



## OE-16 Equity

Policy Type: Operational Expectation

### Annual Monitoring Report for School Year 2024-2025 - March 11, 2026

*The Board believes that each student has the potential to achieve, and it is our responsibility to provide all students with the opportunity and support needed to meet their highest capability in a safe and welcoming environment. We acknowledge that systemic and institutional inequities and bias exist, creating barriers for student achievement and well-being. We are committed to raising the achievement of all learners regardless of race, status, varied ability, mental health, English language fluency, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, trauma impact, and geography. Our culture should promote the identification and removal of barriers causing predictability and disproportionality of the highest and lowest achieving groups.*

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**The Superintendent certifies that the district is in compliance with OE-16 without exception.**

**The Superintendent shall ensure an environment and culture that values and respects the diversity of its students and staff, addressing factors affecting student achievement and well-being.**

#### **General Interpretation:**

I interpret this Operational Expectation overall that as the Superintendent, I will ensure an environment and culture that values and respects the diversity of its students and staff, by modeling equity and inclusion in action and decision-making, ensuring ongoing training and education for all staff and students, holding staff and students accountable for their learning and application of the values of equity, ensuring there are adequate resources to support equity work, and addressing both systemic and environmental factors affecting student achievement and well-being.

#### **The Superintendent will:**

**16.1 Promote an environment and culture that is committed to every student having the opportunity to reach their full potential through educational equity. The Superintendent shall:**

- a. **Recognize the existence of systemic and institutional inequities for students.**
- b. **Actively encourage, support and expect high achievement and social-emotional well-being for students from all racial groups and other identified subgroups.**
- c. **Provide equitable access and academic support throughout our educational system.**
- d. **Provide curriculum that prioritizes diverse viewpoints and cultural relevance.**
- e. **Promote an environment and culture that supports and encourages effective engagement of all students and fosters cultural competency in students.**
- f. **Provide professional development, training, and engagement opportunities to inform and practice cultural competence, and increase awareness of personal and systemic bias and inequities in teaching, counseling, advising, and coaching practices, as well as in discipline, staff – student interactions, and staff – parent interactions.**

- g. Provide equitable access and an inclusive, welcoming, and safe environment for school activities, clubs, and athletics.**

**Interpretation:**

I interpret this to mean that staff employed at Issaquah School District will be able to acknowledge and identify the history, context and current state of institutional barriers and inequities that students face based on their racial and ethnic backgrounds. I interpret this to mean that each employee can interrogate how this history, context and current state inform expectations for students and how to reflect, identify, restore and interrupt unintentional patterns of marginalization and inequity. This can happen in classrooms, schools and programs, or with other activities that students are involved in (e.g., extracurriculars, clubs, and athletics). The district will equip staff at all levels to do this and provide support for students that correct inequities that may exist. The district will provide specific training to staff to bolster cultural competence, confidence and responsiveness while providing students with content and pedagogy that validate historical inequities and affirm their identities and experiences.

**Evidence:**

This section documents the professional development activities conducted for certificated staff during the 2024-25 academic year. The program focused on enhancing cultural competence, addressing personal and systemic biases, and implementing inclusive instructional practices to effectively engage all students. The documentation is structured to present professional development topics, objectives, key accomplishments, and areas for growth.

**Professional Development Topics:**

**1.) Cultural and Religious Literacy: Advancing Equity, Belonging, and Student Well-Being**

- **Objective:** To provide certificated staff with professional development that increases cultural and religious competence related to Jewish and Muslim cultures and faiths; strengthens awareness of antisemitism and Islamophobia; and addresses the impact of the Israel–Gaza conflict and the related rise in hate speech and hate crimes. This professional learning is intended to ensure that Jewish and Muslim students feel safe, supported, and seen in their school communities, and that staff are equipped to respond in ways that promote student well-being, belonging, and equitable access to learning, consistent with the district’s commitments under OE-16 and the Strategic Plan.
- **Key Highlights:** This professional learning deepened staff understanding of Jewish and Muslim identities, beliefs, and traditions, with an emphasis on the diversity within each community. Educators examined both historical and contemporary forms of antisemitism and Islamophobia, including implicit bias, coded language, and systemic impacts, and strengthened their ability to recognize how religious-based bias and discrimination affect student safety, belonging, and engagement. The learning also clarified the distinction between legitimate criticism of Israeli government policies and antisemitism, reinforcing the importance of nuanced and informed discourse. Throughout the session, educators were reminded of their responsibility to interrupt bias, respond appropriately to incidents of harm, and actively support students impacted by discrimination, while fostering culturally responsive communication and engagement with students, families, and colleagues.
- **Looking Ahead:** As a follow-up to our professional development focused on Jewish and Muslim identity, during the 2025-26 school year, professional learning will be provided to all certificated staff in navigating critical conversations and tough topics. This learning is aimed at growing staff confidence in facilitating meaningful, respectful dialogue around complex and sometimes

controversial topics. In an increasingly polarized society, this work emphasizes the importance of engaging—rather than avoiding—difficult conversations as a way to model the skills, dispositions, and practices of a healthy democracy. Grounded in *Facing History and Ourselves* resources, educators will explore strategies for creating reflective, inclusive classroom environments rooted in identity, belonging, and mutual respect.

## 2.) Addressing Systemic Bias and Inequities

- **Objective:** To implement a comprehensive multi-layered approach in addressing systemic bias and inequities through targeted professional development initiatives at the staff, building administrator, district administrator, and Cabinet levels.
- **Key Highlights:** Staff and administrators examined the role of racism in achievement disparities, utilized specific protocols for productive, insight-driven discussions about race, led conversations that generated meaningful solutions, and connected personal understanding to systemic transformation. This professional development also strengthened our administrators' strategies for identifying and addressing institutional barriers, methods for building sustainable change across school systems, and to see the critical role of adaptive leadership in equity work. In addition, our Cabinet team was able to examine existing district practices, policies, and programs through an equity lens, and create accountability measures to track progress toward equity goals.
- **Looking Ahead:** As a staff, we recognize the need to deepen our collective practice around how we analyze and use data to better serve all students. While reviewing overall performance trends has provided useful information, it can also obscure the experiences of students who are not thriving within our system. An important area of growth for us is moving beyond aggregate data to intentionally disaggregate and examine data through an equity lens, ensuring that the needs of marginalized and historically underserved students are clearly identified and addressed. This shift will require us to ask more critical questions, challenge assumptions, and align our instructional and systemic responses to the students who need them most. Through a collaboration between Teaching and Learning, Special Services, and the Equity departments, we have designed and implemented learning walks in our buildings as a Cabinet Team to engage in this important work.

Additionally, we acknowledge the importance of creating and sustaining a work environment that actively supports educators of color. This includes intentionally centering and responding to experiences related to bias, stereotypes, and racism in the workplace. By addressing both student outcomes and staff experiences through an equity-centered approach, we aim to foster a more inclusive, reflective, and responsive school community for all. We are currently collaborating with our Educators of Color Leadership Cadre to design professional learning for our staff centered on these topics.

## 3.) Building Inclusive and Affirming Communities

**Objective:** Provide districtwide LGBTQIA+ professional development for certificated staff to increase educators' knowledge, confidence, and use of affirming practices that support LGBTQIA+ students. Through learning grounded in student voice and lived experiences, staff will strengthen allyship, relationship-building, and family partnership strategies, resulting in more inclusive classroom environments and improved support for students' academic and social-emotional well-being.

**Key Highlights:** This professional development strengthened educator understanding of LGBTQIA+ student experiences, including current data trends and the connection between

school climate, student well-being, safety, and academic success. Staff built practical skills to implement affirming classroom practices such as using inclusive language, honoring student pronouns, demonstrating visible allyship, and responding effectively to bias and harmful language. The learning centered student voice and lived experiences, deepening empathy and informing educator practice. Educators also strengthened relationship-building strategies that foster trust, emotional safety, and a strong sense of belonging. Additionally, the training clarified state protections and district expectations, reinforcing staff members' legal and ethical responsibilities to uphold student dignity, confidentiality, and equitable access to learning. **Looking Ahead:** We will continue to grow staff knowledge around LGBTQIA+ history, experiences, and well-being.

#### 4.) Responding to Bias and Offensive Language

- **Objective:** To continue building staff capacity to respond effectively to biased, racist, or harmful remarks in school settings.
- **Key Highlights:** Educators were introduced to (or reminded of) four practical response strategies—**Interrupt, Question, Educate, and Echo**—that offer clear, actionable ways to address incidents in real time while maintaining student dignity and safety. Participants engaged in scenario-based discussions grounded in common situations that arise in classrooms, hallways, and school activities, as well as incidents reported directly by students. Through both small- and whole-group collaboration, staff practiced applying these strategies and reflected on how context shapes the most appropriate and effective response.
- **Looking Ahead:** Staff will continue to receive annual training in this area, along with additional professional development opportunities throughout the coming year to strengthen skills, confidence, and consistency in responding to harmful remarks.

#### 5.) Continuum of Inclusive Special Education Service Delivery

- **Objective:** To expand inclusionary practices and develop a comprehensive continuum of special education services that prioritize least restrictive environment (LRE) and increased access to general education curriculum for students with diverse learning needs.
- **Key Highlights:** Professional development in 2024-25 continued to be strategically designed to support the systemic expansion of inclusive service delivery. Professional learning focused on priming and supporting the educational system for enhanced inclusive practices, increasing student access to general education classrooms and core curriculum, developing strategies for providing high-quality specially designed instruction (SDI) across multiple educational environments, and equipping general and special education staff and instructional leaders with tools to support diverse learning needs. Examples of training provided to instructional leaders included: principal professional development on using Structured Teaching to build inclusive classrooms, Inclusionary Practices: Research and Resources, UDL and Inclusion, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports and Response to Intervention. Examples of training provided to staff included: professional development on different models of inclusionary practices beyond co-teaching to include push-in and inclusion facilitation. 2024-25 included a yearlong focus reinforcing the connection between Universal Design for Learning and inclusionary practices.
- **Looking Ahead:** Continued efforts concentrated on enhancing general and special education staff skills in supporting learner variability through Universal Design for Learning, deepening knowledge and implementation of inclusive instructional strategies, and ensuring comprehensive support across all educational environments to provide equitable learning opportunities for students with diverse abilities.

