




# Denver Public Schools E1 Equity Monitoring Report

September 2023

Board policy is indicated in **bold** typeface throughout.

I hereby present my monitoring report on your Ends policy 1, "Equity" according to the schedule set out. I certify that the information contained in this report is true, and *represents compliance with all aspects of the policy unless specifically stated otherwise.*

Signed , Superintendent Date 9/29/2023

**DPS will be a district that is free of oppressive systems and structures rooted in racism and one which centers students and team members with a focus on racial and educational equity, enabling students to ultimately become conscientious global citizens and collaborative leaders.**

**Racial and Educational Equity is our collective responsibility. We will achieve equity when we dismantle deeply rooted systems of oppression that have historically resulted in inequitable access and distribution of opportunities and resources for those who represent marginalized identities, including race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, language and ability.**

## Definitions

1. **Racial and Educational Equity** - We will achieve equity when we dismantle deeply rooted systems of oppression that have historically resulted in inequitable access and distribution of opportunities and resources for those who represent marginalized identities, including race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, language and ability.
2. **Systems** - refers to the processes and practices associated with the day-to-day operations of the district. It refers to all practices and processes within the organization and the interplay between processes and practices.
3. **Practices** - refers to those processes which are not included in policy but have precedents in how the process was executed in the past within the organization.
4. **Dismantle** - to halt a process or practice and to identify and record its impact on the organization so that it can never be repeated by agents of the organization
5. **Access and Opportunities** - refers to one of the key factors affecting marginalized students. Marginalized students need access to high-level curriculum, instruction, assessment and other educational resources in order to have opportunities to achieve academic success.
6. **Oppression** - intentional, unjust or cruel exercise of authority or power with the purpose of limiting access and opportunities for the oppressed.
7. **Discriminatory** - making or showing an unfair or prejudicial distinction between different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, language and ability..
8. **Inequitable** - students across our system have differing needs. Equally distributing resources to all students does not address many of the gaps which have resulted from centuries of systemic racism. Inequitable practices tend to presume a level playing field as a justification for distributing resources in an

equal manner. Equitable practices provide greater resources to those students and families so that they can

9. **Intolerance** - unwillingness to consider, not necessarily accept views, beliefs, or behavior that differ from one's own.
10. **Persistent** - continuing to exist or endure over a prolonged period.
11. **Enduring** - continuing or long-lasting
12. **Deeply rooted systems of oppression** - refers to structural oppression including the laws, policies and practices designed to oppress another group on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, language and ability.
13. **Discriminatory practices** - practices anchored in discrimination toward marginalized groups
14. **Discriminatory policies** - policies anchored in discrimination toward marginalized groups
15. **Inequitable distribution of resources** - resources that are distributed equally rather than to address those marginalized groups most in need of the resources.
16. **Inequitable distribution of opportunities** - opportunities which are afforded in an equal manner rather than based on need
17. **Free of oppressive systems and structures rooted in racism** - the goal would be to eliminate such systems and structures rooted in racism. In some cases, elimination of a system may require further attention in order to be in compliance with state and federal laws.
18. **CHE** - Congress of Hispanic Educators
19. **ELA-S** - English Language Acquisition through Spanish. A developmental bilingual program that instructs students in Spanish and transitions them to English as they become proficient.
20. **Inclusive Practices** - Inclusive teaching strategies refer to any number of teaching approaches that address the needs of students with a variety of backgrounds, learning modalities, and abilities. These strategies contribute to an overall inclusive learning environment in which all students perceive to be valued and able to succeed.
21. **Racial or Oppressive Language** - Language that stirs emotion with strong ties in oppressive systems and has been used to marginalize under-represented groups in the past. (Eg. "in the field")

## Reasonable Interpretation

DPS has made Equity its cornerstone. Because of DPS's rich history of civil rights and student activism including, the West HS 1969 Blow Out, and Colorado's history of embracing one of the most iconic hate groups, choosing Equity as a cornerstone seemed inevitable. Listening to the voices of our constituents is critical in understanding the complex issues and challenges anchored in discrimination. The Congress of Hispanic Educators has worked with district officials on the creation of a Modified Consent Decree which requires compliance in addressing discriminatory practices to students who are Multilingual Learners.

