



MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Greg Baker, Superintendent
DATE: October 5, 2026
SUBJECT: Monitoring Report for EL-10, Race, Equity and Inclusion

I certify that the following is accurate as of October 5, 2026. The reporting period is from the completion date of the last report on this Executive Limitation (October 6, 2025) to the present. The report includes updates on work instituted prior to the reporting period to provide evidence of ongoing progress on work in this area, as well as priority areas for our work for the reporting period and beyond.

Policy Type: Executive Limitation

Policy: EL-10 Race and Equity (copy attached)

Adopted: August 14, 2019 **Updated:** May 14, 2026

Background Information: This report is about Executive Limitation (EL)-10 Race, Equity and Inclusion. EL-10 states, "The superintendent shall not fail to interrupt factors that perpetuate systemic inequities and/or practices that contribute to over and under representation of any student group compared to peers. The superintendent shall confront the institutional bias that results in predictability of student success or lack thereof, including, but not limited to, race and ethnicity, gender identity and sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ability, language, and culture."

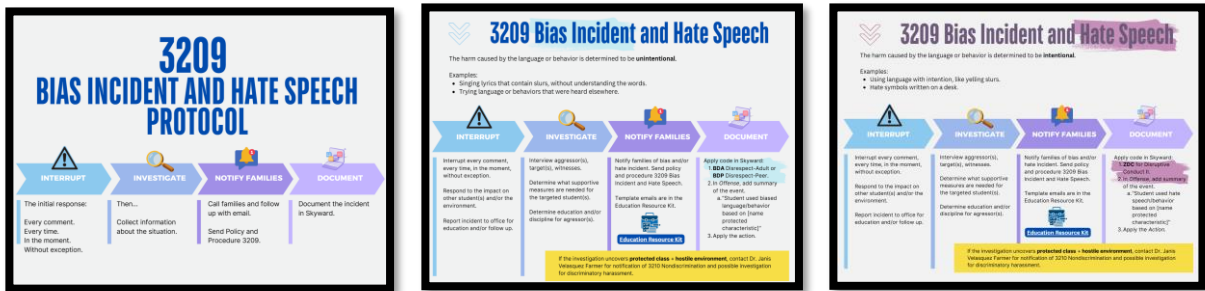
1. The superintendent shall not fail to take all reasonable and prudent actions with respect to reporting, processing, and tracking incidents of bias that are typical for similar and highly effective organizations.

Interpretation: Through the direction provided by the superintendent, the administrative team and staff have demonstrated reasonable efforts to implement processes for reporting, processing, tracking and resolving incidents of bias, racism or hate speech of other kinds that occur.

Evidence of Compliance:

- **New: Calibration with administrators to align practices for tracking/reporting incidents of hate/bias -** Through districtwide calibration, training, and ongoing support, school administrators and staff have strengthened consistent practices for identifying, reporting, documenting, and responding to incidents of bias, hate, and student conduct. Administrators receive guidance regarding what incidents should be reported, how incidents are entered and tracked in district systems, and expectations for timely investigation and response. Staff receive training in recognizing and addressing incidents, reporting concerns, and creating inclusive learning environments. This work promotes consistency across schools, improves the accuracy of data collection and monitoring, and helps ensure incidents are addressed in alignment with district procedures, legal requirements, and equity commitments.

- **New/Update: Part III: Interrupting Hate, equity audit** - The final session of our three-part training focused on increasing comfort with the application of policies and tools used to recognize, interrupt, and address bias and hate. This training emphasizes the importance of personal and collective accountability. The workshop reviews parts I and II, then moves towards culturally responsive liberatory practices, digging deeper into the four strategies for interrupting bias and hate. By equipping educators and school leaders with long-term strategies to integrate these values into daily practices, the systems become more aligned with Policy and Procedure 3209, and The Bellingham Promise of equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- **Update: Revised protocols for Policy 3209**- During the 2025-2026 school year, our school leaders, with the support of the department of teaching and learning, worked to respond accurately and systematically to incidence of bias and hate speech in our schools. This response is one of the ways we ensure that all students feel seen, valued and safe in our schools. We continue to develop clarity around the process so that all buildings respond in a similar matter. With feedback from our leaders, we streamlined the supporting documents so that they are more accessible for any staff member responding to an incident of bias or hate speech in our schools. These documents continue to provide a high degree of support and can be accessed by all staff.



2a. The superintendent shall not fail to recruit, employ, support, retain and continuously develop a workforce of culturally responsive staff.

Interpretation: Through the direction provided by the superintendent, the administrative team and staff have demonstrated reasonable efforts to continuously work to diversify the district's staff through recruitment, support and retention strategies.

