

Norwood Public Schools

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Norwood Public Schools Begins Equity Audit Work

NORWOOD -- Superintendent David Thomson is pleased to share that the Norwood Public Schools has begun its Equity Audit work.

The groundwork for the process began in the spring and will continue through the summer. At the beginning of June, the district held breakout sessions with representation from students, parents/guardians, teachers, the Norwood School Committee, district and school administration and the wider Norwood community. The participants discussed topics such as what diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging means to them; why it matters to Norwood Public Schools; and what they hope will occur as Norwood moves toward a more just and equitable future.

The shared understanding of and vision for diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging provided by participants will help the district begin the Equity Audit and planning process.

The Equity Audit, facilitated by the nonprofit [Mass Insight Education & Research](#), helps

districts determine the necessary actions to meet the diverse needs of students, staff and families. According to Mass Insight, the process helps districts and schools focus on policies and practices that expand equitable access to quality educational opportunities.

The district's Equity Audit and planning process is expected to have several results. First, the district will gain a clear understanding of its current strengths and areas for growth regarding equitable opportunities for all students. This will be achieved by analyzing data and understanding the perspectives and experiences of Norwood Public Schools' stakeholders, particularly students, families, staff and historically marginalized populations.

Second, the audit will result in actionable recommendations for improving equitable practices districtwide, both in the near future and long term. Thirdly, a strategic plan will be designed that will focus attention and resources on supporting Norwood's diverse students, staff, families and community and will move the district toward a more just and equitable state.

"We are excited that this Equity Audit work has begun and thank those who have already participated in the initial part of the process," Superintendent Thomson said. "Along with the many trainings and initiatives we have undertaken recently regarding diversity, equity and inclusion districtwide, this Equity Audit process will help us take a deeper look at the district to understand inequities and what we need to do to address them."

In the coming weeks and months, the district will synthesize input from the session to develop a more concrete preliminary vision for equity that will guide the audit process. This vision will continue to be refined and expanded upon throughout the audit as additional stakeholders become involved.

From August-October, the district plans to conduct several activities to engage students, family members, school and district staff, board members and community members in sharing their experiences in Norwood Public Schools, including the extent to which they feel a sense of belonging and what they see as opportunities to strengthen equity within the district. These activities will include surveys, interviews, focus groups and more. Additional information on these opportunities will be provided to stakeholders as details become available.

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