



OE-16 EQUITY

Policy Type: Operational Expectation

Annual Monitoring Report for School Year 2025-2026 - October 8, 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.

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

Report Organization:

Evidence for each section is organized by workstream. Each workstream describes its objective and progress during the 2025-26 school year. Workstreams that include a **Looking Ahead** section have been identified as key, critical workstreams with work planned and in progress for the 2026-27 school year. These represent the district's priority areas for continued equity improvement and will be reflected in future monitoring of OE-16. Workstreams without a Looking Ahead section reflect 2025-26 implementation, and this work will continue as part of ongoing district practice.

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:

Evidence for 16.1 is organized in three areas: professional learning that builds cultural competence and awareness of bias (16.1a, f); supports for high achievement, well-being, and equitable access for all students (16.1b, c, e, g); and curriculum that prioritizes diverse viewpoints (16.1d). Each section describes its objective, 2025-26 progress, and ongoing work.

A. Professional Learning for Cultural Competence and Bias Awareness

1. Navigating Critical Conversations

Objective: Respond to staff requests for support in navigating complex or potentially controversial topics by equipping elementary and secondary educators with strategies to help students explore identity, recognize similarities and differences, and build respectful, inclusive classroom communities.

2025-26 Progress: Professional learning was provided to all certificated staff. Grounded in *Facing History and Ourselves* resources, the learning emphasized engaging in rather than avoiding difficult conversations as a way to model the skills and dispositions of a healthy democracy. Educators practiced using age-appropriate identity charts, establishing classroom agreements before complex conversations, protecting student choice about what they share, and using structured reflection and peer dialogue to build empathy and reduce stereotypes. Strategies extend into ELA and Social Studies, where identity charts can be used to analyze characters, historical figures, and communities.

2. From Professional Learning to Classroom Practice: Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Equity

Objective: Use building- and district-level learning walks to understand the experiences of students identified in the district Problem of Practice and assess how instruction, curriculum, and learning environments support their success.

2025-26 Progress: Building and district leaders used a common UDL learning walk protocol to calibrate expectations and examine how consistently UDL practices were applied to address learner variability and remove barriers. Observations and student voice showed how students experienced instruction, with attention to engagement, appropriate challenge and support, collaboration, belonging, and ownership of learning, and helped leaders identify where implementation was having an impact and where refinement was needed.

Looking Ahead: Because aggregate data can mask differences among student groups, the district will continue to disaggregate data for students identified in the Problem of Practice and pair those findings with learning walk evidence to guide targeted decisions about instruction, curriculum, professional learning, and systemic supports.

3. Equity Department Professional Learning for Certificated Staff

Objective: Deepen certificated staff understanding of equity, belonging, and culturally responsive practice while building practical strategies to recognize and respond to barriers that affect students' experiences, access, and belonging.

2025-26 Progress: Sessions throughout the year addressed the Building Equity Lead role, interrupting moments of racism, creating accessible translations in Canvas, cultural differences and impacts on the classroom, intent versus impact, immigration and refugee resources and immigrant rights, whose voices are heard in the classroom, equity versus equality, and supporting students through end-of-year transitions. Sessions emphasized practical strategies for strengthening belonging, responding to bias or exclusion, and increasing access to information.

Looking Ahead: Professional learning will continue to connect equity concepts to classroom practice, student voice, belonging, and the specific needs of school communities.

4. Responding to Racist or Biased Moments: Administrator Learning Co-Designed with Educators of Color Leadership Community

Objective: Respond to Stay Survey findings by strengthening leaders' capacity to support staff of color when stereotypes, bias, or racist language arise.

2025-26 Progress: Stay Survey data showed that while staff of color felt their identities were valued at work, they did not consistently experience colleagues or administrators leaning in during "hot moments." In response, the Equity Department and the Educators of Color Leadership Community (ECLC) co-designed professional learning for all certificated and classified administrators using authentic, real-life scenarios. Staff of color helped leaders understand which responses foster belonging, which cause further harm, and why. ECLC members described the co-design as meaningful because their perspectives were translated into districtwide action, and administrators reported strategies they could apply immediately.

5. Continuum of Inclusive Special Education Service Delivery

Objective: Strengthen staff capacity to identify and address barriers to access and participation for students with disabilities through inclusive instructional practice, high-quality specially designed instruction (SDI), data-informed decision-making, and collaborative service delivery.

2025-26 Progress: Professional learning across early learning, elementary, secondary, and transition programs addressed inclusive practice, UDL, Structured Teaching, data-based individualization, evidence-based literacy and mathematics intervention, progress monitoring, collaborative teaming, behavior and social-emotional supports, and transition planning. The work reflects an intentional shift from viewing inclusion as a placement toward building the instructional practices and collaborative structures needed to respond to learner variability in every setting. Implementation varied by level: early learning developed inclusive and blended models; elementary connected intervention, SDI, and progress monitoring; secondary emphasized access to core instruction and expanded academic pathways; and the Academy for Community Transition (ACT) developed community-based, vocational, academic, and independent-living instruction through age 22. Outcomes are reported in Section B, item 7.

Looking Ahead: Professional learning will emphasize job-embedded implementation, coaching, collaboration, and peer expertise, with increasing attention to whether learning changes instructional practice and whether those practices support student access, belonging, and progress.

6. Strengthening Equitable Student Supports Through Data-Informed Counseling

Objective: Build school counselors' capacity to design, implement, and evaluate Tier 2 interventions using pre/post assessments of students' attitudes, skills, and knowledge (ASK), so students have equitable access to evidence-based counseling supports.

2025-26 Progress: All school counselors received professional learning on developing pre/post assessments aligned to measurable outcomes, analyzing results, deciding whether to adopt, adapt, or discontinue an intervention, and communicating outcomes to students, families, staff, and leaders. Each counselor was expected to implement and evaluate at least one Tier 2 intervention using pre/post data, creating districtwide consistency and a continuous improvement cycle.

Professional learning that supports culturally responsive teaching with new instructional materials is described in Section C. All equity professional development provided during 2025-26 can be accessed [here](#).

B. High Achievement, Well-Being, and Equitable Access for All Students

1. Student Summit

Objective: Affirm, celebrate, and elevate the identities, leadership, and lived experiences of students while advancing equity, belonging, and academic excellence. The summit centered students who identify as Black/African American, Latinx, Pacific Islander, and Native, while welcoming and benefiting all students.

2025-26 Progress: The district hosted its second Student Summit. Students helped name the event, design its graphics, and select workshop topics, and the summit was moved earlier in the year in response to student feedback. Workshops, offered in English and Spanish, addressed identity, leadership, poetry and book writing, self-care, affinity spaces, hip hop, and navigating educational pathways. Students led discussions and shared personal narratives, and keynote speakers and panelists from diverse backgrounds offered perspectives on resilience, achievement, and community impact. A culminating celebration honored students' cultural identities and accomplishments.