Evidence of Compliance:

- **Update: Development of a culturally diverse and responsive workforce.** In 2025, ongoing state funding shortfalls and other budgetary challenges necessitated staff layoffs. Although reduction-in-force procedures are prescribed by collective bargaining agreements and applicable law, the district sought to minimize disruption and preserve workforce diversity to the greatest extent possible. When feasible, the district identified opportunities to retain less senior staff of color by leveraging their skills, certifications, and endorsements in other available positions. Additionally, nearly all employees who initially received layoff notices were subsequently recalled, substantially mitigating the impact on staff of color.
 - Despite ongoing fiscal constraints, the district remained committed to supporting programs that promote student engagement and belonging. Staffing support for the Latinos in Action program was increased, enabling continued growth of this highly impactful program and reinforcing the district's commitment to serving and supporting Latino students.

- **Update: Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)** -The district continues to support this staff resource and because of these efforts, there are ongoing social and professional connections for our employees based on shared identities. ERGs are voluntary, employee-led groups that foster community connections within the district. ERGs in Bellingham Public Schools (BPS) serve to improve work relationships and conditions through advocacy, support and professional development in alignment with The Bellingham Promise. There are currently six active Employee Resource Groups:
 - *Staff of Color Coalition*
 - *Jewish Community*
 - *Black Legacy*
 - *Latinx Connection*
 - *LGBTQ+ Employees Alliance*
 - *Multiracial Employees Coalition*

A continued goal of the Human Resources Department is to increase the number of ERGs available for staff. Last year, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Matt Whitten presented information at each of our principal level meetings, encouraging our leaders to promote ERGs at the building level and to direct interested staff to the website at: [BPS Employee Resource Groups](#).

2b. The superintendent shall not fail to increase workforce diversity reflective of our students.

Interpretation: Through the direction provided by the superintendent, the administrative team and staff have demonstrated reasonable efforts to continuously work to diversify the district's workforce in ways that more robustly reflect the diversity of our student population.

Evidence of Compliance:

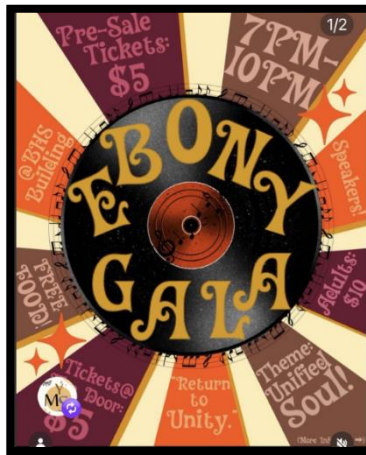
- **Update/ Affirmative Action Progress Report** – The district annually reviews progress toward our five-year Affirmative Action Report by examining progress on specific areas of improvement. Based on the work of our Human Resources Department, our 2025-26 progress reports reflects the following:
 - The District continues to make progress toward the goals outlined in its 2025-2030 Affirmative Action Plan, with hiring efforts focused on increasing workforce diversity and better reflecting the students and communities we serve.
 - Despite a year of limited hiring due to budget constraints, 20% of newly hired certificated staff identified as racial/ethnic minorities, continuing a positive trend in diversifying the educator and administrator workforce.
 - Diversity among newly hired classified staff increased substantially. In 2025, 30.43% of classified hires identified as racial/ethnic minorities, up from 19.39% the previous year.
 - Overall workforce diversity increased, with 259 employees identifying as racial/ethnic minorities in 2025, an increase of 13 employees from the prior year and representing 15.46% of the district's workforce.
- **Update: Bilingual Stipend** - For the 2025-2026 school year, 33 BASE employees' multilingual skills were assessed through a skills assessment, qualifying them for an increased per-hour wage premium for all hours worked for the school year because of the contractual agreement. This is an increase of 13 employees from the previous year. Of these, there are five different languages represented (Spanish, Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu and Polish) and 19 worksites who benefit from the support of our multilingual staff. Additionally, as part of the new collective bargaining agreement with the BASE group, the bilingual stipend will increase from \$0.75 per hour to \$1.00 per hour in the 2028-2029 school year.

2c. The superintendent shall not fail to seek out and incorporate student voice in order to develop and maintain a safe and inclusive environment for each and every student.

Interpretation: Through the direction provided by the superintendent, the administrative team and staff have demonstrated reasonable efforts to continuously work to engage student voices, and in particular, the voices of students who reflect the diversity of our community. The intention of this effort is to create spaces where students feel seen, valued and respected in our school communities.

