

MSCS EQUITY IN EDUCATION PLAN

CREATING AND SUSTAINING
EQUITY AT THE INDIVIDUAL,
SCHOOL AND DISTRICT LEVEL



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INTRODUCTION

EQUITY MEANS...

MSCS defines equity as:

- Prioritizing racial equity because racial and ethnic minorities have been historically prohibited and structurally excluded from educational opportunities;
- Promoting just and fair inclusion and creating the conditions in which everyone can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential; and
- Removing the predictability of success and failure that currently correlates with race, class, gender, gender identity, or any other social or cultural factors.

In an equitable school district, every student has access to the resources, opportunities, and educational rigor they need, irrespective of their race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, learning path, accessibility needs, family background, family income, citizenship, or tribal status.

EQUITY IN MSCS

MSCS collaborated with over 109,750 students, parents, staff, community members, and civic leaders to develop the MSCS 3+ years vision. The Mission and Vision include a compelling, aspirational, universal goal for our district: At MSCS, our Mission is to improve systemic culture, conditions, and competencies across the district to better serve all children, in every neighborhood, situated furthest from opportunity. Our Vision is to remove the predictability of success and failure based on race. We will contribute to a collective understanding about race and gender and how our policies and procedures emphasize legitimate issues related to discipline disparities and access/accelerated exposure to effective instruction and higher achievement in Math and English/Language Arts.

In setting this goal, we understand that many students across the district experience these disparities in opportunity in myriad ways, every day. Inequities exist for several reasons including:

- Lack of understanding of the needs of diverse student groups;
- Lack of political will or investment, structural racism; and
- Mindsets that hinder a student's full potential from materializing.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

THEORY OF ACTION

If we build strong relationships with our black and brown boys, rid ourselves of deficit attitudes and mindsets, provide social-emotional learning to adults and students to engage in healthier conflict, and create space between stimulus and response, then we will validate our students' cultural identity in our classroom practices.

➤ **PRIORITY 1: Commitment**

The equity office will exist to have the greatest possible impact on opportunities and access added to the children from marginalized communities.

➤ **PRIORITY 2: Checking Bias & Privilege**

We will work to fix the oppressor and not the oppressed, by speaking truth to adult actions to align our good intentions with our desired outcomes. Placing before every educator the right to engage in vigilant self-awareness and helping all identify how our identity may prevent or provide access to necessary resources, by constant self-reflection, is key in checking bias.

➤ **PRIORITY 3: Collective Action**

Holding all accountable and designing equity at the margins will help keep all departments organized and connected in the belief that all means all.

TARGET UNIVERSALISM

Gaps in opportunity are driven by differences in how students are situated in relation to the educational system and the universal goal.

The Targeted Universalist (TU) approach to equity, articulated by the Othering and Belonging Institute:

- organizes members of a school community around a shared universal goal;
- uses quantitative and qualitative data to understand how student groups in that community currently perform in relation to the goal; and
- focuses the work of the community on developing short- and long-term targeted solutions to support different groups within the community in reaching the shared goal.
- leads with those who are furthest away from opportunity.

TU recognizes the critical role of systems and structures in students' everyday experiences and acknowledges that the way students interact with those systems and structures differs depending on identity and students' life circumstances, both of which can affect how they perform in school. Many of the systems and structures students encounter in the educational system, in school, and in life enable the predictive power of race and socio-economic status and other factors on student outcomes. To be

successful in this work, we believe we must take a racial equity stance through targeted approaches to eliminate racialized outcomes caused by structural racism. Gaps in opportunity are driven by differences in how students are situated in relation to the educational system and the universal goal. By focusing on the structural changes necessary (rather than locating the problems of inequity in our students), the shared responsibility is on the adults and the system.

While we recognize how existing systems and structures can create and maintain inequitable opportunities, we also understand the power of teachers, principals, school communities—those who do work in MSCS on behalf of our students—to create school environments that support equitable outcomes for all students. We believe the most effective way to reduce disparities in opportunities is to empower all educators, staff, and students across the district to identify the challenges within their individual classroom, school, network community, or district department, and implement thoughtful, data-driven practices to help all students reach our shared, universal goal. The TU framework allows us to:

- take a collaborative, outcome- oriented approach;
- respond to immediate challenges while simultaneously pursuing a more durable, transformational change;
- operate with sensitivity to structural and cultural dynamics; and
- focus our attention on the structural changes needed, rather than locating the problems of inequity in our students.

