

# 2022-2023 Bexley City Schools District Equity Plan<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Please direct questions, comments, or feedback to Marcelius Braxton, Leader of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Bexley City School District, at [marcelius.braxton@bexley.us](mailto:marcelius.braxton@bexley.us).

# Equity Plan

## Overview

On December 7, 2021, the Bexley City Schools Board of Education passed its [Equity in Education Policy](#), providing a vision of how equity should look in the Bexley City School District.

***The Equity in Education policy defines equity as “assuring that through policy, programs, and practices, each student is provided specifically-targeted resources, attention, and support required to meet differentiated social, emotional, and educational goals regardless of demographic identifiers, while working to identify and address the effects of any historical and current barriers.”***

In accordance with its mission and vision of equity, the Board “commits to the achievement of educational equity for each student” by focusing on:

- 1) Supporting multiple learning pathways
- 2) Equitable access to instruction, curriculum, and support
- 3) Appropriate revisions to policies, procedures, and practices, and professional development
- 4) Access to co-curricular and extra-curricular activities
- 5) Equitable resources
- 6) Community engagement and active involvement.

It has tasked the Superintendent to facilitate the development of an **equity plan**<sup>2</sup> “to make measurable progress towards meeting these goals with clear, asset-based standards, solutions, metrics, and procedures that can be reported and assessed.”

## Equity Plan Mission, Vision, and Goals

**Mission:** The mission of the Bexley City School District equity plan is to identify a unified approach to equity, review each department/area for equity, identify tangible

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<sup>2</sup> The Equity Plan falls under Board of Education Policy “AEA: Equity in Education”, which is distinct from and does not impact Board of Education Policy, “AC: Nondiscrimination”. All Board of Education policies can be found here: <https://go.boarddocs.com/oh/bexleyschools/Board.nsf/Public?open&id=policies>

ways to measure and assess equity, and continuously look for opportunities to maintain and produce equity.

**Vision:** The vision of the Bexley City School District equity plan is to create a continuous process of evaluating and examining equity in our district, which insists upon constant assessment, accountability, analysis, and opportunities for feedback from students, staff, administrators, and community.

**Goals:** The goals for the Bexley City School Equity Plan are to create a plan of action to be prepared to address issues of equity that arise within the district. In order to be prepared to address an issue of equity, the district's goal is to:

- 1. Create a process for identifying and addressing issues related to equity.*
- 2. Create a consistent approach to equity.*
- 3. Highlight some tangible examples of district level accomplishments and focus areas that can be used to make measure progress.*

The creation of a consistent process provides the district with a mechanism to address the “Five Ws” (who, what, when, where, why), which are the necessary components for information gathering and problem solving. These components are so important because it allows the district to be consistent, proactive, clear, specific, and forward-thinking.

The creation of a consistent approach to equity builds on the “Five Ws” and helps answer the question of “how”, meaning both how the district should think about equity and also how the district should approach addressing issues of equity that have been identified through the structural process.

**The creation of the process and approach are asset-based developments that clearly articulate standards, procedures, and solutions that can be reported and assessed through the process of checklists and reflective review.**

In addition to creating a process and approach, the Equity Plan will highlight some tangible examples of district level accomplishments and focus areas that will be evaluated and assessed throughout the 2022-2023 school year with the aims of expanding or enhancing those focus areas in the 2023-2024 school year.

**Highlighting district level accomplishments and focus areas allows administrators to establish goals where they can make measurable progress with solutions and metrics that can be reported and assessed. This progress can be**

measured through reflective analysis, qualitative and quantitative methods, and explanations of equity and/or those served.

## Relationship to the Strategic Plan

The Bexley City School District strategic planning process provides an opportunity for determining district strengths and opportunities, connecting the district's mission, vision, values, and goals, and developing a plan to achieve these goals over the next three to five years.

The Bexley City School District equity plan will be embedded within the strategic plan because of the district's belief that equity should be embedded in everything that we do. In addition, the Board of Education, through the Equity in Education policy, requested an equity plan that provides a yearly update that details measurable progress, which is done in support of the strategic plan.

## Process for Identifying and Addressing Issues Related to Equity

Bexley City School District is committing to creating a clear process<sup>3</sup> for identifying and addressing issues related to equity that relies on a team/collaborative approach. This process is necessary to be clear, proactive, consistent, and to prevent gaps.<sup>4</sup>

- Identify the issue and immediate and long term needs.
  - Consider if the response to this need would be proactive or reactive.
  - If the response would be reactive, begin considering ways to be proactive in the future with respect to issues in the future.
- Identify who should be involved in a decision (**What should the team of people addressing the issue look like?**)
  - Have district and building administrators been informed, and what does their involvement look like?

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<sup>3</sup> This process and approach are distinct and **not** associated with the compliance process associated with Policy AC: "Non-discrimination", which states that *"the compliance officer is responsible for coordinating the District's efforts to comply with applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including, but not limited to, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1975. The compliance officer is responsible for addressing any inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination or retaliation in a prompt and equitable manner."* All other policies related to non-discrimination can be found on the District's website.

<sup>4</sup> Although the starting point in this document is the process for identifying and addressing issues related to equity, it is also important to create a space where feedback from students, staff, and the community is accepted and valued. For that reason, there needs to be opportunities for individuals or groups to share feedback, including an anonymous option. There also has to be a commitment to communication and follow up.

- How are staff, students, guardians, and community members involved?
- Could the Leader of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Coordinator of Community Engagement, or other subject matter experts be helpful?
- Who (should be more than one person) is helping to ensure that we're considering all populations and groups?
- Who are our subject matter experts?
- Are the people who are or would be impacted involved?
- Define what involvement looks like for everyone involved.
- Identify **when (or at what point)** people should be involved in a situation.
- Establish what proper communication looks like throughout.
  - Established timeline should be consistent, equitable, and within a reasonable amount of time.
  - This includes initial communication related to the issue as well as “closing the loop” and following up to ensure that everyone is informed about solutions and moving forward.
- Determine what facts, data, and outcomes the district needs.
  - Consider what facts and data already exist.
  - What resources do we have/need to be created?
- Complete a review of the process
  - Was everyone included?
  - What should be done if everyone who was needed wasn't included?

## Overall Approach to Equity

Bexley City Schools is committed to not only creating a process to identify and address equity issues and embed equity within the district but also providing the entire district with an approach to actually addressing issues of equity. Because equity work is robust and evolving, that means that the district needs an approach to equity that allows it to examine the past, present, and future. This entails prioritizing the following:

- Reviewing and evaluating existing policies, procedures and practices and their implementation/application.
- Being proactive and evaluating new, future, or potential policies, procedures, and practices for equity.

### *Individual/specific issue or concern that relates to equity*

As a district, when there is an individual issue (or an issue that is perceived to impact one individual or specific place, item, or entity) that relates to equity, we will focus on the following:

- Identification and acknowledgement of the issue/harm
  - How will you determine what the issue is and how parties are heard?
    - Confirm the issue with others and the parties involved.
  - This identification process also entails considering if what appeared to be a standalone or specific issue is actually part of a systemic or longstanding issue.
    - **If it is determined that this standalone issue is actually part of a systemic issue, then you should also use the approach to equity for systemic issues.**<sup>5</sup>
- Addressing the issue/harm
  - How has/will the team go about addressing the issue, and how will the team communicate it to others?
  - Has the team addressed the issue in a timely and direct manner?
  - Are all parties participating in the process to acknowledge and address the issue/harm?
- Rectifying and repairing the harm, especially through restorative practices that require high levels of support and high levels of accountability.
  - What do all parties want and need? Is it possible for these parties to get these things?
  - What does rectification and repair look like? Have all parties involved helped determine what repair looks like?
  - Who is impacted positively and negatively by the decisions being made?
  - Did this harm do damage to the community? If so, how do we restore it?
    - What does it mean to have an inclusive, welcoming community?
    - What needs to be done to make the community more inclusive and welcoming?
    - What do we owe to each other?
  - What is the process for checking in on each other?