## 6.) Cultivating Belonging: Counseling Practices That Strengthen Student Connection

- **Objective:** The professional development session led by **Gaelin Elmore** aimed to deepen counselors' understanding of the conditions that cultivate genuine belonging within school communities. The objective was to strengthen educators' capacity to create environments where all students and staff feel seen, valued, and connected—essential elements for academic, social, and emotional thriving.
- **Key Highlights:** Belonging is created through deliberate actions—listening deeply, affirming individual stories, interrupting harm, and shaping systems that honor each learner. Counselors explored how policies, school structures, and everyday interactions can either reinforce or undermine belonging, especially for students whose experiences may differ from the dominant culture. The session offered practical, relational strategies for strengthening connection and elevating student voice. Counselors left with a clearer understanding of the difference between “fitting in” and truly belonging, along with tools to help students feel recognized, supported, and authentically included.

## 7). Culturally Responsive Teaching and Inclusive Instructional Materials

- **Objective:** Provide professional learning for teachers to ensure selection and implementation of new instructional materials are representative of our student and community population and used in a culturally sustaining manner.
- **Key Highlights:** Humanities courses K-12 are in various stages of selection and implementation. Highlights by phase include the following:
  - **Commissioning:** Academic Cabinet sets conditions for material selection including the expectation of alignment to the Equity Framework for Curriculum Adoption. District leaders complete a Road Show to engage with department teams at each school about the process and requirements for new materials.
    - 2024-25: MS ELA, 8th/11th grade US History
  - **Selection:** The selection committee is trained on the Equity Framework, conducts data study on equitable outcomes, and ensures selection criteria align to Universal Design principles, including culturally responsive engagement principles.
    - 2024-25: ES Music, Adv Math, Civics, Global Studies
  - **Course Design & Implementation:** Course design begins with the selection team and extends in regular meetings with all course teachers during the first three years of implementation. This phase includes ongoing equity data study and professional development centered on UDL and culturally responsive teaching.
    - 2024-25: ES ELA, MS Math, 6th/7th Grade Social Studies, World History, Spanish/French
- **Looking Ahead:** This process of course design is new, starting with all adoptions since 2022. Though at all levels courses are being designed around the 145-day Scope and Sequence to create more opportunities for supporting students and personalizing instruction, we continue to

receive feedback about the breadth of standards and content. In some cases, struggles arise due to reluctance to let go of past practices and content focus, difficulty prioritizing content, and in some cases, with courses such as math and ELA, teams find that core skills are difficult to complete in 145 days.

- ★ *You can click on the link [here](#) to access all the equity professional development that was provided during the 2024-25 school year.*

## **High Achievement and Social-Emotional Well-Being for All Students:**

### **1.) Student Summit:**

- **Objective:** The Student Summit was designed to affirm, celebrate, and elevate the identities, leadership, and lived experiences of our students while advancing our district’s commitment to equity, belonging, and academic excellence. The summit centered the voices and strengths of students who identify as Black/African American, Latinx, Pacific Islander, and Native, while intentionally creating an inclusive space that welcomed and benefited all students. Through culturally responsive programming, the summit aimed to foster leadership development, academic motivation, community connection, and a strong sense of pride and belonging.
- **Key Highlights:** The summit featured a dynamic series of workshops, keynote presentations, panel discussions, and celebratory experiences that highlighted student excellence and leadership. Workshops focused on identity, leadership skills, goal setting, and navigating educational pathways, providing students with both inspiration and practical tools for success. Student leadership opportunities were embedded throughout the event, allowing students to lead discussions, share personal narratives, and model advocacy and empowerment for their peers. Keynote speakers and panelists were comprised of diverse backgrounds and experiences, offering powerful perspectives on resilience, achievement, and community impact. A culminating celebration honoring students’ cultural identities, accomplishments, and contributions, reinforcing the message that their excellence is recognized, valued, and essential to our school community.
- **Looking Ahead:** Building on the strong engagement and positive impact of this summit, the district will host a second Student Summit in March 2026. The upcoming summit will continue to expand leadership opportunities, deepen student voice, and strengthen culturally responsive opportunities. Lessons learned from the initial summit will inform enhancements to programming, partnerships, and student engagement, ensuring continued alignment with our equity goals and a sustained commitment to celebrating and supporting all students.

### **2.) Creating An Inclusive, Welcoming, and Safe Environment for Students**

- **Objective:** The Equity Department has intentionally supported our secondary schools in creating more inclusive environments and strengthening students’ sense of belonging by partnering with building leaders, staff, and students to sustain and grow affinity groups and identity-based student clubs (Black Student Union, Latinos Unidos, etc.). We have provided guidance, resources, and direct support to ensure these spaces are structured, student-centered, and aligned with district values of safety and inclusion. In addition, the department has collaborated with the Associated Student Body (ASB) leaders and advisor at Issaquah High School to develop and support lessons and activities that elevate diverse cultures, identities, and lived experiences represented at the school.

- **Key Highlights:** We expanded availability and long-term sustainability of affinity groups and culturally responsive student organizations across schools, increasing opportunities for students to connect around shared identity and belonging. The Equity Department has also strengthened student leadership capacity by supporting student leaders in planning and facilitating initiatives that are inclusive, representative, and respectful of diverse perspectives. In addition, ongoing reflection, participation data, and student voice continue to inform adjustments to programming, ensuring efforts remain responsive, relevant, and impactful for students.
- **Looking Ahead:** We are exploring the possibility of creating an equity position within the Associated Student Body at each high school.

### 3.) Social Emotional Learning

- **Objective:** Under Strategic Plan Priority Area 1: Student Well-Being, Strategy D: Implement Social Emotional Learning for All Students, the district’s objective is to ensure all students have access to high-quality, developmentally appropriate, and equitable SEL instruction across K–12. This work focuses on strengthening students’ self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship skills while ensuring curriculum alignment to Washington State SEL standards and district equity commitments.
- **Key Highlights:** At the elementary and middle school levels, teachers deliver a minimum of fifteen lessons using the Second Step SEL curriculum. Some elementary teachers further enhance instruction by incorporating Second Step’s Child Protection Unit and materials from the Issaquah Schools Foundation grant supporting Character Strong’s Purposeful People Toolkit. High school teachers engaged in additional professional development in August 2024 to prepare for the 2024–25 school year, expanding SEL instruction to include Social Awareness and Social Management standards.
- **Looking Ahead:** Four of six Washington State SEL Standards are now integrated across courses; the final two standards will be added in the 2025-26 school year. Wayfinder was piloted across three high schools by a small number of staff (31) in 2024–25. Based on staff feedback, the district will not continue with Wayfinder for 2025–26, but instead will develop a district-created SEL Playbook aligned to all six WA State SEL Standards as a reference for teachers to use in their classrooms.

### 4.) Student Safety and Sense of Belonging

- **Objective:** The district is committed to ensuring that all students feel safe, supported, and experience a strong sense of belonging at school. As part of this work, the district seeks to better understand students’ perceptions of safety in order to identify strengths, address areas of need, and guide continuous improvement efforts aligned with Priority 1B.
- **Key Highlights:** New student survey questions were implemented to gather more specific and actionable feedback regarding students’ feelings of safety while at school. This data provides valuable insight into student experiences and will be used by the Priority 1B Team to set goals, monitor progress, and identify targeted areas for improvement.

Survey results indicate that the majority of students report feeling safe at school. Emerging themes from student feedback highlight opportunities to further strengthen a sense of safety and belonging, including increasing adult presence, fostering positive peer interactions, maintaining calm and supportive spaces, emphasizing consistent routines, and enhancing physical safety measures.

- **Looking Ahead:** The Priority 1B Team is actively collaborating with building principals to review survey data and define next steps. This work will inform school-based strategies and district-wide actions aimed at promoting a consistent, welcoming, and safe learning environment for all students.

## 5.) Equitable Access

- **Transportation**
  - The district purchases ORCA cards to support families in gaining transportation to allow for full participation in academics and extracurriculars. Transportation was also provided at our secondary schools for after-school activities.
  - The district provided transportation for approximately 189 McKinney-Vento-eligible students during the 2024-25 school year. When practical, students are transported via district school buses. When bus transportation is not available, the district utilizes individualized car service to serve students outside of attendance boundaries. In some cases, in-lieu transportation payments are offered as flexible support to qualifying families when appropriate.
- **Food Services**
  - Schools offering breakfast during the 2024-25 school year include Issaquah High School, Issaquah Middle School, Maywood Middle School, as well as Clark, Sunset, Issaquah Valley, Challenger, Apollo, Cedar Trails and Briarwood (newly added) Elementary Schools. The breakfast program served a total of 60,219 breakfast meals to students. Of those meals served, 38,551 were at no charge to students.
  - During the 2024-25 school year, the Food Services Department worked on culturally responsive menu offerings. This work included soliciting recipe ideas from our Family Partnership Advisory group and gathering meal input from student leaders. The first dish was inspired by a food service employee who grew up in Thailand and was named after them. Bell's Thai Yellow Curry Chicken was taste tested by students at Issaquah Middle School with 92% of the participating students recommending the dish be added to the regular menu. OSPI highlighted this work on their [website](#).
- **Back-to-School Resource Fair**
  - This past August the Equity, Belonging, and Family Partnership Department hosted its second annual Back-to-School Resource Fair in collaboration with several other district and community partners. The Back-to-School Resource Fair is a districtwide event designed to ensure students and families have the essential tools, services, and support needed to begin the school year with confidence.
  - The fair brings together multiple ISD departments and community partners to provide high-impact services such as immunizations, health screenings, school supplies, clothing, sports physicals, enrollment and registration assistance, Free and Reduced Lunch application support, and access to DSHS programs including EBT/SNAP and health insurance.
  - This past year, the Resource Fair provided support to more than 430 families and nearly 900 students, playing a critical role in removing barriers that can interfere with readiness for learning. It offers a one-stop, welcoming environment where families can meet basic needs, access health and wellness supports, and connect with community partners—strengthening family engagement and promoting equitable access to resources.