TU IN PRACTICE

Everyone has room for growth and should be afforded the resources, opportunities, and rigorous educational experiences to achieve the universal goal. We must avoid taking a “one size fits all” approach to equity as we recognize that students have different needs based on how they are situated in their daily lives. For example, if a high school’s universal goal for graduation for all students is 95%, then one must examine how student groups (based on race, gender, gender expression, economic disadvantage, and diverse learning needs) are positioned toward the goal. Here are some sample questions:

- What are the current graduation rates for each student group? (considering intersectionality of race and gender)
- What are the factors internal and external to the school that affect the experiences of different groups?
- What are the neighborhood assets and challenges where students live and how might those affect their experiences inside or outside of school?
- What are the different conditions and resources necessary for each student group to thrive?
- What policies benefit or burden each student group?

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Equity in Education Plan

As noted in the example above, TU encourages us to seek out what is working and develop diverse solutions to create change. When we better understand what students need, we can create the practices that will best support all students in reaching the universal goal. Solutions developed via a TU approach support the most marginalized groups while simultaneously helping all students advance toward the shared goal.

The TU approach calls for an on-going process of collaborative inquiry to prioritize and understand equity challenges from multiple perspectives and design, identify, and implement approaches that create greater equity in terms of goals and outcomes. In the graduation example, teachers and staff would co-construct practices and policies that support all student groups in attaining the universal goal. They would then meet regularly to assess progress and adjust practices as needed.

“Teachers, principals, and school staff are on the front lines of leading for equity, by implementing promising practices and creating school cultures that support all students.”

Leadership for equity is a “both/and” proposition. Leading systems change for equity requires quick technical wins as well as adaptive 21 changes that will take longer to happen but have to happen.

Real, sustained systems change is only possible when everyone within the system is leading for equity. Each one of us has an important role to play in reducing disparities in opportunity and creating a more equitable district.

“Once we know how students are situated in relation to our universal goal, we can think about how to move forward. To move forward, we need to apply an equity lens that helps us understand what is necessary to advance equity.”

We offer four dimensions that formulate an equity lens through which each of us can engage in transformational work across MSCS. The layering of these dimensions creates the lens that each of us can use to re-imagine the current system so that we can accelerate change.

- **(Use) Liberatory Thinking**

- **(Catalyze) Inclusive Partnerships**

- **(Direct) Resource Equity**

- **(Design) Fair Policies & Systems**

EQUITY LENS

(Use) Liberatory Thinking

People would say 'Who is a leader?' A leader is a person that does the work. It's very simple. It's a personal choice for people who choose to put in their time and their commitment to do the work. It's a personal choice.

DOLORES HUERTA

Definition



Liberatory thinking is the re-imagining of one's assumptions and beliefs about others and their capabilities by interrupting internal beliefs that undermine productive relationships and actions. Liberatory thinking goes beyond simply changing mindsets to creating concrete opportunities for others to experience liberation. The opportunities provide cover for, and center underrepresented and marginalized people. It pushes people to interrogate their own multiple identities in relation to others and to think about the consequences of our actions, especially for students of critical need. It explores how mindsets can impede

or ignite progress in the classroom, school, and district.

Liberatory thinking lifts up and institutionalizes culturally relevant and sustaining opportunities that celebrate students' identities and offer positive developmental experiences.

Liberatory thinking pushes us to think about what we want for students as a result of equity - beyond only working to stop the negative consequences of inequity.

Liberatory thinking requires working toward a common vision for equity and racial justice. Liberatory thinking appreciates and honors the differences among people, which includes but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, learning path, accessibility needs, family background, family income, citizenship, or tribal status.

