Reynolds School District
Board of Education Working

February 10, 2021

7:00 PM

Virtual Meeting

To:	Board of Directors
From:	Dr. Danna Diaz, Superintendent of Schools
Prepared by:	Kaylie Jeffries, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
Subject:	**Executive Session**
Policy:	Executive Session - BDC
Date:	February 10, 2021

Action	☐
Report	☒

Connection to Board Goals

☒ Student Achievement ☒ Equity ☒ Fiscal Responsibility ☒ Communications

School Board Core Belief/Commitment #4: We believe that the heart of a high-performing organization is its people. We commit to becoming an inclusive and positive organizational culture.

Summary:
The Reynolds School Board and the Superintendent will recess into Executive Session at 6:00p, under ORS 192.660(2)(d) Negotiations and ORS 192.660(2)(h) Legal Counsel.
Executive Session is closed to the public.

Previous Board Action:
Not Applicable

Background:
Not Applicable

Financial Implications:
Not Applicable

Alternatives:
Not Applicable

Staff Recommendation:
Not Applicable

Motion:
Not Applicable

To:	Board of Directors
From:	Dr. Danna Diaz, Superintendent of Schools
Prepared by:	Kaylie Jeffries, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
Subject:	**Call to Order**
Policy:	Board Meetings BD/BDA, Conduct of Board Meetings BDDF
Date:	February 10, 2021

Action	☒
Report	☐

Connection to Board Goals

☐ Student Achievement   ☐ Equity   ☐ Fiscal Responsibility   ☒ Communications

School Board Core Belief/Commitment #3: We believe that high-quality first-time instruction will eliminate the opportunity gap.   We commit to setting high expectations and providing intentional professional development for instructional leaders.

Summary:
   a. Call to Order
   b. Land Use Acknowledgement

On March 17, Governor Kate Brown temporarily suspended public gatherings in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Because of this order, Reynolds School District Board Meetings will be virtual until further notice.

Although members of the board are not gathered in a central, physical location, we do have a quorum present at this meeting by video-conferencing.

Land Acknowledgement
We will open tonight's meeting by acknowledging the traditional Indigenous inhabitants of this land. The purpose of these statements is to show respect for indigenous peoples and recognize their enduring relationship to the land. Practicing acknowledgment can also raise awareness about histories that are often suppressed or forgotten.

Land Use Acknowledgment & Guidelines

Reynolds
School District

Approved and Adpoted on May 27, 2020

Reynolds School District expresses our gratitude and appreciation to traditional village sites of the Multnomah, Kathlamet, Clackamas, bands of Chinook, Tualatin, Kalapuya, Molalla and many other Tribes who made their homes along the Columbia River, and which is now home to a vibrant native community representing over 400 different tribal nations.

We believe that it is our responsibility as a school district to educate our students, staff and families about the true history of colonialism and the continued need to address colonialism today. This land acknowledgement will encourage our community to reflect upon the land we are standing on and engage in conversations centered in honoring the land.

Land acknowledgments will take place in conjunction with the Pledge of Allegiance, which will be recited after the Land Use Acknowledgement, during the following times:

• School Board meetings
• District-wide community meetings
• School assemblies
• Athletic Competitions
• Parent and community school evening events

Land Use Acknowledgment

We respectfully acknowledge that the land on which we are gathering today is the traditional homeland of a diverse array of indigenous tribes and bands. Multnomah County rests on traditional village sites of the Multnomah, Wasco, Cowlitz, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Bands of Chinook, Tualatin, Kalapuya, Molalla, and many other tribes who made their homes along the Columbia River, creating communities and summer encampments to harvest and use the plentiful natural resources of the area. Multnomah County is now home to a vibrant indigenous community representing over 400 different tribal nations.

We recognize Indigenous peoples as the traditional stewards of this land and acknowledge the enduring relationship between the land and the people since time immemorial. We make this acknowledgement to open a space of recognition, inclusion, and respect for our sovereign tribal partners and all indigenous students, families, and staff in our community.

![Reynolds School District logo]

EACH AND EVERY CHILD PREPARED
FOR A WORLD YET TO BE IMAGINED

To:	Board of Directors
From:	Dr. Danna Diaz, Superintendent of Schools
Prepared by:	Kaylie Jeffries, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
Subject:	**Public to be Heard**
Policy:	[Public to be Heard - BDDH](#) [Public Comment at Board Meetings - BDDH-AR](#)
Date:	February 10, 2021

Action	☐
Report	☒

Connection to Board Goals

☐ Student Achievement   ☒ Equity   ☐ Fiscal Responsibility   ☒ Communications

School Board Core Belief/Commitment #4: We believe that the heart of a high-performing organization is its people. We commit to becoming an inclusive and positive organizational culture.

Summary:
Members of the public will address the Board with comments and the Board will listen only. The Board may choose not to address a request if it does not fall within the scope of Board Governance. Oregon law prohibits the Board from discussing specific employees or their job performance.

Those wishing to speak must complete a Public Comment Form on the RSD website between Friday at 5p and Monday at 5p, before the meeting.

Public comment will be limited to the first seven forms turned in. All other submissions will be given to the Board as written comment.

Those providing spoken comment will be moved from attendee to panelists during the Public Comment portion of the agenda. Each speaker will have three minutes. There will be a timer on the screen, giving them warnings when they have one minute left and again at 30 seconds left.

To:	Board of Directors
From:	Dr. Danna Diaz, Superintendent of Schools
Prepared by:	Kaylie Jeffries, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
Subject:	**Strategic Plan Presentation**
Policy:	District Goals – AE
Date:	February 10, 2021

Action	☐
Report	☒

Connection to Board Goals

☒ Student Achievement   ☒ Equity   ☒ Fiscal Responsibility   ☒ Communications

School Board Core Belief/Commitment #4: We believe that the heart of a high-performing organization is its people. We commit to becoming an inclusive and positive organizational culture.

Summary:
We will present the first reading of the Strategic Plan, with the four Goal Topics of Marginalized Students, Culturally Responsive Teaching, Student and Staff Wellness, and Professional Development.

Previous Board Action:
Not Applicable

Background:
Not Applicable

Financial Implications:
Not Applicable

Alternatives:
Not Applicable

Staff Recommendation:
Staff would like to know if the Board will be ready to approve the Strategic Plan at the February 24, 2021 Business Meeting or if they require any additional changes.

Motion:
Not Applicable

Reynolds School District Strategic Plan Organizer 2021-2026

Goal Topic #1: Marginalized Students

In order to give voice to our marginalized* populations: We will remove barriers, hold high academic expectations and elicit and honor all voices.

*In Reynolds, we define marginalized as those students and families who are furthest from justice and those who have been historically silenced in our school system. Our marginalized population is identified as our Black and Brown students. We believe that if we address the disparities that face black and brown students that it will positively impact other groups facing systemic barriers.

GOAL/S:

1. **Elevate Voice:** We will create opportunities that allow voices that have been historically marginalized to be honored and elevated.
2. **Remove Barriers:** We will take action to identify and remove internal barriers (and provide tools to overcome external barriers) so that marginalized students have just and equitable access to a high-quality education.
3. **Communication:** We are committed to truly listen and create timely/efficient communication systems.
4. **Improve the academic and social experience** for Black students and families in RSD

Please choose one or more pillars this goal is aligned to:
☒ Equity   ☐ Safety   ☐ Instructional Practices   ☒ Organizational Culture

METRIC 1: Elevate Voice
- No less than three times per year, schools and district level departments will use a combination of surveys, *empathy interviews, input sessions and community meetings to measure the level equitable participation as well as the overall satisfaction of students and families. Disaggregate for Black students and families. (The ultimate goal is to ensure that there is a true representation of the school/district community in decision making.)