Evidence of Compliance

- **New/Update: Ebony Gala** – The Black Student Union at Bellingham High School and the Young Multicultural Society at Sehome hosted the second Ebony Gala to celebrate Black Excellence. This event has grown to include students from all four high schools and community members. There was poetry reading by local poets, musical performances and DJs, student speeches and songs as well as food prepared by culinary teacher Brian Young. The event was an example of elevating student voices to create opportunities for authentic opportunities to honor the identities and cultures of our students and families.



- **New: Support for all athletes** – The District is committed to ensuring that all students have equitable access to athletic programs and extracurricular activities. To support student success, the district provides 1:1 paraeducator support for students and athletes whose individual needs require additional assistance to safely and successfully participate in athletics, Unified Sports, and after-school clubs. These supports help remove barriers to participation, promote inclusion, foster independence, and ensure that all students have meaningful opportunities to engage in school activities and experience a sense of belonging within their school community.
- **Update: Native American Student Unions (NASU) growing.** During the 2025-2026 school year, we expanded then number of schools offering NASUs to four schools, supporting over 30 Native students. Most notable, Fairhaven Middle School launched their first NASU with support from the Squalicum High School NASU and Western Washington University NASU, creating opportunities for student mentorship, leadership development, and peer advocacy. Similarly, Cordata Elementary School launched a NASU with guidance from two NAFC members, including a Cordata parent. Students and families participated in beading, fry bread making, and other learning activities that supported cultural identity, relationship building, and student engagement.

- **New: Community Pow Wow** – Squalicum High School NASU organized and launched the first spring Pow Wow at BPS, led by members of the first Native American Family Committee (NAFC), featuring drumming, dancing, a community dinner, and activities. The Pow Wow was well attended by community members and included dancing, food, learning opportunities and celebration. Two of the student leaders were recognized with Peacebuilder Leadership Awards by the community.



- **Update: Student Advisory Committee (SACs) to the Superintendent.** The superintendent has valued the input from the student advisory committee for many years. In the past, we brought representatives from each of the four high schools together to discuss district-wide issues. During the 2025-2026 school year, we met with the SACs committee five times, with each of the high schools hosting one meeting. These conversations provided valued input on budget decisions, high school schedule changes and overall student experiences. The SACs committee consisted of two student representatives from each of the four high schools as well as two executives from teaching and learning. In most cases, the principal joined all or part of the conversation and/or offered students a tour if they were unfamiliar with the space. The following reflects the schedule during the 2025-2026 school year.
 - October 20 – District Office
 - November 19 - Sehome
 - January 12 - Squalicum
 - March 18 – Options
 - May 11- Bellingham

2d. The superintendent shall not fail to engage families and community partners in culturally appropriate ways to ensure multiple cultural perspectives are elevated and valued.

Interpretation: Through the direction provided by the superintendent, the administrative team and staff have demonstrated reasonable efforts to continuously work to engage families and community partners who represent the diversity of our students in culturally appropriate and relevant ways.

Evidence of Compliance:

- **New: Partnership with families to support inclusive attendance protocols.** In partnership with School Avoidance Alliance, teachers, specialists and principals have participated in training to deepen their understanding around school anxiety and reasons for chronic absenteeism. School staff are better equipped with strategies to partner with families in helping students feel a sense of safety and

belonging at school, with the goal of improved participation/attendance. This proactive work serves as a strong intervention approach for families and reinforces our MTSS efforts of strong tiered support for all students and families.

- **New/Update: Native American Family Committee (NAFC)** - The Native American Family Committee (NAFC) at Bellingham Schools completed the process of developing bylaws to guide the work of creating a Native American student program in BPS. Throughout the year, the NAFC held family connection events and provided opportunities for cultural experiences through engagement with local community members. The NAFC represents the voice of students and families from local tribes (Lummi Nation and Nooksack Tribe) and diverse tribal nations throughout the country. The meeting schedule, notes and committee information can be found on our website at: [Title VI NAFC Committee.](#)
- **Update: Sports Readiness Program** - The District continues to support the Sports Readiness Program to ensure that all students can participate in school sports, regardless of financial barriers. Many families face challenges in accessing the resources needed for their children to join athletic programs, and this initiative is designed to bridge that gap. Throughout the year, we host events that help families navigate the process of signing up for seasonal sports, including support with Final Forms (an online program) registration. In partnership with PeaceHealth, we also offer free sports physicals to ensure students are ready to play. Additionally, we collaborate with the Bellingham Public Schools Foundation to provide financial assistance for purchasing essential sports equipment that may not be covered by the school. Together, we are working to make sports accessible and inclusive for every student.
- **Update: Operation School Bell**– We have an ongoing partnership with Operation School Bell, funded through the Action League (formerly known as the Assistance League), which supports families with access to clothing items for students. This year, we were able to give \$128,000 worth of JCPenney gift cards to eight hundred students. Families were invited to the District Office to pick up a gift card for \$125 per child. These funds help ensure students have access to winter coats, shoes and clothing.
- **New: Assistive Technology Family Night** – This year, the district hosted a series of “Connection through Access” nights for families and students who benefit from the use of Assistive Technologies. There were approximately 50 people at each event. Attendees included a variety of roles surrounding approximately 6 students who use complex AT. The event reflects an impact on many more students since these educators work daily toward inclusion for these students at various schools. Our focus was on building a sense of belonging through a "community of identity" for students, families, and staff who are engaged in this work - recognizing that is an important and sometimes overlooked aspect of inclusion. This important work was featured as a Promise story on our website: [Connection Through Access.](#)



