

Lake Washington School District Equity Team

2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT



FOREWORD

Superintendent's Message

This annual report aims to summarize the wide variety of efforts across the Lake Washington School District to ensure that we are systemically transforming our schools and district to become more inclusive in practice and equitable in outcomes. Our work in this area is particularly governed by the School Board's [policy](#) on Anti-Racism, Anti-Discrimination, Equity, and Inclusion in Education and is supported by the District's administrative [policy](#) and [procedure](#) on Equity.

This work requires a collective effort and engagement from our students, families, and staff. It is our hope that this report helps to make transparent the efforts underway to better inform the LWSD community about our progress and our path forward.

It is the mission of the Lake Washington School District to ensure that each student graduates prepared to lead a rewarding, responsible life as a contributing member of our community and greater society. To realize that mission we must take on the obligation to:

1. Eliminate racist and discriminatory systems, structures, and practices;
2. Ensure equitable opportunities and treatment for all students; and,
3. Address and close persistent gaps for historically marginalized groups and enable every student to excel and achieve at high levels.

This report documents some of our efforts to meet those obligations. We are both proud to share these efforts with our community and humbled by the work still ahead of us to ultimately realize our mission.

With gratitude,

Dr. Jon Holmen

Superintendent



CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Lake Washington School District is committed to offering an engaging and rigorous educational experience for all our students, especially those who have been historically underserved.

Ethnic Studies Pilot

Last year, Ethnic Studies partnered with Heritage Language teachers and the Teaching & Learning Department to bring in The **XITO Institute** for professional learning and curriculum development. A curriculum map has been built and lesson plans are being added and developed. Ethnic Studies teachers were trained in decolonizing education and culturally responsive teaching through XITO and Washington Ethnic Students Now (WAESN). The curriculum was piloted at Emerson High School this spring and will be offered at each high school in the 2024/25 school year. Coaching support will also be provided to teachers while they facilitate learning with students and to other educators during full implementation.

Antiracist K-5 Lessons Pilot

Supplemental antiracist K-5 Lessons have been developed as that are anchored in literacy, social studies, and social justice standards. There are five lessons per grade level band (K-1, 2-3, and 4-5) that cover the topics of: race, racism, positive racial identity, diversity, and activism. The lessons are currently in the revision stage after being reviewed by several K-5 teachers and librarians. Several schools participated in piloting the lessons This school year. Using educator feedback, lessons will be finalized next school year and will be available district-wide.



"My 2/3 class completed the unit, and to conclude, I finished with the enrichment painting lesson focused on creating skin tones using paint. Instead of the portraiture, I drew inspiration from a poster in our classroom (picture above). It was the perfect way to wrap up the unit. Witnessing my students thoroughly engaged in our discussions was immensely gratifying. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the pilot leaders for their tireless efforts and thoughtful contributions to crafting these enriching units. Thank you!"

2/3 Antiracist Lessons Pilot Teacher

Gender Inclusion Lessons

The Equity and Family Engagement Department (EFE) worked together with educators, community groups, students and parents to develop gender inclusion lessons. These optional lessons were piloted this year and will be available district-wide next school year. The lessons help move the district closer to the goals identified in OE-14. Teachers and schools can choose to use the lessons throughout the year.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

K-5th Grade Social Studies Adoption

Several members of the EFE Department participated as members of the LWSD K-5th Grade Social Studies Curriculum Adoption Committee. The committee which consists of teachers and other educators, administration, parents and other community members are tasked with reviewing and choosing a new curriculum which helps the district work towards the goals set forth in OE-14.

Instructional Playbook - Professional Learning partnered with multiple departments, including Equity and Family Engagement - to develop and launch an Instructional Playbook. This resource for teachers features 10 Tier 1 instructional strategies aligned with culturally responsive practices. The launch of this resource involved professional development for staff that asked teachers to consider how they could leverage these strategies to support students furthest from educational justice.