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<sup>5</sup> An example of the dynamic where a standalone issue could become a systemic issue would be if it is pointed out that a student does not have access to something in a building/school. While there needs to be a clear solution to this individual issue in order to make sure that the student has access to everything they need, this is also likely a systemic issue, which requires us to look throughout the district to proactively ensure that other students are not and will not be impacted by this issue and that every space provides the access needed. An example of an individual or standalone issue would be if the district already proactively took steps to ensure access throughout the district but there was a malfunction in a classroom that needs to be rectified.

## Systemic issue or concern that relates to equity

As a district, when there is a systemic issue that relates to equity, the district will focus on the following framework<sup>6</sup>, which will help identify clear-cut solutions as well as issues, barriers, and gaps that require additional context, data, research, and actionable steps to determine the most equitable solution:

When evaluating a policy, practice, plan, or measure to determine if it is equitable<sup>7</sup>, consider the following questions:

- **When considering the origin, context, impact, and effectiveness of a policy, plan, or practice, how have or will you consider, contextualize, and factor in the impact of years of discrimination (racism, sexism, ableism, etc.), white supremacy, anti-Blackness, and other historical marginalization that has led to and perpetuated inequality?**
  - Look towards history, data, and research that is available in the field.
  - Consider what data is available on a district-wide or individual school basis.
  - Sample questions to ask:
    - Who does/did this policy or practice center or normalize?
    - How could centering/normalizing some populations lead to gaps?
      - How has our understanding of gaps lead to stereotyping and deficit thinking?<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The framework was developed by Marcellus Braxton, who at the time of this document served as the Leader of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for Bexley City School District.

<sup>7</sup> It is important to note that the Board of Education creates, revises, and approves policy. The Board relies on the district to implement and apply policy. As a district, it is important that evaluation, measurement, and assessment is of the policy itself and also the district's implementation of the policy. If the district finds that the policy itself may raise some issues related to equity, the superintendent will notify the policy committee. As appropriate, the superintendent will work with students, staff, and/or administration to discuss and gather research and data that can be presented to the Board of Education by the Superintendent for review.

<sup>8</sup> An important example that has been used to illustrate this point is the achievement gap:  
"From the Achievement Gap to the Education Debt: Understanding Achievement in U.S. Schools":  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/3876731>

*"The achievement gap is one of the most talked-about issues in U.S. education. The term refers to the disparities in standardized test scores between Black and White, Latina/o and White, and recent immigrant and White students. This article argues that a focus on the gap is misplaced. Instead, we need to look at the "education debt" that has accumulated over time. This debt comprises historical, economic, sociopolitical, and moral components.*

"Replicating and Extending Effects of "Achievement Gap" Discourse":  
<https://www.edworkingpapers.com/ai22-628>:

- Who are the beneficiaries? Who is impacted negatively?
  - Who was not considered, included, or prioritized historically and currently?
  - What barriers exist or were created?
  - What kind of environment has this policy, practice, or plan created?
  - How does a lack of equity in the past inform this policy or practice now?
- **Have any repairs/reparations been put into place to address the barriers that exist, and what is the tangible positive or negative impact that has occurred or might occur because of this policy, procedure, or practice?**
  - What issues did you recognize that needed to be addressed?
  - What changes have been made, and what was the impact of those changes?
  - Were the changes made systemic or individual?
  - Did the changes focus on transformation or assimilation (asking populations to fit the norms of others)?
- **Has the building, district, or the Board of Education decided to change/put this policy, procedure, or practice in place with the specific intent of producing, maintaining, or sustaining equity, and are your decisions guided by some level of proof and/or evidence?**
  - What does equity look like, and how do you show clear intent to produce equity?
  - How will you collect data/provide proof? This is important because if you find that you are not producing the outcomes you're looking for, then **intent alone is not sufficient. You must also identify impact.**
  - This emphasizes a proactive approach rather than a reactive approach that requires everyone involved to explicitly show and prioritize how putting a policy, practice, or plan in place will produce equity.
  - For both old and new policies, procedures, and practices, it involves looking at intentionality and clear indications that they are/were put in place with fairness in mind.
  - If one is unable to concretely address how the policy, practice, or plan aims to produce and sustain equitable outcomes, then it is not acceptable to implement.

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*“Scholars argue the “racial achievement gap” frame perpetuates deficit mindsets. Previously, we found teachers gave lower priority to racial equity when disparities were framed as “achievement gaps” versus “inequality in educational outcomes.”*



## Timeline

- **Fall 2022**
  - Returning administrators had the opportunity to perform a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis for each department, area, or responsibility related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Each administrator was provided with a series of questions that helped guide their analysis.
  - New administrators were given the opportunity to review their areas, seek guidance from staff, students, and community, and create an area outlook that will guide their work
- **December 2022**
  - A draft of the equity plan is presented to Dr. Fine during the first week of December along with a draft to each individual Board of Education member to follow from Dr. Fine after his review.
  - The equity plan is presented to the strategic planning company by Dr. Fine after their review.
- **December 2022 - August 2023**
  - The Superintendent, Leader of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and other district leaders will incorporate feedback into their work and the equity plan
- **February 2023**
  - The Superintendent and Leader of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will present the 2022-2023 Equity Plan at a Board of Education meeting.
  - A 1-2 page summary of the equity plan will be developed after feedback.
  - Administrators will meet together to discuss their area's outlook, focus areas, and method of assessing their focus areas.
- **February 2023 - May 2023**
  - The district will share the equity plan and 1-2 page summary with the community and will incorporate feedback and comments from students, staff, and community.
- **June 2023 - August 2023**
  - Administrators will assess their 2022-23 areas of focus, complete a new SWOT analysis, and make preparations for work to be completed during the 2023-24 school year.
- **August/September 2023**
  - The Superintendent and Leader of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will provide an update to the Board of Education related to the equity plan.

## SWOT Analysis

In order to fulfill the Equity Policy objective to make measurable progress with clear, asset-based standards, solutions, and metrics that can be reported and assessed, the district encouraged district and building administrators to complete a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis. The complete analysis will be used internally and will assist with goals, evaluation, metrics, and assessment.

For more information about the SWOT process and analysis, please see [Appendix A: SWOT Analysis](#) (Pages 43-45).

## Administrator Updates

To form a complete picture of Bexley City School's commitment to equity, the Equity Plan will not only prioritize process, approach, and framework, but will also prioritize tangible accomplishments and focus areas for the 2022-2023 school year. **Returning administrators** performed a SWOT analysis to compile accomplishments and also target focus areas. **New administrators for the 2022-2023 school year** were tasked with familiarization, where they create an area outlook for their work in Fall of 2022 and will perform a SWOT analysis in Spring/Summer 2023 in order to determine recent accomplishments and focus areas for the next year.

- **Returning Administrators<sup>9</sup>:**
  - **Key Accomplishments:** Highlight key, recent accomplishments (including partial accomplishments) and how they know it worked, focusing on how they were measured/assessed.
  - **Focus Areas:** Determine two or three focus areas that are or will be important for the 2022-2023 school year.
    - Why are they focus areas?
    - What has been already done in this area?
    - What about them needs to be improved?
- **New Administrators**
  - **Area Outlook (Fall 2022):** Familiarize yourself with your position, what you think your position could/should be, and what has been done in the past.
    - Begin to analyze, critique, and implement within your area/department/initiatives

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<sup>9</sup> Note: This is not an exhaustive list of accomplishments or focus areas, and this list will not be inclusive of every program, initiative, or process that administrators have undertaken. These examples are meant to provide a only sample of district work and initiatives.

