and Education
- Regina Rausch, Director of Special Education
- Timothy Holman, Director of Facilities
- Laurie Ruffing, Principal, Walt Disney Elementary
- Christopher Becker, Principal, William Penn Middle School
- Ryan Regensberg, Assistant Principal, Pennsbury High School East
- Reita Bakshi, ESL Teacher, Eleanor Roosevelt Elementary
- Carmella Bunch, School Counselor, Manor Elementary
- Nicole Peirce, Teacher, Eleanor Roosevelt Elementary
- Stacy Kirsch, Teacher, Pennwood Middle School
- Douglas Campbell, Teacher, Pennsbury High School
- Miriam Oliveras, Teacher, Pennsbury High School
- Virginia August, Secretary, Technology Department

STUDENTS

- Jahad Allah, PHS Student
- Aditya Gaba, PHS Student
- Amanda Lee, PHS Student
- Miranda Newtown, PHS Student
- Siya Patel, PHS Student
- Ariel Rivera, PHS Student

PARENTS/GUARDIANS & COMMUNITY

- Mrs. Christine Toy-Dragoni, School Board President
- Vanessa Bethea-Miller, Elementary Parent
- Stacey Rogers, Secondary Parent
- Carol Saturri, Elementary Parent
- Daniella Alejandro, Secondary Parent
- Michele Holt, Retired PSD Teacher, Edgewood Elementary
- Detective Vicki Crosier, Falls Township Police Department
- Detective Brian Omler, Lower Makefield Township Police Department



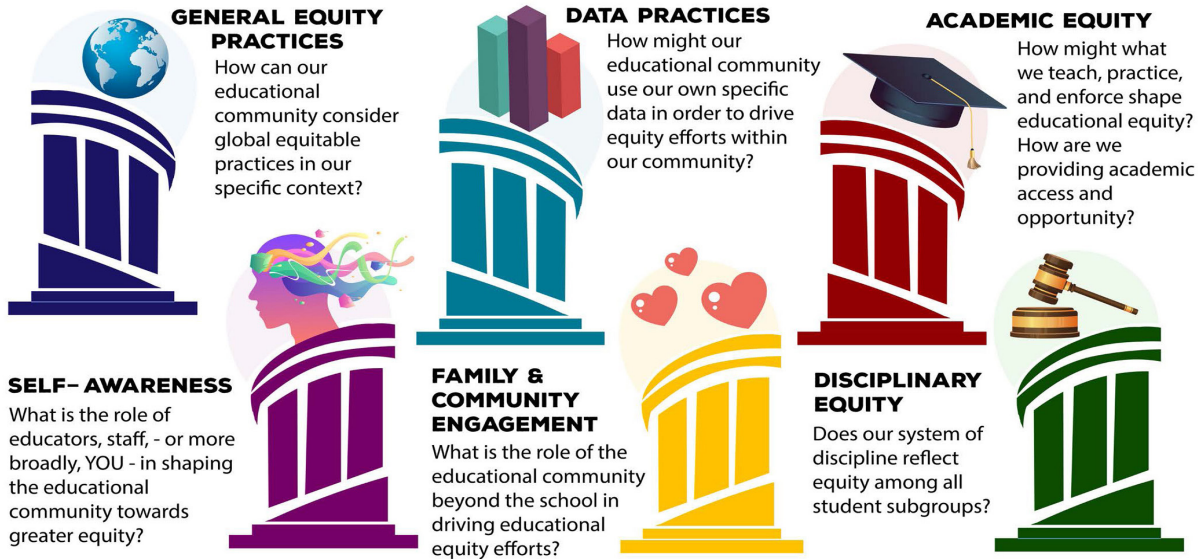
METHODOLOGY

What data were collected?

To understand the whole experience of the District, data were gathered in a variety of areas: achievement, discipline, opportunity or program enrollment, climate, as well as teaching and learning. After review and analysis of best practice for conducting comprehensive equity audits and continuous school improvement, the PSD equity audit process was conducted based on the intersection of PDE's Equity Pillars (see below), the Pennsylvania School Boards Association's Equity Policy Guide, and the Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC) Equitable School-Equity Audit tool recommended by PDE. The MAEC audit tool is organized into seven equity areas that are essential to ensuring educational equity in K-12 schools, and was utilized to examine equity practices of the District at a systemic level. Two essential questions guided the process of the PSD Equity Audit:

1. Are there patterns of inequity based on demographic factors that exist in the data being analyzed? If yes, in what areas and for which students?
2. What system practices or policies are helping/hindering equitable opportunity, access, experience, and achievement for the student groups identified in the data?

EQUITY PILLARS



SCHOOL

CLASSROOM

INDIVIDUAL

EQUITY SPHERES

In what way can the school district or an individual school become more equitable across their systems?

What can teachers do, in manners of curriculum, discipline, pedagogy, and classroom culture in order to become better proponents of equity?

What can an individual, be it a teacher, administrator, student services professional, caregiver, or student, do to promote equity in their educational community?

Pennsylvania Department of Education



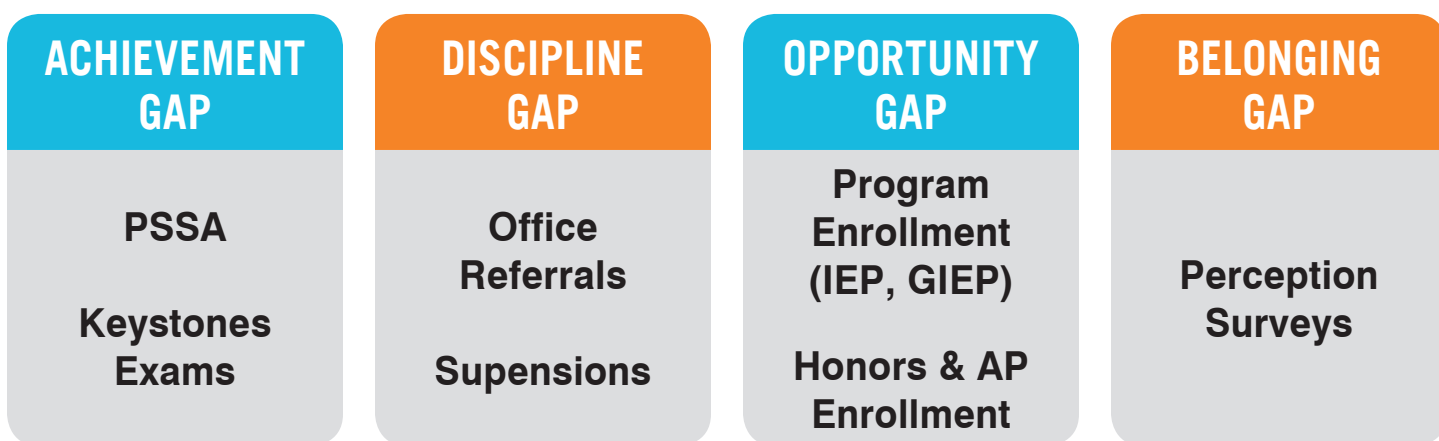
PSD EQUITY AUDIT DATA SUMMARY

What data were collected?