METRIC 2: Remove Barriers
- Annually district departments or schools will identify the top three barriers to the goals.
- RSD will analyze the data from graduation rates; acceptance rates to 4-year universities/trade programs and percentage rates of identified in Talented and Gifted Programs of Historically Marginalized students and disaggregated for Black Students.

METRIC 3: Communication
- At the conclusion of each outreach opportunity, RSD schools and or departments will use input sessions, surveys and/or community feedback to identify internal and external barriers to student and community communication.
- Annual equity progress review to address barriers that families identify.

*An empathy interview uses a human-centered approach to understand the feelings and experiences of others.

Action Steps	Leader	Evidence
ELEVATE VOICE		
Adhering to the Metrics listed, each school and District level Department will be responsible for including an action	District Departments (Communications, Schools, Academics)	• Increased participation in community conversation and/or surveys.

plan in their SIP or DIP, directly related to Marginalized students. developing an action plan • Identify the goal(s). • Develop the action plan. • Evaluate the implementation of the plan and the quarterly results. • Determine if adjustments are needed to the plan based on quarterly results. • Communicated data out to stakeholders and allow opportunity for input on the quarterly results of the plans. • Ensure the diversity of your team represents the community you serve. • Disaggregate all data to evaluate for Black students and families.		• Increased access points for feedback (more offerings than surveys, i.e.,follow up emails, home visits etc.) • District-wide and school specific input sessions to be done that involves all stakeholders. (publish in advance topics, solicit ideas, provide agenda then summary in writing bcs of the meeting) • Identify groups, ensure that there is representation at all input sessions, specifically families and community members from our Black community. • Chat Session, a type of empathy interview, as the initial session to identify barriers and data (be specific about what works and what is not working in regards to participation. • Follow up sessions for assessing how effectiveness of the systems. • Provide ongoing professional conversations to allow all staff to internalize the importance of having an ethnic and racial equity lens in communication. • Create sustainable systems (i.e. train counselors to advocate for students...) to ensure that all staff are trained in equity and anti-racism. All staff will be a voice and an ear for students who need them the most.
REMOVE BARRIERS		
Each school and District level Department will be responsible for including an action plan in their SIP or DIP, directly related to Marginalized students. developing an action plan • Identify the goal(s). • Develop the action plan. • Evaluate the implementation of the plan and the quarterly results. • Determine if adjustments are needed to the plan based on quarterly results. • Disaggregate all data to evaluate for Black students and families. • Communicated data out to stakeholders and allow opportunity for input on the quarterly results of the plans. • Ensure the diversity of your team represents the community you serve. • Adopt a research-based district-wide equity screener.	District Departments (Communications, Schools, Academics)	• Increase participation of Black students in programs like TAG, and AP offerings, ASB, culturally specific clubs. • Create systems for which historically silenced populations are part of the decision-making process. • Specifically identify Black voices to measure levels of trust and to rate positive experiences.

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COMMUNICATION		
Each school and District level Department will be responsible for including an action plan in their SIP or DIP, directly related to Marginalized students. developing an action plan • Identify the goal(s). • Develop the action plan. • Evaluate the implementation of the plan and the quarterly results. • Determine if adjustments are needed to the plan based on quarterly results. • Disaggregate all data to evaluate for Black students and families. • Communicated data out to stakeholders and allow opportunity for input on the quarterly results of the plans. • Ensure the diversity of your team represents the community you serve. • Prioritize the act of "follow through" in the cycle of communication to honor the time and input by all.	District Departments (Communications, Schools, Academics)	• Provide dual pathways for parents and district/ schools to communicate in preferred languages. • There will be multiple pathways for parents to reach out to RSD schools and departments. • Publish meeting notes and/minutes on public forum for accountability.

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Reynolds School District Strategic Plan Organizer 2021-2026

Goal Topic #2: Culturally Responsive Teaching

We will interrupt bias and microaggression in instructional practices.

GOAL/S:

1. Share decision making with all stakeholders.
2. Honor student ways of being and showing knowledge: Student voice and choice.
3. Eliminate control/ compliance as proof of learning.
4. Curate curriculum.

Please choose one or more pillars this goal is aligned to:

☒ Equity   ☒ Safety   ☒ Instructional Practices   ☒ Organizational Culture

METRIC 1: Annual improvement in stakeholder survey and listening session participation rates, mirroring student demographics.

METRIC 2: Annual improvement in student survey data about voice and choice.

METRIC 3: Annual progress toward equitable grading practices at each grade level.

METRIC 4: Annual progress curating curriculum toward culturally responsive teaching across all grades and subject areas.

Action Steps	Leader	Evidence
SHARED DECISION MAKING WITH ALL STAKEHOLDERS		
Establish shared definitions for Culturally Responsive Teaching.	Academics	Shared definition of Culturally Responsive
Establish a baseline. Do our stakeholders currently view our teaching practices as culturally responsive?	Academics	Baseline data established.
Establish a process to ask this every year, to track year over year data - Include in the CEE survey.	Academics	Standardized questions established for annual stakeholder survey.
Establish a process to annually listen and learn 'live' with stakeholder groups – to hear the actual voices of our community, with an equity lens on who our stakeholders are.	Academics	Annual stakeholder 'listen and learn' sessions complete and stakeholder feedback captured.
Establish student exit survey to determine why students 'leave' school.	Academics	Survey results collected and presented annually.

HONOR STUDENT WAYS OF BEING AND SHOWING KNOWLEDGE: STUDENT VOICE AND CHOICE		
Establish a baseline of student perception of their current level of voice and choice.	Academics	Baseline of student perception about voice and choice established.
Increase student voice and choice in their educational experience.	Academics	Clear evidence that student voice and choice have increased and that student response is representative of our student population.
Establish a way to measure student voice and choice year over year.	Academics	Standardized questions established for annual student survey. If insufficient evidence of student response, then re-open and re-communicate the survey.
Ensure addition of electives or choice. Especially equity in PE, art, music offerings in elementary.	Academics	Additional elective choices added to course catalogs at secondary, and choice coursework added at elementary. Full time PE and music in elementary.
ELIMINATE CONTROL/ COMPLIANCE AS PROOF OF LEARNING		
Establish equitable grading practices and accompanying communication strategy to families.	Academics	District wide grading policy established, adopted as Board policy, and communicated to families.
Separate 'will' from 'skill' in feedback.	Academics	Academic grading limited to information about mastery of curricular content.
Stop issuing summative grades for formative assessment.	Academics	Feedback about other student behaviors given separately or not at all.
Establish clear success criteria (i.e. rubrics) for summative grading, across a variety of assessment formats.	Academics	Clear success criteria established for all summative grading opportunities.
CURATE CURRICULUM		
Add ethnic studies coursework at all grade levels.	Academics	Ethnic studies courses offered at all secondary schools, and at elementary, incorporate ethnic studies into units of study.
Supplement adopted curricular materials with culturally responsive texts.	Academics	Culturally responsive texts adopted.
Ensure curricular materials present multiple perspectives on content.	Academics	Scope and sequence documents established, ensuring multiple perspectives in all content areas.
Implement social justice, multicultural education, and ethnic studies in curricular content and enhance cross-curricular approach.	Academics	Scope and sequence documents established, infusing social justice, multicultural education, and ethnic studies in all content areas.