Equity Collective - The Professional Learning and Equity and Family Engagement departments collaboratively led the cross-departmental Equity Collective group. Now in its second year, the group sought to examine and address disproportionate student outcomes. In first semester the group analyzed OE-14 results and identified goal areas related to students' sense of belonging and academic outcomes. In second semester the group interviewed dozens of students and compiled their stories of their educational experiences within LWSD to help identify themes and approaches to changing outcomes.

Collaboration with Accelerated Programs

The Equity and Family Engagement Department has actively partnered with Accelerated Programs Department within the Teaching and Learning division to address the disproportionality in Highly Capable (HiCap) student identification. This strategic collaboration focused on data-driven analysis, engaging with the HiCap Multi-Disciplinary Selection Committee (MSC), and implementing/refining a new HiCap identification processes under the guidance of SB 5072. By continuously reviewing data and examining current identification practices through an equity lens, The departments worked together to identify and address patterns of disproportionality and to consider informed actions to move the work forward. Members of the equity department informed the MSC on equitable practices, provided training on implicit bias and cultural competency, and revised protocols to ensure fair and inclusive selection criteria.

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Within the context of the K-8 Highly Capable Program Review Committee, this partnership and representation in the committee meetings further supported the committee's goal of enhancing equity and inclusion. We partnered with the department to obtain feedback from our community from our families, staff, and students that were historically underrepresented in services. This collaborative effort aligns with recommendations that support LWSD's Mission and Vision, emphasizing Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Equity, and Inclusion to create an inclusive environment where all students, regardless of background, have access to advanced learning opportunities.

Special Education- Inclusion Bites

In 2023-24 the Professional Learning and Special Services departments collaborated on a new model of professional development for Instructional Assistants and Paraeducators. This professional learning series included short videos and readings related to supporting students with learning differences, followed by collaborative discussions facilitated by administrators.

Other District Committees

Members of the Equity and Family Department were invited to participate in a larger district projects intended to support the work of the district as we strive to meet the goals identified in Board Policy OE-14. EFE department members were able to encourage groups to keep our most historically marginalized students at the center of the work and advocate for the inclusion of anti-racist teaching as one of the foundational beliefs of the district. These

committees focused the core district goals of Equity, MTSS, and Inclusion.

Holocaust Awareness and Instruction

On March 16, sophomores in English 10 at Lake Washington HS attended a virtual live tour of Auschwitz, hosted by The Center for Holocaust Education of the East Valley JCC in Arizona (the tour guide was local to Poland). The tour used historical footage, Holocaust survivor testimonies, panorama pictures, and modern animation combined with virtual reality tools to guide participants through the property. It was specifically tailored to Elie Wiesel's experience in *Night*, which students are reading in class. It was our hope in booking the tour that students' understanding of not only the novella but also of the atrocities faced by so many millions of people during the Holocaust would be deepened. Below is a student response to the tour:

"The whole tour and student discussion experience [was meaningful] because we got to know more about something serious that should be acknowledged. I thought it was a good way to acknowledge The Holocaust, I would recommend for future students."

*Lake Washington High School
Sophomore*

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The following professional development opportunities have been offered to various Lake Washington School District Staff in the areas of Equity, Anti-Racism, and Inclusion. The items listed were either directly facilitated by Lake Washington School District staff or sponsored by them. Individual schools and departments also offered professional learning opportunities focused on equity, ant-racism, and inclusion. Please contact the Equity & Family Engagement department if you would like to learn more about what's happening at your local school.

Committed to Life-Long Learning

XITO Institute

Ethnic Studies, Heritage Language and Professional Learning continue to consult with XITO Institute to support both courses. With support from the institute, these courses are able to decolonize curriculum and focus on culturally relevant teaching strategies.

Educator Introduction Academy (EIA)

The EFE Department facilitates learning every summer for new to the profession, and experienced teachers who are new to the district during EIA. At the academy, new staff are introduced to the district and our focus and goals. This year, educators from department were able to facilitate learning about Culturally Relevant Teaching and Partnering with Families.