POLICY & DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

An educational equity analysis of PSD Educational Program Policies and the Student Code of Conduct was conducted by the Equity Literacy Institute (ELI) to identify potential bias or inequitable practice, as well as highlight any policies that demonstrated a strong approach to educational equity.

The ELI noted PSD's overall commitment to supporting all students, yet identified areas that do pose considerable equity threats or demonstrate dated models of practice. The ELI did not identify any explicitly oppressive policies or practices in the PSD Policy and Document Analysis. However, it was noted that often subtle measures and/or practices can yield largely inequitable accumulative outcomes for students, not in line with the District's stated intentions. The ELI recommends that concerns identified within the PSD Educational Program Policies and the Student Code of Conduct be regularly revisited and applied to other PSD policy areas. Regular analysis of District policy and documents can ensure the District practice reflects research-informed best practice and aide in identifying the subtleties that might contribute to unintended inequity.



EQUITY TREND DATA

The data collected during the Equity Audit process is outlined above, and the pages that follow provide an overall summary of each data set. The equity trends are analyzed through four main areas to identify gaps in practice: student achievement, discipline, opportunity, and student belonging/experience. The data summaries for the Achievement Gap, Discipline Gap, and Opportunity Gap are reported using ratios; the ratios represent the likelihood of an outcome for one group in relation to a comparison group. A ratio of 1.0 shows that the risk or likelihood for the two groups is equal; a ratio greater than 1.0 indicates overrepresentation, and a ratio less than 1.0 indicates underrepresentation.



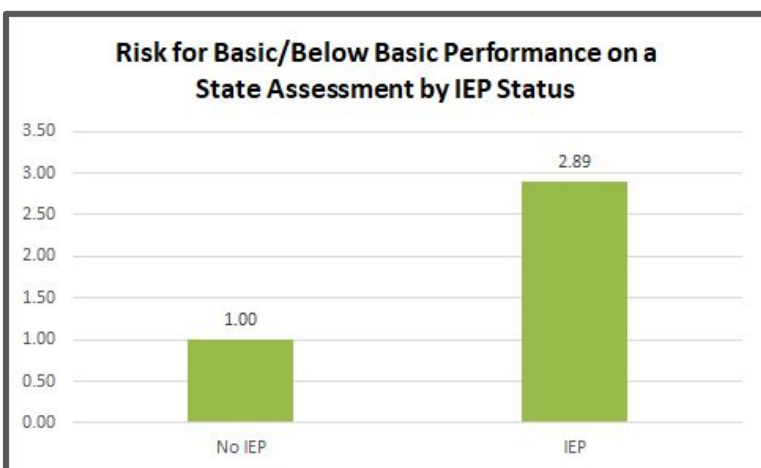
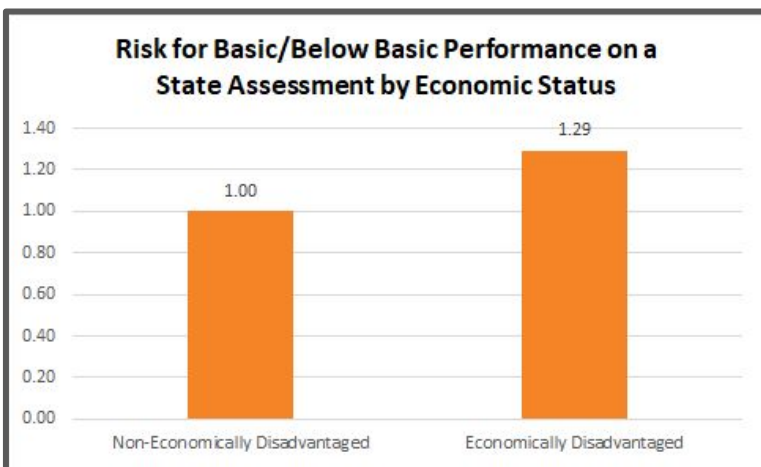
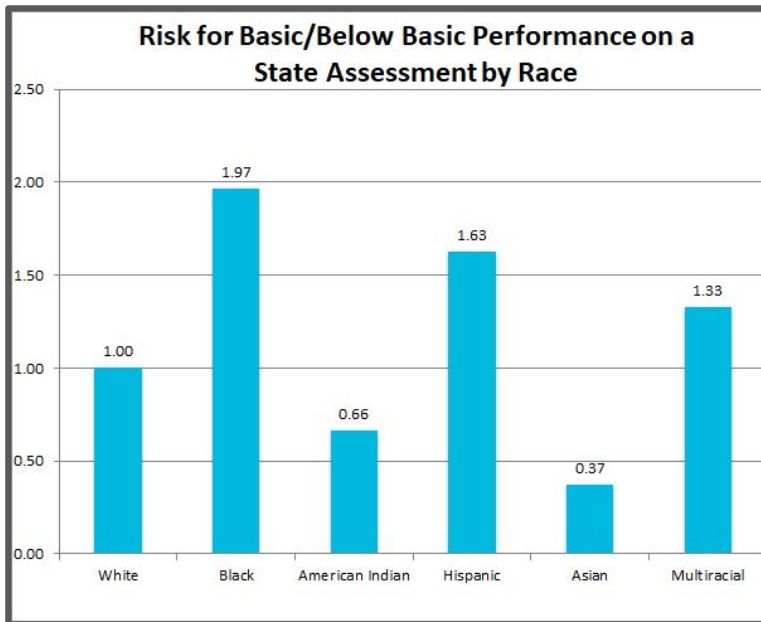
ACHIEVEMENT GAP SUMMARY

What are the gaps in achievement practices?

2018-2019 PSSA RESULTS & KEYSTONE EXAMS

The Achievement Gap is defined as persistent unequal academic outcomes across demographic groups. To explore patterns of achievement inequity based on demographic factors, 2018-2019 state assessment data were analyzed. The following state assessment data were examined for students in grades 3-8 and 11: Reading, Math & Science PSSA and Literature, Algebra I, & Biology Keystone Exams.

The data indicates that there are patterns of unequal outcomes across demographic groups. Specifically, Black, Hispanic, Multiracial, economically disadvantaged (ED) and students with IEPs were persistently at a higher risk of scoring basic or below basic on state assessments than the All Student group. By contrast, Asian students demonstrated patterns of elevated achievement compared to the All Student group and the White student comparison group.