- Create a plan moving forward with respect to equity on a micro and macro level, thinking specifically about measuring.
    - Provide a brief area outlook for your area for the year.
  - **Focus Areas (Spring/Summer 2023):** Perform a SWOT analysis and determine two or three focus areas that are or will be important for the 2023-2024 school year.
    - Why are they focus areas?
    - What has been already done in this area?
    - What about them needs to be improved?
- **Assessment/Measurement (August 2022 - August 2023)**
  - In addition to providing accomplishments/outlook and focus areas, administrators will be asked to show how they will determine the effectiveness of their areas of focus.
  - Areas of focus were identified from previous observations, surveys, focus groups, and more.
  - How the district will measure effectiveness:
    - Areas of focus that relate to process, change in behavior, or review will utilize reflective analysis as well as the district's process for identification and addressing equity as well as the approach to equity.
      - Example: When using the term “support”, reflective analysis allows us to examine exactly what the term means and solicit specific, targeted feedback.
        - Was support provided to ensure people understand the context for the decision?
        - Was support provided to ensure that people understand the desired outcome?
        - Was support provided to ensure that people understand and can complete the process?
        - Was support provided to ensure that people had the opportunity to practice/demonstrate and receive feedback?
        - Was support provided to ensure that people understand the connection and how to apply it?
    - Areas of focus that relate to programs/implementation will utilize qualitative and quantitative methods to produce tangible, observable results to look at effectiveness such as:
      - Interviews
      - Focus Groups
      - Surveys

- Data Records
- Observations
- Case studies/longitudinal studies
- Areas of focus that relate to updating current documents, protocols, or procedures will include an explanation of how those updates will be more equitable or inclusive, an explanation of how those updates were a response to data, and/or an explanation of additional people served.

### Central Office Administrators

- Chief Academic Officer (New Administrator 2022-23)
  - **Area Outlook**
    - The Chief Academic Officer is committed to the ongoing process of familiarizing themselves with their position, what needs to be done, and what has been done in the past. During the 2022-23 school year, they will continue looking to fulfill the Bexley City School District mission and vision.
    - The Chief Academic Officer has already identified areas where equity processes need to be reviewed, revised, or added. These include the Curriculum Review Process, the High Quality Data process, the MTSS handbook and processes, Panorama and OhYes! Surveys, and professional development for staff and administrators, and the Internal Monitoring Team.
    - The Chief Academic Officer will strive to serve the Bexley Community in the areas of Belonging, Wellness, and Academics and will ensure a student-centered, collaborative, and inclusive approach to realize the current Bexley City School mission of providing educational experiences that engage, equip, and empower each student.
  
- Director of Curriculum and Gifted (New Administrator 2022-23)
  - **Area Outlook**
    - The Bexley Curriculum/Instruction Department is committed to creating an equitable learning climate for all students and enhancing the school community's understanding of diverse cultures and multiple perspectives. We will develop a culture of

belonging that builds trusting relationships with all students and their families; encourages and supports cultural awareness, knowledge, and skills; and creates opportunities for connectedness and engagement that lead to inspirational learning experiences that encourage and motivate all students and staff to achieve their best academic and developmental outcomes.

- In order to achieve an inclusive and equitable learning climate for all students, we will continue to search for and remove barriers for student groups, particularly students of various backgrounds, historically underrepresented students, and students with special needs to ensure they have access to the most rigorous courses available and equitable access to learning. We will review curriculum materials used in our classes to ensure that they are representative of various groups and perspectives and promote teaching practices rooted in diversity, equity, and inclusion. We will utilize instructional materials aligned to standards in order to provide all students with differentiated access to culturally responsive teaching practices and research-based instructional strategies to engage all learners.. We will utilize student assessment data to provide the intervention or enrichment necessary to support every student to succeed academically.
- High quality professional learning opportunities cultivate teacher and staff strengths and help to address the needs of each student they serve and create a more inclusive and equitable environment, where the unique contributions of each student are appreciated and celebrated. We will expand professional development opportunities to create inclusive spaces that support networking and collaboration, foster professional growth and inspire innovative ideas among all staff members. We will engage in honest conversations with staff and students about issues and concerns that impact all students. We are committed to inspiring our school community to be accepting and willing to learn from and to build connections with individuals with various backgrounds and viewpoints.

- Director of Employee Relations (Returning Administrator 2022-23)

- **Key Accomplishments**

- Developed a framework and process for interviewing and hiring new staff that emphasizes diverse interview teams, equitable

opportunities for potential candidates, interview questions, and divergent thinking in vetting opportunities.

- Hosted an Informational and Networking Event with Bexley Minority Parent Association (BMPA) to share information about Bexley City Schools and employment opportunities.
- Created a partnership and grant partner with Ohio University's Patton College of Education to provide more opportunities for our 6th-12th-grade Black male students to consider education as a profession (Brothers RISE Initiative).

- **Focus Areas**

- Expand our Informational and Networking event to include not only BMPA and Bexley City Schools but also Bexley Pride and Special Education Parent Teacher Organization (S.E.P.T.O.) and invite more historically marginalized and underrepresented populations of potential candidates to further diversify our staff as positions become open, therefore working to ensure our personnel are more representative of our student population.
- Revisit and rewrite Job Descriptions to include language that is more equitable and provides more accessibility for those who might not have previously applied.
- Embed restorative practices into our staff discipline and investigation processes to embrace the ideals of honest conversations and feedback and to build opportunities for growth that explore microaggressions and include connecting personnel from different backgrounds and experiences so that we can foster the betterment of ourselves and our organization.
- Pilot an Educator's Rising Program in Bexley City Schools and bring several employees and students to Ohio's Educator Rising conference in 2023.

- Director of Facilities and Operations (Returning Administrator 2022-23)

- **Key Accomplishments**

- Provided accessible and single user, gender-neutral restrooms that are stocked with hygiene products for students and staff.
- Rewrote Athletics Handbook to ensure more inclusive/accessible language.
- Revamped evacuation and sheltering guidelines to prioritize accessibility, including identifying areas of rescue in each building for immobile occupants.

- Working to make athletics and extracurriculars accessible to all students through a liberal fee waiver process, a student opportunity fund, and a policy stating no extra costs can be expected by parents.
  - **Focus Areas**
    - Pursuing the goal of ensuring that all students have access to breakfast/lunch.
    - Continuing to identify and address gaps in athletics and theater to ensure that students have access and receive equal opportunity and treatment.
    - Reviewing and addressing district transportation access.
    - Addressing any ADA compliance issues within facilities and the building.
- Director of Student Services and Accessibility (New Administrator 2022-23)
  - **Area Outlook**
    - The Student Services Department is committed to developing structures and processes that ensure that each student experiences a sense of belonging within Bexley City Schools. We believe that it is not adequate for students to merely have access to environments, courses and activities; they must experience a full and valued presence within our community. This department operates with the core belief that learner variability is the norm, not the exception, and by intentionally designing for variability, there is less need to retrofit support or react to student need. We will be prepared for this proactively.
    - In order to achieve this, an approach of intentionally identifying barriers within our system and creatively minimizing or eliminating those barriers is utilized. We use a team approach to analyze barriers within the physical, social, emotional and learning environments. For our students who are often marginalized due to their unique learning needs, including those with disabilities, those who are English Language Learners, and those with mental health needs, we ensure that supports are clearly identified and provided so that they can meaningfully and successfully engage in learning and in developing relationships with peers.
    - Providing support for our staff, so that they have the necessary knowledge, skills and resources to meet student needs is an identified need and an ongoing effort. Through professional learning and collaboration, we can develop a system that has

varied support provided by various educators. Student services staff (Intervention Specialists, therapists, counselors, behavior specialist, English Language Learner teachers, nurses) work alongside, not in isolation of general educators. We believe that by removing the “silos” of service delivery, our system will be more effective in meeting student needs.