Looking Ahead: The third Student Summit will take place in March 2027. Lessons learned from the 2025-26 summit will inform programming, partnerships, and expanded student leadership and voice.

2. Student Affinity Groups, Identity-Based Clubs, and Leadership

Objective: Strengthen inclusive secondary environments through affinity groups, identity-based clubs, and leadership opportunities that elevate student voice, celebrate diverse identities, and foster belonging.

2025-26 Progress: The Equity Department supported affinity groups and culturally responsive student organizations. As these groups have matured, students have created more authentic experiences that celebrate their cultures; for example, members of the Alma Latina student group painted a mural on a portable featuring songs and cultural experiences meaningful to them. Issaquah High School continued to grow an affinity space for students in a district focus group, where students take on leadership roles, including at the Student Summit, and help present at Digital Promise to a broader educational audience. The department also supported students with financial aid forms, college applications, scholarships, and exploring post-high school pathways.

3. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Objective: Under Strategic Plan Priority Area 1: Student Well-Being, Strategy D: Implement Social Emotional Learning for All Students, ensure all students have access to high-quality, developmentally appropriate, and equitable SEL instruction K-12 aligned to Washington State SEL standards and district equity commitments.

2025-26 Progress: Building on four standards previously integrated, all six Washington State SEL Standards were fully integrated and implemented across courses in 2025-26. The district is developing an SEL Playbook aligned to all six standards as a classroom reference for teachers.

4. Student Safety and Sense of Belonging

Objective: Understand students' perceptions of safety to identify strengths, address needs, and guide continuous improvement aligned with Strategic Plan Priority Area 1 Student Well-Being – students feel safe and have a sense of belonging (P1.B).

2025-26 Progress: New survey questions gathered more specific, actionable feedback about students' sense of safety at school; the Priority 1B Team will use the results to set goals and monitor progress. Most students report feeling safe at school. Student feedback points to opportunities to strengthen safety and belonging through increased adult presence, positive peer interactions, calm and supportive spaces, consistent routines, and physical safety measures, as outlined in [OE-2](#). Among grades 4-12, the lowest-rated items were whether bullying is handled effectively and whether the school supports students' mental health and well-being.

5. Equitable Access to Basic Needs and Resources

Objective: Remove non-academic barriers, including transportation, food, health, and basic needs, that can limit students' readiness and full participation in school.

Transportation. The district purchases ORCA cards so families can participate fully in academics and extracurriculars, and provided after-school activity transportation at secondary schools. Approximately 340 McKinney-Vento-eligible students received transportation in 2025-26, by district bus when practical, by individualized car service for students outside attendance boundaries, or through in-lieu payments to qualifying families when appropriate.

Food Services. Breakfast was offered at Issaquah High School, Issaquah Middle School, Maywood Middle School, and Clark, Sunset, Issaquah Valley, Challenger, Apollo, Cedar Trails, Briarwood, Discovery (new), and Newcastle (new) Elementary Schools, serving 64,136 breakfasts, 40,159 of them at no

charge. Food Services continued culturally responsive menu development, serving three new recipes at each secondary school on six occasions: Bell's Thai Yellow Curry Chicken, Lorna's Indian Dal, and a Japanese Gyoza Soup. OSPI recognized this work with a 2026 Rooted in Excellence Award for culturally inclusive meals.

Resource Fairs. In August 2025, the MTSS and Student Well-Being Department and district and community partners hosted the third annual Back-to-School Resource Fair, a one-stop event offering immunizations, health screenings, school supplies, clothing, sports physicals, enrollment assistance, Free and Reduced Lunch application support, and access to DSHS programs such as EBT/SNAP and health insurance. The fair served more than 471 families and nearly 950 students. In January, the Family Partnership Team and the Director of Health Services hosted a Mid-Year Mini-Resource Fair offering the Community Clothing Closet, mobile dental services, health screenings, mental health resources, food assistance, and interpretation. The event served 102 families representing 191 students, plus 28 additional adults at the Clothing Closet, which received approximately one ton of donated clothing. Holding a mid-year fair signaled to families that support continues throughout the year.

Health Services. Health Services reduced barriers to care through several efforts:

- **Childhood Vaccine Program:** In collaboration with the Washington State Department of Health and Seattle-King County Public Health, the district became an approved Childhood Vaccine Provider, allowing nurses to vaccinate students at their home schools beginning in November 2025. By the last day of school, more than 130 students had been served and more than 180 vaccines provided; 38% of vaccines went to uninsured students and 35% to students with state insurance.
- **Community vaccine clinics:** In partnership with Bellevue College nursing students, free clinics provided more than 200 vaccines in the community, approximately 100 of them to district students.
- **School readiness:** Coordination with Dr. Harlan Gallinger ensured families new to the area had emergency health care plans signed and required medications in place before school began. No students were excluded at the start of the year for missing emergency health plans or medications.
- **Sports physicals:** Dr. Gallinger and CarePoint Mobile Clinic provided approximately 50 free sports physicals to students who otherwise might not have been able to participate in athletics.
- **Basic needs:** Nurses partnered with KidVantage to deliver nearly 55,000 products to K-5 families, including 448 pairs of shoes, 779 hygiene products, 5,928 pieces of clothing, and 856 books. The Nurses' Fund provided more than \$5,200 in emergency gift cards for gas, food, or medication, and funded advanced eye exams and glasses for 7 students who failed the school vision screening.

Looking Ahead: Beginning in 2026-27, a partnership with Glasses2Classes will increase access to vision care and prescription eyeglasses, and a collaboration with Big Smiles will provide school-based dental services that reduce barriers related to transportation, insurance, and time away from work.

6. Athletics, Clubs, and Activities

Objective: Expand the number and variety of pathways through which students discover their strengths, experience success, build relationships, receive recognition, and belong (Strategy 5).

2025-26 Progress: In alignment with the WIAA, all three comprehensive high schools added girls' flag football and girls' badminton. Combined participation reached 338 student-athletes, an increase of 74 students (28%). Skyline won the 4A girls' flag football state championship, Issaquah finished as state

runner-up, and KingCo named student-athletes to its 2025-26 All-League teams in both sports. We have seen a more than twenty-five percent increase in participation in girls' flag football and girls' badminton.

Special Olympics and Unified Sports offered track, bowling, and basketball in 2025-26. Growing participation led to the addition of assistant coaches for basketball and bowling, increasing capacity for students with disabilities and creating opportunities for students with and without disabilities to learn, compete, lead, and belong together. The 2025-26 Club Census documented more than 4,600 reported student participants across district high schools in cultural and identity-based, academic and career-focused, creative and performing arts, service, and interest-based clubs.