DISCIPLINE GAP SUMMARY

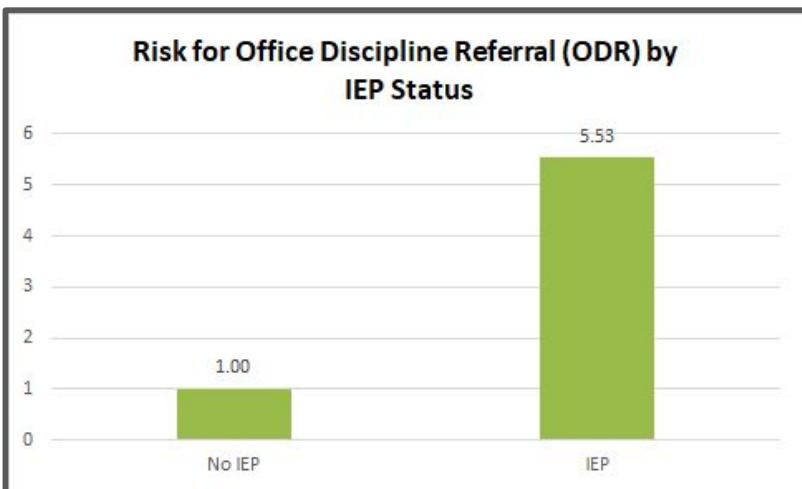
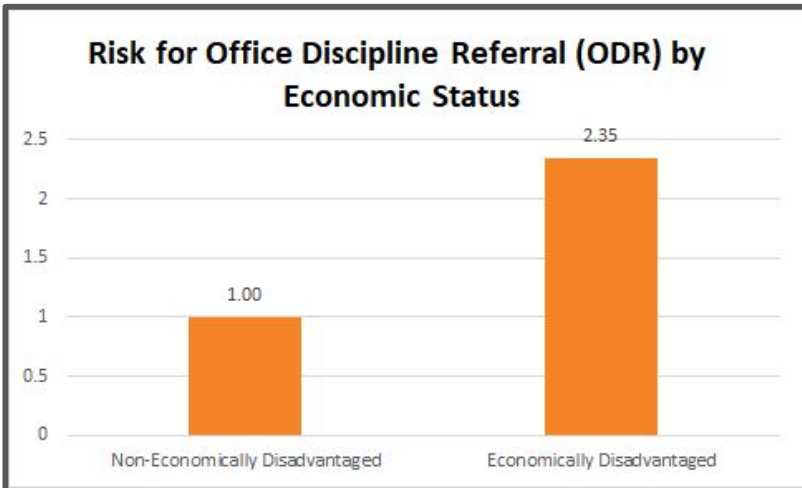
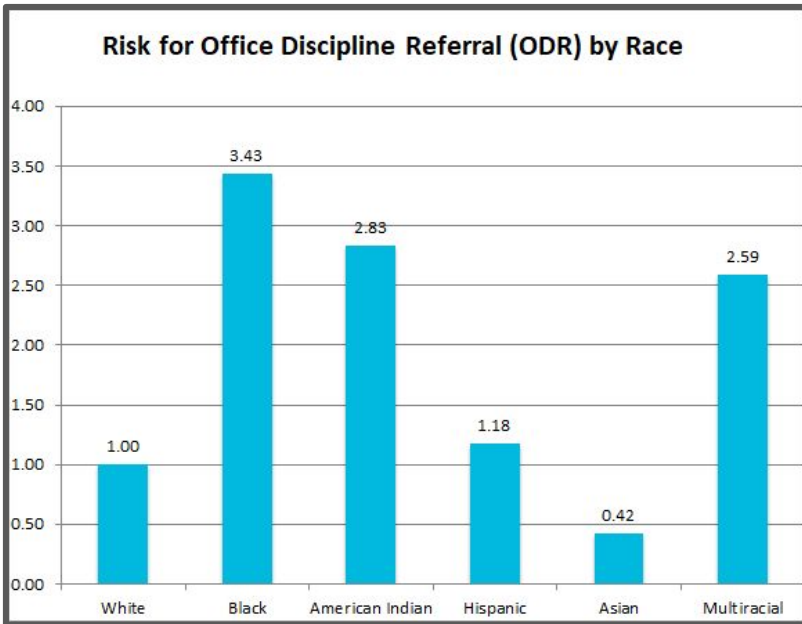
What are the gaps in discipline practices?

2018-2019 OFFICE DISCIPLINE REFERRALS & SUSPENSIONS

The Discipline Gap is defined as the patterns of differences in behavioral outcomes and types of disciplinary responses across demographic groups. To investigate patterns of inequity based on demographic factors, 2018-2019 office discipline referrals (ODR) and suspension data for students in grades 6-12 were analyzed.