Over the past 24 months, we've experienced the complexities associated with a pandemic and witnessed the effects of intolerance for others from a different race, religion, gender and sexual orientation, positional authority and political affiliation. We also witnessed an increase in anti-immigrant rhetoric and intolerance for people from various cultural backgrounds. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, "Intolerance is itself a form of violence and an obstacle to the growth of a true democratic spirit." Given the great history of DPS and given my responsibility as the leader of this great organization, I commit to:

1. Discover, dismantle and revise persistent and enduring systems of oppression within our school system;
2. Partner with the City of Denver to dismantle and revise persistent and enduring systems of oppression outside of our school system that impact our student's ability to engage in their educational opportunities equitably;
3. Discover, support, and connect assets within our communities with our students and their families, celebrating how diversity of thought, culture, and traits can lead to success in college, career, and life;

4. Educate our staff about oppression and inclusive practices in education;
5. Develop the agency of our students to empower themselves to learn and to effectively be part of the changes that are implemented, debate and act for the greater good of our global, multilingual society; (this is about embracing the differences in other cultures and accepting their own culture)
6. Empower our teachers and special service providers to connect with the communities they serve to better understand and embrace their differences.
7. Continue to comply with the applicable requirements in the Modified Consent Decree in order to continue to center the needs of MLLs in all DPS initiatives.
8. Find ways to establish a solid relationship with members of the Legislature to affect change in K-12 education.

## Standard - RI Must-haves

- The standard of measurement for one or more parts of the policy
- The level of achievement on the standard for one or more parts of the policy
- The rationale for the standard of measurement for one or more parts of the policy
- The rationale for the level of achievement on the standard for one or more parts of the policy

## Outcomes

Our targets for 21/22 have been firmly established and achieved. For the 22/23 school year, our goals and objectives are to continue our work from the 21/22 school year and to continue to drive change within our system that eliminates barriers for marginalized students.

Compliance with this End Statement will be achieved for 22/23 when:

1. At least two systems have been identified for dismantling including the commissioning of the La Raza report to study the experience of Latinx students and staff in DPS and implementing the CDE Special Education Corrective Action Plan.
2. Sustain the opening of all 6 Community Hubs through a plan for permanent locations for the Hub sites. We will maintain a partnership with the City and County of Denver and local non-profit service organizations in order to address and support the social, emotional, physical and academic needs of the community.
3. DPS will establish a community advisory panel that includes representation from at least 10 different organizations that serve historically marginalized communities. This panel will focus on uncovering the assets within our communities and identifying opportunities for the district to support those existing efforts and connect them with our students.
4. Educators of Color and Multilingual Educators will be retained at the same rate as other educators in DPS based on preliminary retention calculations by Human Resources in September 2023. This is a reasonable measure and target as national trends indicate that teachers are leaving the profession at an alarming rate.
5. Continue to comply with the applicable requirements in the Modified Consent Decree.
6. 2-3% increase in sense of belonging for racially and linguistically diverse students as measured by the Your Voice/TuVoz survey in May, administered by Research & Evaluation team. This is a reasonable standard of measurement and goal based on the national report on belonging.
7. 2-3% increase in sense of belonging for racially and linguistically diverse families as measured by the Your Voice/TuVoz survey in May, administered by Research & Evaluation team.
8. Establish a periodic meeting with State Legislators in order to explore ways in which DPS can partner with elected officials to address the challenges faced by school districts in the state of Colorado where education is severely under-funded.
9. All district run schools will establish Parent Teacher Home Visits targets during the 22-23 school year that are realistic and honor families choice. This is reasonable as schools will continue to focus on building

relationships with families.