- Processes and procedures have already been amended to respond to the insight that the Director has obtained in the first semester of this school year, and she will continue to analyze, celebrate and improve the department with ongoing reflection and communication with families and staff.
- Director of Technology (Returning Administrator 2022-23)
  - **Key Accomplishments**
    - **Adoption of Technology Plan in Alignment with Strategic Plan:**  
In the spirit of the previous Strategic Plan’s focus on “each” student rather than “every,” the technology plan development led to:
      - Ensuring community members of color and unique backgrounds/experiences were active members of our Technology Advisory Group
      - Any family without Internet access in the home would be provided a wireless hotspot (instead of a device with LTE that could be identified visually).
      - Internet access was installed around all Bexley School building’s exterior property to allow any student to connect to our network at all times.
      - Our 1:1 device initiative would be provided to all students rather than only supplying devices to families that could not supply them.
    - **Improvements Through Commitment Plan Work**
      - Improved processes to demographic identity updates for accounts and online identification
      - Led discussions with the Central Ohio Technology Leadership on ways other districts are connecting Technology department efforts for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.
      - Assisted with adoption of other departmental efforts to support students such as the ELL Family website, closed captioning, and adoption of assistive technology tools
  - **Focus Areas**
    - **Continuous Improvement of Practices**



- Find additional ways to automate language translations for families who could benefit from communication in languages other than English
- Review investigation and discipline practices with Principals with the goal of maintaining student access to online resources whenever possible
- Adjusting our network settings to encourage less personal devices on our network in an effort to make sure devices assigned to students are the devices used on site.
- Review interoperability workflows for account provisioning related to first name, last name, sex, and gender. Create the least complex processes for change management.
- Support curriculum review process to evaluate representation in our online resources.
- **Key Considerations for Next Technology Plan**
  - Continue to find ways to provide Digital Wellness resources to families to support technology use in the home.
  - Work with our Technology Integration Coach to utilize student's access to assigned devices to promote personalized learning, culturally responsive teaching, restorative practices.
  - Develop Assistive Technology processes and determine if an Assistive Technology Team is necessary for review.
  - Participate in discussions with local groups such as the City of Bexley, Capital University, Bexley Education Foundation, and the Bexley Community Foundation to evaluate opportunities for dedicated Internet access in the home for any family struggling to maintain consistent Internet access or key parts of Bexley with a higher concentration of families needing access.
  - Including members of the Special Education PTO and the Bexley Minority Parent Alliance as part of our Technology Advisory Group.

### Building Administrators

- Cassingham Elementary School (Returning Administrator 2022-23)
  - **Key Accomplishments**
    - **Hiring, Recruitment, and Retention of Staff**

- Inclusive Hiring Practices - Intentionally looking for candidates with diverse backgrounds and skills aligned to student needs (restorative practices, trauma-informed care, demonstrated success across various student groups/culturally responsive practices)
  - Seeking out and ensuring that candidates of color have an opportunity to interview, we are getting closer each time we hire to our goal to ensure our students can see themselves in our faculty.
  - Additionally, 78% of CS students responded favorably to questions regarding feeling a sense of belonging at Cassingham, disaggregation of this data shows growth across racial groups
- **Development of Staff**
  - Collaborative teaching teams are a key dynamic which contributes to low staff turnover in our building
  - MTSS practices reviewed with faculty
    - Video summarizing process/purpose/structure shared with faculty and parents within fall school and class newsletters
    - MTSS session offered during curriculum night to ensure parents had the opportunity to pose questions
    - MTSS team members are a part of larger Building Leadership Team
  - School Climate
    - Topics aligned to staff/ student needs:
      - Courageous Conversation
      - Calling in and Calling Out
      - Restorative Practices
    - Ongoing staff conversations and interest in topics presented
    - Exploration of and planning for implementing restorative practices in 23-24 school year
- **Curriculum & Instructional Practices**
  - ELA Curriculum Adoption to enhance student engagement
    - Focus upon implementing Wit & Wisdom in meaningful ways to heighten engagement of students through experiential moments of surprise and delight

- Review of recommended texts within Wit & Wisdom to enhance representational literature within each unit of instruction in 23-24
- Facilitate continued discussion of thinking routines and classroom protocols to enhance student voice and agency in classrooms across all academic areas.
  - This practice is further supported with the work of Amy Genter, Talent Development Specialist in each K-3 classroom and Flexible Math Groups facilitate by Cassingham's GIS, Megan Lafollette
- Anchoring transdisciplinary experience within Wit and Wisdom structure to enhance integration of instruction and engagement/meaning-making for all students
- Guest Speakers & Author Visits to enhance student engagement
  - speakers/experiences
    - 5th graders: John Low, American Indian History Professor & tour of earthworks
    - 4th graders: Noah Jones, cardiologist,
    - 3rd graders: Newport Aquarium, shark tank, experience
    - 2nd graders: Lynette Ford - storyteller
  - Authors: Kwame Alexander, Oge Mora, Christina Soontjornvat (22-23) Minh Le (21-22)
- Continual audit and ordering cycle to update representational literature within library collection
- Social Studies Curriculum Review
  - CS representatives are advocating for enhancing resources and content priorities
  - Focus to include international, multicultural perspectives.
  - Scholarly treatment of migration and the elements that impact global migration trends across history
- **School Climate**
  - PBIS
    - Articulation of expectations for students in each classroom and school space
      - Tour of building in August & January to teach/refresh student understanding of Cub Code

- Incident report reviews with Building Leadership/MTSS team
- Plan for individualized interventions in response to student performance data, experience base, and in consultation with parents
- Incentive programs for students who earned recognition from staff for demonstrating Cub Code (safe, respectful, responsible behaviors)
  - 1st semester - Cub Code stickers
  - 2nd semester - stickers, raffle ticket (experiences offered by faculty & staff) and assembly recognition
- Recognition Assemblies
  - Quarterly recognition of students who demonstrate aspects of Cub Code
- **Student Experience/Belonging**
  - Allied Arts Team (School Counselor, Art, Music, PE & Library) collaboration for student ½ day experiences
    - Social emotional well-being focus in December & March integrating music, dance, mindfulness
    - Cub Gatherings Resume in CS theater
    - Facilitated by students to the greatest extent possible
      - Student Council Officers & Tech Team
    - August introduction of all staff adults & Cub Code
    - January re-introduction of staff members all students may not see regularly & Cub Code updates - what's working and what are current areas of focus
    - PBIS recognition each quarter of 2nd semester
    - Talk about it Tuesdays Cassingham Cub News spot focussing upon exemplar Cub Code student demonstrations
  - Weekly classroom instruction from school counselor in each classroom - Cub Code and Ohio's standards for Social Emotional Learning
  - Student groups developed each 9 weeks, led by School Counselor, School Counseling Intern and Nationwide Children's mental health specialist aligned to student needs (friendship, changing families, self-regulation)
  - Implementation of Rox, leadership development for elementary girls

- Summer 2021-2022 and during school year 22-23 (2, 5th grade groups)
- Support from CS/PTO for ongoing implementation
- **Family and Community Engagement**
  - Cassingham PTO & Staff
    - Online and In Person conferences offered to families to ensure we're meeting at time and in a manner that works for families
    - Readathon, annual fundraiser, participation shift to focus upon reading engagement over amount of sponsorship/money raised
    - Halloween costumes and Valentine cards available for students without access
    - Alternatives activities available during classroom holiday celebrations for students who do not celebrate Halloween/Valentine's Day
  - Developmental Assets Resource Network (DARN)
    - Student Council Fundraiser for DARN, sharing purpose with students
    - Partnership to provide resources across school year- school supplies, support, temporary housing
  - Bexley Minority Parent Alliance (BMPA)
    - Circle of Excellence event to celebrate 5th graders transition to HS
    - All elementary schools including BMPA updates and links within weekly newsletter
  - Parent Access to School Information
    - Virtual and in-person conferences and student services meeting
    - Virtual curriculum night - increased attendance and provided access to all recorded sessions so that parents could access information for all sessions
    - Weekly newsletter communication
- **Focus Areas**
  - **School Climate:** Our school has experienced an increase disruptive behavioral incidents that indicate students are in need of additional support to ensure a safe learning environment for each child
    - Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