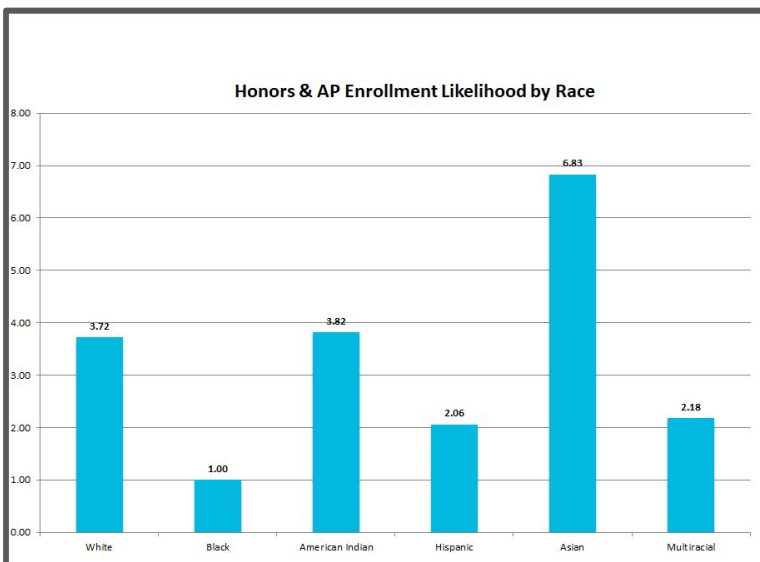
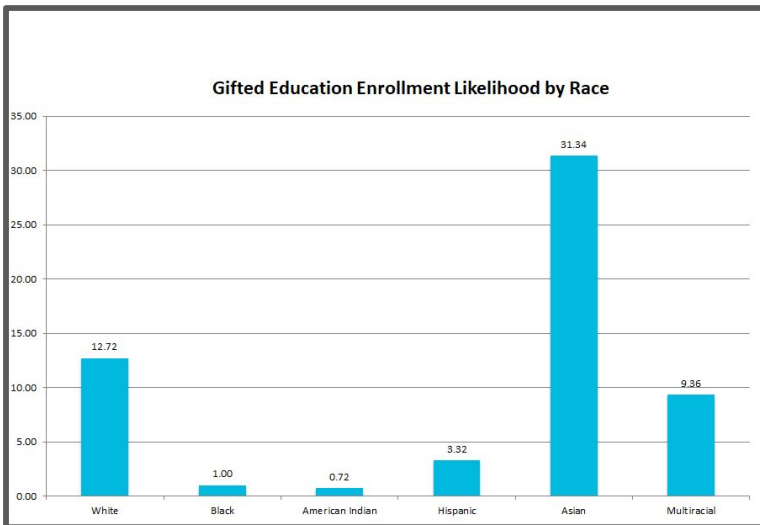
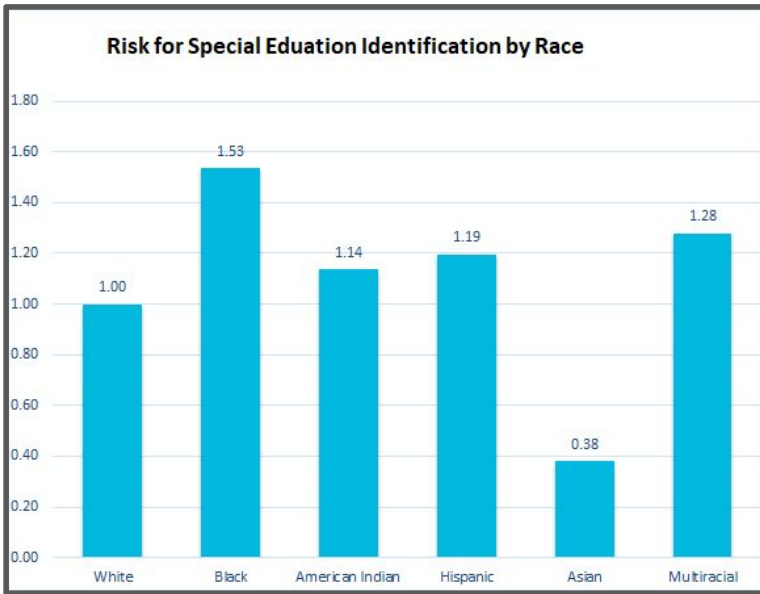
The Discipline Gap data indicates that there are clear patterns of disparity in ODRs and types of disciplinary responses across demographic groups. When examining the risk of racial/ethnic minority groups receiving an ODR relative to White students as a comparison group in the 2018-2019 school year, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Black, Hispanic and Multiracial students were at significantly higher risk. Asian students were a lower risk than White students for an ODR. Similar patterns of disproportionality were evident in the suspension data.

Economically disadvantaged (ED) students were at higher risk compared to a non-economically disadvantaged (Non-ED) students, males at higher risk than females, and students with IEPs at a higher risk than students without IEPs for ODRs and suspensions.



OPPORTUNITY GAP SUMMARY

What are the racial gaps in enrollment practices?



2018-2019 PROGRAM ENROLLMENT (IEP & GIEP) & HONORS & ADVANCED PLACEMENT ENROLLMENT

The Opportunity Gap is defined as patterns of differences in access to educational programs, resources, and supports across demographic groups. To explore patterns of inequity in opportunity based on demographic factors, program and advanced course enrollment was analyzed for students in grades K-12. The following data sets were examined: Special Education and Gifted Education Program Enrollment, Advanced Placement and Honors Course enrollment

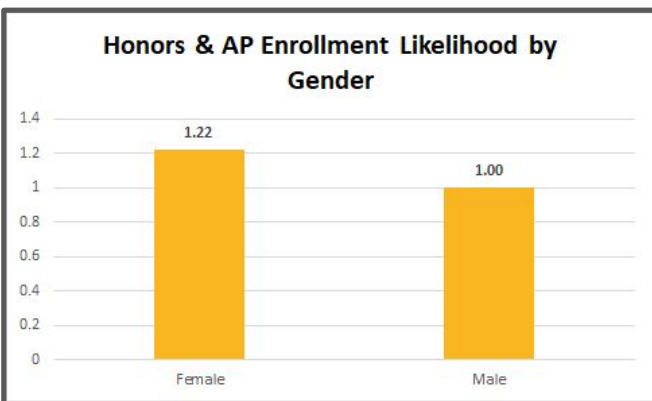
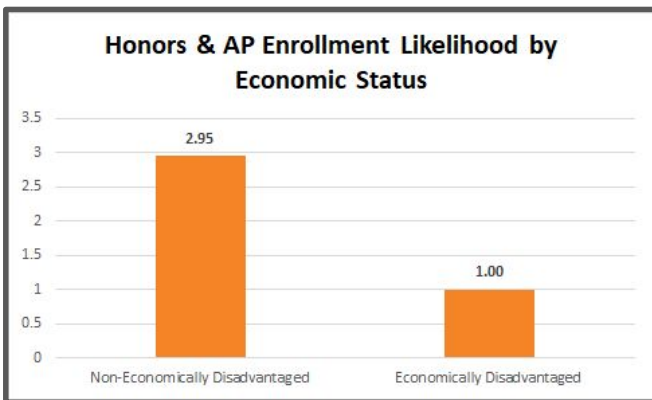
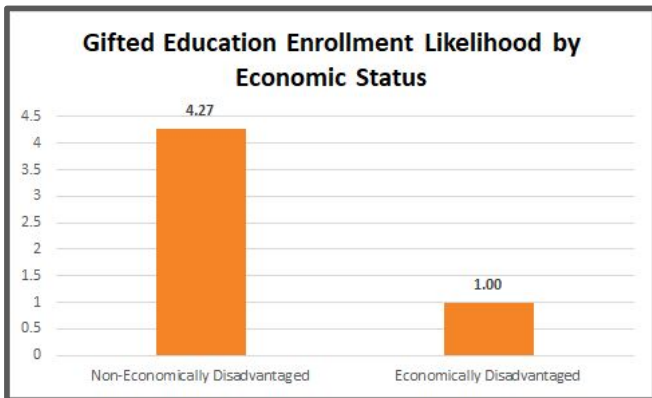
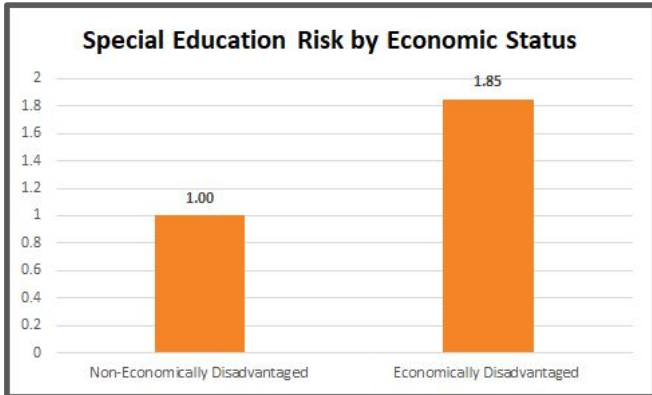
The Opportunity Gap data indicates clear patterns of disparity in access to program and advanced course enrollment for historically marginalized demographic groups. Black, Hispanic, and Multiracial students were overrepresented in Special Education programs and underrepresented in Gifted Education, Honors Courses and Advanced Placement Courses. Asian students demonstrated a low likelihood for Special Education services, and a significantly high likelihood of enrollment in Gifted Education, Honors Courses and Advanced Placement Courses.



