



June 17, 2021

Board Members:

RE: DISTRICT 211 EQUITY PLAN

The Township High School District 211 Equity Team believes that equity is a fundamental concept central to student access, opportunity, and achievement. We are grateful to serve students, families and our surrounding community, which represent a large diversity of cultures and backgrounds.

District 211 has a strong history as a school community where concepts of equity are valued and integrated into the mindset, actions, and daily interactions of every student, staff member and parent. The District 211 Equity Team was formed to ensure that we understand and respond to the everchanging needs within our school community and our broader world. We strive to identify, implement and strengthen equitable practices, equitable curriculum and equitable achievement while engaging our community to ensure a school environment that is free of discrimination and racism.

The District 211 Equity Team believes that equity is intrinsic to the values and beliefs of our school community. We strive for comprehensive educational equity practices, procedures and policies that are culturally sensitive and that provide all students with access, opportunity, support and resources. We believe that equity is most effectively demonstrated as a mindset toward every facet of the educational experience in District 211 and seek to empower our community to use equity as a lens through which all decisions are made. To guide this, we have created a series of value statements that correspond to our work. These statements describe the environment through the experience of students, staff and our organization as a whole.

Students

- x All students can learn at the highest levels when all staff ensure access, opportunity and support.
- x All students must receive individualized support that is both encouraging and empowering.
- x All students deserve to feel safe, welcomed and valued in our schools, both individually and collectively.

Staff:

Organization

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- x We seek to use research, evidence and data to create short and long term strategies.
- x We will acknowledge that equity work is sometimes difficult work, but we will tend toward growth mindset and persistence in our efforts.

The team was organized into four committees, which each focused on a particular area pertaining to equity. The committees and their focus, are:

School, Family, & Community Partnerships Committee

Focus Ensure high levels of communication, engagement and relationships with all stakeholders

Focus

The reports include a description of overall themes that were identified through an analysis of the information, actual student and parent quotes from the focus groups, reflections on each theme, parent information and are isolated from information from staff focus groups, which will be understanding that these would be compared and contrasted with qualitative information from staff focus groups to solidify the context of the shared school experience. The purpose of requesting the the timeline consistent with presenting the District 211 Equity Plan to the Board of Education during the June meeting. The specific information is included below however, our staff has also conducted a separate analysis of the school order to identify early themes that are shared across schools. These themes include the following:

- x Student and parent participants were excited that District 211 is focusing on equity and appreciated the opportunity to participate in the focus groups to share their perceptions and experiences.
- x Some students, particularly black, Asian, Latinx, and LGBTQ+ students, do not always perceive our schools as welcoming and inclusive. Furthermore, some students have reported that they do not feel safe or that they belong to the school culture.
- x Parents and students believe that there are unfair disciplinary practices in our schools, including potential bias of school staff members affecting discipline outcomes, an unequal addressing of behavior in classrooms and hallways, and harsher discipline consequence for black and Latinx students.
- x Black and Latinx students and parents report that their students face bias regarding the perceptions of their academic achievement, particularly as it relates to academic expectations of our staff, access to rigorous courses, and whether they have plans to pursue a college education or directly enter the workforce after graduation.
- x and daily lives and to demonstrate representation of historical figures, authors and main characters of textual works. Additionally, our instructional methods could be more culturally appropriate and responsive in nature.
- x Students feel an increased sense of belonging and worth when they see themselves represented in our staff. We should strive to increase the racial, cultural and linguistic diversity of our staff at all levels.
- x There are a number of school practices and procedures that may be unconsciously racially or culturally insensitive. Including students and parents in a review of these practices and procedures would increase understanding and preventatively identify racial or culturally insensitivities.
- x Students and parents believe that students need increased access to mental health professionals, including school counselors trained in culturally responsive support.
- x There is a perception that school staff are uncomfortable having conversations about race and culture. Students desire to have these conversations to help make sense of the world and the world around them.

School-specific information from each report can be found below:

Conant High School Themes:

Parents and students were appreciative of the opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences in focus groups.

1. Students of color, disabled students and LGBTQ+ students reported

7. A racially, ethnically and linguistically diverse staff and administration is viewed as a benefit for all
8. Some school practices and procedures are viewed as burdensome to students and families.
9. Mixed with some critical feedback well as community members helping newcomers access resources

Schaumburg High School Themes:

1. Students and families are appreciative of the opportunity to participate in the Equity & Cultural Audit
2. For white and some Asian students, the culture is viewed as welcoming and inclusive. For those who feel excluded, there is disappointment regarding the lack of support they experience
3. Black and Latinx students experience lower academic expectations and Asian students are held to higher standards stemming from spoken and unspoken bias, favoritism, stereotypes and assumptions
4. There are perceptions that disciplinary consequences may be disproportionately applied based on race or culture.
5. All participant groups are asking for teaching and curriculum that is multicultural and relevant to the changing needs of students
- 6.

organized by committee and includes priority areas that are supported by belief statements developed from each committee.