- PBIS team members are a part of larger Building Leadership Team (BLT)
- BLT reviews disciplinary incident report trends with a focus upon any gaps within Cub code - technology use gap identified for 22-23
- Annual revision of CS PBIS manual
  - Refreshers for faculty regarding incident reporting
  - Communications systems for reporting and documenting concerns, intervention/safety plans, and MTSS consultation
- Enhancing communication between school and families regarding school expectations
  - Sharing Cub Code (PBIS matrix) through school communications, classroom and building level
  - PTO evening program Feb, 2023 devoted to PBIS
    - History of PBIS, goal
    - Structures and supports - external validation - ESC consultant
    - Cub Code in practice
- **Student Experience/Belonging**
  - Expanding student government leadership opportunities for student council - principal meeting with Student Council officers
  - Increasing access to sensory soothing resources and student empowerment to use them across their school day and recess
    - Develop system for students to self-advocate for breaks and/or be referred by an adult
    - Each classroom identified an in-class break space in 22-23
    - Two sensory paths - 1st & 2nd floor
    - Calming space established within CS room #2115, monitored by literacy specialist and available to students across the school day
    - Peace Path installed on CS playground, 21-22







- **Curriculum & Instructional Practices (In alignment of all Elementary Buildings)**
  - ELA Curriculum Adoption to enhance student engagement
    - Review of recommended texts within Wit & Wisdom to enhance representational literature within each unit of instruction in 23-24
    - Facilitate continued discussion of thinking routines and classroom protocols to enhance student voice and agency in classrooms across all academic areas.
      - This practice is further supported with the work of Amy Genter, Talent Development Specialist in each K-3 classroom and Flexible Math Groups for 4th and 5th grade students facilitated by Carrie Corlew
    - Anchoring transdisciplinary experience within Wit and Wisdom structure to enhance integration of instruction and engagement/meaning-making for all students
  - Guest Speakers & Author Visits to enhance student engagement
    - Speakers/experiences
      - 4th graders: Noah Jones, cardiologist,
      - 3rd graders: Newport Aquarium, shark tank, experience
      - 2nd graders: Lynette Ford - storyteller
    - Authors: Kwame Alexander, Oge Mora, Christina Soontjornvat (22-23) Minh Le (21-22)
- **School Climate**
  - PBIS
    - Articulation of expectations for students in each classroom and school space
      - Tour of building in August & January to teach/refresh school expectations of being Respectful, Responsible and Safe
      - Incident report reviews with Building Leadership/MTSS team
    - Plan for individualized interventions in response to student performance data, experience base and in consultation with parents
    - Incentive programs
    - Monty Cash
    - Monty Store
    - Student Surveys

- Staff Meeting Updates by Committee
- Assemblies
- Safety Patrol Swearing in Ceremony led by Mayor Kessler and a representative from BPD.
- **Student Experience/Belonging**
  - Weekly classroom instruction from school counselor in each classroom - Focus Ohio's standards for Social Emotional Learning, information provided to families via weekly Family Update
  - Student groups developed each 9 weeks, led by School Counselor and Nationwide Children's mental health specialist aligned to student needs (friendship, changing families, self-regulation)
  - Difference Makers Sessions to begin in Spring 2023- Lunch and learn opportunities for 4th and 5th grade students. We will bring in members of our community who are "making a difference" and allow them time to share their passion with our students. Students have the option of attending.
- **Family and Community Engagement**
  - Montrose PTO
    - Monthly meetings offered both in person and on Zoom in order to meet the needs of all families
    - PTO provides family and staff surveys in order to hear voices from all stakeholders regarding events, experiences and programming for our community.
    - Readathon, annual fundraiser, participation shift to focus upon reading engagement over amount of sponsorship/money raised
    - Shade Project
    - Halloween costumes and Valentine cards available for students without access
    - Classroom activities during Valentine's parties that focus on giving back to the community.
    - Seeds of Caring, Ronald McDonald House, Meals on Wheels
    - Alternatives activities available during classroom holiday celebrations for students who do not celebrate Halloween/Valentine's Day
    - Difference Makers Sessions to begin in Spring 2023- Lunch and learn opportunities for 4th and 5th grade

students. We will bring in members of our community who are “making a difference” and allow them time to share their passion with our students. Students have the option of attending.

- Developmental Assets Resource Network (DARN)
  - Student Council Fundraiser for DARN, sharing purpose with students
  - Partnership to provide resources across school year-school supplies, support, temporary housing
- Bexley Minority Parent Alliance (BMPA)
  - Circle of Excellence event to celebrate 5th graders transition to HS
  - All elementary schools including BMPA updates and links within weekly newsletter
- Parent Access to School Information
  - Virtual and in-person conferences and student services meeting
  - Virtual curriculum night - increased attendance and provided access to all recorded sessions so that parents could access information for all sessions
  - Weekly newsletter communication
- **Focus Areas**
  - **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**
    - PBIS team members are a part of larger Building Leadership Team (BLT)
    - BLT reviews disciplinary incident report patterns
    - Annual revision of PBIS manual
      - Refreshers for faculty regarding incident reporting
      - Communications systems for reporting and documenting concerns, intervention/safety plans, and MTSS consultation
    - Enhancing communication between school and families regarding school expectations
      - PBIS matrix shared through school communications and referenced in classrooms.
    - MTSS
    - TBT Meetings
  - **Student Experience/Belonging**
    - Starting in the school year 2021-22, targeted work with the building counselor and DEI Leader to hear student voices on

their sense of belonging through surveys and minute meetings.

- Use survey data to guide conversations with staff focused on students' sense of belonging
  - Provided Professional Development sessions throughout the year that will focus on students' sense of belonging as it connects to the curriculum. This includes sessions on culturally responsive classrooms and practices. (SY 21-22)
  - Offered student council members an opportunity to attend PTO meetings in order to increase student representation and participation in decision making.
  - Expanding the methods for monitoring and communicating academic progress beyond progress reports and standardized assessments
    - Individualized academic/social/emotional intervention plans monitored within Ion
    - intervention plans and safety plans targeted for individual student needs
- 
- Bexley Middle School (Returning Administrators 2022-23)
    - **Key Accomplishments**
      - **Hiring, Recruitment, and Retention of Staff**
        - Inclusive Hiring Practices - Intentionally looking for candidates with diverse backgrounds and skills aligned to student needs (restorative practices, trauma-informed care, success with student populations)
          - Ensuring that candidates of color have an opportunity to interview
          - Low turnover amongst staff, not related to school climate
          - Student Panorama data showing connection to staff members
          - Administrative participation in Bexley Minority Parent Alliance fair which attracted candidates aligned to the district mission and values
        - Diversify the Profession Grant
          - Application and acceptance of the grant
          - Staff participation in listening tour
          - Networking Event for potential new staff
      - **Development of Staff**