- **Clubs, Sports, and Activities**
  - Each of our comprehensive high schools has added several clubs to meet and honor the diverse needs and interests of our students.
    - **Issaquah High** added 14 new clubs, including the Women in Business Club and the Spanish Club.
    - **Skyline High** added 25 new clubs, including the Indian Performing Arts Club, Korean Club, Latinos Unidos, and the National Alliance on Mental Illness.
    - **Liberty High** added 10 new clubs, including the Almas Hispana's, Chinese, and Vietnamese Student Associations.
  - Gibson Ek added a Culture Club, giving students the opportunity to explore other cultures and celebrate students' cultural heritage. Gibson Ek, in partnership with ACT students, also hosted an Invisible Disability Month, which included working with an accessibility design lab that focused on disability awareness and designing accommodations to better support students.
  - In alignment with the WIAA, all three comprehensive high schools added girls' flag football and girls' badminton teams.

## 6.) Special Education

- **Objective:** As also outlined in OE-12 and OE-14, in alignment with the district's dedication to equity and the core tenets of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), the Special Services department continued to focus on expanding inclusionary practices throughout the 2024-25 school year. This work aims to ensure that students with disabilities have equitable opportunities and necessary supports to reach their full potential through a comprehensive continuum of inclusive services, with personalized support for every learner to excel academically within the least restrictive educational environment as measured by Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) data. Ongoing development in inclusive practice beyond co-teaching continued at all levels in 2024-25 with ongoing development of a comprehensive continuum of inclusive services.
- **Key Highlights:** During the 2024-25 school year, the Special Services department served an annual average of 1,983 students (not including Echo Glen) ranging in ages from three through twenty-two years of age across thirteen different eligibility categories (developmental delays, specific learning disabilities, visual impairments, emotional/ behavioral disabilities, intellectual disabilities, autism, deaf blindness, deafness/hard of hearing, multiple disabilities, speech or language impairment, orthopedic impairment, other health impairment, and traumatic brain injury).

The Issaquah School District Special Education program increased from 1,936 students served in September of 2024 to 2,025 students served in June of 2025. This represented an increase of 89 students served over the course of the school year. For students ages 3-5, ongoing growth in both the number of students receiving services and increases in the amount of programming in Special Education Early Learning representing an increase of 46 students over the course of the academic year and a 51.69% programmatic increase.

Despite slower programmatic growth consistent with overall district enrollment declines, the Issaquah School District's Special Education program continued to see notable areas of student need and impact. Specifically, there are significant increases in complex behavioral and mental

health needs across all levels (including preschool and elementary aged students) requiring comprehensive supports.

**Preschool:**

During the 2024-25 school year, the Special Services department offered half-day Early Childhood Education (ECE) programming for students ages three through five who qualify for special education services at three district sites: Briarwood, Holly Street Early Learning Center, and Discovery. Early Childhood Education programs support students in early access to high quality instruction that supports students in being prepared both academically and socially to enter kindergarten. In addition, students with disabilities are also served in all TK classrooms districtwide.

**K-12 schools:**

During the 2024-2025 school year, the district continued a multi-year transition to expand its continuum of special education services across elementary, middle, and high schools. A key shift involved transitioning from "Learning Resource Center" to "Learning Resource Continuum" terminology to better reflect that special education is a service, not a place, and to emphasize the district's inclusive program model.

To increase access to services in neighborhood schools, the district expanded its LRC-1/2 and LRC-2 programming as part of a gradual, multi-year shift away from a regional model. Three elementary schools added LRC-1/2 programming designed to serve students with moderate to severe disabilities and complex needs through specially designed instruction. Additionally, one middle school and one high school added inclusive behavioral support programs. LRC services provide specially designed instruction in academics, behavior, and social areas as indicated within students' Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and are offered across educational settings.

**Transition program:**

The Special Services department also offered transition programming for students ages eighteen through twenty-two at the Academy for Community Transition (ACT) program or through individualized programming.

**Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** LRE-1 indicates that a student has access to and participates in the general education classroom 80% to 100% of their educational day. LRE-2 indicates that a student has access to and participates in the general education classroom 40% to 79% of their educational day. LRE-3 is the most restrictive of programming and indicates that a student has access to and participates in the general education classroom 0 to 39% of their educational day. During the 2024-25 school year, the Special Services department continued targeted and strategic efforts to increase LRE and access for all students who receive special education services to general education environments with appropriate accommodations and supports. This is a strategy to disrupt predictable disparities in student outcomes for students who receive special education services. The district has achieved measurable systemic improvements in Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) as a measure of inclusion and access, with year-over-year data demonstrating increased access to general education settings for 80% or more of the instructional day from 2023-24 to 2024-25. Equity progress is evident across all

demographic categories, with particularly substantial gains among Hispanic/Latino students (+10.1%), Asian students (+8.7%), and students identifying as two or more races (+6.4%). While White students maintain the highest overall LRE placement rate at 82.8%, the increasing access for BIPOC groups suggests that targeted efforts are beginning to narrow opportunity and equity gaps.

**Multi-year Districtwide LRE Data 2022-2025**

School Year	<b>LRE 1</b> <b>80-100% In General Ed</b>	<b>LRE 2</b> <b>40-79% in General Ed</b>	<b>LRE 3</b> <b>0-39% in General Ed</b>
2022-2023	66.80%	20.10%	8.40%
2023-2024	69.30%	20.10%	7.30%
2024-2025	76.50%	12.80%	6.10%

Note: OSPI, 2025 Data for all other placements (Home Hospital, Non-Profit Agency, etc.) are not included.

**Multi-year LRE Data by Disability Category 2023-2025**

Disability	<b>2023-2024</b> <b>LRE 1</b> <b>80-100% In General Ed</b>	<b>2024-2025</b> <b>LRE 1</b> <b>80-100% In General Ed</b>	<b>+/-</b>
Specific Learning Disability	73.20%	83.80%	+10.60%
Other Health Impairment	72.00%	79.90%	+7.90%
Emotional/Behavior Disability	39.40%	47.50%	+8.10%
Communication Disorder	98.60%	100%	+2.40%

**Multi-year LRE Data by Race 2023-2025**

Race	<b>2023-2024</b> <b>LRE 1</b> <b>80-100% In General Ed</b>	<b>2024-2025</b> <b>LRE 1</b> <b>80-100% In General Ed</b>	<b>+/-</b>
Indian/ Alaska Native	Suppressed due to n size	Suppressed due to n size	---
Asian	64.10%	72.50%	+8.70%
Black/African American	55.30%	61.66%	+6.36%
Hispanic/Latino of any race	59.40%	69.50%	+10.10%
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Suppressed due to n size	Suppressed due to n size	---
Two or More Races	72.23%	78.70%	+6.47%
White	76.80%	82.80%	

- **Looking Ahead:** We recognize that LRE metrics represent only one dimension of educational equity. Despite these promising trends in expanding access, BIPOC students continue to experience differential access to inclusive settings, reflecting historical systemic barriers that require sustained focus. Comprehensive system improvement demands parallel examination of special education identification practices alongside placement data to ensure we address potential disproportionality at both stages—identification and placement. This dual lens

approach will enable the district to advance both access and equity more effectively in the years ahead. Persistent and strategic work continues to move toward the goal of equitable opportunities and necessary supports for students with disabilities to reach their full potential.

### 7.) Strengthening Access, Relationships, and Outcomes for Families

- **Objective:** The Equity Department strives to advance equitable access to information, resources, and supports by intentionally partnering with community organizations, schools, and local agencies to meet families where they are.
- **Key Highlights:** Through our partnership with **Cultural Bridges**, we collaborated on news articles designed to increase access to timely district information while also surfacing authentic questions and concerns from families. This feedback loop allows schools to proactively address barriers, clarify processes, and strengthen trust between families and the district. As a result, families are better informed and school leaders are more responsive to community-identified needs.

The Equity department worked alongside **The Circle** to deliver a digital literacy lesson during a Circle and Family Connections meeting, creating space for real-time questions and individualized support. This effort helped families build confidence navigating district platforms and communication systems, increasing their ability to engage in their child's education.

In collaboration with the **Nourishing Network**, the Equity department amplified awareness of district and community resources, including family information nights and workshops. These coordinated efforts reduce fragmentation of services and ensure families can access critical supports such as food, housing assistance, and educational resources.

The Equity department also prioritized direct school and community engagement. At **Goddard's** Kindergarten Information Night (March 24), we provided incoming families with district information and personalized support, helping ensure a smooth and informed transition into elementary school.

At **Rose Crest**, we partnered with the Family Youth Advocate to provide clothing and essential resources for families residing at the apartment complex. Additionally, district staff hosted a Family Connections event in the community room, meeting families in their own neighborhood to answer questions and connect them to services. These efforts increased access for families who may face transportation, language, or logistical barriers.

To strengthen systemic collaboration, we conducted quarterly meetings with the **City of Issaquah** Human Services Department to align city-level services and share trends and challenges impacting district families. This cross-agency partnership enhances coordination of support and reduces duplication of effort, ultimately benefiting students and families.

During **Issaquah Welcome Week**, we introduced and highlighted the work of our Family Partnership Liaisons to new families moving into the community. Early connection to district supports increases families' sense of belonging and awareness of available resources from the outset.

## **8.) Curriculum that provides a diverse viewpoint and empowers diverse learning paths**

The following curriculum selection and course design focused on increasing diverse representation and viewpoints, use of the new Equity Framework for Curriculum Adoptions, providing opportunities for student access to core curriculum alongside their peers, and to have choice over their learning paths.