Looking Ahead: The district will continue to expand the pathways through which students find community, belonging, leadership, and success by reducing barriers to participation in athletics, activities, clubs, and affinity spaces; moving more students from participation into leadership, decision-making, and advocacy roles; developing spaces where students see themselves represented; and using participation data to understand who is and is not participating so opportunities can be expanded for students who have historically had fewer pathways to connection.

7. Special Education

Objective: Ensure students with disabilities receive a Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment consistent with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), while advancing commitments under OE-12, OE-14, and OE-16 to equitable access, rigorous and relevant instruction, individualized supports, and improved outcomes.

2025-26 Progress: Special Services served an annual average of 1,933 students ages 3-22 (1,886 in September and 1,941 in June), including approximately 130 students ages 3-5, 1,765 ages 6-17, and 46 ages 18-22. The district continued its multi-year shift toward understanding special education as a set of individualized services rather than a location, while preserving a continuum responsive to the range of student need. More students learned alongside nondisabled peers, participation in advanced academic pathways broadened, early learning expanded inclusive opportunities, and transition programming emphasized community access and student agency. Differences in placement and outcomes across racial, ethnic, and disability groups remain, and for OE-16 these patterns are central: equity requires examining who benefits from improvement, where disparities persist, and whether access is paired with the instruction and supports students need to make meaningful progress.

Preschool. Early learning expanded inclusive and blended opportunities across ECE, ECEAP, and Transitional Kindergarten, continued Tier 1 literacy implementation, and used Preschool Inclusion Grant resources to support inclusive practice and kindergarten transitions. Child Outcomes Summary data show that 68.8% of students increased their rate of growth in positive social-emotional skills, 57.8% in acquiring and using knowledge and skills, and 67.2% in taking appropriate action to meet their needs; across the three outcomes, 43-49% of students reached age-level functioning by exit.

K-12. At the elementary level, Special Services and Teaching and Learning brought greater coherence to literacy and mathematics intervention, SDI, and progress monitoring across all 16 schools. Among elementary students receiving special education, SBA ELA proficiency increased 15 percentage points over five years, and the percentage meeting Typical Annual Growth in i-Ready Reading increased 14 percentage points. At the secondary level, the district expanded inclusive programming, behavioral supports, and access to core instruction and general education pathways. Secondary students receiving special education reached a five-year high of 89 enrollments in Algebra 2 or higher, including 45 enrollments across eight advanced or college-level math courses, which is particularly relevant because earlier student listening sessions had identified access to math pathways as a concern. These data do

not suggest barriers have been eliminated, but they show a broader range of academic opportunity than in prior years.

Transition (ages 18-22). The Academy for Community Transition (ACT) served 46 students with an emphasis on vocational learning, independent living, community participation, and postsecondary preparation based on students' own goals. A new four-year scope and sequence was established, employer and community partnerships expanded, and every ACT student participated in at least two community-based learning opportunities. 41 of 46 students participated in the Student Leadership Group, and student research on campus accessibility led to facility adaptations. Accessible financial literacy instruction is in development for full implementation in 2026-27.

Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). LRE is both an IDEA requirement and a system-level measure of access. LRE-1 represents students who spend 80-100% of the school day in general education, LRE-2 represents 40-79%, and LRE-3 represents 0-39%. The district uses LRE data as an equity check rather than a placement target, and pairs it with strengthened accommodations, SDI, collaborative planning, and a broader range of service-delivery options so inclusive placement is viable. The percentage of students in LRE-1 rose from 66.8% in 2022-23 to 79.3% in 2025-26, while LRE-2 declined from 20.1% to 10.4% (Table 1). Gains extended across the district's larger racial and ethnic reporting groups: from 2023-24 to 2025-26, LRE-1 increased from 59.4% to 75.3% for Hispanic/Latino students, from 55.3% to 63.0% for Black/African American students, from 64.1% to 72.7% for Asian students, and from 76.8% to 85.9% for White students (Table 3). Groups that began with lower rates of access experienced measurable gains, yet differences among groups and among disability categories remain, particularly for students with Emotional/Behavioral Disability (47.7%), which makes disaggregated monitoring essential.

Table 1. Districtwide LRE, 2022-23 to 2025-26

School Year	LRE-1 80-100% in General Ed	LRE-2 40-79% in General Ed	LRE-3 0-39% in General Ed
2022-23	66.8%	20.1%	8.4%
2023-24	69.3%	20.1%	7.3%
2024-25	76.5%	12.8%	6.1%
2025-26	79.3%	10.4%	6.6%

Note: Other placements, including home/hospital and non-public agency placements, are not represented in these categories.

Table 2. LRE-1 (80-100% in General Education) by Disability Category, 2023-24 to 2025-26

Disability Category	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change from 2024-25
Specific Learning Disability	73.2%	83.8%	90.5%	+6.7 pp
Other Health Impairment	72.0%	79.9%	84.2%	+4.3 pp
Emotional/Behavioral Disability	39.4%	47.5%	47.7%	+0.2 pp
Communication Disorder	98.6%	100%	100%	0.0 pp

Source: OSPI, 2026.

Table 3. LRE-1 (80-100% in General Education) by Race/Ethnicity, 2023-24 to 2025-26

Race/Ethnicity	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change from 2024-25
American Indian/Alaska Native	Suppressed (n size)	Suppressed (n size)	Suppressed (n size)	--
Asian	64.1%	72.5%	72.7%	-0.2 pp
Black/African American	55.3%	61.6%	63.0%	+1.3 pp
Hispanic/Latino of any race	59.4%	69.5%	75.3%	+5.8 pp
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	Suppressed (n size)	Suppressed (n size)	Suppressed (n size)	--
Two or More Races	72.2%	78.7%	81.6%	+2.9 pp
White	76.8%	82.8%	85.9%	+3.1 pp

Source: OSPI, 2026.

Looking Ahead: Beginning in 2026-27, student-reported belonging will be examined alongside LRE to understand whether changes in placement are reflected in students' experience of membership at school. In keeping with OE-16's emphasis on predictability and disproportionality, placement data will also be considered alongside special education identification patterns (see 16.2) to distinguish broad improvement from equitable improvement and identify where systemic barriers remain.

C. Curriculum That Prioritizes Diverse Viewpoints and Cultural Relevance

Objective: Ensure new instructional materials represent the student and community population, are used in a culturally sustaining manner, and give students access to core curriculum alongside their peers with choice over their learning paths.

2025-26 Progress: Humanities courses K-12 are in various stages of a three-phase process. In **Commissioning**, Academic Cabinet sets conditions for selection, including alignment to the Equity Framework for Curriculum Adoption, and district leaders complete a Road Show with school department teams; no new commissioning occurred in 2025-26. In **Selection**, the committee is trained on the Equity Framework, studies data on equitable outcomes, and aligns criteria to Universal Design and culturally responsive engagement principles. In **Course Development and Implementation**, the selection team and all course teachers meet regularly during the first three years, with ongoing equity data study and professional development in UDL and culturally responsive teaching.