OPPORTUNITY GAP SUMMARY

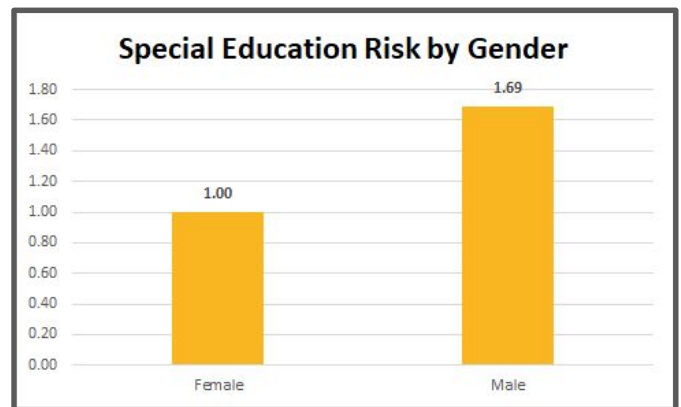
What are the gender, economic and demographic gaps in enrollment practices?

2018-2019 PROGRAM ENROLLMENT (IEP & GIEP) & HONORS & ADVANCED PLACEMENT ENROLLMENT



In addition, the Opportunity Gap data indicates clear patterns of disparity in program enrollment for male students and students identified as economically disadvantaged (ED). Males and students from ED backgrounds are overrepresented in the Special Education program enrollment. Similar to the racial disparities, students from ED backgrounds are also underrepresented in Gifted Education, Honors Courses and Advanced Placement Courses. There were no significant differences in Gifted enrollment by gender; however, males were less likely than females to enroll in advanced courses.

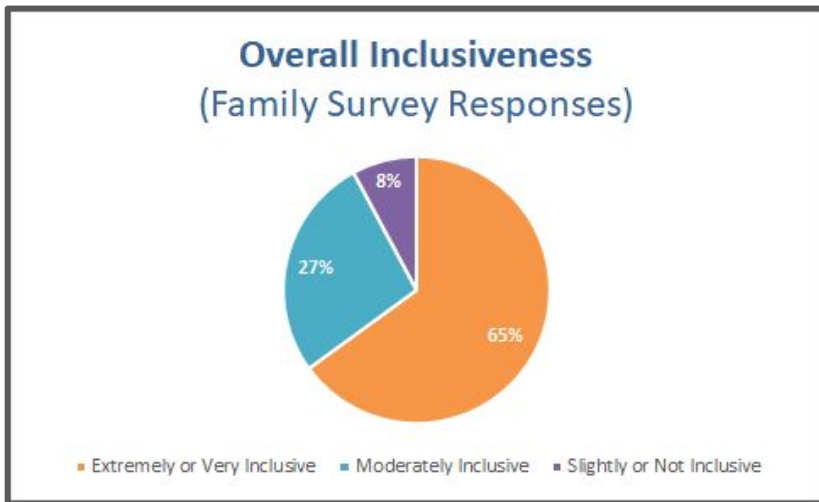
Not pictured, but also evident in the data was disproportionality by student home address. The data revealed that students who live in southern geographic areas of the District (Falls Township and Tullytown Borough) were overrepresented in Special Education programs and underrepresented in advanced courses relative to their overall District population.



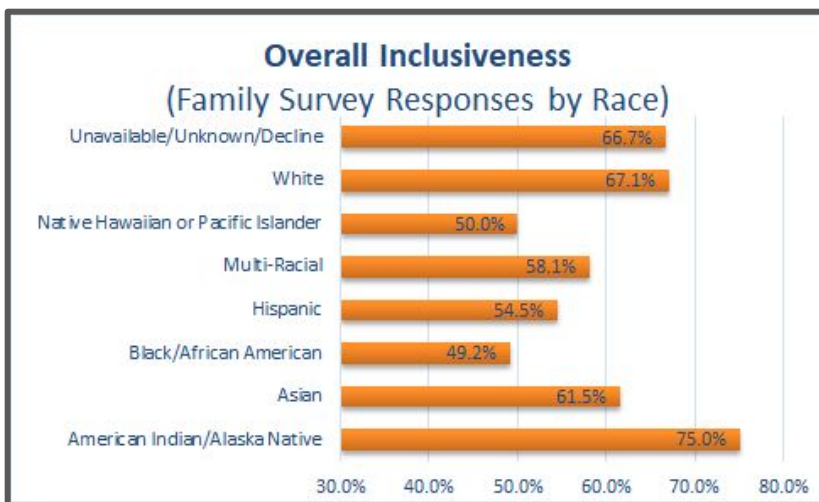
SENSE OF BELONGING GAP SUMMARY

What are the gaps in school climate practices?

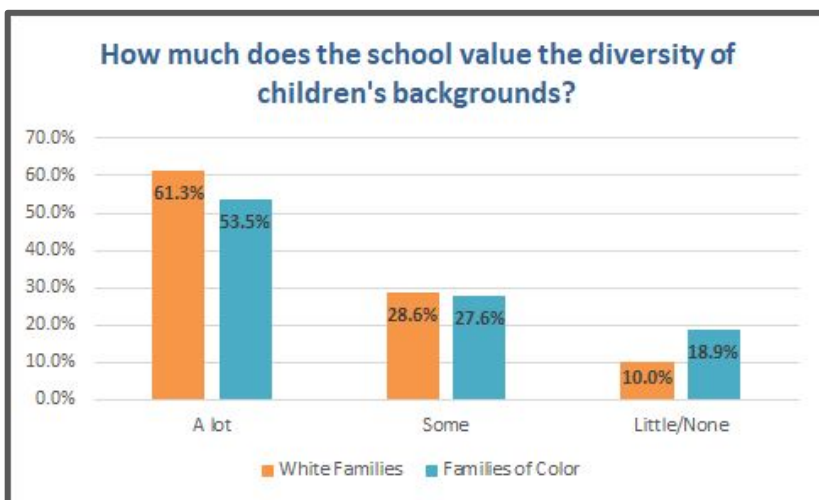
2020-2021 FAMILY ENGAGEMENT & SCHOOL CLIMATE SURVEY



The Sense of Belonging Gap is defined as the disparities and/or differences between groups of students, as indicated through perception data of school climate and culture. To explore patterns of inequity of experience and belonging based on demographic factors, a series of school climate surveys were administered to students in grades 9-12 (999 responses), parents/families of students in grades K-12 (2,378 responses), and all District faculty (612 responses).