10. We will establish a baseline of participation in the Equity Experience Year 1 modules. This is reasonable because the Equity Experience Year 1 is now available to all district managed team members currently and is a 9-month journey of independent, self-paced learning to identify and examine the individual/collective mindsets we engage in daily that perpetuate educational inequities and disparities experienced by many of our students, families and team members.

**Rationale:** This is a reasonable interpretation which is designed to dismantle systemic structures in an ongoing and persistent manner. It has taken centuries of discrimination and oppression to create the current system in which we work and lead. It will take a persistent effort of all staff members to dismantle these systems and structures anchored in racial discrimination.

## Measures

Measure	Family of Schools or District Run Schools	Target	Baseline	Timing	Justification
1.1.1 # of systems identified for dismantling or revision	FOS	At least 2 systems identified 1. LaRaza Report 2. Affective Needs Centers	2 systems identified	May	This is the main action expressed in the Ends. These reports will identify the issues and experiences of the Latinx community.
1.1.2 Retention in district of BIPOC and MLL Educators at the same rate (or higher) as other Educators 1.1.2a) BIPOC Teachers 1.1.2b) ELA-S Teachers 1.1.2c) BIPOC School Leaders 1.1.2d) BIPOC Overall	DR	Same or higher as baseline 1.1.2a) 87% 1.1.2b) 91% 1.1.2c) 87% 1.1.2d) 84.5%	1.1.2a) 87% 1.1.2b) 91% 1.1.2c) 87% 1.1.2d) 84.5%	Sept	Changing the culture and climate with a workforce that reflects the populations which we serve.
1.1.3 Establish a plan to determine permanent locations for all 6 community hubs	FOS	6	0	Sept	This is a clear measure of successful collaboration with the city to help students equitably engage with their educational opportunities
1.1.4 # of organizations actively participating in community advisory panel	FOS	10	0	Sept	This is a clear measure of the community engagement required to uncover community assets we can connect with students
1.1.5 Continue to comply with the requirements of the Modified Consent	FOS	N/A	N/A	Aug	Compliance to this requirement is required by Consent Decree.

Decree					
1.1.6 Increase in sense of belonging for racially and linguistically diverse students in Your Voice/Tu Voz “how much do you feel like you belong at your school?” 1.1.6a Black, 1.1.6b Latinx, 1.1.6c MLL,	DR	1.1.6a 71% 1.1.6b 71% 1.1.6c 75%	From May 2021, district run schools:  1.1.6a 69% 1.1.6b 69% 1.1.6c 73%	June	An important part of students feeling included is their experience of the culture of learning and expectations from teachers and other students. It is important to provide a runway for schools to accomplish the required learning and professional development to truly impact student belonging. The impacts of the Re-Org, lingering COVID Impact, and the inconsistency related to staffing (subs and people new to schools) requires a ramp up over the next few years.
1.1.6) Increase in participation in Your Voice/Tu Voz survey for racially and linguistically diverse students 1.1.6d Black, 1.1.6e Latinx, 1.1.6f MLL	DR	% for each group 1.1.6d 26% 1.1.6e 30% 1.1.6f 28%	From May 2021, district run schools: 1.1.6d: 13% 1.1.6e: 15% 1.1.6f: 14%	June	We must increase participation to ensure that the surveys are representative of the student experience in alignment with the Strategic Roadmap.
1.1.7) Maintain or Increase in sense of belonging for racially and linguistically diverse families in Your Voice/Tu Voz in how families report “I feel welcomed at my students school” 1.1.7a Black, 1.1.7b Latinx, 1.1.7c MLL,	DR	1.1.7a) 93% 1.1.7b) 95% 1.1.7c) establish baseline in May 2023	From Fall 2021, limited to district-run schools:  1.1.7a: 91.1% 1.1.7b: 93.0% 1.1.7c: establish baseline in 2023	June	This addresses the Family and Community Engagement commitments.  It is important to provide a runway for schools to accomplish the required learning and professional development to truly impact student belonging. The impacts of ReOrganization of Central Office, lingering COVID Impact, and the inconsistency related to staffing (subs and people new to schools) requires a ramp up over the next few years.
1.1.7) Increase in participation in Your Voice/Tu Voz survey for racially and linguistically diverse families 1.1.7d Black, 1.1.7e Latinx,	DR	for each group 1.1.7d 17% 1.1.7e 16% 1.1.7f 11%	From May 2021, district run schools: 1.1.6d: 16% 1.1.6e: 15% 1.1.6f: N/A%	June	We must increase participation to ensure that the surveys are representative of the family experience.