In-Practice

Those who use liberatory thinking:

- Broaden how they interpret data to be inclusive of student experiences instead of creating exclusionary practices.
- Engage in deep reflective work to understand their biases, multiple intersecting identities, and personal stories.
- Examine how they have been impacted by structural racism or systematic oppression while considering how they might be unintentionally perpetuating these conditions.
- Disrupt historical ways of using data on assessment outcomes to compare students to dominant groups.
- Develop individual and systemic equity purpose statements to guide decision-making.
- Build relationships in affinity and across difference to lead change toward greater equity.
- Advocate for fair treatment and opportunities for others.
- Engage in courageous conversations on racial equity, internal biases, systemic inequities, and system redesign, including rethinking how they use data and how data impacts student experiences.
- Manage privilege and bias by acknowledging and mitigating their personal bias.
- Set conditions for safe/brave spaces where both healing and interruption can occur.
- Push to include diverse affirming (positive) traditions, cultural lived experiences and culturally relevant curriculum in school life.

(Catalyze) Inclusive Partnerships

We cannot seek achievement for ourselves and forget about progress and prosperity for our community. Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own.

CESAR CHAVEZ

Definition



Inclusive partnerships (IP) value and prioritize the diverse voices of students, families, caregivers, and communities when making decisions that affect their lived experiences. This relationship requires the people and institutions who hold power to account for past inequities and to create conditions for healing and co-design an equitable future. In the process of creating inclusive partnerships, an equity leader will always acknowledge and publicly recognize communities and cultures, and their solutions and ideas will be leveraged for shared benefit. The outcome will be both authentic

engagement and diversity, as well as more equitable decisions as a result of the engagement process.

We prioritize three key stakeholder groups:

- People with institutional or historical memory,
- People most impacted by inequity, and
- People responsible for implementing and driving change.

Prioritizing the voices of those with the most critical needs by providing accessible authentic and collaborative experiences in schools, communities, online, and beyond furthers transparency and power sharing. Inclusive partnerships bring together a diverse array of stakeholders to engage in authentic, collaborative experiences and co-design community-centered solutions to complex and challenging issues caused and upheld by systemic oppression. Internal partners include students, caregivers, school, district staff, and volunteers. External partners include community organizations, research organizations, and funders, among others. All partners must remain committed to sharing power and responsibility as they move toward greater equity.

This requires inviting and allowing students, families, caregivers, and underrepresented employee groups to speak about their needs to inform improvement efforts.

In-Practice

Those who catalyze inclusive partnerships:

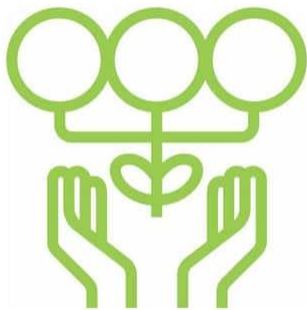
- Prioritize the perspectives and voices of stakeholders with institutional and/or historical memory, those most impacted by inequitable decisions, and those responsible for implementing and driving change.
- Shift from competition to cooperation mindset to productively address conflict, promote healing, and rebuild trust, using tools like meeting norms and the Equity CURVE, with much greater transparency in service of students.
- Listen to diverse stakeholders to understand how culture, differences, and lived experiences can be leveraged as assets.
- Engage in ongoing, inclusive partnerships with those most affected by structural inequity to design and implement a more equitable education system that empowers underrepresented students and adults.
- Elevate student voice data and opportunities for student input across the district and city to understand students' lived experiences in order to make decisions that are made with students for students.
- Embrace families across Memphis community areas as allies who engage and inform student learning opportunities, including continuous dialogue about allyship and anti-bias and how to leverage the community's strengths and assets inside and outside of school.
- Set high, clear expectations for all parties to promote trust and transparency.
- Finds ways to include voices and ideas that may have been previously ignored.

(Direct) Resource Equity

The knowledge and skills to educate all children already exist. There are no pedagogical barriers to teaching and learning when willing people are prepared and made available to children.

ASA G. HILLIARD

Definition



The goal of resource equity is to create equitable student experiences in learning-ready environments. Resource equity means consistently prioritizing and allocating people, time, and money to align with levels of need and opportunity.

Resource equity recognizes that providing the same amount of resources to students and schools with different lived experiences, assets, and challenges will maintain the status quo of unequal achievement.

The resources people need vary based on their quality of life. Resource equity creates opportunities to share resources within a school or institution or across schools to meet the diverse needs of all students. Advocating for resource equity involves tracking level of opportunity in relation to performance or impact and creating progressive spending patterns.