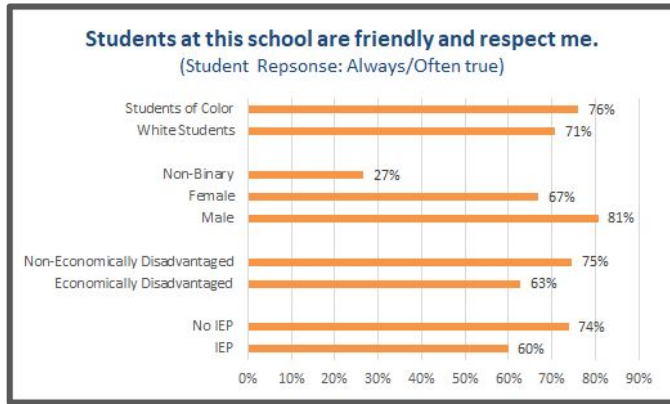


The responses from the Sense of Belonging Gap data indicates that the various stakeholder groups surveyed believe the learning environment is positive across the School District. While the overall climate data reflects a positive learning environment, there were patterns of disparity in experience and feelings of inclusiveness among subgroups. The family survey revealed that families of color, as well as families from ED backgrounds perceive lower levels of inclusiveness than White families and their non-ED counterparts.



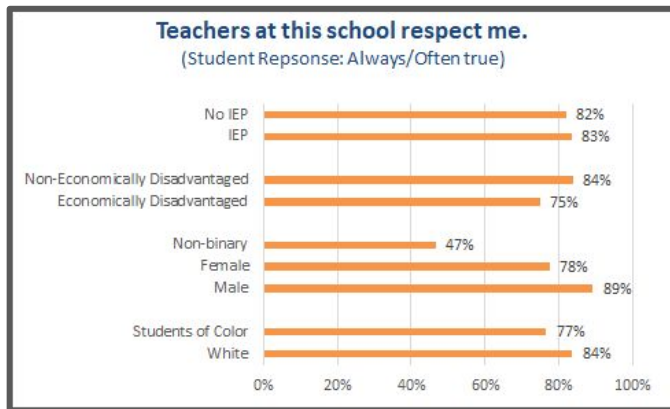
SENSE OF BELONGING GAP SUMMARY

What are the gaps in school climate practices?

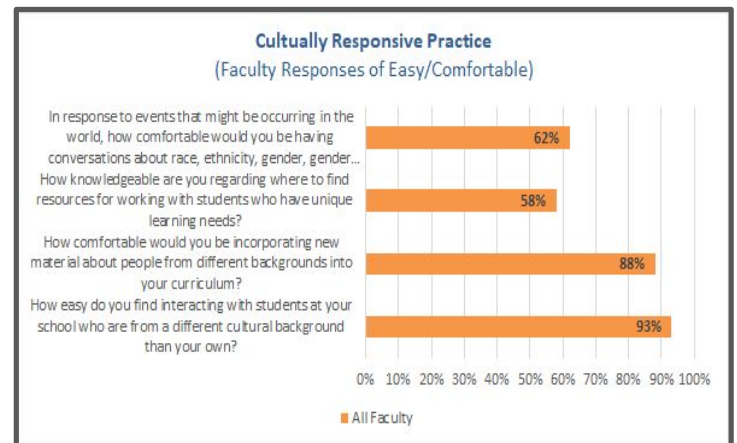
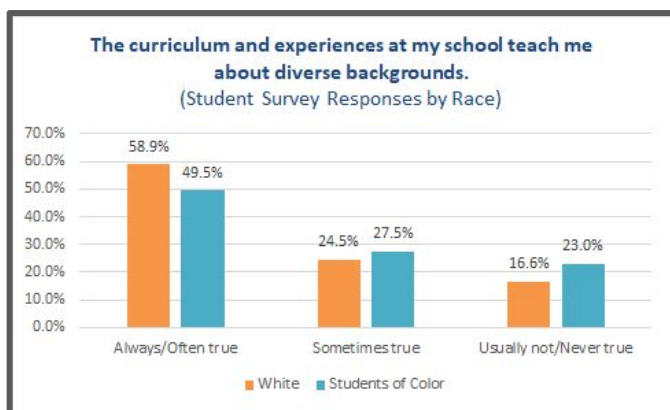
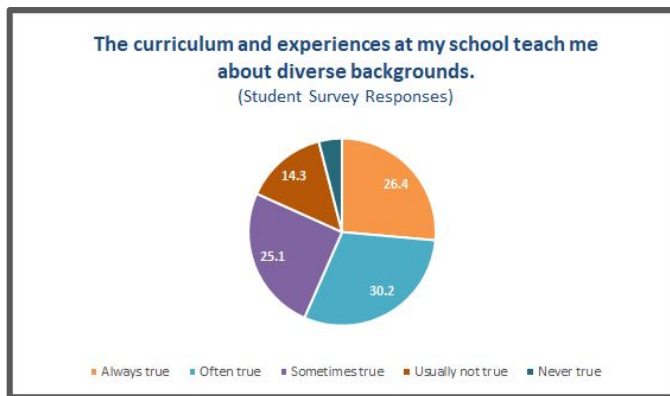


