



*The Pathway to the Promise.™*

## Pittsburgh Public Schools

**Education Committee Meeting  
Equity in Learning  
January 5, 2010**

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### Equity in Learning

- What is Equity?
- Equity in learning is where "all students receive the individual support they need to reach and exceed a common standard or expectation."  
*Curtis Linton, Vice President of School Improvement Network*

Definition from an equity webinar, *What have Schools Done to Close Their Gaps?*  
December 10, 2009

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### Is Equity the Same as Equality?

**No it is not, equity means meeting the access needs of each subgroup of students**

**"Equity can be achieved only if the design features strategies that disproportionately advantage students on the wrong side of the achievement gap."**

*Closing the Achievement Gaps: Lessons from the Last 15 Years* Kappan, November, 2009

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### Why a Policy?

- **Lens of equity**
- **Roots for the Work**
- **Statement to the Staff and the Community**
- **Long-lived**

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### Why a Framework?

Provides direction for the district as well as a clear means of communication to the community

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### Equity in Learning: Goal One Policies and Practices

**Policies and practices that promote closing race-based disparities and high levels of proficiency for African-American students**

*Framework adopted from Boston Public Schools*

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### Policies and Practices

- Objective 1.1 Develop and seek approval for a Board Policy promoting equity in learning
- Objective 1.2 Provide communication and training regarding that policy and create a culture focused on explicit efforts to reduce race-based academic disparities

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### Equity in Learning: Goal Two

**Employ a diverse and culturally competent leadership and staff district-wide**

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### Diverse Staff and Leadership

- Objective 2.1 Support district administration in leading the work of significantly increasing the achievement of African American students
- Objective 2.2 Recruit, select, develop, and retain staff members who *show evidence* of commitment and effectiveness in promoting learning for African American students
- Objective 2.3 Conduct program evaluation and provide evidence of the results of these efforts annually to the Board and to the Pittsburgh community

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Equity In Learning: Goal Three

**Develop learning environments that promote a “college-readiness” culture**

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Learning Environments

- Objective 3.1 Engage parents, students, staff and the community to promote a positive, safe, and respectful climate for learning for all students regardless of race, gender, disability, or area of residence.
- Objective 3.2 Provide opportunities for students to provide leadership and input to inform this work.

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Learning Environments

- Objective 3.3 Regularly engage community partners to share information on progress and maintain focus on the learning environment goal. Evaluate the strategies employed by partners to identify most effective strategies.

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Equity in Learning: Goal Four

**Employ teaching and learning practices which advance the achievement of African-American students**

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Teaching and Learning Practices

- Objective 4.1 Equip educators with a variety of instructional strategies to address the range of achievement levels, communication styles, and learning styles of African-American students in the Pittsburgh Public Schools, as well as students of other races and ethnicities.
- Objective 4.2 Ensure that the core and the elective curriculum are rigorous and employ examples which reflect the culture of all PPS students

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Teaching and Learning Practices

- Objective 4.3 Provide evidence that culturally relevant practice, content, and relationship building is embedded in teacher training, (Empowering Effective Teaching – EET) and student teacher preparation, including the PPS/PFT Teacher Academy.
- Objective 4.4 Train school staff about the challenges of crossing racial and SES barriers in that work with students, and how to address those challenges.

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Equity in Learning – Goal Five

**Assessment and Accountability for Performance**

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**Assessment and Accountability**

- Objective 5.1 Use data and assessment information to measure progress on these goals as well as the institutionalization of successful practices.
- Objective 5.2 Establish clear performance standards for staff and programs related to eliminating race-based academic disparities. Hold staff accountable through performance appraisal and programs through program evaluation.

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**Examples of Current Work**

- Academy Plan
- Courageous Conversations – Principals
- Observing for Equity
- Design Team
- Report Preparation by Dr. Martin

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Reports and Framework

- **Seek Board Action on Policy January 20<sup>th</sup>**
- **Meeting with the Equity Advisory Panel February 22<sup>nd</sup>**
- **District Response to Recommendations from Martin Report**
- **Communication Plan on Policy and Framework**

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