- Elementary ELA – Course Design and Implementation 2023-26.
- Elementary Music – Selection 2024-25
- 6th grade Ancient and Medieval History - Course Design and Implementation 2024-28
- 7th grade Washington State History & World Geography - Course Design and Implementation 2024-28
- 8th & 11th grade US History – Commission 2024-25, Selection 2025-26, Course Design and Implementation 2026-29
- 9th grade World History - Course Design and Implementation 2024-27
- 10th grade Global Studies - Course Design and Implementation 2024-28
- 12th grade Civics - Course Design and Implementation 2024-27
- AP African American Studies – Selection 2024-25, Implementation fall 2025

**Connection to the strategic plan:** As part of the strategic plan and process, the district aligned OE-16.1 with strategies in our strategic plan. These strategies are connected to equitable access to resources and pathways, providing students with basic needs and resources, creating a safe and welcoming school environment for students, addressing academic opportunity gaps, and providing curriculum with a diverse viewpoint.

### **16.2 Collect, disaggregate, analyze, and utilize data in order to:**

- a. Identify inequities.**
- b. Develop and implement strategies and allocate resources towards eliminating those inequities.**
- c. Establish and sustain equity-based accountability systems across the district.**

#### **Interpretation:**

I interpret this to mean the staff members will examine and use a range of relevant disaggregated data and evidence in order to build and calibrate capacity for data literacy to unearth inequities, identify root causes, develop a problem or opportunity statement in support of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) and access for all students, develop a robust set of evidence-based solutions, prioritize resources and support, and establish accountability for eliminating opportunity gaps in district plans and School Improvement Plans (SIPs). In addition, I interpret this to mean that there is an ongoing cross-functional system of reviewing data and progress to determine what may be working, what may not be working, and the next course of action.

#### **Evidence:**

This section documents the steps taken to build towards full implementation of MTSS as well as annual assignments to build the capacity and alignment across the system.

## Equity-Based Accountability Systems

### 1.) School Improvement Plans (SIP)

- **Objective:** School improvement plans continue to be a primary accountability system for data-informed, equity-based accountability. Schools are provided with a standard data dashboard and additional tools that allow deeper dives into disproportional data. The SIP data is derived from the Washington School Improvement Framework provided by OSPI, secondary grades, and district assessments. Each school sets overall achievement goals and targeted goals for students in a BIPOC focus group consisting of students in demographic groups with predictable disproportionality and students with disabilities. Schools set targets for improvement in overall achievement as well as improvement in outcomes for students with disabilities and students in the BIPOC focus groups.

### 2.) Tiered Team Data & Protocols

- **Objective:** The district has developed Tiered Teams at all schools – Tier 1 and Tier 2.

Tier 1 teams focus on core academic, SEL instruction and building-wide PBIS systems. This team examines student data, including data disaggregated to identify inequities for the purpose of making core program adjustments to address findings in the data. Tier 1 data includes the following:

- School Improvement Plan data
- i-Ready building-wide summary data
- SWIS data
- Quarter and semester grades
- Attendance data

Tier 2 teams focus on identifying groups of students who may need intervention and matching intervention resources to student learning needs. This team examines group and student level data, including specific monitoring of progress for students in demographic and program groups with predictable disproportionality. Tier 2 teams utilize the following data:

- Student level i-Ready data
- Mid-term and term grades
- Attendance
- SWIS and Exclusionary discipline data

- **Key Highlights:** Intervention staff, including the Title 1A/LAP administrator, provided procedures to implement multiple academic intervention cycles per year and monitor progress for more proactive and responsive assignment of interventions that were equitable across schools.

The strategy Priority Area 2A, along with the continued growth in the use of new early literacy intervention programs resulted in more students experiencing accelerated growth. Given the success in early interventions with this approach, the decision was made to continue expanding these strategies to other areas of intervention and to higher grade levels.

The district continues to learn about building needs by reviewing, implementing, and testing Tier 2 interventions, particularly the Bridges math program at select elementary schools.

The Teaching and Learning Services team provided a protocol for elementary staff to examine i-Ready progress data to monitor student growth and adjust instruction for students with the

intent to reduce achievement gaps. All schools had access to i-Ready trainers as needed to support data-based decision-making.

A root cause analysis was conducted in 2022-23 to continue to examine the root causes of existing disproportionality within special education eligibility. The district continues to have disproportionate representation of students who are African American or Black in the category of specific learning disability.

As part of the district's 3-year Strategic Plan, and ongoing development of MTSS systems, the district commissioned the development of new agile data tools to more easily provide frequent data for tiered teams. These were developed in PowerBI and piloted and refined throughout the 2024-25 school year.

- **Looking Ahead:** During the 2025-26 school year, we will expand the new collaborative data study to Teaching Teams, providing teachers more timely and comprehensive data to proactively plan for student learning needs and adjust to prevent failure and increase equitable outcomes.

### 3.) Tiered Intervention System for Attendance

- **Objective:** The district uses a tiered intervention system for attendance incorporated into our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support. These interventions are designed to address barriers to student participation and engagement in learning.
- **Key Highlights:** Building staff make data informed decisions using our school refusal assessment to identify targeted supports that include check in/check out, creation of attendance agreements, connecting students to a mentor, and addressing transportation barriers. We partner with the school teams to identify alternate supervised spaces on campus where students can continue to work or de-escalate in a supportive space.

Schools use a forced choice survey to identify possible reinforcers to incorporate in our attendance agreements to help celebrate and reward students for making progress towards increased attendance.

The district hosted monthly Community Engagement Boards to collaborate with students and families in identifying barriers to success and developing targeted interventions. These efforts strengthened community partnerships through both virtual and in-person re-engagement workshops with Unleash the Brilliance, and by connecting students to Reconnect to Opportunity, which supports youth ages 16–24 in re-engaging with education and employment pathways.

Schools help connect families to services and resources in the community through conversations with our district social workers, school nurses, and the resource center at the courthouse. Some of our families need support with housing, transportation, access to medical care, and guidance filling out at-risk-youth petitions, and we connect them to experts who can help address those barriers that are contributing to their children not attending school. Washington State Law, RCW 28A. 225.030 requires that school districts file truancy petitions with the Juvenile Court when students have accumulated seven unexcused absences in one month or not later than fifteen unexcused absences in an academic year.

**Re-Engagement Program:** The district piloted a re-engagement program in collaboration with the district's online learning department for students with active truancy petitions.

**Truancy Petition Data Year 2024-25**

Issaquah School District		# Petitions	% Petitions	# Dismissed	% Dismissed
District Totals	*BIPOC	107	69.4%	60	56%
	Students with Disabilities	71	46.1%	40	56.3%
	504	12	7.7%	10	83.3%
	ALL Petitions Filed	154	100%	86	55.8%

\*BIPOC American Indian, Black, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian  
2024-25 Data from OSPI's Tableau Application (Includes Running Start)

Our re-engagement program helps our students find a pathway forward in an individualized supportive environment. Students attended in person weekly support sessions at the district office while engaging in two to three classes online. Previously, students unenrolled from our district to enroll in a full-time online learning program, but this re-engagement program allowed students to remain enrolled in ISD.

We are proud of the students progress and celebrate that:

- 4 students from the re-engagement program continued their educational journey by enrolling in a Career Education Options (CEO) program.
- 1 student passed his GED.
- 3 students returned back to their comprehensive high school.
- 3 students were not ready to transition to a different program and remained the following year in the re-engagement program.

**Chronic Absenteeism:** Defined as students who missed 10 percent or more of the school year, including excused and unexcused absences (about 18 days in a 180-day school year). This threshold is an empirically supported indicator of whether a student is at academic risk due to absenteeism.

**Absenteeism Data Year 2024-25**

Issaquah School District		% ISD Students	% Students Chronic Absenteeism (18+ Excused and Unexcused Absences Combined)	% Students with Truancy Petitions (15+ unexcused absences in a year or 7+ unexcused absences in a month)
District Totals	*BIPOC	14.2%	29.2%	3.9%
	Students with Disabilities	11.2%	29.9%	3.2%
	504	3.7%	23.9%	1.7%
	ALL	100%	17.3%	.79%

\*BIPOC American Indian, Black, Hispanic, Native Hawaiian  
2024-25 Data from OSPI's Tableau Application (Includes Running Start)

Our building leaders continue to educate our students and parents about the importance of attendance and the impact missing class has on learning. We established a meeting protocol for administrators to use which guided the conversation with students and families once they have reached 15 excused absences in a year.

Now that it has been a couple of years since the COVID pandemic, building leaders along with school nurses continue to have conversations with students and families about when it is okay to come to school and what symptoms require a student to stay at home.

Truancy petitions act as a safety net and have helped some students attend more frequently because they do not want to appear in front of a judge in court.

Many of the buildings have established rise and shine programs welcoming the students in the morning with warm welcomes, food, or prizes. We have established incentive programs for students on petitions to help motivate attendance where they can earn a reward for meeting their attendance goal.

- **Looking Ahead:** As a district, we continue to identify the barriers to attendance and work with the student and family to offer resources and support.

District results for the Culturally Responsive Tiered Fidelity Inventory, showing strongest alignment across the system in teams, interventions and evaluation at the Tier 1 level.