2020-2021 STUDENT SENSE OF BELONGING & FACULTY SCHOOL CLIMATE PERCEPTION SURVEYS

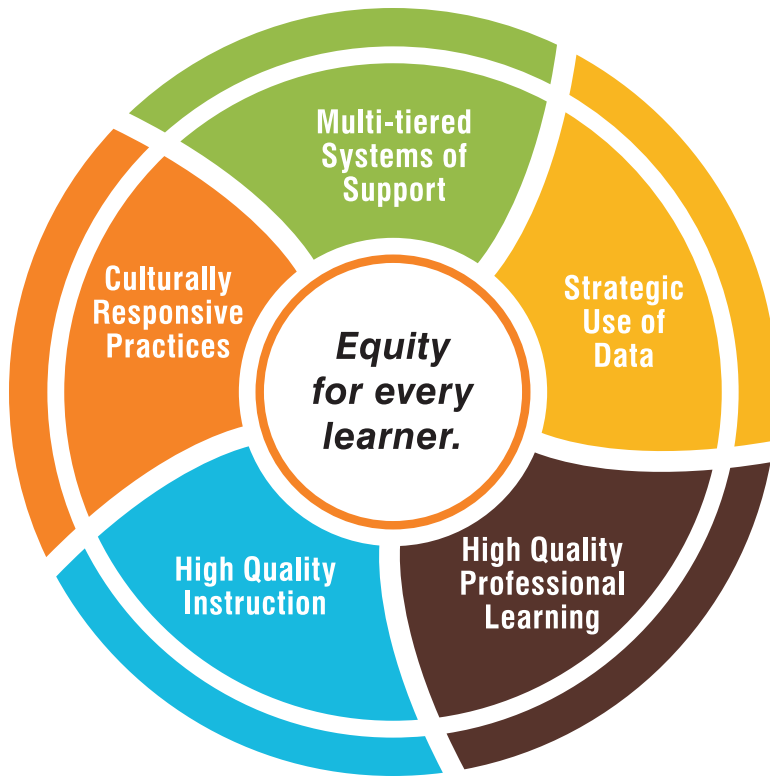
The student survey indicated that some student subgroups reported lower levels of respect from peers and/or teachers compared to their peers. Specifically, students with non-binary gender identities, female students, and students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds report lower levels of respect from both peers and adults than their comparison groups.



The Faculty School Climate Survey and the Student School Climate & Sense of Belonging surveys both address questions relative to diverse curriculum materials and comfortability teaching diverse populations. The student data indicates that only about 56.6% of all students, and just under 50% of students of color, perceive the curriculum to reflect diverse backgrounds. The results of the Faculty School Climate Survey suggest that the PSD faculty values diversity and has comfortability with teaching curriculum reflective of diverse populations, but resources and supports may be needed to build faculty capacity for educating all students.



THEORY OF ACTION & STRATEGIC GOAL AREAS



IF WE:

Lead with cultural proficiency to implement a multi-tiered system of support with the strategic use of data for equity and access built on a foundation of high quality core instruction and professional learning,

THEN:

Then we will reach our vision of: Equity for every learner.

Our Theory of Action will enable PSD to focus on the following six strategic goal areas.

STRATEGIC GOAL AREAS:

1. Institutional Practices

2. High-Quality and Culturally Relevant Instruction

3. Inclusive School Climate

4. Learning Culture & Professional Development

5. Data-focused, Multi-tiered Systems of Support

6. Workforce Diversity



INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES

STRATEGIC GOAL AREA #1

OBJECTIVE:

Center the District's equity lens approach to ensure equitable opportunity and access to resources.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC ACTIONS:

- Communicate the PSD equity vision and calibrate a District-wide understanding of educational equity for the school community.
- Adopt an Educational Equity Policy to outline the required processes of data analysis, strategic planning, and accountability for the District and schools to enhance equitable practice.
- Establish a PSD Equity Lens Approach decision-making protocol to support equity as the foundation and guide District decision-making at all levels of the system.
- Examine opportunity and access to high level content and courses by demographics.
- Align administrative goals (District and building level) to strategic planning processes and evaluate annually for accountability.
- Implement a process for annual building-level equity analysis.
- Increase the capacity of the leadership team to assess and implement equitable practices through targeted and ongoing professional learning.
- Maintain the District Equity Leadership/Family Engagement Equity Teams to elevate the voice of historically marginalized stakeholder groups.
- Establish Building Equity Teams and Building Equity Lead positions at each school to embed equitable practices throughout the system.

“Every system is perfectly designed to get the result that it does.”

~ W. Edwards Deming



HIGH-QUALITY AND CULTURALLY RELEVANT INSTRUCTION

STRATEGIC GOAL AREA #2

OBJECTIVE:

Reduce achievement, discipline and opportunity gaps by using culturally responsive, universally designed, standards-based curriculum and instruction.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC ACTIONS:

- Conduct a comprehensive curriculum audit to assess the alignment of the written, taught and assessed curriculum, as well as the District governance structures to ensure implementation and monitoring of the curriculum through an equity lens.
- Ensure all staff have a firm understanding of equitable education practices and receive professional development in social-emotional learning, culturally responsive teaching, Universal Design for Learning, anti-racism instructional practices and inclusion, and believe that all students can be successful with appropriate levels of support.
- Establish diverse curriculum steering committees and an ongoing process to review instructional materials, methods and strategies to ensure that they are universally designed (e.g. to determine accessibility and engagement) and culturally responsive (e.g. materials are free of bias and inclusive of diverse cultural perspectives).
- Increase the courses and content offerings that teach students about the contributions and perspectives of diverse cultures.
- Ensure that Universal Design for Learning, Culturally Responsive Teaching and inclusive practice are foundational to educational programming. IEPs and plans for English learners are designed to ensure access to the least restrictive environment and enable students to progress effectively in the content area of the general curriculum.
- Utilize the MTSS framework to analyze data and continuously assess the quality of core instruction across all levels.

“Authentic engagement begins with remembering that we are wired to connect with one another.”

~ Zaretta Hammond



INCLUSIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE

STRATEGIC GOAL AREA #3

OBJECTIVE:

Foster an inclusive environment and school climate through collaboration with family and community.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC ACTIONS:

- Maintain a District Equity Leadership/Family Engagement Equity Team to ensure relative representation of historically marginalized groups in planning school events and programs.
- Annually administer perceptions surveys to assess school climate and sense of belonging of stakeholders: students, parents, faculty/staff.
- Assess and revise the Student Code of Conduct to reflect restorative, trauma informed practices. Monitor discipline data to ensure the Student Code of Conduct is applied fairly and equitably to all students.
- Adopt policies and procedures to implement researched based social-emotional learning (SEL) and trauma-informed practices for students in grades K-12. Provide professional development and training for all faculty and staff in SEL and trauma-informed practices.
- Assess and plan action steps to increase the representation of all segments of the school community who have access to attend and participate in school events including athletic, dramatic, service, PTA/PTO, back to school night, etc.
- Ensure materials, notices, and other school communications are available in multiple languages. Establish two-way communication that reflects culturally responsive dialogue.
- Ensure that classrooms and library/media centers have recent visual, print, and non-print materials that accurately provide information about diverse student groups.
- Establish student leadership groups/clubs K-12 to support school culture and climate, build understanding of cultural differences, and promote a sense of belonging for historically marginalized groups.
- Establish targeted supports to promote college and career readiness for historically underserved student populations.