Table 4. Curriculum Selection and Course Development Status, 2025-26

Course	Phase	Timeline
Middle School ELA	Selection; Course Development and Implementation	Selection 2025-26; Implementation 2026-29
8th and 11th Grade U.S. History	Selection; Course Development and Implementation	Selection 2025-26; Implementation 2026-29
Elementary ELA	Course Development and Implementation	2023-27
Middle School Math	Course Development and Implementation	In implementation 2025-26
6th Grade Ancient and Medieval History	Course Development and Implementation	2024-28
7th Grade Washington State History and World Geography	Course Development and Implementation	2024-28
9th Grade World History	Course Development and Implementation	2024-27
10th Grade Global Studies	Course Development and Implementation	2024-28
12th Grade Civics	Course Development and Implementation	2024-27
Spanish/French	Course Development and Implementation	In implementation 2025-26
AP African American Studies	Implementation	Fall 2025
Elementary Music	Review	Reviewed 2024-25

High School ELA continues to center diverse novels.

Looking Ahead: This course design process applies to all adoptions since 2022. Courses at all levels are being designed around a 145-day Scope and Sequence to create more opportunities to support students and personalize instruction. Teams continue to report challenges with the breadth of standards and content, including reluctance to let go of past practices, difficulty prioritizing content, and, in math and ELA, difficulty completing core skills within 145 days.

Connection to the Strategic Plan: The district aligned OE-16.1 with Strategic Plan strategies connected to equitable access to resources and pathways, basic needs, safe and welcoming school environments, addressing academic opportunity gaps, and curriculum with diverse viewpoints.

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:

Evidence for 16.2 is organized in two areas: equity-based accountability systems that identify inequities and drive strategy (16.2a, c), and resource allocation directed toward eliminating inequities (16.2b).

A. Equity-Based Accountability Systems**1. School Improvement Plans (SIPs)**

Objective: Use SIPs as the primary system for data-informed, equity-based accountability at each school.

2025-26 Progress: Schools receive a standard data dashboard and tools for deeper analysis of disproportional data drawn from the OSPI Washington School Improvement Framework, secondary grades, and district assessments. Each school sets overall achievement goals and targeted goals for students with disabilities and a BIPOC focus group of students in demographic groups with predictable disproportionality.

Looking Ahead: In alignment with Board input, the December 2026 SIP meetings will be focused on outcomes tied to opportunity gap closure as reflected in strategic plan metrics. Building Principals will share strategies that have contributed to positive movement in student outcomes, as well as approaches that have not yet resulted in the intended impact.

2. Tiered Team Data and Protocols

Objective: Establish tiered teaming across all schools so disaggregated data drive adjustments to core instruction and equitable assignment of interventions and resources.

2025-26 Progress: Every school maintains Tier 1 and Tier 2 teams, supported by MTSS Specialist coaching. **Tier 1 teams** focus on core academic and SEL instruction and building-wide PBIS, using SIP data, i-Ready building summaries, SWIS data, quarter and semester grades, and attendance, disaggregated to identify inequities. **Tier 2 teams** match intervention resources to student needs using student-level i-Ready data, mid-term and term grades, attendance, and SWIS and exclusionary discipline data, with specific progress monitoring for groups with predictable disproportionality.

Intervention staff, including the Title I, Part A/LAP administrator, established procedures for multiple intervention cycles per year to make assignment of interventions more proactive, responsive, and equitable across schools. Strategy Priority Area 2A and expanded use of new early literacy intervention programs resulted in more students experiencing accelerated growth, and the district decided to extend this approach to other intervention areas and higher grades. The district continues to test Tier 2 interventions, including the Bridges math program at select elementary schools. Teaching and Learning Services provided a protocol for elementary staff to use i-Ready progress data to adjust instruction and reduce achievement gaps, with i-Ready trainers available to all schools. New agile data tools developed

in Power BI under the Strategic Plan were piloted and refined in 2024-25 to provide more frequent data to tiered teams.

A 2025-26 root cause analysis continued to examine disproportionality in special education eligibility. The district continued to have significant disproportionate representation of Black/African American students in the category of Specific Learning Disability during the 2025-26 school year. In 2026-27 school year the district anticipates the removal of the designation for Black students with the district moving from disproportionate to significant disproportionality for Latinx students under the eligibility criteria for Specific Learning Disabilities.

Looking Ahead: In 2026-27, collaborative data study will expand to teaching teams, giving teachers more timely and comprehensive data to plan proactively, prevent failure, and increase equitable outcomes in alignment with the 2026-27 Problem of Practice and the 2026 Strategic Plan. This work addresses known opportunity gaps for students with disabilities, multilingual learners, students from low-income households, and students who identify as Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and Pacific Islander.

3. Tiered Intervention System for Attendance

Objective: Address barriers to student participation and engagement through a tiered attendance system embedded in MTSS.

2025-26 Progress: Building staff use a school refusal assessment to select targeted supports such as check-in/check-out, attendance agreements, mentors, transportation solutions, and alternate supervised spaces on campus. A forced-choice survey identifies reinforcers for attendance agreements, and incentive programs reward students on petitions for meeting attendance goals. Many buildings have "rise and shine" programs that welcome students each morning. Administrators use a meeting protocol with students and families at 15 excused absences, and nurses help families understand when students should stay home. Social workers, nurses, and the courthouse resource center connect families to housing, transportation, medical care, and help with at-risk-youth petitions.

The district hosted monthly Community Engagement Boards with students and families, offered virtual and in-person re-engagement workshops with Unleash the Brilliance, and connected youth ages 16-24 to Reconnect to Opportunity. In March, the district began hosting its own monthly Attendance Workshops with the Community Engagement Board to reach more families. The district also joined Washington's five-year challenge to cut chronic absenteeism in half and participates in the OSPI-led statewide Community of Practice. Under RCW 28A.225.030, districts must file truancy petitions when students accumulate seven unexcused absences in a month or 15 in a year; petitions serve as a safety net and have helped some students attend more consistently.

Reengagement Program. In partnership with the district's online learning department, the district piloted a reengagement program for students with active truancy petitions. Students attended weekly in-person support sessions at the district office while taking two to three online classes, allowing them to remain enrolled in the district rather than unenroll for a full-time online program. Of 29 participating students, 23 (79.3%) earned at least one credit, for a combined 57.0 credits. Twenty-one students either earned the credits needed to graduate, returned to their comprehensive school, returned to the program in 2026-27, enrolled in the Career Education Options Program (CEO program), or enrolled in full-time online school.