The levers that impact student experiences occur at all levels of the district, including classrooms, schools, and district departments and offices. District leaders, school administrators, teachers, and support staff engage in continuous learning to identify ways to disrupt, and design their own policies and practices to promote responsive, timely resource equity for students across the district. Resource equity balances immediate solutions with sustainable, long- term distribution of resources to close opportunity gaps for students.

In-Practice

Those who direct resource equity:

- Make allocation decisions across schools and within schools based on data that presents the needs and assets of each community, school, and/or student group—and where they are currently situated within outcomes—to support achieving universal goals.
- Use a broad range of data, including qualitative and multi-sector data, to assess the current and future impact of resource distribution in relation to the distribution of opportunity and how each of these correspond with outcomes.
Advocate for equitable resource allocation in their context or role.
- Engage in an extensive, sensitive dialogue with an array of stakeholders, building public moral, economic, and political will to provide the resources and support to co-construct opportunity and give all students access to the resources, opportunities, and educational rigor they need to succeed.
- Re-organize themselves to allocate the time and resources within their locus of control to focus on students and schools in areas of concentrated disadvantage.
- Facilitate opportunities for schools and networks to share resources within and between schools including human capital, materials, and promising practices to address common problems.
- See themselves as resources with agency and prioritize students with the most risk factors working against them in their efforts and actions to support schools and communities.

(Design) Fair Policies and Systems

One does not understand structures or systems by looking at intent. Instead, we have to examine what they actually do—how they operate and what the outcomes are. Certainly a system or structure could be established for the purpose of excluding or discriminating. However, most structures produce racialized outcomes without intent.

JOHN POWELL

Definition



Fair policies and systems promote equitable opportunities to reach equal positive academic and socioemotional outcomes for all student and stakeholder groups with an emphasis on those who are most impacted by structural inequality and inequity. Fair policies and systems happen after examining the impact of key policies, practices, and budgets on students and communities followed by recommending and implementing actions for change. All policies require systems within which to operate; not all systems require policies. A system can function equitably with or without policies and policies can be used to positively impact systems to function equitably for students.

To examine policies and systems, we must ask who is burdened by past and present policies and practices and who benefits in order to chart a future plan to address the impact of inequity and promote access and opportunity.

The impact of inequity can include, and is not limited to, racial predictability of student success and community and school push out and displacement. Because policies and systems exist at the classroom, school, district, and city level, examining connections between policies and systems is critical for transformation.

All policies and systems should be continuously improved with equity and social justice at the center.

In-Practice

Those who design fair policies and systems:

- Examine the impact within their control and explore possible equity-based solutions.
- Create conditions that foster mutual trust and understanding, and which help stakeholders at all levels to be accountable for equity.
- Check to see if their efforts marginalize a group of people or cause an undue burden.
- Ensure inclusion and equal treatment of greatest needs groups in their school context.
- Find root causes and generate a plan to redesign a policy or system.
- Center policy decisions within students' lived experiences.
- Inform those who currently hold the power and responsibility to impact the inequity that is uncovered.
- Redesign policies and systems to address the pressing need for racial equity and to meet the needs of those most impacted by inequity.
- Ask a set of agreed upon questions when assessing any policy or system to reduce bias.
- Monitor the impact of policies and systems to ensure success for all student groups.
- Utilize the strengths of Memphis diversity to incorporate the social and cultural capital of its communities in all decision making.
- Strengthen the links between school, classroom, and home to increase access and opportunity for parents.

Equity Lens

Leading for equity and engaging in equity work requires us to move away from the historical ways we educate our students towards a model which understands and prioritizes student needs, particularly those most affected by inequity.

What is perhaps most challenging and most necessary is that leading and engaging for equity requires all of us to recognize the ways in which we need to shift our own perspectives and practices to support more equitable outcomes for students. Doing this requires self-reflection and a recognition of how existing systems and beliefs maintain opportunity disparities. We must give ourselves the space and time to reflect, listen, learn, innovate, and develop so that we can do the same for our students. Leading for equity also requires us to grapple with complicated and complex challenges, and to be persistent and flexible in developing promising practices to address these challenges.

Understanding the Equity Lens

An essential component of collective leadership for equity is the equity lens. We must apply an equity lens that enables us to see and understand the existing structures and conditions that create inequities, as well as the changes that are necessary to create more equitable learning environments. This is a shift from a historical education lens that upholds structural racism to an equity lens that creates fair access and opportunities for all. Doing so requires using a shared lens when re-imagining what our district could look like and accomplish. An equity lens has four dimensions:

1. (Use) Liberatory Thinking;
2. (Catalyze) Inclusive Partnerships;
3. (Direct) Resource Equity; and
4. (Design) Fair Policies and Systems.