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Reynolds School District Strategic Plan Organizer 2021-2026

Goal Topic #3: Student and Staff Wellness

We will promote a healthy learning and working environment which provides students and staff with the skills, social support, and environmental reinforcement they need to adopt long-term, healthy behaviors.

GOAL/S:

1. Develop and implement a robust District-adopted wellness policy that focuses on physical, mental-emotional, and social health for students, family, and staff.

Please choose one or more pillars this goal is aligned to:
☐ Equity   ☒ Safety   ☐ Instructional Practices   ☒ Organizational Culture

METRIC 1: Draft plan presented to Board for adoption by ……

METRIC 2: Revision of related board policies

METRIC 3: Development of a wellness policy guide

METRIC 4: Evidence of ongoing meeting of wellness committee

Action Steps	Leader	Evidence
Form a standing Wellness Committee. At all levels – Elementary, Secondary, & Staff Wellness Committees.	Student & Family Services	Formation of a committee with elementary, secondary and staff representation
Review/revise Board policies and federal and state guidelines related to student and staff wellness. Review and offer recommendations to the Policy Review Committee.	Student & Family Services	Meeting minutes of the Wellness Committee that reflect a review and revision of Board policies and federal/state guidelines.
Revise board policies related to student and staff wellness.	Student & Family Services	Meeting minutes of the Wellness Committee that reflect a review and list of recommendations to the policy review committee.
With stakeholder input, draft a Wellness Policy Guide aligned to the revised Board policies related to student and staff wellness.	Student & Family Services	Completion of a Wellness Policy Guide.
Over the next five years, periodically survey student, staff, and families (parents) stakeholder groups and review Oregon Healthy Kids Survey results.	Student & Family Services	Committee develops a survey and annual survey schedule.
Ensure Wellness Committee meets quarterly every year.	Student & Family Services	Schedule of committee meetings and minutes that reflect quarterly meetings.

Build an action plan to commit to improving student, family, and staff wellness. Make other and online resources available.	Student & Family Services	Wellness Action Plan

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Reynolds School District Strategic Plan Organizer 2021-2026

Goal Topic #4: Professional Development

We will offer continuous learning opportunities from onboarding to retirement for all staff to develop skills, knowledge, and confidence to accelerate student outcomes.

GOAL/S:

1. Improving the quality of professional development for all staff while eliminating systems of racism and oppression to become a high performing, culturally responsive school district.

Please choose one or more pillars this goal is aligned to:

☒ Equity   ☒ Safety   ☒ Instructional Practices   ☒ Organizational Culture

METRIC 1: Voluntary staff retention less retirement and reduction in force.

METRIC 2: Measure the quality of delivery and content of professional development by using a standardized feedback form across departments

METRIC 3: Results from the annual community and staff RSD perception survey (CEE).

METRIC 4: Measure RSD recruitment of applicants, hiring, and retention of candidates of color.

Action Steps	Leader	Evidence
Build a rubric for culturally responsive practices.	Academics	Rubric
Utilizing PLC's, staff meetings, and conferences to measure implementation of the PD offerings.	Schools	Conferences/Book Study Data Review – adult and student data Meeting minutes
Develop and implement an effective coaching and mentoring model that provides ongoing support to staff.	Human Capital Management	Reestablish a mentoring program that is inclusive of all staff Research-based coaching model in place
Design a professional development tracking form for all staff in every department that outlines a professional development pathway focused on equity, safety, instructional practices, and organizational culture. PD Map by position designed for all staff from year 1 to retirement differentiated based on skill and all positions receive PD.	Human Capital Management	Results from the professional development tracking Development of professional development guide including registration and participation
SIP/DIP plans have a clearly articulated implementation plan for	Schools & Academics	SIP/DIP plans

professional development specific to culturally responsive practices.		
Articulate professional development standards.	Human Capital Management & Academics	Adopted standards
Design a standardized feedback form to measure the quality of delivery and content of all PD	Human Capital Management	Standardized PD feedback form
Departments and schools will examine and derive SIP/DIP action steps from community and staff perception survey results annually.	Schools & Academics	Documentation of data and steps taken
All staff who exit RSD will complete a feedback form focused on organizational improvement	Human Capital Management	Exit survey data
Review existing policies, resources, and practices with a culturally responsive lens to eliminate systems of racism and oppression in areas including, but not limited to: Recruitment, Selection/Hiring, Evaluation, and Coaching.	Human Capital Management	Recruitment and Hiring Data

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Mission and Vision Statements:

MISSION:

We lead with equity to educate and support all students to graduate with the skills and confidence to thrive.

VISION:

Option 1: We partner with families and our community to prepare lifelong-learners to achieve their full potential in a complex and interconnected world.

Option 2: Together, we prepare lifelong-learners to achieve their full potential in a complex and interconnected world.

Option 3: As a community, we prepare lifelong-learners to achieve their full potential in a complex and interconnected world.

To: Board of Directors

From: Dr. Danna Diaz, Superintendent of Schools

Prepared by: Kaylie Jeffries, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

Subject: **Oregon Center for Educational Equity Training**

Policy: [District Equity Policy – GCCB/GDCB/IKAAA](#)

Date: February 10, 2021

Action	☐
Report	☒

Connection to Board Goals

☐ Student Achievement   ☒ Equity   ☐ Fiscal Responsibility   ☐ Communications

School Board Core Belief/Commitment #2: We believe that equitable practices allow everyone within the Reynolds community to thrive. We commit to using equity as a foundation in all decision-making processes in order to eliminate inequities.

Summary:
One of the goals in the Superintendent's Action Plan is to work with the Executive Director Schools to orchestrate routine, ongoing conversations and professional development around systemic racism and systemic oppression in education, beginning with district leadership. Each district leadership meeting will begin with relevant discussions around how race impacts our work.

The Oregon Center for Educational Equity has done trainings with building and department administrators and will now facilitate a few sections with the Board.

Previous Board Action:
Not Applicable

Background:
Spring 2020:
- Developed five-year equity and anti-racism PD plan for the district.
- GOAL: Eliminate systems of racism and oppression in RSD.
- *We will function as an anti-racist system that takes universal action to remove barriers to student achievement. We will be able to identify and understand our own biases and how they impact and perpetuate an educational system that is set up to elevate the dominant culture.*
- YEAR 1: Building capacity and efficacy in all building and district leaders in anti-racism.

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Summer, Fall 2020
Oregon Center for Educational Equity work with RTT

- In August, the Reynolds Transformation Team participated in a 3-day virtual professional development with the Oregon Center for Educational Equity (OCEE). We engaged in deep learning about the racist state and federal policies that were put in place intentionally to oppress and deny people of color access to land, generational wealth, employment and basic human rights. We were challenged to confront our own biases around race and to be courageous enough to interrupt acts of oppression and racism when it is witnessed.
- Since August, the first hour of our monthly RTT meetings is devoted to learning and having conversations about race. It may start with a short video or an article, then lead into breakout sessions with our small learning leaders' teams to discuss our thoughts and understandings about what we saw or heard. We then share out as a whole group which offers the opportunity to challenge or affirm our thinking. In February, OCEE will return to follow up with RTT and do another learning series called Taking it Up. If this series is as impactful as what we received in August, Reynolds is on track to make real change in our system.