Table 5. Reengagement Program Outcomes, 2025-26

Measure	Fall 2025	Spring 2026
Students enrolled in reengagement program	21	19
Students earning at least one program credit	15	17
Percent earning at least one credit	71.4%	89.5%
Total program credits earned	29.5	27.5

Table 6. Truancy Petitions by Student Group, 2025-26

Student Group	# Petitions	% of Petitions	# Dismissed	% Dismissed
BIPOC*	67	43.2%	27	40.3%
Students with Disabilities	66	42.6%	26	39.4%
Section 504	<i>suppressed</i>	9.7%	<i>suppressed</i>	26.7%
All Petitions Filed	155	100%	74	47.7%

*BIPOC includes American Indian, Black, Hispanic, and Native Hawaiian students.

**Dismissed means it was dismissed by the Truancy Court.

Source: 2025-26 data from OSPI's Tableau application (includes Running Start).

Chronic Absenteeism. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10% or more of the school year, including excused and unexcused absences (about 18 days in a 180-day year), an empirically supported indicator of academic risk. In 2025-26, 21.7% of all students were chronically absent, compared with 32.2% of BIPOC students, 31.2% of students with disabilities, and 29.3% of students with Section 504 plans (Table 7).

Table 7. Chronic Absenteeism and Truancy Petitions by Student Group, 2025-26

Student Group	Students (% of ISD)	Chronic Absenteeism (18+ absences)	Truancy Petitions (7+ unexcused/month or 15+/year)
BIPOC*	2,643 (14.1%)	852 (32.2%)	67 (2.5%)
Students with Disabilities	1,790 (9.6%)	559 (31.2%)	66 (3.7%)
Section 504	1,944 (10.4%)	568 (29.2%)	15 (0.7%)
All Students	18,690 (100%)	4,061 (21.7%)	155 (0.83%)

*BIPOC includes American Indian, Black, Hispanic, and Native Hawaiian students.

Source: 2025-26 data from Power BI.

Looking Ahead: The district will continue working with students and families to identify and remove barriers to attendance and is exploring its own Open Doors program so students can remain enrolled while continuing their educational pathway.

B. Resource Allocation

1. Title I, Part A and Learning Assistance Program (LAP)

Title I, Part A and LAP funds are allocated in addition to instructional classroom staffing. Title I, Part A funds are allocated on a per-pupil basis relative to each eligible elementary school's free and reduced-price lunch percentage and supplement K-4 literacy at identified Title I schools; staffing and funds are tied to the students served. LAP funds target K-4 literacy at all elementary schools. Total FTE allocated to Title I and LAP did not change from the prior year. [Title I - LAP Allocation 2025-26 OE 16](#)

2. Equity-Based Budget Framework

The district implemented the Equity-Based Budget Framework in 2025-26 to align targeted resources with student and school needs. While many staffing allocations follow enrollment and state formulas, the framework uses multiple indicators to guide selected investments, including increased MTSS staffing and behavior supports, emergency paraeducators for transportation and safety needs, additional classroom staffing at select grade levels, professional development in inclusive practices, and language access and mental health supports. The framework is reviewed annually, and schools may newly qualify for or transition from targeted supports as demographics change.

3. Highly Capable Program (HCP)

Objective: Advance equitable identification and service practices that reduce disproportionality and increase access for historically underrepresented student groups.

2025-26 Progress: The district continued universal screening of all kindergarten, second grade, and fifth-grade students during the school day; no outside or private testing was used for eligibility. A matrix scoring system avoids reliance on a single cut score, the Non-Verbal CogAT supports multilingual learners, and the Multidisciplinary Selection Committee considers context such as multilingual status and language acquisition level, special education services, and socioeconomic background. Notifications, appeals, exit procedures, testing opt-out options, and private/home-based testing information are translated as needed. Elementary schools offered challenge groups, and secondary students offered self-select advanced courses. The HCP team added targeted reviews of participation patterns among underrepresented groups to identify students with advanced potential who may not yet be formally recognized. Designation data show uneven representation: Asian students account for 71% of students designated Highly Capable, while Students of Focus account for 3% (Table 8).

Table 8. Highly Capable Designation by Student Group, 2025-26

Student Group	Total ISD Students	% of Total ISD Students	% of HC	HC Yes	HC No
Asian	6,079	38%	71%	972	5,107
Students of Focus	2,496	14%	3%	43	2,453
Two or More Races	1,697	8%	8%	111	1,586
White	6,975	18%	18%	251	6724
Grand Total	17,247			1,377	15,870

Looking Ahead: The district recognizes uneven representation in the Highly Capable program and is expanding access to advanced learning. At the elementary level, enrichment and enhancement lessons are integrated into Success Blocks, so more students, especially from underrepresented populations, access higher-level tasks more frequently. At the secondary level, the district is expanding advanced course availability, reducing enrollment barriers, and encouraging broader participation among students historically underrepresented in advanced coursework.

Connection to the Strategic Plan: OE-16.2 aligns with the Strategic Plan's Learning Opportunities priority, particularly the commitment to address the full range of students' learning abilities, strengths, identities, and styles.

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. Authentic Engagement with Caregivers (Priority Area 4A)

Objective: Advance Priority Area 4A, which states that "district leaders will listen and follow up on input from constituent groups."

2025-26 Progress: In Year 3 of the Strategic Plan work, an engagement menu and companion guide were socialized with family partnership groups, IEA leaders, and all administrators, and their feedback was incorporated into a final version available to all staff on Staff Hub. The co-design model is being formally launched districtwide, and family and student voice mechanisms are being formalized as a standing part of district planning and accountability. The Student Voices Project and related partnerships are described in 16.4. Communications and Information Technology also partnered to strengthen and standardize two-way communication between schools and families in response to Board and community recommendations for more consistent administrator-to-family and teacher-to-family communication, gathering feedback from representatives across school communities.

Looking Ahead: A new two-way communication platform will be implemented, tested, and launched, with staff training, during 2026-27.

2. Family Outreach in Preferred Languages and Communities

Objective: Advance equitable access to information, resources, and support by partnering with community organizations, schools, and local agencies to meet families where they are.

Family Partnership Liaisons. Three liaisons supported caregivers across all schools, with a focus on families new to the district, through email, text, phone, and in-person communication. In 2025-26,

liaisons expanded communication with Spanish-speaking families through video bulletins and translated updates on graduation, summer school, graduation pathways, and immigration policies and regulations.

Family Connections Meetings. The Equity Department hosted four meetings supporting English-, Spanish-, and Mandarin-speaking families, particularly those new to the district. Liaisons invited newly enrolled families, and meetings were promoted through district and school communications, curriculum nights, community events, WeChat, WhatsApp, email, and text. Topics included navigating resources, academic planning and course selection, advanced learning, parent-teacher communication, student learning resources, and SEL, with time for student-specific questions.