"The Culturally Responsive Teaching was a great time for thinking and reflection as we get ready to move forward into the school year "

EIA Participant

Cornerstone Learning

In an effort to support staff in the district in a flexible and supportive way, the EFE Department has developed multiple, self-paced courses that are available online through Cornerstone. These courses meet the requirements for educators to maintain their various certifications, using the standards outlined by the state. In particular, courses are updated and developed to meet standards related to Cultural Competency, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Islamophobia in the K-12 Classroom: Understanding Context, Recognition, and Student Success Strategies

The Puget Sound Educational Services District (PSESD) developed the following course. Lake Washington School District employees were encouraged to participate in this course in May of 2024.

This educator workshop offered an introduction to essential tools and insights needed to effectively address Islamophobia in K-12 classrooms. Participants gained an understanding of the political, social, and cultural factors contributing to Islamophobia and its impact on students. Educators learned strategies for fostering inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments that support the well-being and academic success of diverse student populations. By the end of the training, participants emerged equipped with actionable strategies and resources to counter Islamophobia, promote empathy, and cultivate a more equitable educational experience for all students.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

The Equity and Family Engagement Department remains committed to engaging and supporting families in our school district. This includes supporting and facilitating interactions between school and family, coordinating and providing access to resources, seeking feedback from families, etc.

Language Access Coordinator

LWSD added the position of Language Access Coordinator this year. This position is intended to facilitate access to LWSD for all of our families, regardless of the language they speak and understand. A multi-year plan has been developed to aid in this work. The plan includes recruiting and training a pool of skilled interpreters, building a system that will allow staff to request these interpreters, and coordinating feedback about the process.

Family Technology Nights

For the last several years, Family Technology Nights were hosted by staff in the EFE Department. The intent of these offerings is to help bridge the gap between access to LWSD technology resources and our multilingual

families. The learning was facilitated in the families home language and department staff acted as translators. The families are introduced to Skyward, Parent Square and other district resources. This year, they were offered in Spanish and Portuguese.

Family Engagement Highlights

The following are highlights of some of the work the department facilitated to support district families.

- Back to School Jam, a supply drive to support families access resources.
- Holiday Toy Drive
- Families Helping Families grocery voucher program
- Know Your Rights in Spanish and Portuguese
- Veteran's Day Pow Wow
- Listening Sessions, "Café Con Leche"
- Juneteenth Celebration



"Las noches de tecnología nos permite entender el sistema educativo y la cultura americana. Además de ser en español y derribar la barrera del idioma, nos permitio conectarnos con la escuela de nuestra estudiante. Ahora siento que estamos alineados con la cultura de la escuela. /Tech Nights allow us to understand the educational system and the American culture. In addition to being in Spanish and breaking down the language barrier, it allowed us to connect with our student's school. Now I feel that we are aligned with the school culture".

Tech Night Parent Attendee

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation Center (SWIFT)

The SWIFT (Schoolwide Integrated Framework for Transformation) Center is located in the University of Kansas. The center works with a variety of partners to implement evidence-based practices to improve outcomes for students across the country. The SWIFT Center recently reached out to a few school districts across the country to pilot an Equity Transparency Tool they were developing. Coincidentally, Lake Washington School District has been exploring utilizing an Equity Audit Tool as part of our administrative policy work in the area of Equity.

Kamiakin Middle School and Rush Elementary School both agreed to pilot the tool. The SWIFT Center sent out an entire team to assist both schools in applying the Equity Transparency Tool. This process involved identifying families, students, and staff to form focus groups. These focus groups would provide the school leaders with a textured honest assessment of various systems at play in their respective schools and how they promoted or inhibited equitable outcomes for all students. In the words of The SWiFT Center, the purpose of the facilitated school-level Equity Transparency Tool is to support schools in:

- Acknowledging and , when necessary, repairing past practices of systemic inequity
- Thoroughly describing and examining current practices of systemic (in)equity
- Creating and implementing a plan toward more equitable procedures, practices, and policies in the future for populations who have been historically disenfranchised in education

Kamiakin Middle School and Rush Elementary School are both using the data provided to them to guide their equity work at a local level. We will continue to monitor the progress SWiFT makes on the Equity Transparency Tool and evaluate it's fit for our district schools.