- **Update: Sixth Annual Block Party** –In August, the district hosted the sixth annual Block Party at Bellingham High School, with an estimated 1,500 students and family members in attendance. Each school was represented, and students were able to make connections with staff in preparation for the first day of school. Additionally, families received access to resources supported by over 35 community organizations. A few examples of our community partnerships include:
 - **PeaceHealth, Sea Mar & Family Care Network** – offered 102 onsite sports physicals, provided by six volunteer doctors.
 - **Hoagland Pharmacy** – vaccinated children.
 - **Bellingham Action League & Bellingham Central Lions Club** – gave away 900 hundred backpacks and hundreds of free books.
 - **Evergreen Beauty College, Northwest Barber Academy and Blessed Hands Braiding Studio** – offered over one hundred haircuts.
- **New/Updated: Supporting student well-being through integrated health services** - Through sustained partnerships with community health organizations, including Compass Health, Accent Counseling, Sea Mar Community Health Centers, Consejo Counseling, Lydia Place, Unity Care NW, and NW ESD 189, Bellingham Public Schools provides students and families with access to a variety of on-site health and mental health services. These partnerships help remove barriers to care, ensuring students receive the support they need to thrive academically and emotionally. District staff facilitate referrals and connections to services, while Prevention & Wellness Specialists funded through county behavioral health resources provide targeted mental health and substance use prevention support at the secondary level. These community partnerships provide essential supports for our students and in many cases, allows students to more fully participate in the school experience.

2e. The superintendent shall not fail to provide an environment that supports the creation and implementation of culturally responsive instructional practices and curriculum.

Interpretation: Through the direction provided by the superintendent, the administrative team and staff have demonstrated reasonable efforts to continuously work to seek out, identify, adopt and develop culturally responsive curricula and instructional practices.

Evidence of Compliance:

- **New/Update: Unified Sports** - The District offers a comprehensive Unified Sports program at both the high school and middle school levels, providing students with and without intellectual disabilities opportunities to compete together as teammates in an inclusive and supportive environment. Current Unified Sports offerings include Unified Soccer, Unified Basketball, and Unified Bowling. During the 2025-26 school year, a total of 347 students participated in Unified Athletics, including 72 Unified Bowling athletes, 146 Unified Basketball athletes, and 125 Unified Soccer athletes. Through participation in these programs, students develop athletic skills, leadership, teamwork, communication, and meaningful social connections while fostering a culture of inclusion and belonging across our schools. The continued growth of Unified Sports reflects the district's commitment to equitable access, student engagement, and creating positive educational experiences for all students.



- **Update: Dr. Sonja Cherry Paul, Author/Educator visit** – In partnership with Western Washington University and community organizations, the district was able to use an NEA grant to welcome Dr. Sonja Cherry-Paul, author of *Anti-Racist Reading Revolution*, back to Bellingham for a third visit. Dr. Cherry-Paul engaged educators at all levels in professional learning entitled “Teach Black History All Year”. This event was well attended by teachers and principals. The conversation sought to build a stronger understanding of the importance of teaching in a culturally responsive and relevant. Dr. Cherry-Paul also offered an evening session for families and staff entitled “Cultivating and Sustaining a Vision for Belonging.” This partnership is foundational to the professional learning of our teachers and leaders.

2f. The superintendent shall not fail to provide professional development, training and engagement opportunities to inform and practice cultural competence and increase awareness of personal bias and inequities in leading, teaching, counseling, advising and coaching practices.

Interpretation: Through the direction provided by the superintendent, the administrative team and staff have demonstrated reasonable efforts to continuously work to increase the awareness of personal bias and inequities, including the continuation of ongoing efforts to inform and practice cultural competence among our system’s leaders, teachers, counselors, teacher leaders and classified staff members.