“People will forget the things you do, and people will forget the things you say. But people will never forget how you made them feel.”

~ Maya Angelou



LEARNING CULTURE & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGIC GOAL AREA #4

OBJECTIVE:

Ensure employees receive ongoing professional development in cultural proficiency, cultural responsiveness, implicit bias, explicit bias, anti-racism, diversity and inclusive practices.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC ACTIONS:

- Clearly define time, resources, energy and personnel to align curriculum, instruction and professional learning across the District. Outline a plan to delineate roles and responsibilities to ensure ongoing and cohesive professional learning.
- Examine District structures, calendar, contract language to support high quality professional development structures and time.
- Establish a 3- to 5-year professional development cycle to ensure continuity of focus areas for high quality professional learning.
- Ensure that professional development offerings are guided by data (quantitative and qualitative) and student outcomes.
- Establish dedicated professional development time to help faculty/staff learn how to use data to drive instruction and monitor interventions.
- Utilize the educator evaluation process to provide formal and informal feedback specific to meeting the academic, social-emotional and behavioral needs of students in inclusive settings. Ensure competencies in educational equity are made an integral part of all performance evaluations.
- Provide ongoing training and professional development in SEL, culturally responsive teaching, Universal Design for Learning and anti-racism instructional practices.

“You don’t need to be an expert to believe in and do this work; you just need to be open, humble and committed.”

~ Mirko Chardin & Dr. Katie Novak



DATA-FOCUSED, MULTI-TIERED SYSTEMS OF SUPPORT

STRATEGIC GOAL AREA #5

OBJECTIVE:

Use multiple measures of quantitative and qualitative District-wide and school-level data as the basis for instructional decision-making and continuous improvement.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC ACTIONS:

- Increase the effectiveness of a District-wide data culture to identify and address inequities, and to drive instructional decisions.
- Utilize the District MTSS teaming structure to refine, build, and support MTSS infrastructure District-wide.
- Establish a District-wide MTSS and Inclusionary Practices position to build system-wide continuity and fidelity of data practices.
- Ensure the schedule (K-12) allows time for interventions to be delivered across all three tiers of the MTSS model in addition to students being included in the inclusive general education classroom.
- Continuously examine of all levels of classes, including special education, gifted education programs, and advanced courses to ensure classes are composed of students who proportionately reflect the diversity within the overall student population.
- Evaluate tracking structures that perpetuate disparate outcomes predictable by race and socioeconomic status.

***“Equity isn’t an outcome. It is a process.
What we want as the outcome is equality.”***

~ Dr. Kevin Ahmaad Jenkins



WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

STRATEGIC GOAL AREA #6

OBJECTIVE:

Identify and address barriers to the recruitment, hiring, retention, development and promotion of District employees from diverse backgrounds.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC ACTIONS:

- Increase the diversity (racial, gender, linguistic, religious, and other cultural identities) in faculty/staff to reflect the proportionate representation of the student population.
- Establish procedures and practices for recruitment of candidates who are committed to educational equity and have culturally diverse backgrounds and/or experiences.
- Ensure that hiring criteria, recruitment, and selection for all District employees include the assessment of knowledge, skill, and experience teaching in inclusive classrooms.
- Establish procedures to monitor faculty/staff attrition and retention.
- Partner with colleges and universities, including historically Black (HBCU's) institutions, to recruit diverse candidates and candidates committed to educational equity.
- Develop programs within the District to promote teaching as a career to existing students.

“Diversity may be the hardest thing for a society to live with, and perhaps the most dangerous thing for a society to be without.”

~ William Sloane Coffin



KEY TERMS

Achievement Gaps: The academic disparities and/or differences between groups of students, as indicated through variances in academic indicators such as test scores, grade point average and graduation rates.

Cultural Proficiency: The level of knowledge-based skills and understanding that is required to successfully teach and interact with students and to work effectively with colleagues, families and communities from other cultures. It requires an ongoing examination and self-reflection to challenge one's own cultural biases and understand the cultural perspectives and experiences of others.

Culturally Responsive: The inclusion of students' cultural references in all aspects of learning, school experiences and student engagement.

Cultural Lens: When school staff understands and honors the attitudes, values, norms, and beliefs of a culture, they are using a cultural lens that goes beyond the superficial aspects of that culture, such as major holidays, manner of dress, foods specific to the culture, and family customs.

Discipline Gap: Patterns of differences in behavioral outcomes and types of disciplinary responses across demographic groups.

Economically Disadvantaged (ED): The term used to identify the poverty status of students, as defined in the Pennsylvania Department of Education "free or reduced-price meal" eligibility data.

Educational Equity: The practice of distributing resources, access and opportunity based on fairness and justice regardless of race, ethnicity, color, age, religion, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, language, disability or socio-economic status.

Educational Equity Audit: A comprehensive equity and inclusion benchmarking instrument that assesses a District's barriers to opportunity and progress towards achieving the equity outcomes described in this policy and the District's Educational Equity Action Plan.

Equity Lens: An intentional focus on assessing any inequitable impact the execution of a program, practice, operation, decision or action may have on a student or group of students.

Experience/Sense of Belonging Gap: Disparities and/or differences between groups of students, as indicated through perception survey data of school climate and culture.

Gender: The range of characteristics pertaining to, and differentiating between, masculinity and femininity, including a person's gender identity and gender expression which includes a person's internal sense of being male, female, some combination of male and female or neither male nor female.

Historically Marginalized: Student populations who do not have the same opportunity at being academically successful as their comparison group peers, and are, therefore, at a disadvantage. This has happened in the U.S. for a number of reasons, which include but are not limited to reasons of: race, income, religion, language, gender, sexual orientation, disability, behavior, national origin, and legal status.

continued...



KEY TERMS (CONTINUED)

Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS): The standards-aligned, comprehensive school improvement framework used to provide targeted support for all learners. It is rooted in supporting the “whole child”, whether an advanced or struggling learner, through academic, behavioral, social and emotional services.

Non-binary: A term used to describe genders that do not fall into the binary categories of male or female.

Opportunity Gaps: The disparities in the delivery of educational and extracurricular opportunities, funding and other resources between and among different student groups, leading to different academic, extracurricular, social and economic outcomes for students.

School Climate: The quality and character of school life based on patterns of students’, parents’ and school personnel’s experience; it also reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices and organizational structures.

Social–Emotional Learning (SEL): Process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve favorable goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain favorable relationships, and make responsible decisions.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL): The educational framework utilized to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn. The framework guides the development of firm instructional goals and flexible instructional practices that accommodate individual learning differences.



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