Winter 2021
White Fragility Book Study and Seminar with Robin D'Angelo

- Last winter, we were able to confirm time with Robin D'Angelo, author of the book White Fragility to do a 3-4-hour workshop with our district leadership team. In preparation for her visit, the Reynolds Transformation Team (RTT) will begin reading the book White Fragility and engage in monthly discussions about each chapter. This August workshop with Dr. D'Angelo will serve as a stage setting kick off for our work in becoming a more anti-racist system. We feel honored that we were able to secure her expertise and look forward to learning from her.

Financial Implications:
Trainings with the Oregon Center for Educational Equity will be funded by the District Improvement Grant.

Alternatives:
Not Applicable

Staff Recommendation:
Not Applicable

Motion:
Not Applicable

HAVING NECESSARY CONVERSATIONS IN SCHOOLS

Guidelines for Addressing Contentious Political/Social Environments and Cultures

Suggestions from the Oregon Center for Educational Equity (OCEE)

INTRODUCTION:

Especially during times of divisiveness, it is imperative that educators be prepared to facilitate and lead conversations around issues of diversity, inclusion and equity. We must commit to interrupting and responding to all forms of hurt and harm that come from conflicts of beliefs and behaviors.

Public Education has the responsibility to provide not just for the education of students, but must also prioritize their well-being, respect, sense of belonging, full inclusion and safety.

Necessary conversations are needed with the implementation of Oregon's *ALL STUDENTS BELONG* rule that bans symbols of hatred from school grounds. Combined with the contentiousness of the current political dialogue and divisiveness of perspectives, now is the time to firm up support for educators to engage with the controversial issues facing our nation and their impacts on our schools.

The Oregon Center for Educational Equity (OCEE) believes that policies, practices, leadership and collaboration is needed so that educators are proactive in addressing issues of racism, sexism, homophobia, religious intolerance and any other forms of hurt and harm to the very identities of each of us.

It is imperative that educators ensure safe, supportive and affirming learning environments and cultures. It is not about taking a neutral position. Clearly and consistently, all adults in the system must actively support and ensure the well-being of each student.

WHY ARE THESE CONVERSATIONS NECESSARY?

"Schools must provide access to education on a non-discriminatory basis, prevent harassment that interferes with their educational mission, and socialize students to live and work in a diverse community." Joan E Bertin

"In Oregon, we value both freedom and responsibility. With freedom comes collective responsibility to ensure the civil and human rights of every student – by providing a safe, welcoming school environment."
ODE *All Students Belong*

October 2020   www.edequityoregon.net

"All students are entitled to a high-quality educational experience, free from discrimination or harassment based on perceived race, color, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability or national origin."
ODE *All Students Belong*

When one person in a school community is treated poorly, everyone is affected. The mental, emotional, social and fear for physical safety adversely impact many people. The controversy can overtake the teaching and learning creating divisiveness that hinders everyone's experiences in schools.

Hostile environments are not just about physical safety, but emotional and psychological security as well. We cannot permit the impact of attitudes and/or actions to damage students by causing emotional distress.

It is our responsibility to be both proactive and reactive in order to confront divisive and contentious issues. OCEE believes that RESPONSIBILITY is the ability and commitment to respond. Schools need to be prepared to face controversy, not merely respond to conflicts and hurtful incidents.

Oregon now bans in schools symbols that have histories of violence and hate (confederate flag, noose, swastikas) They "contradict the educational mission of public schools as it puts some students in harm's way as targets for verbal and psychological harassment." Berit Brogaard The reality of this situation cannot be ignored.

It is the ethical duty of every educator to keep each student safe and protect the integrity of the learning environment based on a strong commitment to diversity, inclusion and respect for all.

When not deliberately addressed, these issues often erupt into unproductive interactions filled with name-calling and attacks. Ineffective circular arguments can arise that are time and emotionally draining. Therefore, we must strategically plan and implement well-facilitated, timely conversations.

Arguments aren't just about trying to be right and changing someone else's mind. Instead these disagreements provide an opportunity for each of us to gain better, deeper understanding of our own perspectives, beliefs and non-negotiables. Facilitated discussions afford opportunities to understand the perspectives of folks who do not share our beliefs and/or lived experiences. One loses nothing of one's own moral and ethical perspective by trying to understand those who hold vastly differing points of view.

HOW TO CREATE/SUSTAIN THESE NECESSARY CONVERSATIONS:

There is a need to deliberately facilitate discussions to explore differences and seek some areas of common ground. Whether the intersection of core beliefs can be found or not, the process of exploring shared value is beneficial learning.

OREGON CENTER for
EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

October 2020   www.edequityoregon.net

All educators must understand, recognize and address the pervasiveness of everyday racism. Often manifesting as Micro-Aggressions, they are verbal and non-verbal insults, assaults and invalidations. They have tremendous negative cumulative effects. Micro-Aggressions must be interrupted and prevented as they cause both immediate harm as well as create and perpetuate hostile environments and cultures.

Educators must teach their students that comments that disparage, put down or attack the identities of others constitute harassment. Under the umbrella of Anti-Bullying, these comments are not allowed or tolerated in schools.

To determine which actions, attitudes and symbols must be addressed and about which students need to understand the impact, it is essential to consider:

- Their substantial disruption to the learning environment for any student;
- The harm and/or how they substantially collide with the rights of others;
- Ways they violate school policies (bullying, harassment, nondiscrimination, equity/diversity/inclusion).

We must teach students, and hold our colleagues and community members, to respectful, thoughtful conversations and interactions. Responses to inappropriate attitudes, actions and symbols should be designed to interrupt harm while increasing understanding, respect and tolerance.

Educators must be prepared to intervene both publicly and privately to teach the students why their actions are inappropriate and hurtful. For example, all educators should be prepared to immediately respond with statements like: *"That comment is disparaging the identities of students in our school and constitutes harassment. As a result, we need to have a further conversation about how you are putting other students in harms way."*

Educators need professional development and support to be able to acknowledge, respond to and help heal the hurt and harm.

Facilitators must be prepared to ask questions to help understand what others are thinking and feeling. These questions should be about things you honestly want to know and better understand. They are not "gotcha" moments to prove someone wrong.

Though these facilitated discussions might not change anyone's perspective, they will provide the opportunity for each person to learn to respectfully speak and listen to someone else's point of view. It in no way limits or restricts someone to hold their beliefs, but they must share them and act upon them in ways that do not harm others who disagree.

OREGON CENTER for
EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

Each of us must be ready and willing to teach about and support people who are harmed by explaining the manifestations of potential and actual physical, emotional and social trauma.

- Feelings of fear and being threatened, impair students' social, emotional and academic development;
- Students avoid parts of school or certain activities to try to feel safer;
- Students miss school --- when they are at school, often they are preoccupied with their sense of a hostile environment and the resulting distress;
- Conflicts ensue which can lead to violence and fighting;
- Students and staff are distracted from the teaching and learning process;
- Staff must spend time addressing the incidents and conflicts;
- Often further disruption takes place with protests and counter protests that cause more students to miss school or have their education disrupted.   ODE *All Students Belong*

To effectively facilitate controversial and potentially contentious conversations, those who lead the dialogue must understand their own triggers and flash points. These discussions are not just academic or intellectual endeavors. They are emotional.   Processing not only what you hear, but how it makes you feel is essential. It is also beneficial to share emotional processing with others.   If the conflict becomes too over-whelming, it is appropriate to pause and stop the conversation. Re-engage later after everyone has had a time to reflect on their emotional responses.

