



Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

**Fall Update
November 15, 2023**

Jeanice K. Swift
Superintendent of Schools

Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

AAPS Dignity, Belonging & Well-being Focus Statement 2023-24

Through our intentional actions each day, we work together to ensure a **culture of dignity** so our students learn, grow and thrive within an **environment of belonging**; we **model and cultivate well-being** for every child as the essential foundation of quality learning experiences as we nurture students to achieve excellence and equity in education.

The AAPS Strategic Equity Plan is built on a foundation of dignity, belonging and well-being.



Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

Dignity

“Dignity is *the* precursor to cultural responsiveness and any other equity methodology ever conceived - past, present or future.”

~ Cobb & Krownapple
Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity



Belonging

“...positive school climates are aligned with an increased sense of dignity, belonging, and well-being for everyone: students, families, staff and administration. In these inclusive environments, access is high, belonging is unconditional, and everyone feels included.”

~ Cobb & Krownapple,
Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity

Well-Being

Environments, policies and practices that that support well-being are critical for organizations.

The priority of well-being applies to the entire AAPS community - students, staff, families, and community.

True well-being is not the absence or removal of challenges, and does not mean that we will feel good all the time.

Well-being is the development of skills, agency, clarity, and capacity to address challenges as they emerge.

Supporting well-being is also creating the time and space to address challenges.

Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

Core Beliefs

Dignity

- Dignity is our common heritage and birthright as human beings.
- Dignity is the innate equal worth of human beings, as humans.
- Dignity stands above differences.
- Every person has dignity.

Belonging

To achieve a culture of dignity, we will embody the **indicators of belonging**:

- We will begin by listening,
- We will take action to know our students by name, strength, culture, story and need,
- We will listen closely to the experiences of students and act affirmatively on what we learn, so that all in our schools feel validated, appreciated, accepted, and treated fairly.

- Well-being is the foundation for learning.
- Well-being involves individual mental, physical, emotional, and occupational health.
- Well-being applies to the whole school community - students, staff, families, and community.
- Well-being includes individual, family, environmental, social and political influences.
- Historic and ongoing inequities can significantly impact well-being for many in our classrooms and school communities.
- We have the power to transform school environments by cultivating well-being among students and staff through relationships, practices, and policies.
- Well-being is essential for staff to thrive as people and as professionals.

Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

AAPS Strategic Equity Framework Focus Areas

Culture of Dignity

Community Engagement

✦ **A Foundation of Dignity**

A culture of dignity, and the recognition of the dignity of every student is central to equity work. In the AAPS, we will nurture a climate of belonging through shaping and maintaining a culture of dignity for every student, staff & family member.

✦ **Academic Learning, Growth, and Achievement**

All students learn, grow and achieve at high levels.

✦ **Well-Being: Social-Emotional, Mental and Physical Health**

School environments and practices support the social-emotional, mental and physical well-being of students and staff.

✦ **Safety and Security**

All students are safe and secure at school; systems are in place to address safety concerns.

✦ **Design District Systems for Equity, Access and Opportunity**

Align district procedures, regulations, practices and policies to the responsibility of ensuring equity throughout the organization.

✦ **Courageous Equity-Centered Leadership**

Leaders demonstrate courageous actions necessary to remove inequities and barriers to ensure optimal learning and growth.

✦ **Student, Family and Community Partnership**

Cultivate partnerships between schools, families and the community to establish a strong network of support, connections, resources and opportunities for every student.

Outcomes/Accountability Measures

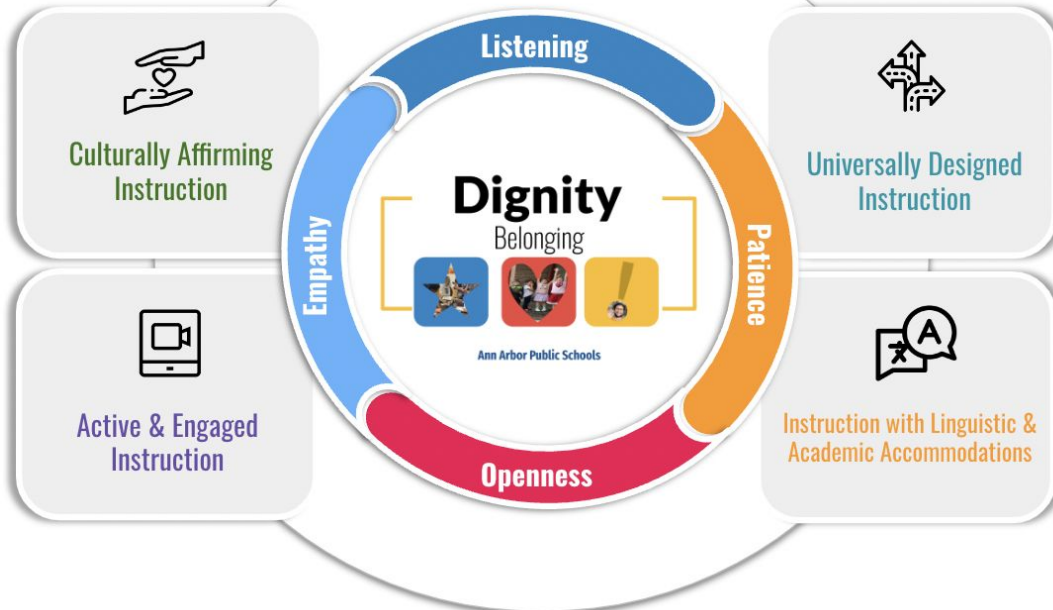
Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

Academic Learning Growth and Achievement - Ongoing Work

AAPS Framework for Equitable Instruction

~ Equity is Everything ~

Four Essential Design Elements of Equitable Instruction





Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

Organizational Disciplines and Practices

Theory of Growth & Change

We progress in our Strategic Equity Plan implementation across three key pathways of work in the AAPS:

- transformation of **culture**,
- shift of **classroom, school and organizational practice**, and
- **redesign of systems** to honor dignity, belonging and well-being.



Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

Organizational Disciplines and Practices

High-Performing Team

Talented, Diverse, Committed to Equity

Fiscal Responsibility

Effective, Transparent & Equitable Stewards of Resources

Communication

Timely, Accurate, and Informative Updates

Updated School Buildings, Campuses & Infrastructure

Healthy optimal learning environments designed for the future

AAPS Capital Program

Environmental Sustainability

Commitment to environmentally sustainable existence

Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

Organizational Disciplines and Practices

Talented, Diverse, Committed and High-Performing Team

The AAPS attracts, develops, supports & retains talented, effective individuals who are deeply committed to the mission of equity and the success of every student and serve as members of diverse, representative teams to ensure a high-performing and resilient organization.

As high-performing team members, AAPS employees consistently support and develop each other to improve equity-driven practice within and across the organization.

Team members achieve at the top of their professional groups.

Fiscal Responsibility

- Financial decisions ensure fiscal responsibility, effectively balancing the short, mid-range and long term needs to keep the district financially strong and viable.
- Regular, consistent, monthly public financial reporting supports strong fiscal oversight and communication.
- Ensure equity-based financial practices so that those with the greatest need are served.

Link: [AAPS Financial Transparency](#)

Link: [AAPS Monthly Budget Monitoring Reports](#)

Communication

Information and Updates: In the AAPS, we are committed to timely, accurate sharing of critical information with students, staff, parents and community, sharing consistent updated news and information.

Link: [Messages from Superintendent](#)

Link: [AAPS Weekly Update](#)

Tell the Story: We work to tell the story, work and achievements of our students, staff, and schools, shining the spotlight on the AAPS, and sharing the happenings in our school communities.

Link: [AAPS News](#)

Link: [AAPS Monthly Communication Reports](#)

Website: Maintain A2Schools.org district website including pages for departments, Board of Education, and staff resources and oversee websites for all of the neighborhood schools.

Media Relations: Coordinate relations with local and national media organizations.

Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

Organizational Disciplines and Practices

Updated School Buildings, Campuses & Infrastructure
Ensure healthy optimal learning environments for students and staff



Link: [Capital Program website](#)

Environmental Sustainability

The AAPS is committed to care for the environment, to model and achieve an environmentally sustainable existence, with every decision and in every area of the organization, including Policy 8000s.

The AAPS values a decades long tradition of top-quality environmental education programming.

In all decisions we embody and live the value of care for the earth and the environment. Individual, team and district decisions are consistent with care for the earth.

Link: [AAPS Environmental Sustainability Framework](#)

Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

Core Values Drive the Process of Community Engagement

- Meaningful engagement begins with authentic listening and open, honest dialogue. It's a process of doing with, rather than doing for, our community members.
- Community engagement uses many strategies to be as accessible as possible - hearing all voices - meeting people where they are and hearing their experiences, thoughts and concerns.



- Community engagement is a continuous, long-term and systemic process involving ongoing relationship-building with individuals, groups, and organizations.
- Community engagement is goal-directed, and input is used as an important component of district planning and decision efforts.



Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

AAPS Strategic Equity Framework Focus Areas

Culture of Dignity

Community Engagement

✦ **A Foundation of Dignity**

A culture of dignity, and the recognition of the dignity of every student is central to equity work. In the AAPS, we will nurture a climate of belonging through shaping and maintaining a culture of dignity for every student, staff & family member.

✦ **Academic Learning, Growth, and Achievement**

All students learn, grow and achieve at high levels.

✦ **Well-Being: Social-Emotional, Mental and Physical Health**

School environments and practices support the social-emotional, mental and physical well-being of students and staff.

✦ **Safety and Security**

All students are safe and secure at school; systems are in place to address safety concerns.

✦ **Design District Systems for Equity, Access and Opportunity**

Align district procedures, regulations, practices and policies to the responsibility of ensuring equity throughout the organization.

✦ **Courageous Equity-Centered Leadership**

Leaders demonstrate courageous actions necessary to remove inequities and barriers to ensure optimal learning and growth.

✦ **Student, Family and Community Partnership**

Cultivate partnerships between schools, families and the community to establish a strong network of support, connections, resources and opportunities for every student.

Outcomes/Accountability Measures

Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

AAPS Dignity, Belonging & Well-being Focus Statement 2023-24

Through our intentional actions each day, we work together to ensure a **culture of dignity** so our students learn, grow and thrive within an **environment of belonging**; we model and **cultivate well-being** for every child as the essential foundation of quality learning experiences as we nurture students to achieve excellence and equity in education.

The AAPS Strategic Equity Plan is built on a foundation of dignity, belonging and well-being.





Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

Partial List of References/Resources

- **Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity: The Keys to Successful Equity Implementation**
Cobb and Krownapple, 2019
- **We Got This. Equity, Access, and the Quest to Be Who Our Students Need Us to Be**
Cornelius Minor, 2018
- **Unearthing Joy: A Guide to Culturally and Historically Responsive Teaching and Learning**
Gholdy Muhammad, 2023



Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

Next Phase of the Work

Goals, Objectives, Actions

Indicators of Success

Dashboard - snapshot of progress

Communication



Ann Arbor Public Schools Strategic Equity Plan

**Fall Update
November 15, 2023**

Jeanice K. Swift
Superintendent of Schools