- School Climate
  - Topics aligned to staff/ student needs:
    - Courageous Conversation
    - Calling in and Calling Out
    - Restorative Practices
  - Ongoing staff conversations and interest in topics presented
  - Expectations for utilization of restorative practices in 22-23 school year
- **Curriculum & Instructional Practices**
  - ELA Equity Audit
    - Revision of units and assessments to be more inclusive of diverse perspectives and experiences
  - Department Book Studies
    - Math department independently selected *Multiplication is For White People: Raising Expectations for Other People's Children* by Lisa Delpit
  - Increase texts by underrepresented groups in the library
- **School Climate**
  - PBIS
    - Articulation of expectations for students in each space
    - Review of discipline data
    - Plan for targeted interventions related to data
    - Incentive program for students who earned recognition from staff for demonstrating safe, respectful, responsible behaviors
    - Assemblies responsive to student needs
  - Recognition Assemblies
    - Quarterly recognition of students aligned to District Core Values, participation in school extracurriculars
    - Laurel Honor Society recognition for 8th grade students who have met requirements in the areas
- **Student Experience/Belonging**
  - UMOJA group for Black girls with typically 10-14 students in attendance per week
  - Boys Group for Black boys with typically 8-10 students in attendance each week
  - WEB peer mentor groups for incoming 6th graders led by trained 8th grade student leaders

- Buckeye Clinic - South Sudan Service Learning Project
- Flex Period with opportunities for students to participate in a variety of high interest activities
  - Changes for 22-23 based on student and staff feedback
- Camp Mary Orton 6th graders experienced team building and personal challenges activities
- Author Visit - Jason Reynolds
- Summer ELL Program
  - Week long student program designed to build connections between students and explore Columbus (State House, City Hall, COSI, International Grocery store, cooking)
- Student groups led by Nationwide Children's staff aligned to student needs (DBT, Anxiety group, ) with student participation and students able to demonstrate the skills to self-regulate
- **Family and Community Engagement**
  - Developmental Assets Resource Network (DARN)
    - Block party to engage families and connect them to resources
    - Partnership to provide holiday help to families during December
    - Support of students to participate in activities beyond the school day (Ski Club, bicycles)
  - Bexley Minority Parent Alliance (BMPA)
    - Circle of Excellence event to celebrate 8th graders moving to HS
    - Racquel Armstrong recognized as the Friend of BMPA award winner
  - Parent Access to School Information
    - Increase access through both in-person and virtual conferences
    - Virtual curriculum night
    - Weekly newsletter communication
  - ELL Family events
    - Columbus Crew game
- **Focus Areas**
  - **School Climate:** The school has experienced an increase in significant behavioral incidents that disrupt the learning

environment and/ or lead to students not feeling safe at school. Panorama data from the spring of 2022, placed our school in the 2nd quintile and showed a 3% drop in favorable responses since the Fall of 2020. Only 33% of students responded favorably to the question, “At your school, how much does the behavior of other students hurt or help your learning?”

- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)
  - Reviewing disciplinary practices
  - Increasing communication between school and families regarding school expectations
- Implementation of student focus groups to increase problem solving between staff and students
- **Student Experience/Belonging**
  - UMOJA group for Black girls with typically 10-14 students in attendance per week (led by Racquel Armstrong)
  - Boys group for Black boys with typically 8-10 in attendance per week (led by Brian Lowery)
- Bexley High School (Returning Administrators 2022-23)
  - **Key Accomplishments**
    - **Academics**
      - **Academic Support**
        - The Response to Intervention team meets 4X a week to discuss students who are experiencing difficulties at BHS. This team is made up of two classroom teachers (Math/ELA), a special educator, school counselors and building administrators. Additionally, the NCH counselor attends once a week and the HS School Psychologist also attends regularly in order to problem solve student learning and SEL challenges. While the focus is primarily academics (a determining metric used is students doing poorly or failing a class) the team also takes into consideration environmental factors that get in the way of student success (attendance, behavior, home, learning gaps, sense of belonging, relationships, etc.). This team recognizes that a “grade” is typically an indication of many things for a student, not simply a cognitive ability which gets in the way of academic success.

- During School Year 2021-22 the new school counseling model was initiated in order to serve students best in a variety of areas: Academically and SEL primarily. Feedback from students during the 2020-21 school year indicated students did not recognize school counselors were a resource for many things besides academics. Also, the college counselor returned to the position of a generalist in order to minimize student caseload and provide a 4-year working relationship with all students and their counselor.
- During School Year 2022-23 the Focus on Freshmen programming will be pushed to academic classes rather than study halls, providing a more structured and cohesive opportunity for counselors to provide consistent academic and SEL classroom guidance.
- During School Year 2022-2023 the HS introduced a mentoring program for young men grades 6-12. They are meeting regularly with adult mentors who are current staff members. Some areas of focus are school engagement, student skills, matriculation beyond HS, leadership development, trade options and peer mentoring within the group.
- **Advanced Placement: How/Is the Advanced Placement experience an equitable opportunity for all students?**
  - An effort to gain a complete picture of all AP students so that professional development regarding instructional practices within these courses could be offered.
  - One aim was to provide a strength based model for teachers to target improvement in classroom practices.
  - Another aim was to gain access to a complete set of student data to begin to identify areas within sub-population groups that were underrepresented and underperforming with respect to their peers.
  - Remove the financial barrier for any student who wished to take the class, providing all students with the opportunity to earn college credit through successful completion of the course and assessment.



- PSAT: What is the history of allowing all students the opportunity to take the PSAT?
  - An effort to have a complete set of data for all students, not only those who self-selected themselves as an interested student.
  - Initially meant to allow for programmatic investigation of grade bands and student body overall to improve instructional practices within the classrooms (all classrooms).
  - Inclusive participation in the PSAT also allows for AP Potential information to be utilized during scheduling conversations with both teachers and counselors. A faculty belief that individual discussion and encouragement with both students and families may encourage students to participate in AP, an experience closely aligned with college readiness, has been developed over the past 5 years.
- **Curriculum Review: How will the Curriculum Review cycle include an equity audit moving forward?**
  - SY 2019-2020, during the second year of the ELA curriculum cycle an equity audit 6-12 was conducted.
  - Led by Curriculum Director, along with MS/HS Admin
  - Over 700 MS/HS students were polled on topics such as: seeing themselves in the work they studied, teachers being open to alternative curricular materials, sense of belonging in their ELA classroom, ability to ask critical questions in the classroom, opportunities to read and study materials with a minority focus, etc.
  - Teachers from MS/HS were involved in meeting, choosing curricular units, assessing data and selecting materials
  - Community Members/Parents and Students were involved in the process
  - Selected curricular units were audited by an outside organization (ESC) based on the CRE Scorecard.
- **Attendance**
  - Identifying data to help identify how attendance data plays out across different groups of students

- Identifying ways to eliminate barriers for students who demonstrate a need with respect to attendance.
- **Behavior**
  - Proactively identifying student behavior struggles by grade level.
  - Grade level meetings including school mental health/behavior specialist involvement
  - Identifying five classroom expectations and teaching those
  - Looking at class attendance, tardies, and engagement in class
  - Identifying educational components as well as a follow up with students.
- **Focus Areas**
  - **Academics**
    - BHS administrators and faculty prioritize providing each student with the opportunity to engage in challenging coursework which encourages and develops high level thinking and problem solving. In order to continue to identify barriers to participation in rigorous, college-level coursework, it will be important for BHS administrators and counselors to track their purposeful conversations with students regarding their course selections more closely. This data, when compiled, will provide administrators and counselors with specific information regarding the student's stated reason for not viewing themselves as a college preparatory ready student and any additional barriers that they identify. There is a prevailing belief that BHS administrators and counselors can improve in the area of educating families about options that exist to them earlier on in their time at BCSD. Opportunities could include College Credit Plus, AP or Honors courses, Credit Flex options, and more.
  - **Attendance**
    - Administrators and office personnel at BHS will implement a more rigid and documented process for conversations with students and families regarding attendance and needed support. There are many potential barriers that can be identified as threats to student attendance, and learning about those threats and developing potential solutions is an endeavor that will require specific data to point to for future conversations. While monitoring attendance, based on

learning mode employed and individual family circumstances as a result of COVID, has been challenging over the past two-and-a-half school years, BHS administrators and office personnel are committed to not only tracking attendance, but purposeful, timely interactions and interventions with students and their families.