Family Partnership Events and Workshops. Eleven family information events engaged more than 1,400 caregivers, with individual events drawing between 19 and 330 participants. Topics, selected from caregiver feedback gathered through Family Advisory meetings, Family Connections meetings, and the Family Partnership team, included sports and clubs, resources for families new to U.S. public schools, Canvas, parent-teacher conferences, college financial aid, graduation pathways, and school transitions. Events were offered in two to six languages, including English, Spanish, Mandarin/Chinese, Korean, Russian, and Japanese; recordings posted on the district website generated more than 1,000 YouTube views, and in-person 1:1 Canvas support was also offered. [Family Partnership Events 2025-26 School Year](#)

Community-Based Support. The Family Partnership Team brought support directly into residential communities where families may face transportation, language, technology, or logistical barriers. At the start of the year, the team visited Overlook and Rose Crest to provide school supplies and hygiene items, demonstrate Canvas, and share school event and website information. At YWCA Village, staff and the school helped families navigate Canvas, check test scores, and prepare for Parent-Teacher Conferences. At Passage Point, staff shared school bulletin information and answered questions about transportation, Before and After School programs, Release of Information documents, and McKinney-Vento (MKV) services; in response to family questions, the Director of Counseling later gave a formal MKV presentation there. The team also partnered with Cultural Bridges on magazine articles addressing questions families frequently ask and shared the magazines with new families; delivered a digital literacy lesson with community partners at a Circle and Family Connections meeting; worked with community partners on supportive plans for immigrant families; shared mental health and other resources; and introduced Family Partnership Liaisons to new families during Issaquah Welcome Week.

Language Access. Through the Communications Department, the district expanded translated materials, qualified interpreters, and on-demand services under its [language access](#) plan, supporting schools, events, conferences, surveys, and other communications. As state grant funding for language access declines, overall language service use increased 9% in 2025, and in-person interpretation accounted for nearly 52% of parent-teacher conference language services. Despite increased demand, total language access costs decreased 39% through greater use of trained in-house interpreters.

3. District Communication with Families

Objective: Share timely information through meaningful two-way engagement aligned with the Strategic Plan's focus on authentic engagement.

2025-26 Progress: Communications supported key initiatives, including the 2026 Renewal Levy measures for Educational Programs and Operations, Capital Projects (Technology and Critical Repairs), and Transportation, as well as equity-based budgeting and cost-saving reductions to balance the budget and align staffing to enrollment. The district conducted more than 60 levy renewal presentations for staff, families, and community members. Messages were distributed in families' preferred languages by

e-newsletter, text, and robocall through FinalSite and SchoolMessenger; publications included The 411 weekly bulletin, special bulletins, Horizons, ISD Insider for staff, the twice-annual FOCUS newsletter, the renewal levy pamphlet mailed to all residents, and an end-of-year postcard celebrating district accomplishments and the Class of 2026. Videos included multilingual captions, and surveys were translated into the most frequently requested languages.

Parent, student, and staff surveys were aligned to Board Results, Operational Expectations, and the Strategic Plan; standardized across grade bands; improved readability and translation; and updated to include Net Promoter Score measures. The Language Access Advisory Committee and Family Partnership groups continued to gather feedback from multilingual and diverse communities (see 16.4). Community engagement increased across most social media platforms, excluding X, for which metrics are no longer available (Table 9).

Table 9. Social Media Engagement, 2025-26

Platform	Followers/Subscribers	Growth	Reach
Instagram	5,485	+41%	2.4 million views
Facebook	14,579	+6%	3.4 million views
LinkedIn	Not reported	+50%	Not reported
YouTube	2,377	+8%	149,231 views; 5,384 hours watched

Health Services efforts that reduced family barriers to care (vaccine clinics, sports physicals, and emergency health plan support) are described in 16.1, Section B, item 5.

Connection to the Strategic Plan: As part of the strategic planning process, the district aligned OE-16.3 with strategies in the Strategic Plan, including Authentic Engagement (Priority Area 4A).

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:

1. Two-Way Communication and Advisory Structures

Objective: Engage a representative group of families and community members to provide input on district initiatives, school programs, and family support strategies.

2025-26 Progress: Family advisory members represent a range of cultural and linguistic communities and feeder patterns and share information and gather feedback through established networks, including PTSA networks, WeChat, KakaoTalk, WhatsApp, and other platforms. The Spanish-language video bulletins described in 16.3 were shared by text and the Remind app, allowing families to respond directly, ask questions, and seek clarification. The Dual Language Family Advisory group continued to advise on programming and program expansion, and the Language Access Advisory Committee brought together parents, students, staff, and community members to identify barriers and improve language access services.

2. Listening to Families to Inform School Practice and Climate

Parent Panel at Grand Ridge Elementary. The Equity Department and school staff facilitated a panel with kindergarten families about their experiences navigating the U.S. elementary school system. Staff learned how cultural and educational experiences shape expectations around academics, behavior, attendance, SEL, and communication, and that some families may be unfamiliar with PBIS, SEL, phonics instruction, grading, attendance expectations, and privacy requirements. Families emphasized cultural inclusion, welcoming environments, and relationships with teachers. Staff identified opportunities for proactive outreach, clearer information about school systems, and more culturally responsive, multilingual communication, particularly for families less likely to initiate questions.

Never Enough Book Study. In partnership with the PTSA Council and ParentWiser, the Family Partnership Team facilitated a four-session book study of *Never Enough* in response to concerns raised by the Family Partnership Advisory Group about student mental health, anxiety, depression, and pressure on young people and families. Families from diverse backgrounds learned together, identified needed resources, and shared feedback about school practices and conditions they believe contribute to student stress, perspectives that may not be captured through traditional feedback processes. Participants requested additional book studies for the following school year.

3. Family Partnership in Special Education

Objective: Use family engagement not only to share information but as evidence of how families experience participation in special education.

2025-26 Progress: In 2025-26 the district participated in the OPSI Special Education Parent Survey to measure the degree to which parents/caregivers report that schools partner with them and facilitate involvement to improve educational services and results for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). On the Washington Part B Parent Survey, 68.39% of respondents reported that the district facilitated their involvement, exceeding the state target of 36.8%. In fact, ninety-nine percent of our families reported receiving information in their preferred language. Results show strong access to information and clear areas for growth. Feedback from the Family and Community Partnership Committee, SEPAC/Parent Advisory, Literacy Continuum Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, and Student Advisory shaped the 2026-27 engagement model.

Looking Ahead: The 2026-27 model includes expanded listening sessions and parent education, a redesigned district-led Parent Advisory with opportunities to advise and co-design, continued support for SEPAC, and an updated Parent and Caregiver Guidebook that makes rights, processes, timelines, and avenues for participation easier to navigate.