FOSTERING STUDENT BELONGING

The following list of programs and affinity groups is not all encompassing. The groups and programs listed below were facilitated or sponsored by the Equity and Family Engagement Department in the Lake Washington School District. Your students' local school may also offer affinity groups and programs intended to promote Equity and Belonging. We invite you to reach out directly to your students' school to find out what is being offered locally.

Students of Color Conference

One of the most important roles the EFE Department plays is supporting the students who are the furthest away from educational justice and have been historically marginalized. Towards that goal, we have organized and facilitated LWSD's Students of Color Conference. This year was our third annual conference.

SOCC Mission Statement

The mission for the Students of Color Conference is to highlight the power and fortify the wisdom of historically marginalized and traditionally non-dominant communities, specifically students who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, by introducing students to concepts and structures that will strengthen their identity development, enhance their awareness of others, promote social justice/ social activism, and encourage personal development.

SOCC Sessions

- Post-Secondary Resources for Latino/ Undocumented Students
- How to be a Xingona in 10 Easy Steps/Como Ser Xingona en Diez Pasos

- Leveraging Social Media for Change and Advancement
- Redefining Professionalism
- Reducing Miscommunication
- Express Yourself Through Your Surreal Self Portrait/Amor Proprio y Celebración a Través del Arte
- Tools for Staying Calm/Herramientas para Mantener la Calme en Caos
- This is Your Story/Conoce Tus Derechos y Tu Poder
- The Immigrant Experience– Sacrifice and Resilience
- The Importance of Art to Yourself and Your Community
- Slanted Eyes– The Asian-American Experience
- Know Your Rights and Power
- So You Want To Be a DJ?
- Cascadia Scholars
- Additionally, Affinity Spaces were organized for students to attend.

"The facilitators for the pride affinity space were so kind, joyous, and fun. I really appreciated their energy."

SOCC student attendee

FOSTERING STUDENT BELONGING

Other Student Support

- ENEAP Events
- Debutante Ball
- Black Student Unions and Affinity Spaces at multiple schools
- Arab Awareness Group
- Girls Empowerment Group
- Black Room at RMS
- Equity Student Board
- Links Crew Leaders
- Brazilian Student Groups



"I feel comfortable around some teachers like Miss Adanna and Ms. Wheaton because they run BSU. It helps that Miss Adanna looks like you."

Student at Inglewood Middle School

"We wouldn't feel successful if we didn't feel like we belonged. In Brazilian Club, we found out we weren't the only ones. We understand each other and don't need to explain. We're trying to spread the vibes of the Brazilian Club. The vibe would help feel like we belong."

Student from JHS, Interpreted by Isabelly



OTHER DEPARTMENT WORK

Restorative Practices

The Equity and Family Engagement department collaborates with Student Services Department, Human Resources Office of Civil Rights, school-based staff and community organizations to ensure that families are heard. Equity and Family Engagement Facilitators are organized via Comprehensive High School Feeder Patterns. They are known as EF². Families and students will often reach out to them when a situation arises and feel more comfortable speaking to someone from this group. EF²'s are supervised by the Director of Equity and Family Engagement. He will assist the EF², family, and school-based staff on finding ways to restore relationships when harm has happened. In the instances where restoring relationships is not possible, the Director of Equity and Family Engagement along with EF²'s will guide the student and/or family on what their rights are and assist them in escalating their concerns and grievances. This escalation has resulted in Civil Rights investigations being performed amongst other outcomes. This school year, the EF² will be supervised by the newly created role of Equity and Strategic Engagement Manager.