We can think of these dimensions as similar to what happens when an artist mixes colors on a pallet to create just the right shade. Individually, the colors are simple and straightforward, but when they are mixed together, the resulting shade has depth and nuance that the individual colors do not possess on their own.

We would never have seen the nuances and the depth if the colors had not been mixed together. Similarly, the dimensions of the equity lens work together to allow us to “see” the system differently. We cannot see the nuances if we are only using one dimension of the equity lens. All the dimensions must be engaged in order for equity work to succeed. If we developed and implemented a promising practice after only engaging the liberatory thinking dimension, the practice would likely not be as successful as it would had we engaged all of the dimensions of the equity lens simultaneously. In this way, the equity lens provides a descriptive, conceptual understanding of what equity work requires so individuals and groups can think and act in service of our students, especially those most impacted by inequities. Using an equity lens is critical for this work. When we use an equity lens, we create the conditions within ourselves and among our colleagues that lay the foundation for more equitable learning environments.

Applying the Equity Lens

Without an equity lens, we will maintain the opportunity gaps we are working to mitigate. We must apply the equity lens to every equity challenge we seek to solve. The interaction between the four dimensions of the equity lens is what creates disruption in the status quo and opens the door for change. When using the four dimensions of the equity lens, we begin by understanding and re-imagining our own assumptions and beliefs (**Liberatory Thinking**). Second, we consider how we can create inclusive partnerships that recognize differences as assets and prioritize the voices of those most affected by a proposed change (**Inclusive Partnerships**). Third, we prioritize and allocate people, time, and money to align with level of opportunity (**Resource Equity**) in order to create opportunities that meet the diverse needs of all students. Finally, we design policies and systems that promote equitable opportunities to reach equal outcomes for all student and stakeholder groups, with an emphasis on those who are most affected by structural inequality and inequity (**Fair Policies and Systems**).

The equity lens is applicable to any context—classroom, school, or district. To create the real, transformational change that will support all students, we must use an equity lens to engage with our colleagues on complicated and complex problems of equity. Everyone is accountable for having an equity lens and is expected to continuously improve their lens; this is how we transform our district to advance equity for students.

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Equity in Education Plan

An equity challenge is a clear concise statement that articulates who is most negatively impacted in a given situation or system and what inequitable outcomes or experience need to be disrupted or interrupted (e.g. African American males do not have equitable access to advanced placement courses.).





Applying the equity lens allows us to deeply clarify the equity challenge we are solving. Applying the equity lens helps us to clearly understand what our true universal goal is and how different people are situated to that goal. Applying the equity lens helps us to determine what high-impact change ideas we need to implement to ensure that all students meet or obtain the universal goal. Applying the equity lens helps to determine practices to implement high- impact change ideas.

See school-based examples below. Note: The district is committed to solving other equity challenges at the institutional level.





LESSON PLANNING

Centering Student Need, Agency, and Voice in Lesson Planning	
 <p>(Use) Liberatory Thinking Self reflection & shared power in planning pedagogy and building curriculum.</p> <p>Tripod/Gates Survey: Engaging students in anonymously reviewing pedagogy to identify teacher cultural competencies as well as biases and room for educator growth.</p> <p>Curriculum reflection/audit: Facilitate students review of curriculum at the end of a unit to determine if it is equitable and representative for them.</p>	 <p>(Catalyze) Inclusive Partnerships Value students as partners in education and honor student knowledge as an asset.</p> <p>Empowering Student Solutions: Transparently adjusting lessons with students based on student feedback.</p> <p>Assessing Student Expertise: Create access points within lessons for students to contribute knowledge.</p>
 <p>(Direct) Resource Equity Identify inequities in lessons and advocate for solutions</p> <p>Teacher as Resource: Reflect on gaps in educator’s knowledge and partner with organizations that can supplement with added curriculum.</p> <p>Student Access: Identify resource inequities for students and advocate for additional resources.</p>	 <p>(Design) Fair Policies & Systems Collaborate with students on integration of policies.</p> <p>Shared Policies: Build classroom policies with students both annually and daily.</p> <p>Redesign Policies: Give students access to institutional power by supporting reflection on policy impacts and inequities.</p>