Holding space for respectful exploration of multiple perspectives is a skill that educators need to practice, reflect upon and continue to learn from each experience. It is helpful to collaborate with others to plan for, implement and reflect upon the crucial role of the facilitator for these essential interactions.

Why Are We Yelling: The Art of Productive Disagreement teaches that understanding the basis of a person's point of view can help others listen and respond in discussions around controversial issues. It divides these realms into HEAD, HEART and HANDS.
- HEAD discussions debate the facts and which sources of information to embrace;
- HEART disagreements stem from deeply held beliefs, moral imperatives, and ethical considerations;
- HAND arguments are about actions that are believed to be appropriate and inappropriate.

Understanding one's own and other's point of view realms help us better understand others, even when we vehemently disagree with one another.

Policies and practices must clearly delineate that teaching about controversial issues is an essential part of 21st century public education.

OREGON CENTER for
EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

IMPACT:

"America's classrooms are rife with opportunities for growth through controversial topics. The question is whether teachers will be empowered to address them." Jonathan Zimmerman & Emily Robertson

" When our nation is starkly divided and intolerance creates a constant *'us-versus-them'* attitude among social groups, now is exactly the time to teach students how to deal with controversial subjects and how to cope with a plurality of ideas and identities."   Rebecca Recco

Students need to be able to express what they think and how they feel about the controversies that surround the contemporary world in which they live. They need safe spaces to "test drive" their ideas and learn to see disagreement as an opportunity to learn.   Facilitated discussions can be an antidote to conflict.

Being both proactive with these conversations as well as prepared to deal with the urgency of immediate responses to conflicts are necessary. Both should be anticipated.

In an educational setting, all who are involved with schools deserve to receive immediate feedback and intervention if what they say or do, causes hurt or harm, regardless of whether it was intentional or unintended; consciously or unconsciously done.

Educators must be ready to immediately interrupt the negative flow of information. Student safety and well-being is our number one priority. These necessary conversations afford the opportunity for those whose words or actions harm others to be called out and understand their impact. For those people who suffer the harm, it is the chance to experience support of someone who will intervene.

"The worst time to try and settle a long-standing argument is when you're in the middle of its latest outbreak. That's when everyone is most likely to dig in and fight from their own corner, regardless of whether it's useful or not."   Buster Benson

The only way to hope to lessen the contentiousness and divisiveness we are currently experiencing in the United States and which impacts schools, is to address the issues. When conversations do not go well . . . regroup and try again.

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ADDRESSING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

As educators tackle the complex issues around creating and sustaining schools that meet the needs of each student, the dimensions of equity must be understood in order to be effectively implemented. With a social justice lens, educators have a moral obligation to provide multiple pathways for success not just in school, but in life for every student. Equity is all about fairness and there is nothing more unfair than to treat people who are diverse in needs, talents, life experiences and historical legacies, all exactly the same. As a society that promotes a belief in equality with respect for all, there must first be equity to enable each person to have access, opportunity and support before true acceptance and inclusion can be achieved.

"Inequities occur when biased or unfair policies, programs, practices, or situations contribute to a lack of equality in educational performance results and outcomes." (edglossary.com) Therefore, all of us working toward educational equity must find ways to actively address the predictability of who will be successful based on any identity factors and historical barriers or sources of privilege. It means identifying and dismantling the dominant culture practices that serve to maintain the status quo and reproduce practices that negatively impact vulnerable and marginalized students. Equity work needs to focus on assets not deficits as educators look for and nurture the talents, gifts and interests of every student. Schools that truly nurture and support each student, shift communities so that they benefit from these changes as we become more inclusive, interdependent, supportive, connected and appreciative of diversity.

Generally, education equity reform efforts have been reactive. They seek to address inequities identified through test scores or other sources of data. They are ineffective because they look at the symptoms not the root causes and make little change to the beliefs and behaviors that created the policies and practices that lead to disparities among different groups. We tinker with the ways things are and do not address the inherent barriers and hindrances within the structures and culture of our educational system. Educators see the deficits within students, families and communities and apply a "fix-them" mentality that does not honor or respect individuals in all aspects of their essence. Educators' propensity to try to "fix" students leads to perpetuation of the dominant culture and assimilation into that dominant culture as the only way for students to "fit-in" and succeed. "While countless

advancements in civil rights have arguable led to greater equality, many would contend that diminished societal inequity, or a greater understanding or awareness of inequity does not mean that inequities no longer exist." (Edgossary.com)

Instead, educational equity needs to be proactive and pervasive in how we think and act in all areas of schooling. Equity is a belief and a stance one takes to close the gap between the espoused goals of public education and the reality of the actions and outcomes within schools. Before we ask ourselves: What should I do? each educator must confront Who am I? and How will I be in every interaction I have? It means embracing social justice leadership. Those working toward equity and social justice must take on issues of "race, class, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation and other historically and currently marginalizing conditions in the United States central to their advocacy, leadership practice and vision. This definition centers on addressing and eliminating marginalization in schools" (Theoharis 2007, 223)

Equity work is complex and challenging but should not be considered hard. It is work that reaps amazing results. Being an equity leader allows us to look at ourselves in the mirror and surface conscious and unconscious biases that get in the way of understanding and connecting with students. It means holding self-compassion and grace as we acknowledge our intentional and unintentional actions that have harmful impact. It means acknowledging and learning from our imperfections as humans and striving to be better and more loving next time. Developing our equity lens enables us to clearly see the students and families that we serve in all of their wonderfulness. For that reason, educational equity work is truly a gift not only to others, but to ourselves as we realize, at least in part, our moral imperative to bring about meaningful change to the systems in which we work.

Equity-focused educators employ a variety of frames of thinking into their work. They address the needs of the whole-person by attending to not only cognitive development, but social, emotional and cultural connectiveness. Through the lens of multi-culturalism, there is a strong focus on respecting and celebrating diversity, communicating and interacting across differences and exposing all students to diverse curriculum and multiple perspectives. Through the lens of social justice, equity-minded educators guide students to explore diverse life-experiences, historical and current issues of oppression and privilege, and engage in raising consciousness around inequity in everyday social, environmental, economic and political aspects of life. A focus on social justice empowers students and staff to interrupt and address patterns of inequities. Educators must know how to employ culturally responsive teaching and learning that focuses on facilitating multiple pathways to learning and methods for demonstrating learning. There must be clear focus on variety and choice in improving the learning capacity of diverse students who have been marginalized. It means focusing on both

affective and cognitive learning through relevant and rigorous curriculum and instruction. Being culturally responsive means building resilience and positive mindsets by pushing back on dominant narratives about historically and currently marginalized people. (Z. Hammond 2016) It means helping members of the dominant culture see the significance and positive impact of diversity and inclusion.   Multicultural, social justice and cultural responsive self-development is an essential aspect of equity education for dominant-culture students as well. "Through the social construction of a more multifaceted self, students can begin to critically examine personal and historical perspectives and practices underlying the opportunity gap between dominant and dominated sociocultural groups. "(Houser 1999) It affords them the opportunity to address the uncomfortable, unequal, ineffective prejudicial conditions and relationships that not only harm individuals, but society. Racism. Sexism, Classism, Ableism, Heterosexism, Religious Intolerance etc. are, by their very nature, the products of design and therefore with courage and conviction they need no longer function in our schools and communities. We can redesign how we treat one another.