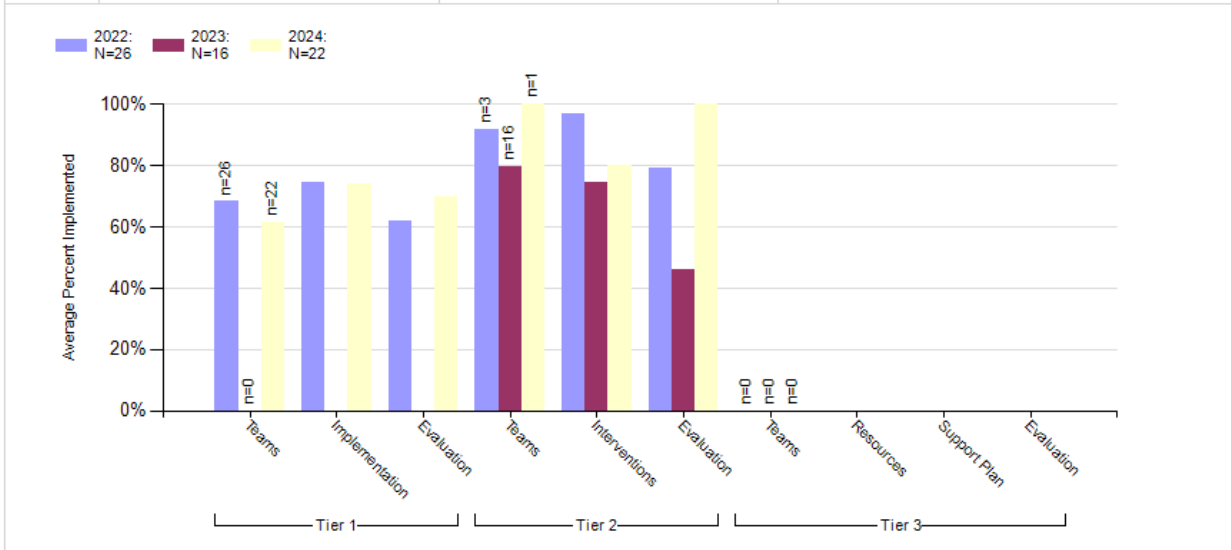
Culturally Responsive Tiered Fidelity Inventory results for 2024-25 indicate incremental growth on alignment of MTSS systems and structures, with several schools at fidelity for Tier 1, and steady progress at the elementary level toward fidelity at Tier 2.

The TFI will be administered on a multi-year, needs-based cycle to inform school PBIS planning and track districtwide progress.

### TFI Subscale Report

#### Issaquah School District 411

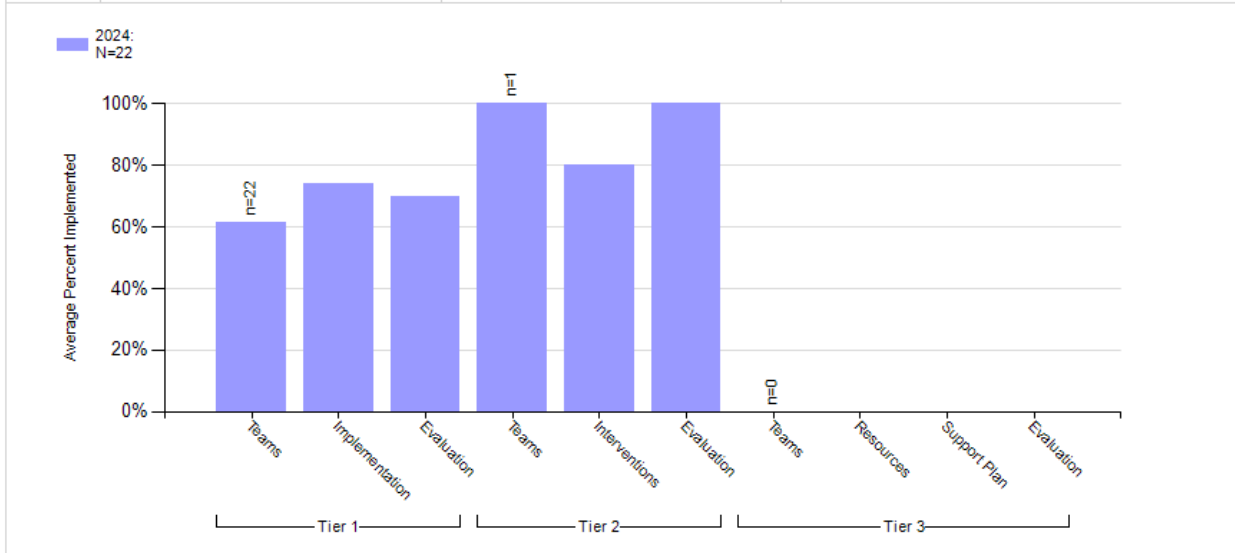
School Year	Tier 1			Tier 2			Tier 3			
	Teams	Implementation	Evaluation	Teams	Interventions	Evaluation	Teams	Resources	Support Plan	Evaluation
2022-23 N=26	68.27%	74.36%	62.02%	91.67%	96.67%	79.17%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	n=26			n=3			n=0			
2023-24 N=16	N/A	N/A	N/A	79.69%	74.38%	46.09%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	n=0			n=16			n=0			
2024-25 N=22	61.36%	73.99%	69.89%	100.00%	80.00%	100.00%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	n=22			n=1			n=0			



## TFI Subscale Report

### Issaquah School District 411

School Year	Tier 1			Tier 2			Tier 3			
	Teams	Implementation	Evaluation	Teams	Interventions	Evaluation	Teams	Resources	Support Plan	Evaluation
2024-25	61.36%	73.99%	69.89%	100.00%	80.00%	100.00%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
N=22	n=22			n=1			n=0			



### Resource Allocation:

#### 1.) Title I, Part A Funds:

- The allocation of Title I, Part A funds is in addition to the instructional classroom staffing allocation. The methodology for allocating these funds is based on a “per pupil” expenditure in relationship to each eligible school’s free and reduced population percentage (grade span - elementary). These schools are identified as Title I schools based on their free and reduced (rank and allocation) status. Title I, Part A funds are used to help supplement K-4 literacy at those schools. Staffing and funds are tied back to the school's servicing identified Title I students.

#### 2.) Learning Assistance Program (LAP)

- The allocation of other state funding, such as LAP, is in addition to the instructional classroom staffing allocation. LAP funds are used to target K-4 literacy at all elementary schools.
  - [FY 24-25 - Title-LAP Allocations OE 16.pdf](#)

#### 3.) Equity-Based Budgeting Model

- In addition to enrollment resource allocations, an equity-based budgeting model was developed through a collaborative process that began in September 2023. The district partnered with Education Resource Strategies (ERS), a national consulting organization, and convened a working group with representatives from across the district, including Special Services, MTSS, Teaching and Learning, Human Resources, Student Information Systems, principals, and both certificated and classified employees. The process also included family and community engagement to ensure transparency and shared understanding. Equity-based budgeting directs additional investments to the schools and students who need them most. Examples include:
  - Increased MTSS staffing and behavior supports
  - Emergency paraeducators for transportation and safety needs

- Additional classroom staffing allocated at select grade levels
- Professional development in inclusive practices
- Language access and mental health supports

#### 4.) Highly Capable Program (HCP)

- **Objective:** The Highly Capable Program (HCP) continued its focus on equitable identification and service practices, with expanded efforts aimed at reducing disproportionality and increasing access for historically underrepresented student groups.
- **Key Highlights:** The district continued universal screening for all kindergarten, second-grade, and fifth-grade students during the school day, ensuring that no outside or private testing was used for eligibility decisions. A matrix scoring system remained in place to provide flexibility and prevent reliance on a single cut-off score. To better support multilingual learners (MLL), the Non-Verbal CogAT measure was intentionally used, and Multidisciplinary Selection Committees (MSCs) reviewed contextual factors such as MLL status, language acquisition levels, participation in special education services, and socioeconomic background.

To expand accessibility for families, HCP notifications and related materials, including appeals, exit procedures, testing opt-out options, and private/home-based school testing information, continued to be translated for easy access. At the elementary level, schools provided “challenge groups” for students who did not meet formal HCP eligibility but demonstrated readiness for advanced academic experiences. At the secondary level, students retained the ability to self-select advanced courses.

To address disproportionality more intentionally, the Highly Capable Department incorporated targeted reviews of student group populations when examining its problem of practice and talent development data. This included systematic analysis of participation patterns among underrepresented groups to better identify students who show advanced potential but may not yet be formally recognized.

#### ISD Highly Capable Designation 24-25

Issaquah School District		Total ISD Students	% Of Total ISD Students	% of HC	HC Yes	HC No
District Totals	Asian	6997	36%	69%	873	6124
	BIPOC	2799	14%	3%	39	2760
	Two or more races	2178	11%	8%	104	2074
	White	7488	38%	19%	246	7242
	Grand Total	19462			1262	18200

- **Looking Ahead:** The district recognizes uneven representation in the Highly Capable program and understands there is further work to do to address this by expanding efforts to ensure more equitable access to advanced learning opportunities:
  - **Elementary Level:** Enrichment opportunities are being intentionally integrated into Success Blocks, allowing more students, especially those from underrepresented populations, to access higher-level tasks with greater frequency and consistency.

- **Secondary Level:** The district is increasing access to advanced classes by expanding course availability, reducing barriers to enrollment, and encouraging broader participation among students who have historically been underrepresented in advanced coursework.

**Connection to the strategic plan:** As part of the strategic plan and process, the district aligned OE-16.2 with strategies in our strategic plan in the areas of Organizational Effectiveness and Academic Opportunities.

**16.3 Promote an environment and culture that supports and encourages effective engagement of all families, including those from diverse backgrounds.**

**Interpretation:**

I interpret this to mean that district staff strive to improve outreach and engagement for our families from diverse backgrounds, develop and foster a welcoming environment and promote relevant engagement opportunities for all families through program development, curriculum adoption, communications and school-based efforts to reach out to and engage families. I interpret this to mean that outreach is conducted in a family’s preferred language, and multiple modalities are offered to engage families from diverse backgrounds.

**Evidence:**

**1.) Strategy Work Focused on Effective Engagement with Caregivers**

- **Objective:** Authentic Engagement, Priority Area 4A states that “district leaders will listen and follow up on input from constituent groups.”
- **Key Highlights:**  
Created a working definition of “authentic engagement,” and a template explaining a tiered system of engagement strategies [linked here](#).