1.1.7f MLL					
1.1.8) Establish periodic meeting with state legislators to partner with DPS Leadership in addressing the many challenges of school districts in Colorado	FOS	2 meetings per year	0	Dec & June	As school districts across the state of CO continue to face funding shortages, teacher flight from the profession and reverberating effects of the pandemic, effective change can only occur at the policy level.
1.1.9) Establish individual by school targets for Parent and Staff Home Visits	DR	100% of schools have targets	n/a	Dec	We will work with schools to establish and meet individual school by school goals for home visits that honor parents' choice and right to refusal
1.1.10) Report on and establish a baseline for district wide participation in Equity Experience Year 1 Modules across cohorts	DR	Establish a baseline of district wide % completion of the equity experience year 1	n/a	Jan	Over the last 4 years, the Equity Experience Year 1 modules have been rolled out system wide. The Equity Experience (Year 1) is a 9-month journey of independent, self-paced learning to identify and examine the individual/collective mindsets we engage in daily that perpetuate educational inequities and disparities experienced by many of our students, families and team members. Additionally, completion is now a requirement of teachers per the DCTA contract, so this is now an holistic measure.

### Aggregation Methodology

I will be successful if I meet 75% of the measures above.

### Evidence of Outcomes Achieved

**Goal:** Discover, dismantle and revise persistent and enduring systems of oppression within our school system;

2-3% increase in sense of belonging for racially and linguistically diverse students as measured by the Your Voice/TuVoz survey in May, administered by Research & Evaluation team. This is a reasonable standard of measurement and goal based on the national report on belonging.

2-3% increase in sense of belonging for racially and linguistically diverse families as measured by the Your Voice/TuVoz survey in May, administered by Research & Evaluation team.

Establish a periodic meeting with State Legislators in order to explore ways in which DPS can partner with elected officials to address the challenges faced by school districts in the state of Colorado where education is severely under-funded.

### September Measures

Green indicates achieving or exceeding targets, Yellow indicates improvement/increases but missed targets, White indicates missed targets or significant decreases.

Measure	Family of Schools or District Managed	Target	Baseline (2021-22)	Result
1.1.2 Retention in district of BIPOC and MLL Educators at the same rate (or higher) as other Educators	1.1.2a BIPOC Teachers	Same or higher	87.00%	88.87%
	1.1.2b ELA-S Teachers		91.00%	91.67%
	1.1.2c BIPOC School Leaders		87.00%	85.85%
	1.1.2d BIPOC Overall		84.50%	86.74%
1.1.3 Establish a plan to determine permanent locations for all 6 community hubs	Family of Schools (all schools)	6	0	6
1.1.4 # of organizations actively participating in community advisory panel	Family of Schools (all schools)	10	0	10

### Summary

#### Retention in District for BIPOC and Bilingual Educators:

Overall, we met **our goals on retention of BIPOC and Bilingual educators**, except for BIPOC school leaders. Additionally, all educator retention improved from the previous year. We saw a slight decrease in BIPOC School Leader retention, which was the result of a mid year transition and that our data has been inclusive of retirees. Our retention data also includes when full time team members transition to contractor/temporary status to support in a different capacity and then leave DPS when that assignment is complete.