To many leaders, the challenge of taking on and undoing inequities in schools seems daunting and too complex to address in meaningful ways. However, when we embrace the concepts of diversity, inclusion and equity as lens through which we view all decisions and situations we are better prepared to look at the variety of ways that inequities play out in schools.   A focus on equity does not come with a position or title.   It is a way of being that demonstrates care and concern for making a difference by challenging the status quo. Often, we begin equity work in schools by looking at disaggregated data from the standardized assessments and practices we currently use to report learning performance. This Data Approach can stall meaningful action because it usually involves either admiring gains or loathing lack of achievement without significant understanding of causes or effective systemic changes. Too often addressing equity has used a Hammer Approach that shames and blames educators thereby closing them off from creative and inspired actions. The "Kumbaya Approach" also does not work well. Just celebrating and accepting everyone where they are and providing encouragement is not enough. There is real danger in a culture of low expectations.

The Oregon Center for Educational Equity believes that through active love, educators must look deeply at beliefs, behaviors, practices, policies, structures, systems and culture ---- investigating how they impact ourselves and others to understand who benefits and who is harmed. As bell hooks says, "To begin by always thinking of love as an action rather than a feeling is one way in which anyone using the word in this manner automatically assumes accountability and responsibility." Responsibility is the ability to respond and being

accountable for one's choice to either act or not take action.   Active love prompts educators to look at the contributing factors and intentional and unintentional consequences of a variety of different types of gaps and inequities. Gaps represent the impact of conscious and unconscious inequitable policies and practices that create barriers and disparities in how systems treat and support different people. There are also forms of inequity that stem from broader beliefs and behaviors that represent underlying norms and assumptions that play out in schools and communities in a variety of ways. These gaps and inequities are evident in the culture, systems and structures that perpetuate barriers to realizing the goals of honoring diversity, providing inclusion of all, ensuring fair equitable treatment and realizing social justice. To bring about meaningful change, it is essential to investigate and address educational equity though understanding of multiple, interconnected gaps and inequities.

<h3 style="text-align:center;">Educational Equity Gaps:</h3>

"**Achievement Gap**" is often the term used to point out the significant, persistent and predictable disparities in academic performance based on standardized assessment measures by groups of students who share characteristics like racial and socio-economic status.

 "**Opportunity Gap**" is closely aligned with the achievement gap. An "Opportunity Gap" exists when "race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English proficiency, community wealth, familial situations, or other factors contribute to or perpetuate lower educational aspirations, achievement, and attainment for certain groups of students." (edglossary.com) It is often a result of the unequal or inequitable distribution of resources to meet the needs of individual students especially those who have been historically marginalized by the dominant culture.

"**Access Gap**" exists through the policies and practices within schools that limit or block certain students from taking full advantage of all courses, programs or activities that schools provide. To address the Access Gap generally requires schools to provide additional services and/or remove the actual or potential barriers that prevent some students from key learning situations. (edglossary.com)

"**Behavior Management Gap**" Explicit and implicit bias and negative stereotypes cause disparities in the range of responses leading to unfair and often unwarranted disciplinary actions. For students, especially those who experience marginalization, exclusion, "othering" and oppression, discipline practices often lead to anxiety, anger, disengagement, increased absenteeism and potential for dropping out (being PUSHED-OUT). Behavior management actions too often stem from race and gender-based beliefs around appropriateness and expectations of students' attitudes and actions. Teachers' differing responses to perceived disruptive and/or disrespectful behaviors create disparities in school discipline. Schools need behavior management systems based on relational trust that shift students' and teachers' mindsets from rule compliance and punishment to interventions that address social and emotional dynamics of groups and deterioration of student-teacher interactions and relationships.   (NAACP Legal Defense/ Education Fund, 2017)

Information compiled by Elaine Rector & Carmen X Urbina   January 2020   Oregon Center for Educational Equity

"**Teaching Gap**" is often present due to low expectations by teachers of some students. It leads to systems of tracking and ability grouping where students are "instructionally impaired" because they never get the chance to learn essential knowledge and skills necessary for success in schools.

"**Learning Gap**" describes "the disparity between what a student has actually learned and what he or she was expected to learn at a particular age or grade level." (edglossary.com) Attendance issues certainly can be a factor. Yet, even students with regular attendance may fail to acquire essential knowledge and skills because they are not taught in ways that effectively engage them in active learning. Without effective interventions, the cumulative effects of Learning Gaps create a system whereby students reaching high school are "pushed out" (not drop out) because they cannot meet the requirements of graduation. Time has run out!

"**Grading Gap**" Traditional grading systems are inconsistent and inequitable. Two students with identical academic performances get different grades from different teachers. Grading systems need to use formative assessments to provide feedback and guide learning and instruction. Teachers must move away from the unsound practices of averaging and 0-100 scales to use instead 0-4 based specific rubrics and a summative assessment system that reflects the most recent evidence of learning. Restructuring grading to be clear and consistent changes teachers' beliefs and behaviors around how to support and motivate student learning.

"**Worthiness Gap**" exists when students internalize the discrimination, marginalization and exclusion that they feel in schools and society in general. When only their deficits are seen and their assets ignored, students believe they are worthless and stupid outsiders. They internalize the negative messages they receive repeatedly in schools. They lack the confidence to try because they believe they will fail or fear they will fail. This fear may lead to an impairment of their performance.

Looking at these different gaps within the educational system is an important way to address issues related to institutional inequity. There are also several different lens through which we can view students and families to determine how best to support and address both individual and groups of students in our quest for excellent and equitable public schools for every student and community.

FORMS OF INEQUITY

Societal Inequity: It means acknowledging and addressing the historical legacy and current realities of bias, prejudice and discrimination based on race, ethnicity, language, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical/cognitive abilities, etc.. There must be attention to understanding and addressing the cumulative effects of overt and covert assaults, insults and invalidations that create and sustain hostile environments for students who do not feel they fit in with the dominant culture.

Socio-Economic Inequity: Family resources as well as school resources are not distributed equally. With many neighborhood schools reflecting segregated housing and communities based on wealth, there are both school-wide and individual concerns around economic privilege and struggle.

Cultural Inequity: Schools are institutions created based on dominant culture beliefs, values and experiences. They have changed little as more diverse students have come to attend. The norms, customs, social expectations, and pathways to success may not be known or understood. Often there can be cultural conflict and forced assimilation into the dominant culture ways as the only avenue to success. Many students must learn to "code switch" to try to maintain their own cultural identity and still function within the school setting.

Familial Inequity: Supportive families and encouraging caring adults are important in every student's life. Some children have a wealth of positive support, while others find themselves in challenging situations lacking the nurturing they deserve. Too often assumptions are made about students and families from lower socio-economic levels or diverse cultures around the levels of familial support. Schools must provide information and support so that the significant adults in students' lives have what they need to support students. Schools must also continue to take on responsibility for advocating for and providing necessary interventions for students who are not in supportive family settings.