Refined the Opportunity Matrix [linked here](#).

Created an Authentic Engagement Companion Guide for School Leaders and Staff to use when working with caregivers [linked here](#).

From September through October 2025, the district convened a Levy Advisory Committee made up of more than 60 parents/guardians, staff, students, and community members. This volunteer committee represented all areas of the district and met over five sessions to review district needs, evaluate proposed levy investments, consider tax rate impacts, and provide feedback to the Superintendent. The committee’s work informed the Superintendent’s final recommendations for the Educational Programs & Operations Levy, Capital Levy (Technology and Critical Repairs), and Transportation Levy for the February 2026 ballot.

- **Objective:** Student Well-Being, Priority Area 1C: Continuous Improvement
- **Key Highlights:** In partnership with Bellevue College nursing students, the Health Services Department held free vaccine clinics to decrease barriers to accessing vaccinations for students. Over 200 vaccines were given in the community with approximately 100 to district students.

In partnership with Dr. Harlan Gallinger, and CarePoint (a free mobile clinic), the Health Services Department provided free sports physicals for student athletes who were otherwise unable to access sports physicals. Approximately fifty physicals were provided to district students.

Health Services coordinated time prior to the start of the school year for families new to the area to have emergency health care plans signed by Dr. Gallinger and prescriptions for emergency medications submitted. As a result of this proactive support, no students were excluded from school due to missing emergency health care plans or required emergency medications at the start of the year.

Our team worked in collaboration with the Washington State Department of Health and Seattle–King County Public Health to become a designated provider for the Childhood Vaccine Program. This designation allows our school nurses to administer vaccines at a student’s home school, effectively eliminating barriers to accessing immunizations.

## 2.) District Communication with Families to Further Effective Engagement

- **Objective:** Ensure timely information is shared in a meaningful two-way engagement that is aligned with the Strategic Plan’s focus on authentic engagement.
- **Key Highlights:** Efforts supported key initiatives and responses, including secondary innovation, equity-based budgeting, the 2024 School Modernization and Construction Bond measures, and the unprecedented bomb cyclone.

Messages and communications were distributed via e-newsletter bulletins, text notifications and robocalls in families’ preferred languages through Finalsite and SchoolMessenger. The district’s digital and print publications included the Weekly Bulletin: The 411, special bulletins as needed, the Horizons digital publication, ISD Insider for staff, regular website updates and the twice-annual FOCUS print newsletter mailed to all residents, along with an end-of-year postcard celebrating accomplishments and the Class of 2025. Videos included multilingual captioning, and surveys were translated into the district’s most requested languages.

The Communications Department remained focused on improving the accessibility and availability of digital content for all users on the district website. Accessibility checks and audits monitored issues, resulting in a reduction of inaccessible PDFs across 28 district and school websites. Additionally, the district improved the digital course guide during the 2024-25 school year to better assist counselors in guiding students and families through the course selection process. Plans were put in place to update the district’s calendar to include cultural and religious dates to improve possible impacts to learning.

District leaders expanded engagement through the Language Advisory and Family Partnership groups, creating additional opportunities to meet with cultural brokers and gather feedback from families in the Chinese, Hindi and Latinx and Hispanic communities. These efforts included hosting and promoting a bond presentation for members of the Chinese community and launching the district’s first Black and Brown Excellence Summit for high school students.

Community engagement across most social media platforms, excluding X, increased. Highlights included Instagram followers increasing 50% to 3,894, with page and profile visits up 170%; LinkedIn followers growing 50%; and YouTube subscribers increasing 22.4% to 2,195, with views up 18.4% and watch time rising 68.9%, totaling more than 7,600 hours.

### 3.) Family Outreach to Cultivate Effective Caregiver Communication

- **Family Partnership Liaisons:** The district has three family Partnership Liaisons that support all our schools and serve as essential points of contact for caregivers new to the school district, providing personalized outreach through both email communications and in-person meetings. To ensure caregivers can effectively navigate district resources and systems, Liaisons regularly direct caregivers to valuable online materials, including documentation from information sessions and other essential resources available through the district website. They also connect caregivers to appropriate staff when questions arise or support is needed. This comprehensive support system helps create a welcoming environment while empowering families to access the information and support they need for their students' educational journey.
- **Family Connections Meetings and Coffee Chats:** Throughout the year, the Equity department hosted six Family Connections Meetings (offered in the morning and evening), and coffee chats to provide a space for all district caregivers to ask questions and receive help. Liaisons invite caregivers who are new to the school district to these meetings as families enroll in the district throughout the school year. The Equity Department advertises these events to caregivers using their preferred social media platforms, including WeChat and WhatsApp. They also send meeting invitations to all caregivers who enrolled in the ISD during the school year. A wide range of topics were discussed at these meetings, including how to navigate the district website, academic planning, how to look up school menus, bus routes, snow routes, and activity bus routes for their students. Caregivers were also provided information on how to look up grades, homework, and test scores. Family Connections meetings were offered in both English and Mandarin to ensure accessibility for multilingual families.
- **Family Partnership Events and Workshops:** Eighteen caregiver information events were held to support our culturally and linguistically diverse caregivers. Topics for these events range from Canvas support, Financial Aid information for college, transition events, Running Start, WANIC, and Student Support (academic, mental health, and counseling). Topics are selected through parent feedback provided during EVP, Family Advisory meetings, and feedback to the Family Partnership Liaisons. The information nights were held in seven languages. See an overview of events below. All the events were recorded and posted on the website.
  - [Family Partnership Events Data 2024-25.xlsx](#)

**Connection to the strategic plan:** As part of the strategic plan and process, the district aligned OE-16.3 with strategies in our strategic plan.

#### 16.4 Develop and implement strategies for effective partnerships between home, school, and the district, seeking out diverse perspectives on district initiatives, practices, and school climate.

##### **Interpretation:**

I interpret this to mean the Issaquah School District will actively develop and implement communication and feedback processes and protocols that support partnership and two-way communication that ensures the district is hearing the voices representative of our diverse community and student population. This includes the aforementioned communication to families in their preferred language and through multiple modalities, as well as the addition of a staff member working specifically to support Language Access. The district will also support the same processes and protocols at the school level with students, parents, and families within that school community.

**Evidence:** This section documents how the Equity Department enhanced communication, support, and engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse families.

## 1.) Two-way Communication with Caregivers and Students

- **Objective:** The Equity department collaborates with a representative group that provides input on district initiatives, school programs, and family support strategies. This group, composed of members from various cultural, religious, and feeder pattern communities, facilitates two-way communication by sharing information through key social media platforms, including PTSA networks, WeChat, KakaoTalk, WhatsApp, and others. Through these efforts, the group helps ensure that families are well-informed and connected to district resources, events, and practices, promoting a more inclusive and supportive educational environment.
- **Key Highlights:** Based on feedback from the Family Partnership Advisory Group, the Counseling and Student-Well Being department in partnership with the Family Partnership Team, developed and hosted a new parent information event titled **Student Supports**. The event addressed how to access academic, social, mental health, and health-related support. This event helped caregivers be aware of and understand how to access these supports going forward.

Caregiver participants in the Family Partnership Advisory Group shared concerns about the nutritional value and diversity of school lunch options, particularly for culturally diverse students and those following vegetarian diets. In response, the Director of Food Services attended an advisory group meeting to address questions, listen to concerns, and gather feedback. He was open to suggestions and engaged in meaningful dialogue with families. Advisory group members also shared a potluck meal with him, offering ideas for additional culturally responsive food options that could be considered for student lunches. As a result of this partnership, the Director of Food services shared the district would be offering three culturally diverse meals for students during the 2025-26 school year (Daal, Gyoza Soup, and Thai Curry). Caregivers in this advisory group have shared that they feel heard, valued, and seen by the Food Services team.

The Family Partnership Advisory team shared that they and other parents had questions and concerns around Graduation Pathways, Xello and the High School and Beyond Plan. Based on their feedback, parent professional development was developed in collaboration with the Counseling Coordinator to talk about graduation pathways and how to access and navigate Xello and the High School and Beyond Plan.

Student Panel at Grand Ridge Elementary – Grand Ridge staff wanted to hear student perspectives from current high school students on their elementary school experience, so they could better support students and caregivers. The Equity department worked with students from Issaquah High School and had them share their perspectives highlighting themes related to family engagement, multicultural lunch experiences, their perspectives as Multilingual Learners (MLL), and the impact of teacher support. Teachers valued the students' insights and engaged in meaningful dialogue by asking thoughtful questions. Students expressed appreciation for the opportunity to share their perspectives and contribute feedback directly to staff, reinforcing the importance of student and family voice in strengthening school–community partnerships.

During the 2024-25 school year, the Special Services department strengthened family partnerships through comprehensive engagement initiatives across all grade levels. Early Childhood Education (ECE) family nights equipped parents and caregivers with resources to support whole-child development, social-emotional learning, and enhanced communication with educators. The department expanded engagement channels by launching the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC), conducting family and student listening sessions, and maintaining multiple advisory committees including Literacy Continuum, Family and Community Partnership, and Strategic Planning groups. Educational programming addressed critical needs through workshops on IEP navigation, service continuums, and transition support

from ECE through post-secondary. The department also facilitated quarterly partnerships with external organizations to connect families with essential resources, including financial planning, estate strategies, and community services from the ARC of King County. Additional improvements included updating the Special Services website, implementing ongoing feedback surveys for Special Service Team meetings, and hosting specialized events for deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) families, collectively strengthening coordination between families, educators, and community resources.

The Dual Language Family Advisory group continued to meet to advise on programming and expansion of the program.

Teaching and Learning Services and Elementary Education hosted several in-person and online parent engagement meetings to get feedback on the elementary report card to inform changes. Engagement included meeting with the Family Partnership Advisory, Multilingual Advisory and Special Education family advisory committees to ensure diverse perspectives contributed to recommendations for change.