Equitable Practices & Mindsets

Priority #1: Ensure that school climate and school culture promote a safe and inclusive environment where students from diverse backgrounds can thrive academically, socially, emotionally and physically.

Belief Statements:

- x We believe that every student, family, staff and community members should feel welcomed, empowered and proudly represented by their school and the broader District 211 community.
- x We believe in the importance of recognizing and celebrating the diversity of District 211 schools.
- x We believe in identifying, analyzing and eliminating access, opportunity and achievement gaps that could cause inequity in our schools.

Priority #2: Improve our system of behavior interventions and supports by committing to continually re-evaluating our processes and procedures through a lens of equity.

Belief Statements:

- x We believe in establishing trust and respect as the foundation for our school environment.
- x We believe that there is a history of institutional and systematic racism in our educational systems and aim to restore trust between school staff and families of color.
- x We believe in providing individualized social emotional support to our students.
- x We believe in providing behavior interventions and supports that meet the needs of diverse students.

Priority #3: Increase the capacity of students and school staff through leadership development efforts specifically focused on the application of an equity mindset to school experiences and decisionmaking.

Belief Statements:

- x We believe that our students are agents of change within our schools and should be given a voice in school improvement efforts.
- x We believe that our school staff are the most direct channel of influence on our students and should be knowledgeable about equity mindsets and practices.
- x We believe in placing equity at the center of our decisions, actions and priorities.

Priority #4: Develop and implement recruitment and employment practices that build and foster a diverse workforce while establishing an equity mindset with all staff.

Belief Statements:

- x We believe that equity mindsets develop the agency of the school community to build upon diversity and to enhance understanding.

- x We believe that equity provides the opportunity for each person to feel valued part of the learning community.
- x We believe that District 211 should seek to diversity our staff so that our staff more closely represents the students we serve.
- x We believe that representation is critical. Students and the school community benefit when they have opportunities to interact with diverse staff.

Equitable Opportunity & Achievement

Priority #1: Empower students to take increased ownership through attendance, involvement and engagement in academics, activities, athletics and fine arts opportunities.

Belief Statements:

- x We believe that consistent, daily attendance in our classrooms is the most effective preparation for college and careers.
- x We believe that students who have a school community outside the classroom feel a stronger sense of connection and belonging.
- x We believe in providing opportunities for diverse students to participate in extracurricular activities that are of interest to them.

Priority #2: Develop structures and institutional processes that provide all students opportunity to select and succeed in rigorous coursework.

Belief Statements:

- x We believe in the access to opportunities for all students.
- x We believe in eliminating racial and socioeconomic predictability and giving students choice and opportunity.
- x We believe in empowering all students to make informed decisions through processes which are equitable and tailored to diverse students.
- x We believe in the power of personal agency and student voice.

Priority #3: Design and implement proactive systems of support and interventions to prepare, scaffold and respond to the diverse needs of all students.

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Belief Statements:

- x We believe that the concept of equity should be the lens through which all professional learning takes place in District 211.
- x We believe that equity-focused professional learning has the greatest impact when it is continuous, sustained and integrated into our school priorities.
- x We believe that individual and collective reflection is critical to personal change.
- x We believe that equity-focused professional learning must include topics related to bias, privilege and systematic injustice.

Equitable Curriculum & Instruction

Priority #1: Ensure that all curriculum, curricular materials, supplemental materials, activities instructional and grading practices are reflective of our diverse student population.

Belief Statements:

- x We believe that all students, inclusive of disability, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, gender identity, immigration status, language, nationality, ~~family~~,

- x We believe that the increased integration with our feeder school districts is necessary in order to fully support the student transition process.

Priority #4: Build safe and supportive learning spaces by applying ~~social~~ social learning

- x We believe that we must continue to increase and improve our knowledge of and access to supports for students.
- x We believe that our District 211 staff needs to participate in professional learning experiences related to social

As originally presented at the December 10, 2020 Board of Education Meeting, we seek to move forward with Phase II of our Equity & Cultural Audit, which is facilitated by Bea Young Associates. Phase II includes staff focus groups, which will be organized to allow additional staff voice about equity in District 211 as well as to identify specific implementation efforts based on the 16 priorities identified in this plan. Phase II also includes individual interviews for District based administrators, School Board members, and the formalization of the final recommendations based on the full Equity & Cultural Audit. We seek to begin Phase II in July, 2021