



## DISTRICT 97 EQUITY POLICY - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On March 12, 2019, the District 97 Board of Education unanimously approved the district's equity policy. During the two years prior to that, we worked closely and collaboratively with our students, staff, families and community members to develop this policy, which affirms our steadfast commitment to racial equity, seeks to promote a strong sense of belonging in all of our schools, and is aimed at ensuring that every student we serve has access to an excellent and equitable educational experience. This work included, but was not limited to:

- Conducting an extensive search and performing a thorough review of sample policies that were created by other cities/communities (Portland, Seattle, Minneapolis, Roanoke, Madison, Beaverton and Highline).
- Offering multiple opportunities and avenues for the community to offer guidance and feedback on all aspects of the policy (e.g., focus, structure, content, etc.).
- Working with community leaders and experts to strengthen the policy and directly address the challenges we have faced and goals we are striving to accomplish in the area of racial equity.

These efforts coupled with the significant contributions of the community culminated in the creation of a transformative policy that addresses our struggles to achieve equity and offers a comprehensive roadmap for how we will:

- Eliminate racial inequities and systemic disparities.
- Create and ensure equitable educational opportunities for all students, especially those who have historically been underserved in our district and public education settings.
- Help families effectively navigate the services that are available to them so that they not only feel a sense of belonging in the district, but will also know that we will meet their specific needs and those of their children.
- Establish a framework that will enable us to eliminate the racial and cultural biases that affect student learning and achievement, and promote environments that intentionally welcome, respect and value diversity and inclusion.
- Address disparities in educational opportunities and achievement.
- Utilize policy, procedure and practice to eliminate opportunity gaps at every level of our organization.

It details the steps and actions we will take in the following areas to achieve equity for our students:

- Equitable access
- Racial equity
- Eliminating discipline disproportionality
- Stakeholder and community engagement
- Workforce equity
- Professional development
- Welcoming school environments
- Recognizing and valuing diversity

- Equity leadership and infrastructure

It also addresses the issues of reporting and accountability, coordinating efforts with districts 90 and 200, working with equity consultants, and achieving our desired objectives and outcomes.

While the policy went into effect following its approval on March 12, its official implementation will begin at the start of the 2019-20 school year. In the months leading up to this date, we will work with the community on the development of an implementation plan that will include priorities, milestones and opportunities for stakeholder engagement. We will use a variety of resources (email, website, social media, etc.) to keep people updated on the status of the planning process and the ways they can help. We will use those same resources to share the final version of the plan.