Linguistic Inequity: Students who are not yet proficient in the English language will face challenges in schools especially in English-only environments and where there is little support for accessing learning through multiple modalities. Most students get the message early, in Kindergarten, that speaking a language other than English is negative. In the 21st century, schools need to shift toward valuing multi-lingualism and not always treating English Language Learners as if they have only a deficit and not an asset.

Programmatic Inequity: School programs may be structured in ways that are unfair and contribute to inequitable educational experiences. Educators must look at and deal with the disproportionate representation of students of color, especially boys in disciplinary actions. Over-identification of some groups in Special Education and a culture of low expectations often creates inequalities that must be addressed. Incentives, pre-requisites, traditions and in-group behaviors often limit access to programs for some students while encouraging others.

Staffing Inequity: Most schools are adult-centered even though they proport to be student-centered. Staff often choose to work at schools that reflect a higher socio-economic community and use the concept of seniority to ensure that they work with students who are compliant and achieving academically. The schools with the highest needs students often have high turn-over rates. Matching the most effective teachers with the students who need the best our educational systems have to offer is too often not the norm.

Instructional Inequity: Especially in an age of standardization and fidelity to a pre-packaged curriculum, many students do not learn via relevant and rigorous curriculum and instruction. Diverse students need multiple-pathways to learn and demonstrate their learning. Teachers also must understand that they teach who they are before they ever teach the subject area information. Teachers must be prepared to be culturally responsive to the diverse students in their classes. It is more about how you are in your interactions with students and how you teach rather than what you teach.

Assessment Inequity: Beyond the inherent biases and flaws in test design, assessment continues to be a sorting process far more than an effective reporting and supporting process. Students should not only have multiple pathways to learning and achieving essential outcomes, but they should be able to employ a variety to means for showing what they know and can do. Grading and assessment systems can create failure and often provide little focus on how to help students learn and grow.

By understanding the nature of the various gaps and exploring different sources of inequities, educators can have significant influence within their spheres of influence. When equity is internalized as a key non-negotiable aspect of every action and decision within each of our realms, we can have impact directly on the students we serve and bring the needed, essential change to the systems in which we work.

EQUITY DECISION-MAKING TOOL

In every decision we make, it is important for us to consider equity and the impact on all students and families, especially those in underserved demographic groups and protected classes. Some key questions to ask about any proposed change:

STAKEHOLDERS: Who are the different groups of people _____ would affect? How have they been meaningfully engaged? Who has been missed?

PURPOSE: What are we trying to achieve with _____ ? How would it reduce disparities and advance equity and inclusion? Are there better ways to do this?

INEQUITIES: Would _____ affect different groups differently? If so, in what ways? If we don't know, how could we find out?

NEGATIVE EFFECTS: How could _____ be bad for different groups? What could we do to prevent or reduce negative effects and unintended consequences?

POSITIVE EFFECTS: How would _____ be good for different groups? What could we change or add to increase positive effects on equity and inclusion?

ROOT CAUSES: Why would _____ affect some groups unequally? What could _____ do to address these root causes?

SUSTAINABILITY: Is _____ realistic and adequately funded? Does it have what it needs to be successful?

EVALUATION: How do we measure _____ 's success? How can we share that information with people?

Revised version from Applied Research Center

Here in Oregon, the Eugene 4J School District's Equity Committee has provided us
with a Decision-Making Tool that will help guide us to stop and ask questions at
all levels of our work to address equity to bring about necessary change.

A belief in and commitment to educational equity enables each of us to change the beliefs, behaviors, practices, policies and programs that currently do not support each student to learn and grow. It is time that schools transform into places where there are many ways for students to learn and succeed. We must work to provide schools where all educators embrace diversity and inclusion as they work diligently to change our educational system into a places where each student is supported to progress on a pathway to success.

Using this Equity Decision-Making Tool is not just a simple process of asking the above questions when proceeding through the established ways of planning courses of action. To address equity, educators need to bring equity forward as a prime objective in a deliberate and focused way. It starts with *Identifying a Choice Option;* recognizing opportunities to make or influence a decision to achieve better equitable outcomes. The process also involves *Assessing Impacts,* focusing on how decisions and actions may unintentionally reinforce bias, barriers or inequities. *Generating Options* is essential as educators look for a variety of alternative action options that could produce better, more equitable outcomes. When *Deciding Action,* attend to which option(s) will generate the most leverage, momentum and gain towards advancing equity and inclusion. Ultimately to achieve equity, organizations and individuals must work on *Changing Habits*. There must be reminders and "equity primes" structured into the routine practices and protocols to make equity an ongoing priority and habit. Relationships, supports, incentives and accountability measures must be in place to sustain and monitor progress toward success indicators of the desired equity goals.   Terry Keleher: 2012.

Part of an effective equity approach to decision-making is to ensure that there is on-going analysis of current situations and issues, an opportunity to develop and advance proposed changes and the chance to evaluate current proposals from a variety of perspectives. These deliberations should be used to anticipate, assess and prevent potential adverse consequences of proposed action on diverse (racial and other) groups. These questions and an equity-based decision-making process should not stall actions or be used to avoid making decisions. Instead, they can be helpful in moving forward toward significant actions. This process is fluid and adjustments will come as more information is learned and progress is monitored. These Equity Decision-Making Tools are designed to help guide the process because there is urgency and the real need to make significant changes in education to provide equitable and inclusionary education for each student

Throughout the process there are several key questions to consider:

Analyzing Current Problems: What are the adverse effects that different disadvantaged and marginalized communities experience under current conditions, policies, practices and expenditures? What are the causes or contributing factors that produce or perpetuate these inequities? What data, evidence or testimony is available or can be collected to demonstrate the racial (or other) inequities, adverse effects, contributing causes, trends and current needs?

Developing and Advancing Proposed Changes: What steps can insure public input and participation by the most disadvantaged communities and stakeholders in developing proposed policies and budgets? What new policies, programs, funding streams are needed to address the needs and inequities that different underserved and marginalized communities face? What changes in existing policies, programs, budgets would reduce inequities? What new opportunities can be created to enhance equity, inclusion and unity? What specific equitable outcomes will this action achieve and what are the success indicators? How can these proposed changes be effectively designed in such a way to make them most viable, enforceable and sustainable.

Evaluating Current Proposals: Will the proposal reduce, limit or eliminate programs that are vital to or disproportionately needed by different disadvantaged, underserved or marginalized (racial/ethic or other) communities? Will the proposal increase, expand or create programs that are vital to or disproportionately needed by different disadvantaged, underserved or marginalized communities? Will the proposal miss or create opportunities to benefit and unify people across different communities? Will there by enough money allocated to address real (racial or other) inequities with fair sustainable revenue streams? Will there be adequate provisions to ensure success and fairness, including sufficient public participation by stakeholders in development, implementation and evaluation? What modifications in the proposal are needed to maximize (racial or other) equity and inclusion?

A comprehensive approach to Equity Decision-Making strives to identify and engage **diverse stakeholders**, identify *root causes* and document inequities, *clarify the purpose* of planned actions, consider potential *adverse effects* while *advancing the equitable impacts*, examining *alternatives* for improvements, ensuring *viability and sustainability* with a system for monitoring *success indicators and progress benchmarks.* Terry Keleher: 2009.