REMOTE LEARNING

Student Access and Engagement During COVID-19 Remote Learning	
 <p>(Use) Liberatory Thinking</p> <p>Reflective Discussion: Acknowledge issues of inequity within the crisis and engage students in supportive discussions based on their experience and perspective.</p> <p>Honor Student Experience: Empower students voice to identify needs, adjust learning, and build solutions (both in your classroom and outside).</p>	 <p>(Catalyze) Inclusive Partnerships</p> <p>Partner with Students/Families: Listen to the needs of students/ families, advocate within school/ district, and connect students/ families with community members that can offer support.</p>
 <p>(Direct) Resource Equity</p> <p>Technology Inequities: Identify students who do not have access to technology. Advocate for that student and adjust lessons and curriculum to their need.</p>	 <p>(Design) Fair Policies & Systems</p> <p>Reflect & Adjust: Assess the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of policies (classroom, school, district) with students and support them in developing solutions and recommendations (i.e. grading).</p>

MATH ACHIEVEMENT

Supporting African American Males in Math Achievement	
 <p>(Use) Liberatory Thinking</p> <p>Look beyond identifying deficits of students to ask teachers whose Black students are not doing well in their classes to start identifying with those students.</p> <p>Engage in deep reflective work. How do I need to think differently? As an educator and person, what do I need to change about me?</p>	 <p>(Catalyze) Inclusive Partnerships</p> <p>Multiple stakeholders, including students and teachers practice asset-based data analysis.</p> <p>Approaches to culturally responsive pedagogy are co-constructed.</p>
 <p>(Direct) Resource Equity</p> <p>Examine what resources I currently have. How are we using them? What resources do we need? Does the talent/materials match student needs? Do students with larger opportunity gaps receive the highest quality teaching?</p>	 <p>(Design) Fair Policies & Systems</p> <p>Change systems and structures in your school. Measure impact of systems. Young men end up in summer school more than other student groups. Plan for change.</p>

GOALS AND OUTCOMES

1. Authentic Selves and Relationships

Goal: We will establish an equity institute to train all educators to interrupt patterns of implicit bias, social inequality, and internalized oppression.

Strategies:

- Offer professional learning and development with coordinated courses and coaching centered on equity in education.
- Provide the Looking Through an Equity Lens newsletter that covers valuable and relevant content to promote, support, and cultivate a learning environment. Through an equity lens, stakeholders will be able to identify and utilize strategies that support teaching and learning that transform the culture and structure of schools to ensure the academic achievement of all students.
- Utilize the Safe Schools platform to focus on the historical and social context of equity and social justice issues. One's awareness of personal biases and privilege and the importance of creating inclusive and equitable environments will be explored.
- Utilize school walkthrough data, academic and non-academic data, and survey feedback from collaborating departments. Walkthroughs provide "bridge to practice" exercises that allow leaders to reflect on their practice and gain a deeper understanding of the learning and assess student needs.

2. Cultural Competency

Goal: Increase the cultural competency of students to decrease conscious and unconscious bias and its intended/unintended outcomes of discrimination.

Strategy:

- Partner with the University of Memphis, Peer Power, Fed-Ex, and the Boys' and Girls' Club to increase community engagement, courageous conversations, and culturally responsive solutions.

3. Employee Recruitment and Retention

Goal: MSCS will recruit and retain Black male teachers in Grades K-5 for exposure and access to higher promotion rates in partnership with Christian Brothers and the University of Memphis River City Partnership.

Strategy:

- Recruit young Black and Brown boys to the River City teaching partnership.
- Offer Secure the Chalk events throughout the school year for district employees to attend.

4. Strategic Planning (2)

Goal: Analyze attendance data, grades, and assessments and eliminate the school-to-prison pipeline by providing intensified restorative discipline practices district-wide.

Strategy:

- Capture raw data trends in attendance, discipline, failing grades, and assessments. The data will be disaggregated by low-income students, minority students, gender, and disabilities to improve student-level outcomes and reduce inequities for all students as evidenced quarterly.