Policy Work

Operational Expectation 14 (OE-14)

The Lake Washington School District Board of Education adopted this policy in September of 2021. It made a revision to the policy in June of 2023. The revisions made are evidence of this policy being a living document. These revisions are intended to more accurately measure our progress and adapt to our students' needs, especially those furthest from educational justice.

Lake Washington School District Administrative Equity Policy

The Lake Washington School District Superintendent enacted The [Administrative Equity Policy 0100](#) and [0100P](#) in October of 2022. The Administrative Equity Policy was developed through the cooperation of community members and Lake Washington School District staff. This Equity Annual Report is an example of the expectations the community has expressed for our school district. Other areas of focus for the continued work for the policy group include: Accountability & Transparency; Curriculum and Instructional Practices; Equitable Access; Equity Teams; Family Engagement; Professional Learning; Recruitment, Hiring, Retention, and Workforce Equity; Shared Leadership and Decision Making; Student Access and Academic Achievement; and Well-Being. The Administrative Equity Policy is meant to be a living document. We are committed to developing more policy items on an ongoing basis.

OTHER DEPARTMENT WORK

Equity in Human Resources

Human Resources (HR) has played a crucial role in advancing the work of Anti-Racism, Anti-Discrimination, Equity, and Inclusion within our organization. This has been accomplished through a multifaceted approach that ensures these principles are deeply embedded in our practices and culture.

One of our key initiatives has been partnering closely with the Equity Department. This collaboration has ensured that the Equity Department is involved in all Administrator interview panels, ensuring that equity considerations are at the forefront of our leadership selection process. Additionally, HR has updated the bias training toolkit used in interviews, making it a more robust resource for mitigating unconscious bias and fostering a more inclusive hiring process. We have also made significant updates to our Civil Rights Policy, reflecting our commitment to equity and inclusion. These updates were guided by the feedback and insights of our Equity Department, ensuring that our policies are not only compliant but also progressive in their approach to civil rights.

Through our Talent Acquisition team, HR has integrated discussions around hiring and supporting educators of color into our school visits. This initiative is part of our broader strategy to attract and retain diverse talent, ensuring that our educator workforce better reflects the diversity of our student population. Recognizing the need for a dedicated focus on equity at a strategic level, HR collaborated with the Equity Department to create a job description for the newly established position of Equity & Strategic Management. This role is designed to provide leadership and vision in the development and implementation of equity-focused initiatives across the district.

Moreover, HR has been intentional in the design and implementation of new certificated educator training, as outlined in the LWEA Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). This training is specifically focused on equity, ensuring that all new educators are equipped with the knowledge and skills to support an inclusive and equitable learning environment. As part of the CBA, we have also updated language to explicitly address equity, reflecting our commitment to working together to support all students.

HR has also overseen a comprehensive review of the Civil Rights component of the OSPI Comprehensive Program Review (CPR). This review was thorough and aimed at ensuring that our practices align with state and federal civil rights requirements, while also advancing our internal equity goals.



OTHER DEPARTMENT WORK

In addition, HR has made significant strides in enhancing the New Employee Orientation program by transitioning it from a virtual format to an in-person, collaborative, community-based approach. This change is designed to foster a more personal touch and deeper connectivity among new hires, facilitating stronger relationships and a sense of belonging from the outset. By engaging in a face-to-face format, we can better support relationship building and create a welcoming environment that reflects our commitment to equity and inclusion.

To further support our community, we have introduced community-based application support training at local libraries. This initiative offers a personal touch and hands-on experience for applicants, helping them complete their applications with the guidance and support they need. This approach not only demystifies the application process but also ensures that our outreach efforts are inclusive and accessible to all members of the community. These initiatives, alongside our on-going partnerships with the Equity Department, updates to the bias training toolkit, revised Civil Rights Policy, and targeted efforts in talent acquisition and educator training, exemplify our comprehensive strategy to embed equity and inclusion throughout our organization. Through these efforts, HR is ensuring that we are not only compliant with civil rights standards but are also leaders in creating an equitable and inclusive workplace.