- **Behavior**

- BHS administrators and counselors must implement a more comprehensive tracking mechanism to document all conversations with students that involve student behavior, not just behavior that rises to the level of formal school discipline. This mechanism regarding tracking of behaviors and interactions with students as a result of these behaviors, must include a follow-up component (either via email or in person) that allows students multiple opportunities to articulate their needs as a learner and as a person. This data is valuable in helping to identify areas of interaction for students of different populations with individual teachers or with staff and administrators overall. Once data is collected and analyzed, purposeful professional development regarding culturally responsive practices can be developed and put forth to all BHS staff.

## Summary/Moving Forward

The Bexley City Schools Equity Policy serves to clearly articulate district values and goals, and the Bexley City Schools Strategic Plan serves to provide long-term missions, goals, visions, and strategies to articulate district values generally and in specific areas.

Moving forward, the Bexley City Schools Equity Plan will serve as an annual document that articulates a **clear process, targeted approaches/examinations, and clear methods for communication, transparency, and accountability**. In addition, it serves as an opportunity to **share accomplishments and focus areas for schools and department areas that are guided by clear, asset-based standards, solutions, metrics, and procedures** that are mandated by the Equity Policy.

Each year, the district will examine structural and systemic methods and ensure that they are being embedded in the work that is done throughout the district. And the district will use the equity process and framework to examine policies, plans, and procedures proactively.

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Administrators will also conduct an individual review of **what** is working/not working throughout the district, **why** it is working/not working, and **how** to build upon that success/reexamine tactics.

The District will also review and revise the equity process, framework, and overall equity plan periodically and as needed.

Bexley City School District is also committed to providing opportunities for input from students, staff, administration, and community members as well as providing public opportunities for feedback and questions, and professional development that continues the advancement of equity will be informed by this input.

# Resources

## Working Definitions

- **Adequacy/Adequate Education**<sup>10</sup>: “the principle that all students should receive “an adequate education” whatever it takes to provide it (Brighthouse & Swift, 2008). As an example of what the difference means in practice, consider a district that has a policy of one reading specialist per elementary school. Everyone would agree that this is an equal distribution. However, School A has 15 students who are reading below grade level whereas School B has 250 below grade level readers. Equal distribution is therefore not providing adequate services to the children in School B because the needs in that school are obviously much greater.”
- **Culture**<sup>11</sup> : “The system of shared beliefs, values, customs, behaviors, and artifacts that the members of society use to cope with their world and with one another, and that are transmitted from generation to generation through learning. As understood in sociology, a subculture is a set of people with a distinct set of behavior and beliefs that differentiate them from a larger culture as a whole of which they are a part of. The subculture may be distinctive because of the age of its members, or by their race, ethnicity, class and/or gender, and the qualities that determine a subculture as distinct may be aesthetic, religious, political, and sexual or a combination of these factors.”
- **Cultural proficiency**<sup>12</sup> : “Cultural Proficiency in education is the level of knowledge-based skills and understanding that are required to successfully teach and interact with students and to work effectively with colleagues from a variety of cultures by holding all forms of cultural difference in high esteem; a continuing self-assessment of one’s values, beliefs and biases grounded in cultural humility; an ongoing vigilance toward the dynamics of diversity, difference and power; and the expansion of knowledge of cultural practices that recognize cultural bridges as going both ways. Culturally proficient services require that both the individual and the institution be culturally proficient.”
  - “Five essential elements contribute to an institution's ability to become more culturally proficient which include:
    - 1. Valuing diversity.
    - 2. Having the capacity for cultural self-assessment.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.nsba.org/-/media/NSBA/File/cpe-educational-equity-research-brief-january-2016.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <https://rcs.instructure.com/courses/797875/files/29797768/download?wrap=1>

<sup>12</sup> Id.

- 3. Managing the dynamics of difference
    - 4. Having institutionalized cultural knowledge.
    - 5. Having developed adaptations to service/curriculum delivery reflecting an understanding of cultural diversity.”
  - “These five elements should be manifested at every level of an organization including policy making, administration, and practice. (Cross, etal. 1989)”
- **Culturally Relevant Pedagogy**<sup>13</sup>: “a theoretical model that focuses on multiple aspects of student achievement and supports students to uphold their cultural identities. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy also calls for students to develop critical perspectives that challenge societal inequalities.”
  - “Gloria Ladson-Billings proposed three main components of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy: (a) a focus on student learning and academic success, (b) developing students’ cultural competence to assist students in developing positive ethnic and social identities, and (c) supporting students’ critical consciousness or their ability to recognize and critique societal inequalities. All three components need to be utilized.”
- **Culturally Responsive Teaching**<sup>14</sup>: “Culturally responsive teaching means using students’ customs, characteristics, experience, and perspectives as tools for better classroom instruction.”
  - “The term was coined by researcher Geneva Gay in 2000, who wrote that “when academic knowledge and skills are situated within the lived experiences and frames of reference for students, they are more personally meaningful, have higher interest appeal, and are learned more easily and thoroughly.”
  - “Gay’s research shows five essential components of culturally responsive teaching:
    - A strong knowledge base about cultural diversity. Teachers should understand different racial and ethnic groups’ cultural values, traditions, and contributions to society, and incorporate that knowledge into their instruction.
    - Culturally relevant curricula. Teachers should include multiple perspectives in their instruction and make sure the images displayed in classrooms—such as on bulletin boards—represent a wide range of diversity. Teachers should also contextualize issues within race, class, ethnicity, and gender.

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.cde.ca.gov/pd/ee/culturalrelevantpedagogy.asp>

<sup>14</sup><https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/culturally-responsive-teaching-culturally-responsive-pedagogy/2022/04>

- High expectations for all students. Teachers should help students achieve academic success while still validating their cultural identities.
    - An appreciation for different communication styles. Teachers should understand different communication styles and modify classroom interactions accordingly. For example, many communities of color have an active, participatory style of communication. A teacher who doesn't understand this cultural context might think a student is being rude and tell the student to be quiet. The student may then shut down.
  - The use of multicultural instructional examples. Teachers should connect students' prior knowledge and cultural experiences with new knowledge. (Gay 2000)"
- **Educational Equity**<sup>15</sup>: "Educational equity means that each child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential. Working towards equity in schools involves:
  - Ensuring equally high outcomes for all participants in our educational system; removing the predictability of success or failures that currently correlates with any social or cultural factor;
  - Interrupting inequitable practices, examining biases, and creating inclusive multicultural school environments for adults and children; and
  - Discovering and cultivating the unique gifts, talents and interests that every human possesses."
- **Restorative practices**<sup>16</sup>: "Restorative practices is a social science that studies how to build social capital and achieve social discipline through participatory learning and decision making."
  - "The use of restorative practices helps to:
    - reduce crime, violence and bullying
    - improve human behavior
    - strengthen civil society
    - provide effective leadership
    - restore relationships
    - repair harm"
  - "The IIRP distinguishes between the terms restorative practices and restorative justice. We view restorative justice as a subset of restorative practices. Restorative justice is reactive, consisting of formal or informal responses to crime and other wrongdoing after it occurs. The IIRP's definition of restorative practices also includes the use of informal and

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.nationalequityproject.org/education-equity-definition>

<sup>16</sup> [https://www.iirp.edu/images/pdf/Defining-Restorative\\_Nov-2016.pdf](https://www.iirp.edu/images/pdf/Defining-Restorative_Nov-2016.pdf)

formal processes that precede wrongdoing, those that proactively build relationships and a sense of community to prevent conflict and wrongdoing.”