District staff partnered with families at Passage Point by visiting the site to provide direct support and services. During these visits, staff were available to answer questions such as transportation, Before and After School Program, Release of Information documents and McKinney-Vento questions. We connected families to resources, and offered guidance based on individual needs. In response to questions raised by families during earlier visits, the Director of Counseling later provided a formal presentation at Passage Point focused on McKinney-Vento (MKV) supports, ensuring families had clear information about available services and how to access them.

## 2.) General Communication with Caregivers and Students

- **Surveys & ThoughtExchange**

- The district conducts annual Parent Surveys and student exit surveys for grades 5, 8, and 12. Student, parent, and post-graduate surveys help us assess school climate, student and parent perceptions and beliefs, as well as identify issues affecting the learning environment. Individual results for each year are posted on the district's website under [Reports and Surveys](#) and high-level trends appear with the [Annual Community Report - Issaquah School District 411](#)
- As part of its 3-Year Strategic Plan, the district emphasizes "Authentic Engagement" and seeks input from students, staff, and community members to shape its initiatives. In November 2023, the district launched a ThoughtExchange to gather perspectives on what "authentic engagement" means to stakeholders, aiming to inform its strategic priorities.

- **General and Emergency Messaging**

- The district prioritizes clear and timely communication with families and staff. The district typically utilizes multiple channels, including email, phone calls, texts, social media and its website to disseminate important information.

- **Tools and Applications for Communication**

- To strengthen connections with families and staff, the district offers various tools and applications:
  - **Family Access:** A platform that allows parents to monitor their child's academic progress, attendance and other essential information.

- **Website and Social Media:** The district maintains an active online presence to share news, events and important announcements.
  - **District Newsletters:** Publications such as "The 411," "Horizons," and "FOCUS" print newsletter provide updates on district initiatives, events, and highlights.
  - **Annual Report:** The Annual Report includes an overview of student achievement, district programs and services, and state of district finances, including a summary of how public schools receive funding and build budgets. Updated for the 2024-25 school year: [Annual Community Report - Issaquah School District 411](#)
- **Web & Social Media Use and Metrics**
  - The district leverages its website and social media platforms (Meta – Facebook/Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn and X) to engage with the community, share success stories and provide timely updates. The consistent use of these platforms indicates a commitment to transparent and accessible communication. The district has experienced growth across these channels, with the exception of X as metrics are no longer available.
- **Key Stories and Awards Highlighting Diversity and Partnerships (2024-25)**
  - During the 2024-25 school year, the district celebrated several initiatives emphasizing diversity and community collaboration. The Communications Team earned seven awards from the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) for:
    - Excellence in Writing: “Hard Work, Dedication Helped I.H.S. Senior Overcome Obstacles” and “Student’s Smile is Best Part of Each School Day, Para Says”
    - Video Series Award of Excellence for Superintendent Community Updates
    - Single Video Award of Excellence: “Voice Mentor Q with Kaili” and “The Skyline Shooting Stars”
    - Award of Merit: Monthly Financial Report and “Horizons” Digital Newsletter
- **Partnerships and Engagement Opportunities**
  - During the 2024–25 school year, the district continued to collaborate with community partners to strengthen engagement and communication across the Issaquah community. While not an exhaustive list, these partnerships reflected a shared commitment to supporting and recognizing our students and staff. Community partners included the Issaquah Schools Foundation, Issaquah PTSA Council, City of Issaquah Human Services, Kiwanis of Issaquah, Nourishing Network Issaquah, The Circle, The Garage, Friends of Youth, and the Issaquah Food and Clothing Bank.
  - Second Annual Back-to-School Resource Fair took place in Fall 2025, aiming to provide families with essential resources and information to support student success.

### 3.) Authentic Engagement strategic plan priority area:

- **Objective:** The district is committed to actively listening to and following up on input from various constituent groups through a co-design model that meaningfully engages students, families, staff, and community members in supporting student success. This work centers on leading effective engagement practices that ensure opportunity, partnership, and access for all — with an intentional focus on reaching diverse populations. The district continues to grow its network and cultivate new partnership opportunities (e.g., Microsoft) while strengthening relationships with long-term partners (e.g., PTSA & ISF).

- **Key Highlights:**

The district assessed building partnership needs by hearing from 100% of ISD schools and began mapping those needs to available resources — work that directly connects to the Student Well-Being priority area. To support consistent and effective practices across schools, system-wide guidance was provided to building administrators regarding the partnership/contract agreement process. The Authentic Engagement work team was also expanded to include school leaders, ensuring broader representation and organizational buy-in. The Opportunity Matrix was presented to school leaders, and their feedback was incorporated as a meaningful planning input. The matrix, along with engagement best practices, has since been leveraged across several key district processes, including the strategic plan, bond committee, and middle school athletics committee.

A significant area of progress this year has been the intentional redesign of how the district structures its partnerships with key community organizations. Regular agenda planning sessions were established, and leadership meetings with both PTSA and ISF were restructured to align with ISD's organizational goals alongside the goals of each partner organization. This shift moved these relationships from informational exchanges to strategic, goal-aligned collaboration. Monthly meetings with PTSA leadership and monthly meetings with ISF leadership are now embedded as consistent touchpoints, creating shared accountability and continuity that strengthens the district's ability to co-design solutions and respond to community needs throughout the year.

### **16.5 Promote hiring practices to attract a highly skilled and diverse workforce.**

#### **Interpretation:**

I interpret this to mean the Issaquah School District will review and develop hiring processes that reduce bias and barriers to entry for applicants of all identities and backgrounds. In addition, the district will train hiring managers in anti-bias hiring practices. The district will focus recruitment efforts in networks that are known for applicants of color and promote all job postings that speak to and exemplify a commitment to equity and inclusion. As a result, the district will see an increase over time in staff demographics overall, and across all employee groups that represent the student population.

### **OE-16.5 is well aligned to and informed the development of the Strategic Plan, Priority Area Three—Diverse Talent.**

#### **Research from the Field:**

- Dr. Daman Harris conducted significant review of research into the impact of teachers and leaders on closing achievement gaps for students of color. He writes in his book *The Antiracist School Leader* (2024) that “committed, non-judgmental fellowship among colleagues and friends can spur self-interrogation of our values, beliefs, and behaviors that undergird the policies and practices that support or constrain our students.” (96) Additionally, Dr. Harris notes that the culture of white supremacy in our society at large results in racially disproportionate achievement, disciplinary, engagement, social and psychological outcomes for students in schools as studied by Chin, Quinn, Dhaliwal & Lovison in 2020, Dunbar, Mirpuri & Yip in 2017, Gershenson & Papageorge in 2018, Hung, et al in 2020, Jones, et al in 2021, Merolla & Jackson in 2019, and Young in 2019. We aim to hire staff committed to this very kind of reflective practice and who have an awareness of systems that perpetuate racially disproportionate outcomes for students and a vision for how to change them.

**Evidence:**

- Human resources staff continued their use of a relocation guide created with input from various stakeholders and it is live within our employment application platform as well as on our district website. Additionally, a QR code to the document is included in materials provided at recruiting events.
- Human resources staff collaborated with the Communications team and other district leaders to have a presence at our local Salmon Days, to invest in banners on our school fence lines and to utilize school reader boards to keep opportunities visible to members of the community.
- The Human Resources department hosted an in-person job fair for classified staff needs in August of 2025 which brought in 137 candidates for classified jobs, a significant increase from last year's attendance of 102 and the year before that at 77.
  - 45 staff were hired as a result of this event (22 Paraprofessionals, 23 substitute Paraprofessionals or sub custodians, six drivers in training).
- Human resources staff, with the support of other trained staff, attended ten in-person job fairs for certificated hiring including American Speech and Hearing Association conference, Seattle University, City University Central Washington University, University of Washington Bothell, the UW's Diversity Fair, the UW's College of Education Fair, Gonzaga, the Spokane Job Fair, and the Tacoma Dome Job Fair as well as having a presence at virtual job fairs like the Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD) Pathways Fair.
  - For the second time we personally reached out to all 81 student teachers to make them aware of which fairs we would have a presence and to invite them to see us there and apply for open positions.
- Digital strategies included:
  - A presence on HBCUConnect, college and university Career Center ads, Chamber of Commerce ads and an ongoing presence on Handshake to reach students still active in a college of education.
  - The Communications team assisted with school website pop-up ads, Salmon Days Digital Ads, Instagram ads, Peach Jar notices, and Facebook and LinkedIn ads.
- Hiring managers were trained in strategies to reduce bias in the hiring process as aligned to the Strategic Plan Priority Area 3 Diverse Talent (P3b) that extended their learning beyond the point of hire to creating and fostering a sense of belonging for staff of color. In the spring of 2026 we are continuing this support of our leaders by offering a training called "Leading a Workplace Free of Harassment and Discrimination" to all classified and certificated administrators.

**Results:**

- We saw a huge gain in the % of staff of color hired. 29.5% of all new cert hires identify as people of color (29 of 98). This is up 10% from last year.
- The percentage of candidates of color decreased by 4.6%. A total of 26% of certificated candidates identify as staff of color. Our total candidate pool size again increased. The increase in total candidates has helped us to mitigate, in part, the decrease in the % of candidates of color.
- The percentage of certificated staff of color employed decreased by 0.2%, taking us to a total of 10.2% staff of color.
  - Based on our participation in a local analysis of the workforce landscape conducted by Puget Sound Educational Service District, we have learned that 11.7% of our staff identify as staff of color in the OSPI hosted portal in which we renew our certificates in 23-24. In fact, they noted that in addition to our 11.7% another sizeable amount

recorded “do not wish to report” and they include that additional 11% when quantifying our staff of color population as 22% of all certs in the district.

- 6 of 104 candidates (5.8%) did not report race when they came on staff (source is Qmaltiv, our student and staff data base)
- Classified staff diversity increased for the third year in a row, moving from 30% to 31%.

