STRATEGIC PLAN for EXCELLENCE through RACIAL EQUITY

NYACK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

JANUARY 2022











DEAR SCHOOL COMMUNITY,

A strategic plan should be a living document that takes an organization on a journey; a roadmap that reflects the trajectory of work between what is learned, believed and imagined. In Nyack Public Schools, we wanted to capture the pillars, strategies, aspirational outcomes and competencies laid out in our district's plan for the community to visualize with clarity. Here, we provide you with a snapshot of our **Strategic Plan for Excellence Through Racial Equity.** We are excited to present this piece as the first in a series of publications and videos designed to inform our stakeholders and promote the foundational work of equity, innovation and optimism aligned to the 7 C's: *Critical Thinking, Creativity, Collaboration, Communication, Compassion, Content Mastery, Cultural Responsiveness.* Please take a look and join us on this journey towards providing a world class education for each student in the Nyack Public Schools.

Model the way,

Eudes S. Budhai, Superintendent of Schools

Terence Rock, Board of Education President

VISION The Nyack Public Schools value the richness of our diverse community. This assertion is founded in the Board of Education's Mission Statement approved in its policies. We believe that all children are born with sufficient innate ability to achieve school tasks, and that it is our ethical and moral responsibility to ensure our school district provides an optimal learning environment that meets the needs of all students regardless of race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, first language, religion, national origin, age or differently-abled.

MISSION The mission of the Nyack Public Schools is to provide each student with programs of excellence that instill a passion for learning while preparing them for the challenges of an increasingly complex world. The Nyack Public Schools will enhance each student's self-esteem, help them discover and maximize their individual potential, and guide each to dignify, appreciate, respect and accept human diversity.

GOAL The Nyack Public School District's equity goal is to create a district-wide and building-based climate and culture that demands and supports systemic equity and improved student achievement for every student while narrowing the predictable gap in measurable outcomes.

MILESTONE

Measures of Success

EACH STUDENT will enter Kindergarten ready to learn and First Grade ready to read.

EACH STUDENT will be reading on grade level at the end of Third Grade.

EACH STUDENT will complete Grade 8 ready for high school.

EACH STUDENT will enter Grade 10 on track to graduate high school.

EACH STUDENT will complete Grade 12 ON TIME and be ready for college, vocational school and/or the workforce.

EACH STUDENT will have access to explore, create and be active participants in their learning.



FOUR PILLARS *of the* STRATEGIC PLAN *for* EXCELLENCE *through* RACIAL EQUITY

PILLAR 1

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE WORKFORCE

We must have the knowledge, beliefs, skills,attitudes and practices that allow individuals to form relationships and create learning environments that support academic achievement and personal development of learners from diverse racial and cultural groups.

Prioritized Strategies for 2021-22:

Establish Professional Learning Communities and other professional development structures to address both systemic racism and its manifestations.

Provide an Equity Certification In-Service Credit Program offered to all District teachers.

Develop partnerships with Historically Black Colleges and Universities as well as colleges and universities with diverse teacher education programs to target recruitment and hiring initiatives.

PILLAR 2

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

We must provide all students with rigorous, culturally responsive and engaging learning environments that accelerate their academic achievement and personal growth.

Prioritized Strategies for 2021-22

Establish curriculum teams responsible for reviewing curriculum and revising instructional units to ensure our curriculums are culturally responsive.

Create courses and units of study that are specific to learning about diverse cultures represented in the state of New York in a way that is comprehensive and empowering.

Develop school-based Equity Teams to make recommendations regarding practices, policies and procedures to interrupt and transform school cultural norms that maintain institutional racism.

PILLAR 3

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We must reach beyond the hallways and classrooms of our schools to engage all families and stakeholders; to organize cross-sectors in collaboration; and ultimately to build bridges between our schools and beloved community that uphold anti-racist beliefs, protocols, practices and policies for the benefit of all children.

Prioritized Strategies for 2021-22

Encourage parents/ guardians who reflect the diversity of our students to participate in parent leadership roles in the schools/district.

Develop multiple engagement systems to expand access to and communication with families of diverse backgrounds.

Build ongoing trust equity and consensus for common analysis, language, understanding and support of anti-racist principles between district families and staff to create lifelong learners.

PILLAR 4

CULTURAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

Our school system must undergo a cultural and organizational transformation to build a culture of inclusion that actively challenges institutional racism. The Board of Education and Administrative Leadership Team must actively examine and dismantle systemic policies, programs and practices that serve to perpetuate racial achievement disparities.

Prioritized Strategies for 2021-22

Utilize an equity lens in developing all areas of teaching and learning, program development and institutional practices.

Utilize Cycle of Inquiry Framework at each school level through building-level Equity Teams and action plans developed annually through building-level student data analysis.

Assess school climate using a variety of measures to collect diverse stakeholders perceptions and experiences.