Goal: Ensure that all students experience a well-rounded education through implementing academic opportunities such as Honors, Pre-Advanced Placement, Advanced Placement, Dual Enrollment, and Dual Credit courses and address any disparities that results in low-income students, minority students, and students' inequity education.

Strategy:

- Employ strategies that promote equitable access to advanced courses, enabling students to engage in a continuum of academic growth that prepares them for careers and post-secondary experiences.

5. Ready Graduates

Goal: Focus on transitions from high school to Postsecondary and Career Readiness challenges and meet the needs of the students.

Strategies:

- Freshman Success – district leaders and support team will partner with MSCS priority schools to ensure all ninth graders complete their first year of high school and is on-track to graduation. While not allowing race and socio-economic status to predict success, the district’s goal is to ensure that all students graduate from high school being prepared for college and career opportunities.
- ACT Specialist – leaders for ACT related initiatives in the school building, working with leadership and teachers to improve ACT performance. Monitor progress of school-based programs, lead ACT plan development, and develop incentive structures with leadership.
- Graduation Coaches – aid all high school students regarding high school graduation and completion by analyzing data to identify students or subgroups with potential high school graduation problems; planning, implementing, and tracking individual high school graduation plans; identifying and resolving barriers to graduation; and facilitating career choices and planning.
- Counselors – note credit deficiencies, communicate this to the student/parent, and develop a plan to eliminate the deficiencies through opportunity of credit recovery, grade repair, or project graduation. They review progress toward graduation & Ready Graduate status with each student during the first semester.

6. Parent/Family Engagement

Goal: Identify any barriers within the community & parent engagement, and school and how the district is addressing those barriers.

Strategies:

- Access to Technology: Provide digital devices (tablets, laptops, wireless spots) for students to use at school and home.

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Equity in Education Plan

- In-school/afterschool programs: Provide support for homework and tutorial services in core subjects in multiple languages.
- Virtual Family Forums: Provide an opportunity for families to gather, learn, and share valuable information to support student learning and success in school such as ACT Family Night.

GLOSSARY

The following terms and phrases are commonly used in educational and racial equity texts. Some of them are used in the framework. Note: this is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but rather supportive to learning.

Accomplice Across Difference

A person not from the same affinity group as you with whom an honest, open, and communicative relationship is built fostering discussions leading toward the goals of educational equity (Source. Race & Equity in Education Seminars: Glossary of Commonly Used Words and Ideas).

Affinity

A group of people who choose to meet to explore a shared identity such as race, gender, age, religion, or sexual orientation. These groups gather both formally and informally in school, community, and workplace settings. For the purpose of Race and Equity in Education Seminars, groups are designated based on racial affinity, broken first into 'Dominant Culture/White Affinity' and 'People of Color Affinity' groups. These groups can be further broken down into smaller groups within the two major affinities (Source. Race & Equity in Education Seminars: Glossary of Commonly Used Words and Ideas).

Belonging

Connotes something fundamental about how groups are positioned within society, as well as how they are perceived and regarded. It reflects an objective position of power and resources as well as the intersubjective nature of group-based identities (Othering and Belonging Institute, 2019).

Co-design

"People come together to conceptually develop and create things/Things that respond to certain matters of concern and create a (better) future reality. People come together despite, or because of, their different agendas, needs, knowledge and skills. The task may involve academics, practitioners and communities

of place/interest that work together in order to make sense of certain situations and conceptually develop ideas into solutions” (Connected Communities: Co- design as Collaborative Research 2018).

Community Indicator

The means by which we can measure socioeconomic conditions in our communities. All community indicators should be disaggregated by race, if possible (Government Alliance for Race & Equity. Advancing Racial Equity & Transforming Government: Resource Guide).

Colorism

Discrimination based on skin color, which often privileges lighter-skinned people within a racial group and positions people with darker complexions at the bottom of the racial hierarchy. Colorism is an example of how White supremacy can operate amongst the members of a single racial or ethnic group. This form of prejudice often results in reduced opportunities for those who are discriminated against, and numerous studies have revealed differences in life outcomes by complexion (Race Forward. Race Reporting Guide).

Cultural Competence

A process of learning that leads to the ability to effectively respond to the challenges and opportunities posed by the presence of social-cultural diversity in a defined social system (National Multicultural Institute. “Diversity Terms” 2003).