**Staff of Color (SOC) Hires**

	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Classified	55 (of 148) = 37% 7 did not report race	66 (of 166) = 40% 25 did not report race	100 (of 222) = 45% 0 did not report race
Certificated	41 of 141 = 29% 10 did not report race	25 of 129 = 19% 11 did not report race	29 of 98 = 30% 6 did not report race
<b>Total Employed</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2023-24</b>	<b>2024-25</b>
Classified SOC	287 of 1025 = 28%	373 of 1213 = 30%	382 of 1237 = 31%
Certificated SOC	158 of 1374 = 11.5%	128 of 1226 = 10.4%	141 of 1374 = 10.2%
OSPI (source certification renewal portal)	130 of 1227 = 11.7% 114 did not report race = 9.3%	145 of 1226 = 11.8% 120 did not report race = 9.8%	145 of 1234 = 11.7% 136 did not report race = 11%

- Key findings:
  - The district hired 31 fewer teachers than in 2023-24. There is an impact on our efforts to diversify when we hire fewer total positions (we hired 61 teachers in 24-25 versus 107 total certs in the previous year).
  - Anti-biased hiring strategies matter and are increasingly important when the hiring demand is lower.
  - Human Resources continues to use existing and emerging digital strategies; the most important and effective recruiting strategies reported by our applicants remain:
    - A current employee
    - A community member
    - Our job postings on our employment portal
  - Significant numbers of applicants continue not disclosing race, noted in red on the chart below.

Baseline data for all certificated staff applicants as aligned to the Strategic Plan Priority Area 3 Diverse Talent (P3a):

- (Note “applied” does not necessarily mean the applicant completed an application nor that s/he/they met the minimum qualifications for a teaching job in Washington State).

Charts below show Certificated and Classified applications by race:

**Certificated Staff Application by Race**

	2022-23 applications Number of applicants/ % of total n=1136	2023-24 applications Number of applicants/ % of total n=1083	2024-25 applications n=1117
American Indian or Alaskan Native	12/ 1.1%	8/ 0.07%	7/ 0.6%
Asian	101/8.9%	178/16.4%	127/11.4%
Two or more races	54/4.8%	58/5.3%	64/2%
Black	9/.08%	33/3.0%	22/2%
Hispanic/Latino	57/5.0%	58/5.3%	72/6.4%
<b>No Race Given</b>	<b>136/12.0%</b>	<b>117/10.8%</b>	<b>125/11.2%</b>
Pacific Islanders	7/ 0.06%	6/ 0.6%	5/ 0.45%
White	760/66.9%	630/58.0%	695/62.2%

**Classified Staff Application by Race**

	2022-23 applications n=1025	2023-24 applications n=1213	2024-25 applications n=TBD
People of Color	287 (28%)	373 (30%)	485 (45%)
White	731 (71.3%)	815 (67%)	479 (45%)
<b>Unknown</b>	<b>7 (0.68%)</b>	<b>25 (2%)</b>	<b>112 (10%)</b>

**16.6 Promote a workplace environment and culture that supports retaining a highly skilled and diverse workforce.**

**Interpretation:**

I interpret this to mean the district will ensure that there is support and space for all staff to both develop and contribute their commitment to equity and inclusion. The district will develop an action plan that brings forward both emerging practices and ideas from staff about improving a culture that retains a highly skilled and diverse workforce. The district will see retention consistent across staff demographics. Specifically, the district will ensure there are ongoing efforts to provide training and support to all staff to develop their cross-cultural awareness and communication and facilitate or promote opportunities to caucus by identity.

**Part 6 of OE-16 is well aligned to and informed the development of the Strategic Plan, Priority Area Three—Diverse Talent.**

**Evidence:**

**1.) Educators of Color Cohort (ECLC)**

- **Objective:** To support and retain educators of color in the district by providing professional development opportunities and creating affinity spaces that foster belonging and connection.
- **Key Highlights:** During the 2024-25 school year, the Issaquah School District launched the Educators of Color Leadership Community (ECLC) to foster belonging, leadership development, and connection among educators of color. Nine staff members participated in a series of four sessions focused on affirmation, reflection, healing, and shared learning. Through relationship-building across schools, the community strengthened support networks, elevated educator voices, and contributed to efforts to retain and empower educators of color across our district.
- **Looking Ahead:** The district aims to expand program capacity to meet the opportunity to create sustainable, long-term support systems for educators of color throughout growing interest from educators of color while continuing to develop a robust internal infrastructure to sustain and grow these initiatives. Building upon the initial training, the in-district program will be leveraged to strengthen connections among educators of color across different schools and departments, fostering a more cohesive professional community. Throughout this expansion, careful monitoring and evaluation of program effectiveness will be essential to ensure these efforts meaningfully support retention and enhance the sense of belonging among educators of color.

**2.) Equity Advisory Committee (EAC)**

- **Objective:** The Equity Advisory Committee exemplifies the district's strategic commitment to creating and maintaining a workplace environment that attracts and retains a highly skilled, diverse workforce. Through its collaborative structure, which includes representation from the Issaquah Education Association (IEA), district administration, and leadership, the committee provides a crucial platform for addressing equity concerns and implementing meaningful solutions.
- **Key Highlights:** In its second year of operation during 2024-25, the committee has demonstrated effectiveness in several key areas:

Professional Development Enhancement: The committee's responsive approach to staff feedback regarding LGBTQIA+ training showcases its commitment to meeting educators' professional learning needs. By developing enhanced training for the 2024-25 school year, the committee ensures that staff receive the support and resources necessary to serve all students effectively while growing professionally.

Members of the Equity Advisory Committee also partnered with Teaching and Learning Services and the Special Education Department to design professional development focused on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as a foundation for inclusive instruction. Educators explored how many general classroom accommodations can be embedded within strong Tier 1 instruction, helping normalize supports and reduce stigma. At the same time, the sessions reinforced the legal responsibility to implement individualized accommodations and specially designed instruction outlined in students' 504 Plans and Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Together, this collaboration strengthens alignment between equity, instructional practice, and compliance, ensuring both universal access and individualized support for students.

Creating Supportive Professional Communities: The establishment of monthly LGBTQIA+ affinity spaces demonstrates the district's understanding that retention of skilled educators requires more than traditional professional development. These dedicated spaces provide opportunities for connection, support, and authentic professional dialogue, contributing to a workplace culture where educators feel valued and supported.

Inclusive Decision-Making: The committee's structure, which incorporates diverse voices through an application process, ensures that multiple perspectives inform district-wide equity initiatives. This comprehensive approach to equity work strengthens the district's capacity to maintain an environment where diverse, highly skilled educators choose to stay and grow professionally, ultimately benefiting both staff and students.

**3.) Sense of Belonging Survey**

- With support from the Equity department, input from one of its key partners and research into other school district models, Human Resources created a stay survey and an exit survey. These were disseminated to all staff, certificated and classified, concurrent with the Transfer Memo for IEA members and remained open through the month of February. 1268 staff responded, an increase of 163 respondents. As it pertains to the Strategic Plan and this OE, the following data are important for our progress monitoring:

	<b>Feel a Sense of Belonging Question 2023-24</b>	<b>Feel a Sense of Belonging Question 2024-25</b>	<b>Change</b>
Total Respondents	<b>1105</b>	<b>1268</b>	
Classified Not Staff of Color	204 of 254 = 80% yes	261 of 323 = 80% yes	No change
Classified Staff of Color	70 of 79 = 87% yes	114 of 131 = 87% yes	No change
Certificated Not Staff of Color	554 of 651 = 85% yes	566 of 673 = 84% yes	-1%
Certificated Staff of Color	77 of 100 = 77% yes	79 of 106 = 75% yes	-2%

**Net Promoter Score** = staff are likely to recommend the district as a workplace.

	<b>Net Promoter (responded 9 or 10) 2023-24</b>	<b>Net Promoter (responded 9 or 10) 2024-25</b>	<b>Change</b>
Total Respondents	<b>1105</b>	<b>1268</b>	
Classified Not Staff of Color	96 of 254 = 38%	139 of 323 = 43%	+ 5%
Classified Staff of Color	40 of 79 = 50%	74 of 131 = 56%	+6%
Certificated Not Staff of Color	266 of 651 = 35%	229 of 673 = 34%	-1%
Certificated Staff of Color	42 of 100 = 42%	42 of 106 = 40%	-2%

**Key Findings:**

- A higher percentage of certificated staff of color replied that they are net promoters compared to staff who do not identify as staff of color (40% versus 34%).
  - In all exit survey responses (certificated and classified), 78% of those who identify as staff of color would work in the district again, a 7% increase over last year.
  - 79% of those who do *not* identify as staff of color would work in the district again, a 17% increase over last year.
- Retention Data as aligned to Strategic Plan Priority Area 3 Diverse Talent (P3c):

	<b>Resignation Number 2023-24</b>	<b>Resignation Number 2024-25</b>	<b>Resignation Differential as a % of Unit</b>
Classified	196 (of 1213) = 16%	160 (of 1237) = 13%	-3%
Certificated	104 of 1367 = 7.6%	104 (of 1374) 7.5%	-0.1%

**Key Findings:**

- Certificated staff who are white represent 87% of all resignations and represented 87% of all certificated staff indicating no disproportionality.
- Certificated staff of color represent 10% of all resignations and represented 10.2% of all certificated staff indicating slight disproportionality (< 1%).
- Additionally, we isolated teacher data for the first time and noticed that staff of color in classroom teaching positions are 13% of all cert resignations and this disproportionality is larger and more concerning.
- "Did not report" represents 3% of all resignations and represents 2% of all certs.

- Classified staff resigned at rates nearly identical to their % of the total workforce
  - 31% of classified staff resignations were staff of color, an exact match to the current % of staff of color employed in our classified positions.
  - 68% of all classified staff resignations were white staff; our white staff comprises 69% of all classified employees.

*Board acceptance:*