#### Plan for Permanent Locations of Community Hubs

**The district has successfully established a plan to ensure permanent locations for all six Community Hubs.**

Our six Community Hubs locations for the 2023-24 school year are at:

- FNE region in John H. Amesse Elementary- 5440 Scranton St, Denver, CO 80239
- SE region in Place Bridge Academy- 7125 Cherry Creek N Dr, Denver, CO 80224

- NNE region in Smith Elementary - 3590 Jasmine St, Denver, CO 80207
- Central region in Swansea Elementary - 4650 Columbine St, Denver, CO 80216
- NW region in Colfax Elementary - 1526 Tennyson St, Denver, CO 80204
- SW region in Johnson Elementary - 1850 S Irving St, Denver, CO 80219

Our Community Hub locations were carefully chosen based on internal meetings with school leaders and external meetings with community organizations; a community needs assessment, mapping consideration which accounted for public transportation routes within half a mile of Community Hub sites, and a student distribution view as well as accounting for various factors such as accessibility, community needs, and available resources.

While we strive to establish stable and long-term spaces, it is important to acknowledge that these locations may change in the future due to certain circumstances.

- **Neighborhood Demographics:** We understand that a sense of permanence is essential for students, families, and community members to establish trust and develop a strong connection with our hubs. However, we also recognize that neighborhood demographics, changes in building space availability, and shifts in school leadership can influence the overall suitability of a particular location for our community hubs.
  - Neighborhoods are dynamic, and demographics can evolve over time. We must remain responsive to these changes, ensuring that our Community Hubs are located where they can best serve the needs of the residents. By periodically reevaluating the demographic landscape, we can ensure that our resources are allocated in a way that maximizes impact and reaches within the community.
- **Building Spaces:** Building space reduction or limitations may arise unexpectedly. In such cases, we may need to explore alternative locations that can accommodate the evolving needs of our programs and services. When changes in building availability necessitate a relocation, we will work diligently to find suitable alternatives.
- **School Leadership:** Changes in school leadership can impact the support and buy-in for our Community Hubs. While we strive to establish collaborative partnerships with schools, we must acknowledge that leadership changes can result in shifts in priorities and strategies at schools hosting Community Hubs. In such instances, we may need to reassess the viability of the current location and explore options that align better with the goals and vision of the new leadership.

### **The plan for maintaining or shifting the Community Hubs locations will be based on the above criteria.**

Community Hubs engage in ongoing review every semester to determine all the factors listed above and planning for the next semester or program year.

Our primary objective is to maintain a strong and sustainable presence within the community. We will make every effort to communicate any changes well in advance, keeping district leadership informed throughout the process and involving you in the decision-making whenever possible, as we have recently done with our transition from Wyatt/Focus Points to Swansea Elementary.

## **Community Panel Participation:**

The superintendent, alongside the team, convened an advisory council of community and key stakeholder groups 4 times throughout May and June, with a focus on the Long-term Safety Plan.

This group was comprised of 18 individuals representing the following groups: Asian Education Advisory Council, Black Family Advisory Council, Collaborative Council, Denver Classroom Teachers Association, Denver School Leaders Association, District Accountability Committee, Latino Education Advisory Council, Parent Safety Advisory Group, Principal Advisory Council, Multilingual Education Districtwide Advisory Committee, Reimagine Police Task



Force, Special Education Advisory Council, Superintendent Student Cabinet (2 reps), Students Demand Action, Superintendent Transition Team, Teacher Advisory Council, and Teacher Leader Advisory Council.

Individuals had good attendance at these convenings and we met more than initially planned because of the group's active engagement in sharing feedback on the safety plan from their communities.

The superintendent is planning to convene a new group that just represents district Advisory councils this year to continue to center community voice in our leadership and decision making.

## **Explanatory notes for preparing a monitoring report**

**(if needed) Non-compliance:** If a superintendent is indicating Non-compliance, a date by when compliance can be expected should be included.

The district did not reach its goal for BIPOC School Leader retention because of a mid-year school leader transition and leaders who have retired. We remain committed to ensuring that we retain our BIPOC school leaders and supporting them through our retention efforts. As we look ahead and what we need to do to support retention of our BIPOC leaders and all roles across the district, we will focus on ensuring our adults have competitive compensation and benefit offerings, opportunities for training and support, spaces for inclusion and belonging, and opportunities for evaluation, feedback, growth and development.