4. Student Voice and Community Partnerships

2025-26 Progress: Through the Authentic Engagement priority, the strategy team deepened connections to Student Well-Being and grew the partnership ecosystem with a focus on mental health and social

service coordination. Care Solace expanded to include social services coordination; Youth Eastside Services (YES) staff were placed at each comprehensive high school and Issaquah Middle School to offer mental health counseling, substance awareness classes, and LGBTQIA+ support groups; new MOUs with Safe Crossings, The Garage, Friends of Youth, and Sound Mental Health extended the mental health services network; and a UW SMART Center partnership piloted an evidence-based mental health intervention delivered by high school counselors.

A major outcome was the **Student Voices Project**, led by Student Representatives to the Board. Rather than relying solely on formal surveys or forums, student representatives engaged peers directly during lunch and in other informal spaces, surfacing candid insight that traditional mechanisms often miss.

Looking Ahead: Student Voices Project feedback will be used throughout 2026-27 to design school systems that better support students.

5. Surveys, Tools, and Public Reporting

The district conducts annual parent surveys and student exit surveys for grades 5, 8, and 12 to assess school climate, perceptions, and issues affecting the learning environment. Results are posted under [Reports and Surveys](#), and high-level trends appear in the [Annual Community Report - Issaquah School District 411](#). The 2023-26 Strategic Plan Authentic Engagement work produced a matrix of engagement types and a companion guide of best practices (see 16.3); in the refreshed Strategic Plan, community engagement is woven into Priority Area 3, Trust, and Strategy 9, which calls for broadening opportunities for families and community members to engage and connect with schools.

Families can monitor academic progress and attendance through Family Access and stay informed through the website, social media, email, phone, text, and district newsletters (The 411, Horizons, and FOCUS; see 16.3). The Annual Report provides an overview of student achievement, programs and services, and district finances; the 2025-26 report will be updated before the Board's OE-9 review in January 2027, and school links under "State Assessments" show the most current OSPI report card metrics released in September 2026.

Recognition Highlighting Diversity and Partnership, 2025-26.

- Dr. Sharine Carver received the Washington Association of School Administrators Student Achievement Award for advancing inclusive practice by moving from a reactive accommodation model to proactive instructional design, alignment, and compliance. The district's strengths-based inclusion framework builds accommodations, modifications, and supplementary aids into Tier 1 lesson design, with a goal of embedding 80% or more of student accommodations in Tier 1 core instruction.
- Clark Elementary School students and staff [created a collaborative mural](#), "The Best Parts of Us," celebrating each student's favorite part of themselves.
- The Communications Team earned awards from the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA), including a Golden Achievement for the 2026 Levy Renewal Campaign; a Video Award of Excellence for "American Sign Language with Paige Friedli"; Awards of Excellence for the FOCUS newsletter and the "Homeroom Huddle" podcast; and Awards of Merit for the Annual Budget Guide 2025-26 and Last Day of School 2025 video.

Community Partners. Partners in 2025-26 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. Resource fairs are described in

16.1, Section B, item 5. Additional committees and methods of family and community engagement are reported in the [Operational Expectation 2 - Treatment of People monitoring report](#).

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. In *The Antiracist School Leader* (2024), Dr. Daman Harris reviews research on the impact of teachers and leaders on closing achievement gaps for students of color. Drawing on multiple studies (2017-2021), he describes racially disproportionate achievement, disciplinary, engagement, social, and psychological outcomes for students, and notes that committed, non-judgmental fellowship among colleagues can spur the self-interrogation of values, beliefs, and practices that support or constrain students. The district aims to hire staff committed to this kind of reflective practice, with awareness of the systems that perpetuate disproportionate outcomes and a vision for changing them.

Evidence:

1. Recruitment Outreach and Access

Objective: Reduce barriers to entry and reach applicant networks that broaden the diversity of the candidate pool.

2025-26 Progress: Human Resources continued to use a stakeholder-informed relocation guide available in the employment application platform, on the district website, and by QR code at recruiting events. HR and Communications kept opportunities visible through a presence at Salmon Days, banners on school fence lines, and school reader boards, and digital strategies included HBCUConnect, college and university career center ads, Chamber of Commerce ads, Handshake, school website pop-up ads, Salmon Days digital ads, Instagram, Peach Jar, Facebook, and LinkedIn. HR staff and trained staff attended eight in-person certificated job fairs, two for the first time: Seattle University, Seattle Pacific University, City University, University of Washington Bothell, the UW College of Education fair, Whitworth, the Spokane Job Fair, and the Tacoma Dome Job Fair.

For classified positions, the Family Partnership Team and HR partnered with The Circle, a local nonprofit serving diverse community members, on a July 2025 information session that was well attended but yielded very few applications. The August 2025 Classified Hiring Fair drew 136 attendees, most of whom learned of it through the website and district social media (37%) or direct mail (26%). Forty-five attendees (33%) were hired, including 26 into high-need substitute paraeducator and substitute custodian roles and 22 as paraeducators. Because the district remained well staffed at the end of 2025-26, the August 2026 fair was suspended.

HR and Special Services continue to partner with WEA, SPU, and CWU on a teacher residency for candidates pursuing a special education endorsement; roughly half of WEA candidates identify as people of color. The WEA program will be discontinued in 2026-27 due to lack of funding, and the district and WEA will support current residents through program completion. Applicants report that the most effective recruiting sources remain district job postings on the employment portal (43%), a current employee (15%), and a community member (15%).

2. Anti-Bias and Anti-Discrimination Training for Leaders

In spring 2026, Human Resources offered all district leaders the training "Leading a Workplace Free of Harassment and Discrimination."

3. Results

- The total candidate pool remained strong in volume, with modest increases in applicants who identify as Asian, Black, two or more races, or Latino. These applicants increased the diversity of the pool by 8% and produced the most diverse certificated candidate pool in three years (Table 12).
- Certificated staff of color employed increased by 0.8 percentage points to 11% (Table 11).
- Certificated staff of color hired declined to 17%, closer to 2023-24 levels, but the district continues to hire staff of color at a rate higher than the current percentage employed (Table 10).
- Classified staff diversity increased for the fourth consecutive year, from 31% to 32%, and 53% of classified applicants identified as people of color (Tables 11 and 13).

Table 10. Staff of Color Hires, 2023-24 to 2025-26

Employee Group	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Classified	66 of 166 = 40% (25 did not report race)	100 of 222 = 45% (0 did not report race)	83 of 197 = 42% (0 did not report race)
Certificated	25 of 129 = 19% (11 did not report race)	29 of 98 = 30% (6 did not report race)	13 of 76 = 17% (0 did not report race)

Table 11. Staff of Color Employed, 2023-24 to 2025-26

Employee Group	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
Classified staff of color	373 of 1,213 = 30%	382 of 1,237 = 31%	380 of 1,200 = 32%
Certificated staff of color	128 of 1,226 = 10.4%	141 of 1,374 = 10.2%	149 of 1,368 = 11%
Certificated staff of color (OSPI)	145 of 1,226 = 11.8% (120 did not report = 9.8%)	145 of 1,234 = 11.7% (136 did not report = 11%)	Not available as of 9/18/26

Source for OSPI row: state certification renewal portal, used for OSPI Report Card teacher demographics.