Cultural Relativism

The ability to understand a culture on its own terms and not to make judgments using the standards of one’s own culture.

Cultures

Social systems of meaning and custom that are developed by a group of people to assure their adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors, and styles of communication. Institute for Democratic

Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative (A Community Builder's Tool Kit. Diaspora "The Culture of Diasporas in the Postcolonial Web" Leong Yew).

Diversity

Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender—the groups that most often come to mind when the term "diversity" is used—but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values (UC Berkeley Center for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, Glossary of Terms).

Ethnicity

A social construct which divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history, and ancestral geographical base. (Adams, Maureen, Lee Anne Bell, and Pat Griffin, Eds. *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook*. New York: Routledge, 1997).

Ethnocentrism

Making false assumptions about others based on our own limited experience.

Future State

The equitable future, especially with a focus on race relations, you hope to foster through your change idea and other strategies.

Gatekeeper

Anyone in an institutional or organizational role or position who can grant or deny access to institutional resources or equity. Gatekeepers are, by structural design, accountable to the institutions they work for,

and not the people they serve. They function as buffers between their institutions and the community (Washington University. Racial Equity Glossary).

Gender identity

A person's individual and subjective sense of their own gender; gender identities exist in a spectrum, and are not just masculine and feminine. (Carthage College. Glossary of Working Language or Conversation).

Greatest-needs groups

Groups of people who have been historically and presently marginalized due to systems of oppression and resource inequity. These groups include, and are not limited to, English Learners; students with diverse learning needs; Students in Temporary Living Situations; and African-American, Latinx, LGBTQ, and low-income students (UIC Great Cities Institute).

Implicit Bias

Also known as unconscious or hidden biases, implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold and express automatically, without conscious awareness. Many studies have indicated that implicit biases affect individuals' attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that those biases exist within themselves. Notably, implicit biases have been shown to trump individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that many people profess. The Implicit Association Test (IAT) is often used to measure implicit biases with regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, and other topics (State of the Science Implicit Bias Review 2013, Cheryl Staats, Kirwan Institute, The Ohio State University).

Inclusion

Being included within a group or structure. More than simply diversity and quantitative representation, inclusion involves authentic and empowered participation, with a true sense of belonging and full access to opportunities (Race Forward. Race Reporting Guide).

Intersectionality

The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage (Washington University. Racial Equity Glossary).

Least-served

Students or groups who have been/are oppressed or marginalized and have received less resources. Liberation: A state of being in which one is free from ALL forms of oppression; liberation can be both personal and communal with a deep connection to one's self, body, mind, and spirit. We believe collective liberation is possible when we work at the individual, interpersonal, and institutional level (Young Women Envisioning Liberation: Move to End Violence).

Opportunity Gap

An inequitable distribution of resources and opportunities, which sustains achievement differences.

Othering

A system of discrimination whereby the characteristics of a group are used to distinguish them as separate from the norm (2009) Key Concepts in Political Geography.

Privilege

Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g. White privilege, male privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because they are taught not to see it, but nevertheless, it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it (Colors of Resistance Archive Accessed June 28 2013).

Race

A powerful social idea that gives people different access to opportunities and resources. Race is not biological, but it is real. A political construction created to concentrate power with White people and legitimize dominance over non-White people.

Racial Equity

A combination of processes, initiatives, and outcomes that eliminates all forms of racial oppression and co-creates conditions that enable those most impacted by structural inequity to reach their full potential centering their agency. If the processes and initiatives don't achieve the outcomes of racial equity.

Racial Microaggressions

Brief and commonplace verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color.

Root Cause

The deepest underlying cause or causes of positive or negative symptoms within any process that, if dissolved, would result in elimination or substantial reduction of the symptom.

Solidarity

Unity or agreement based on shared interests and objectives; long-term mutual support within and between groups.

Structural Racism

A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color (Government Alliance for Race & Equity. Advancing Racial Equity & Transforming Government: Resource Guide). Institutional racism is expressed in the practice of developing organizational programs, policies, or procedures that work to the benefit of White people and

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to the detriment of people of color, usually unintentionally or inadvertently (Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative).

Undue Burden

A significant difficulty or expense used in United States constitutional law. Result(s) of decisions benefit some (winners) and burden others (losers) (CUE REIA).

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