- **Social Capital**<sup>17</sup>: “Social capital is defined as the connections among individuals (Putnam, 2001), and the trust, mutual understanding, shared values and behaviors that bind us together and make cooperative action possible (Cohen & Prusak, 2001).”
- **Social Emotional Learning**<sup>18</sup>: “We define social and emotional learning (SEL) as an integral part of education and human development. SEL is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.”
  - “SEL advances educational equity and excellence through authentic school-family-community partnerships to establish learning environments and experiences that feature trusting and collaborative relationships, rigorous and meaningful curriculum and instruction, and ongoing evaluation. SEL can help address various forms of inequity and empower young people and adults to co-create thriving schools and contribute to safe, healthy, and just communities.”
  - “For many, our framework is known as the “CASEL wheel.” At the center are the five core social and emotional competencies—broad, interrelated areas that support learning and development. Circling them are four key settings where students live and grow. School-family-community partnerships coordinate SEL practices and establish equitable learning environments across all of these contexts.”
- **Targeted Universalism**<sup>19</sup>: “Targeted universalism means setting universal goals pursued by targeted processes to achieve those goals. Within a targeted universalism framework, universal goals are established for all groups concerned. The strategies developed to achieve those goals are targeted, based upon how different groups are situated within structures, culture, and across geographies to obtain the universal goal. Targeted universalism is goal oriented, and the processes are directed in service of the explicit, universal goal.”
  - “Targeted universalism is a platform to operationalize programs that move all groups toward the universal policy goal as well as a way of communicating and publicly marketing such programs in an inclusive, bridging manner. It is an approach that supports the needs of particular groups, even the politically powerful or those in the majority, while

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<sup>17</sup> Id.

<sup>18</sup> <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://belonging.berkeley.edu/targeted-universalism>



reminding everyone that we are all part of the same social and civic fabric. As such, targeted universalist policies are more resistant to the critique that government programs serve special interests, whoever that might be.”

## Assessment

### **Culturally Responsive Assessment<sup>20</sup>:**

1. Be mindful of the student population(s) being served and involve students in the process of assessing learning;
2. Use appropriate student-focused and cultural language in learning outcomes statements to ensure students understand what is expected of them
3. Develop and/or use assessment tools and multiple sources of evidence that are culturally responsive to current students
4. Intentional improvement of student learning through disaggregated data-driven change that examines structures, demonstrations of learning, and supports which may privilege some students’ learning while marginalizing others.

Source: Montenegro and Jankowski (2017)

### **Socially Just Assessment<sup>21</sup>:**

“Socially just assessment includes the elements [in Culturally Responsive Assessment] and refocuses them within a framework that analyzes the interplay between culture, bias, power, and oppression in the assessment process. Socially just assessment calls for the acknowledgement that assessment takes place within various departmental and institutional cultures which impact the processes we follow”

Source: Heiser, Henning, & Lundquist, 2018; Henning & Lundquist, 2018b

### **Critical Assessment<sup>22</sup>:**

1. Disregarding the objectivity myth and accepting that assessment is inherently subjective and guided by the biases and experiences of those conducting assessment

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<https://www.learningoutcomesassessment.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/A-New-Decade-for-Assessment.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Id.

<sup>22</sup> Id.

2. Varying the types of evidence used to assess learning outcomes to not privilege specific ways of knowing or preferred ways to demonstrate knowledge
3. Including the voices of students, especially those who belong to minoritized populations or those whose voices can often be left unheard, throughout the assessment process
4. Using assessment to advance the pursuit of equity across previously identified institutional parameters that demonstrate disparate outcomes across student populations.

Source: Heiser et al. (2017), as well as Hanson (2019)

## Approaches

### **Restorative Practice Approach<sup>23</sup>**

1. Build community and strength relationships
2. Respect the process
3. Circles are powerful and can be strengthened by curriculum
4. There are many restorative responses to choose from.
5. Everyone needs to be part of the process.
6. Restorative practices need principal and school-wide (and district-wide) planning

### **Developmental Relationships Framework<sup>24</sup>**

1. Express Care
  - a. “Show me that I matter to you.”
2. Challenge Growth
  - a. “Push me to keep getting better.”
3. Provide Support
  - a. “Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.”
4. Share Power
  - a. “Treat me with respect and give me a say.”
5. Expand Possibilities
  - a. “Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.”

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<sup>23</sup> <https://www.edutopia.org/article/bringing-restorative-practices-to-your-school-laura-mcclure>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.search-institute.org/developmental-relationships/developmental-relationships-framework/>

## Appendix A: SWOT Analysis

- Initial SWOT Questions
  - What do you think the area does well to produce equity?
  - What do you think is a weakness (not a weakness in your work but perhaps the process)?
  - What are some opportunities?
  - What are some threats to your ability to produce equity?
- Initial SWOT Considerations
  - Start by defining what you think equity might look like for a particular area, department, or building.
    - Is each student receiving what they need?
    - Are there any gaps?
    - If there are gaps, why do they exist?
  - When thinking about what counts as a strength, think about how to show that.
    - What data exists?
    - How should the area assess what is known?
    - Is it the best way to assess/are there better ways to assess?
    - Are equity-based forms of assessment being used?
      - Culturally Responsive Assessment
      - Socially Just Assessment
      - Critical Assessment
  - When thinking about opportunity, is each area thinking about how to make sure that discussions/conversations about equity are embedded in the work and frequently discussed with an open mind and with room for feedback?
    - Are there regular questions that can be asked in meetings by everyone?
    - How can areas be accountable for real, existing problems/opportunities that need to be solved?
    - Would it make sense to create a template that can be helpful for conversations?
- Additional SWOT Questions
  - How do we make sure that everyone understands what equity looks like?
    - Is there a shared language to support discussions of equity?
    - Who would you expect to participate in discussions of equity?
    - Do people have places they can go when they have questions related to equity?

- What does collaboration look like? How are areas working together to address policies, practices, and procedures?
- What does advocacy look like for students, staff, and others?
- If there is an equity concern in the building/area, what is the procedure/protocol for having a discussion?
- How do you utilize professional development, and how do you assess it and build upon it?
- Is there a norm? Who is included in that norm? Who is excluded from that norm? Can that norm be harmful?
- How are you making sure you get staff/student/community input?
  - What mechanisms are in place/need to be put in place?
- What input have you received?
  - Have staff members shared issues of equity with you?
- If a staff member, guardian, or student has a question about equity do you feel you have the appropriate resources to share?
- How do we make sure that discussions/conversations about equity are embedded in our work and frequently discussed with an open mind and with room for feedback?
- Do you feel restorative practices can be used to support efforts in equity?
  - If so, how?
- How do we factor gaps in our own cultural bias/awareness?
- How do we factor in culture/identity generally?
  - Race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, language, etc.
- SWOT Example Analysis: Reviewing Student Conduct
  - What policies do we have in place related to behavior/punishment?
    - What is good about these policies, and what opportunities for improvements exist?
    - Is there a discrepancy between what they are versus what they should be?
    - What does fairness look like?
    - Do our current policies match the district mission, vision, etc.?
  - When implementing policies and practices, did we implement them with the intent of producing equity?
    - Did we consider historical context? Did we consider impact? Did we consider any barriers to implementation and application?
  - What do our numbers look like related to behavior/punishment?
    - Are there any discrepancies?
    - How do biases, stereotypes, lack of cultural competence, etc. create/sustain disparities?
    - In what ways have we tried to address those discrepancies?

- What work have we done in this area to be culturally proficient and culturally responsive?
- What training, programs, or applications do we need to put into place?
- Are there any biases/practices/approaches that are helpful/harmful?
- What do you need to help you produce equity in this area? What barriers exist?
- How have we addressed the social-emotional needs of our students in a proactive rather than reactive manner?
- What exists that could prevent the school/district from implementing equitable policies?