Key Findings. Hiring fewer total positions limits progress in diversifying staff; the district hired only 76 teachers in 2025-26, a significant decline for the third consecutive year. The district continues to hire staff of color at a rate higher than the current percentage employed, and anti-bias hiring strategies become increasingly important when hiring demand is lower. Classified staff, nearly half of all employees and serving in roles at every level, show steady incremental progress. OSPI certificated data show steady, if slow, improvement in certificated staff diversity: in 2018-19, staff identified as 84.7%

white and 8.7% staff of color (6.1% not reporting); in 2024-25, 77.2% white and 11.2% staff of color (11.0% not reporting). OSPI 2025-26 data are not yet available.

Significant numbers of applicants continue not to disclose race (see "No Race Given" in Table 12). Note that "applied" does not necessarily mean the applicant completed an application or met minimum qualifications for a Washington State teaching position.

Table 12. Certificated Staff Applicants by Race, 2023-24 to 2025-26 (Strategic Plan Priority Area 3, P3a baseline)

Race/Ethnicity	2023-24 (n = 1,083)	2024-25 (n = 1,117)	2025-26 (n = 1,114)
American Indian or Alaska Native	8 (0.74%)	7 (0.6%)	5 (0.45%)
Asian	178 (16.4%)	127 (11.4%)	199 (17.9%)
Black	33 (3.0%)	22 (2.0%)	43 (3.9%)
Hispanic/Latino	58 (5.3%)	72 (6.4%)	81 (7.3%)
Pacific Islander	6 (0.6%)	5 (0.45%)	1 (0.09%)
Two or More Races	58 (5.3%)	64 (5.7%)	55 (4.9%)
White	630 (58.0%)	695 (62.2%)	611 (54.9%)
No Race Given	117 (10.8%)	125 (11.2%)	119 (10.7%)

Table 13. Classified Staff Applicants by Race, 2023-24 to 2025-26

Race/Ethnicity	2023-24 (n = 1,213)	2024-25 (n = 1,076)	2025-26 (n = 1,188)
People of Color	373 (30%)	485 (45%)	631 (53%)
White	815 (67%)	479 (45%)	557 (47%)
Unknown	25 (2%)	112 (10%)	0 (0%)

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.

OE-16.6 is well aligned to and informed the development of the Strategic Plan, formerly Priority Area Three - Diverse Talent, now Operational Excellence 1.

Evidence:

1. Educators of Color Leadership Community (ECLC)

Objective: Support and retain educators of color through professional development and affinity spaces that foster belonging and connection.

2025-26 Progress: Eighteen staff members participated in four sessions centered on affirmation, reflection, healing, and shared learning, building cross-school relationships and networks that support retention and leadership. The ECLC also brought educator perspectives into district leadership: members co-designed the all-administrator professional learning on responding to racist or biased moments (see 16.1, Section A, item 4) and participated in a listening session with the Chief of Staff and Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources about their experiences with students, staff, and families.

Looking Ahead: The district received a Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSED) grant to expand the ECLC to meet growing interest and build sustainable, long-term support, strengthening connections among educators of color across schools and departments. Ongoing monitoring will assess whether these efforts support retention, professional connection, and belonging.

2. Stay and Exit Surveys

2025-26 Progress: With support from the Equity Department, a key partner, and research into other district models, Human Resources developed stay and exit surveys. In 2025-26, Communications helped transition the surveys to Qualtrics. The stay survey is sent to all certificated and classified staff concurrent with the IEA Transfer Memo and remains open through February. Participation grew to 1,931 respondents, an increase of 664. Belonging increased for three of four staff groups, while certificated staff of color reported a decline from 75% to 70% (Table 14). Net Promoter results declined for all four groups (Table 15). In exit surveys, 78% of staff of color would work in the district again (up 7%), as would 79% of staff who do not identify as staff of color (up 17%).

Table 14. Staff Who Feel a Sense of Belonging, 2023-24 to 2025-26

Staff Group	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change from 2024-25
Total respondents	1,105	1,268	1,932	
Classified, not staff of color	204 of 254 = 81%	261 of 323 = 81%	416 of 504 = 82%	+2%
Classified staff of color	70 of 79 = 89%	114 of 131 = 87%	173 of 186 = 93%	+6%
Certificated, not staff of color	554 of 651 = 85%	566 of 673 = 84%	673 of 774 = 87%	+3%
Certificated staff of color	77 of 100 = 77%	79 of 106 = 75%	78 of 112 = 70%	-5%

Table 15. Net Promoter Score (Responded 9 or 10: Likely to Recommend the District as a Workplace), 2023-24 to 2025-26

Staff Group	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change from 2024-25
Total respondents	1,105	1,268	1,932	
Classified, not staff of color	96 of 254 = 38%	139 of 323 = 43%	205 of 504 = 41%	-2%
Classified staff of color	40 of 79 = 50%	74 of 131 = 56%	97 of 186 = 52%	-4%
Certificated, not staff of color	266 of 651 = 41%	229 of 673 = 34%	217 of 774 = 28%	-6%
Certificated staff of color	42 of 100 = 42%	42 of 106 = 40%	37 of 112 = 33%	-7%

Key Findings: A higher percentage of certificated staff of color are net promoters compared with certificated staff who do not identify as staff of color (33% versus 28%). This is the third consecutive year in which this is true.

Looking Ahead: During the 2026-27 we will reset a new baseline that aligns to industry standards for this metric.

3. Retention

Retention data are aligned to the Strategic Plan. Resignations increased for both classified (n = 19) and certificated (n = 25) staff (Table 16).

Table 16. Staff Resignations, 2023-24 to 2025-26

Employee Group	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Change as % of Unit
Classified	196 of 1,213 = 16%	160 of 1,237 = 13%	179 of 1,200 = 15%	+2%
Certificated	104 of 1,367 = 7.6%	104 of 1,374 = 7.5%	129 of 1,368 = 9.4%	+1.9%

Key Findings.

- **Certificated:** White staff represent 85% of certificated resignations and 87% of certificated staff, indicating no disproportionality. Certificated staff of color represent 12% of resignations and 11% of certificated staff, indicating slight disproportionality (1%). Staff who did not report race represent 3% of resignations and 2% of certificated staff.
- **Classified:** Classified resignations are increasing. For the first time, staff of color made up 37% of classified resignations, exceeding their share of the classified workforce (32%) and constituting disproportionality. White staff made up 62% of classified resignations and 69% of classified employees, indicating no disproportionality.

Board acceptance: 10/8/2026