"**Education** is for **improving the lives of others** and for leaving your **community** and **world better** than you found it."

—Marian Wright Edelman

A **TIMELINE & TRAJECTORY** of our **DISTRICT'S EQUITY WORK**

The Nyack Union Free School District's history, demography and diversity enable a unique perspective; one that has propelled the school community into a challenging trajectory and investigation of the impact of systemic racism on student success. This is a snapshot of the equity work that spans over twenty years.

2000

- ***NY Times* headline: "Racial Gap in Schools Splits a Town Proud of Diversity," August 4, 2000**
- *Tulin Report* published: BOE conducted study of systemic inequities results in public reporting, grass roots organizing and initial Undoing Racism® training

2000 to 2015

- 15 years of community leaders organizing/networking/learning about racialized systems and laying a foundation for Nyack Public Schools to take the lead

2015

- Development of 7 Core Competencies to distinguish Nyack's Profile of a Graduate
- BOE/Superintendent commitment to examine policies and practices for systemic change
- De-Tracking of the middle school
- Community Priorities Survey conducted
- New student-designed logo, defining and branding our school/community priorities

2016

- Pedagogy shift in curriculum to address root cause of educational disparities
- District leadership re-engaged in Undoing Racism® workshop

2017

- Superintendent/BOE commitment to a common analysis, problem based learning and embedding of anti-racist principles

2018

- Safe spaces created in each school building to hold facilitated conversations about race, racism and systemic change
- Nyack Basics launched with a goal that "All children enter Kindergarten ready-to-learn and reading-on-level in 3rd grade"
- Community Forums and Film Series engaged a cross-sector representation of partners with a District Innovation Showcase for Reimagining Education
- Groundwater Analysis shared with community and focus groups by nationally-recognized Racial Equity consultant

2019

- "Turn the Mirror Inward" District-wide consortium strengthened a collective understanding among staff for equity
- ***Iohud headline:* "Nyack Schools Set a Course Towards True Racial Equity", May 22, 2019**
- Reaching Towards Equity building-level trainings with staff

2019 continued

- Two Envisioning Equity Forums brought community together to build consensus and introduce our new Director of Equity position

2020

- Student-driven mascot name changed to Nyack RedHawks
- Implemented building-level equity teams with district equity action plan
- BOE adopted a new policy and action plan entitled: **A Strategic Plan for Excellence in Education through Racial Equity**, June 1, 2020

2021

- Leadership Team aligns goals, strategies, outcomes with District's 4 Equity Pillars
- Culturally Responsive Pedagogy for student-centered approach to teaching is integrated into professional learning

NEW IN 2022

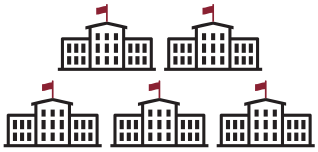
- Equity Certification Program initiated for teachers
- New data dashboard constructed to store district information for ongoing analysis
- Equity audit recommendations enacted for K-12 ELA curriculum

AND BEYOND — **Becoming a multi-cultural, anti-racist, equity-driven school community**

Profile of **OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

5 SCHOOLS:

- Nyack High School
- Nyack Middle School
- Liberty Elementary School
- Upper Nyack Elementary School
- Valley Cottage Elementary School



1 COMMUNITY...

8 sq. miles on the scenic Hudson

20 miles north of NYC

23k residents

36 World Languages Spoken; *Most predominant: English, Spanish, Haitian Creole*

20+ countries represented by student body and families



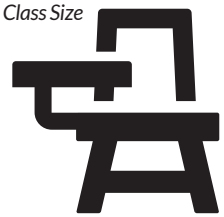
STUDENT POPULATION:

White: **43%**
Latinx/Hispanic: **28%**
Black: **16%**
Asian: **6%**
Multi-Racial: **6%**
American Indian/ Alaskan Native: **1%**
Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander: **1%**



2,730 Enrolled Students

21 (K-5); **24** (6-12)
Average Class Size





5 BASICS PRINCIPLES
for early adult-child interaction from birth to age 3 that lay the foundation for all future learning:

THE NYACK BASICS



2 QUESTIONS THAT INFORM POSITIVE CHANGE:

How well are we preparing each student for a rapidly changing and increasingly complex world?
How well are we meeting the needs of each student?

7 CORE COMPETENCIES

that distinguish our Profile of a Nyack Graduate:

- CRITICAL THINKING
- CREATIVITY
- COLLABORATION
- COMMUNICATION
- COMPASSION/EMPATHY
- CONTENT MASTERY
- CULTURAL/ GLOBAL AWARENESS



WE ARE

REDHAWKS RISING

NYACK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

www.nyackschools.org

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Building **BRIDGES** for today's students to cross into tomorrow's world with EQUITY, INNOVATION and OPTIMISM

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