A belief in and commitment to educational equity enables each of us to change the beliefs, behaviors, practices, policies and programs that currently do not support each student to learn and grow. It is time that schools transform into places where there are many ways for students to thrive. We must work to provide schools where all educators embrace diversity and inclusion as they work diligently to change our educational system into places where each student is served equitably and supported to progress on a pathway to succes

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Reflecting on the article: *Addressing Educational Equity*

Using the Key Talking Points:

<u>**UNDERLINE**</u>   phrases with which you **AGREE**

phrases with which you **DISAGREE**

?   phrases with where you have questions / wonderings

****

Key Points: "*ADDRESSING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY*"

Dimensions of equity must be understood in order to be implemented.

1. All about fairness. Nothing more unfair than treating people who are diverse in needs, talents, life experiences and historical legacies, all exactly the same.   (p1:1)
2. To achieve belief in equality with respect for all, there must first be equity.   (p1:1)
3. All of us working toward educational equity must find ways to actively address the predictability of who will be successful based on any identity factors and historical barriers or sources of privilege. (p1:2)
4. Identifying and dismantling the dominant culture practices that serve to maintain the status quo and reproduce practices that negatively impact vulnerable and marginalized students. (p1:2)
5. Equity work needs to focus on assets not deficits.   (p,1:2)
6. Reactive equity reform efforts are ineffective because they look at symptoms not the root causes and make little change to beliefs and behaviors.   (p1:3)
7. Propensity to try to "fix" students leads to perpetuation of the dominant culture and assimilation.   (p.1:3)
8. Equity needs to be proactive and pervasive.   (p2:1)
9. Equity is a belief and a stance.   Before we ask "What should I do? Ask "Who am I?" "How will I be in every interaction I have?"   (p.2:2)
10. Equity leaders look at ourselves in the mirror to surface conscious and unconscious biases. Holding self-compassion and grace of our intentional and unintentional actions that have harmful impact. (p2:2)
11. Address the needs of the whole-person- not just cognitive development but also social, emotional and cultural connectiveness.   (p.2:3)
12. Lens of multiculturalism: focus on respecting and celebrating diversity, communicating and interacting across differences and exposing all students to diverse curriculum and multiple perspectives. (p.2:3)
13. Lens of social justice: empowering students and staff to interrupt and address patterns of inequities.   (p.2:3)
14. Employing culturally responsive teaching: focus on facilitating multiple pathways to learning and methods to demonstrate learning – focusing both on affective and cognitive learning through relevant and rigorous curriculum and instruction -- building resilience and positive mindsets by pushing back on dominant narratives about historically and currently marginalized people – helping members of the dominant culture see the significance and positive impact of diversity and inclusion. (2:3 continuing onto page 3)
15. Multicultural, social justice and cultural responsiveness essential for dominant-culture students as well.   (p.3: continuing from page 2)
16. Address the uncomfortable, unequal, ineffective, prejudicial conditions and relationship that not only harm individuals, but society.   (p.3: continuing from page 2)

17. Racism, sexism, classism, ableism, heterosexism, religious intolerance, etc., are, by their very nature, the products of design and therefore with courage and conviction they need no longer function in our schools and communities. We can redesign how we treat one another.   (p.3: continuing from page 2)
18. To many leaders, the challenge of taking on and undoing inequities in schools seems daunting and too complex…..when we embrace the concepts of diversity, inclusion and equity as lens through which we view all decisions and situations we are better prepared to look at a variety of ways that inequities play out.   (p. 3:1)
19. A focus on equity does not come with a position or title. It is a way of being that demonstrates care and concern for making a difference by challenging the status quo.   (p. 3:1)
20. Data Approach can stall meaningful action because it usually involves either admiring gains and loathing lack of achievement without significant understanding of causes or effective systemic changes.   (p.3:1)
21. Too often addressing equity has either used a Hammer Approach that shames and blames thereby closing people off. OR "Kumbaya Approach" just celebrating and accepting everyone where they are. (p.3:1)
22. There is a real danger in the culture of low expectations.   (p. 3:1)
23. OCEE believes that through active love, educators must look deeply at beliefs, behaviors, practices, policies, structures, systems and culture and how they impact themselves and others; understanding who benefits and who is harmed. (p. 3:2)
24. bell hooks" "To begin by always thinking of love as an action rather than a feeling is one way in which anyone using the word in this manner automatically assumes accountability and responsibility." (p.3:2)
25. Responsibility is the ability to respond and being accountable for one's choice to either act or not take action. (p. 3:2 continuing onto page 4)
26. Active love prompts educators to look at the contributing factors and intentional and unintentional consequences of a variety of different types of gaps and inequities;   (p. 4 continued from p. 3)
    a. Gaps represent the impact of conscious and unconscious inequitable policies and practices that create barriers and disparities in how systems treat and support different people.
    b. There are also forms of inequity that stem from broader beliefs and behaviors that represent underlying norms and assumptions that play out in schools and communities
    c. To bring about meaningful change, it is essential to investigate and address educational equity through understanding of multiple, interconnected gaps and inequities.
    d. By understanding the nature of the various gaps and exploring different sources of inequities, educators can have significant impact within their spheres of influence.
27. When equity is internalized as a key non-negotiable aspect of every action and decision within each of our realms, we can have impact directly on the students we serve and bring the needed, essential change to the systems in which we work.   (p.7 final paragraph)

*The Eugene 4J School District's Equity Committee has provided us
with a Decision-Making Tool that will help guide us to stop and ask questions at
all levels of our work to address equity to bring about necessary change.*

In every decision we make, it is important for us to consider equity and the impact on all students and families, especially those in underserved demographic groups and protected classes. Some key questions to ask about any proposed change:

STAKEHOLDERS: Who are the different groups of people _____ would affect? How have they been meaningfully engaged? Who has been missed?

PURPOSE: What are we trying to achieve with _____? How would it reduce disparities and advance equity and inclusion? Are there better ways to do this?

INEQUITIES: Would _____ affect different groups differently? If so, in what ways? If we don't know, how could we find out?

NEGATIVE EFFECTS: How could _____ be bad for different groups? What could we do to prevent or reduce negative effects and unintended consequences?

POSITIVE EFFECTS: How would _____ be good for different groups? What could we change or add to increase positive effects on equity and inclusion?

ROOT CAUSES: Why would _____ affect some groups unequally? What could _____ do to address these root causes?

SUSTAINABILITY: Is _____ realistic and adequately funded? Does it have what it needs to be successful?

How might using this tool help you address significant and/or urgent equity issues causing students to suffer inequities and/or hurt and harm in your district?

What are your thoughts and feelings about using an Equity Decision-Making Tool?

Which of these steps are well defined and in place for you in your work on the School Board?

Which steps are not well understood or in place in the School Board's current decision-making process?

What are other considerations around equity that should be factored into School Board decisions?

EACH AND EVERY CHILD PREPARED FOR A WORLD YET TO BE IMAGINED

To:	Board of Directors
From:	Dr. Danna Diaz, Superintendent of Schools
Prepared by:	Kaylie Jeffries, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
Subject:	**Adjourn**
Policy:	Board Meetings - BD/BDA, Conduct of Board Meetings - BDDF
Date:	February 10, 2021

Action	☒
Report	☐

Connection to Board Goals

☐ Student Achievement   ☐ Equity   ☐ Fiscal Responsibility   ☒ Communications

School Board Core Belief/Commitment #2: We believe that equitable practices allow everyone within the Reynolds community to thrive. We commit to using equity as a foundation in all decision-making processes in order to eliminate inequities.

Adjournment