Evidence of Compliance:

- **New: Crisis Prevention Intervention training** - Our district demonstrates its commitment to trauma-informed, responsive support for students by investing in comprehensive Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) training for staff. During the 2025-26 school year, 117 staff members completed the two-day Nonviolent Crisis Intervention, De-Escalation, and Safety Training, and an additional 71 staff members completed Verbal Intervention and Non-Restrictive Safety Interventions training. With three certified CPI instructors and ongoing training opportunities, including 31 additional staff trained in August 2026, the district is building staff capacity to de-escalate challenging situations, strengthen relationships, and maintain safe, supportive learning environments for all students.
- **Update – MTSS Data focus**– Our focus on multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) was guided by the commitment to strong systems of support for all students that is rooted in the desired outcomes of the Bellingham Promise. During the 2025-26 school year, the district concentrated our focus around implementing data beliefs for teams to use when making evidence-based decisions. These belief statements were developed by the district MTSS committee and provide a child-centered approach to using data. There is a strong connection to family values, culture and a commitment to authentic partnership. School-based leadership teams are now using these data beliefs during attendance meetings, academic support meetings and in discussions with and about students and families.

Data guides evidence-based decision-making which leads to purposeful growth.

1. We center students, families, and their culture.
2. We collaborate to collect data and analyze with curiosity.
3. We use multiple data sources to make informed decisions.
4. We value shared responsibility and actionable dialogue.



- **New/Update: Expansion of Project GLAD training as a key instructional framework** – Project GLAD is an equitable approach to teaching content and language that supports multilingual learners in accessing rigorous, standards-aligned instruction. Through Project GLAD, we provide professional training and ongoing follow-up planning, partnering with a multilingual specialist to help teachers intentionally embed language supports within their instructional units. During the 2025–2026 school year, 30% of our elementary classroom teachers completed Project GLAD training. Building on this progress, we plan to train an additional 30% of elementary classroom teachers during the 2026–2027 school year, strengthening our shared capacity to provide inclusive and academically rich learning experiences for all students.
- **Update: 2nd Annual Centering Black Excellence Program** – In January, we were honored to host the second annual *Centering Black Excellence* program—a powerful collaboration between the District and Western Washington University. This multi-day program launched Black History Month and Black Lives Matter at School Week of Action by bringing teachers together learn and honor black culture. This year, we welcomed Dr. Willaim Jackson, 2024 Washington State Secondary Principal of the Year, who visited students throughout the district, sharing stories and inspiration. There was an evening event at WWU, entitled *Loving Engagement in Leadership*, that many of our staff participated in. We also hosted a second evening event at the district office that featured model lessons that inspire equity and inclusion, a resource fair with tools for educators and community members, and community collaborations that strengthen connections. Together, we'll explore strategies for discussing race and anti-biased behavior, highlight the contributions of Black communities, and empower educators to design actionable lessons promoting social justice.



- **New/Update: Paraeducator professional learning** - Each year, our new BASE paraeducators are required to complete 28 hours of learning as part of the state mandated Fundamental Course of Study. Additionally, paraeducators can earn their General Paraeducator Certification by enrolling in course related to their job responsibilities. These hours can be a combination of online training through the State and district-provided learning opportunities. Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Janis Valesquez Farmer provided five focused training courses centered on concepts of equity and cultural diversity. These sessions were offered as three- or four-hour courses and over fifty paraeducators participated. Paraeducators work closely with students and are key communicators in helping a child feel a sense of belonging in our schools. In addition to the EDI focused professional learning, paraeducators also had

access to a number of course that focus on supporting students with complex needs. Examples of courses offered include:

- Supporting All Students: Effective paraeducator support in an inclusive setting for learners with complex needs
- Building Safe and Strong Schools
- Data Driven Decisions
- Visual Support Strategies

Providing high-quality professional training for this paraeducator group is essential work and one of the many ways we support an inclusive learning environment in our schools.

2g. The superintendent shall not fail to recognize and value the funds of knowledge that students and families bring to each classroom, school and our system as a whole.

Interpretation: Through the direction provided by the superintendent, the administrative team and staff have demonstrated reasonable efforts to continuously work to celebrate and highlight the value of diverse perspectives and the funds of knowledge that students with diverse backgrounds bring to our schools every day.

Evidence of Compliance:

- **New: First Native Student graduation celebration** - The first-ever Native Student Graduation Celebration in Bellingham Public Schools honored graduates from all four high schools and Community Transitions in a ceremony on Friday, May 29 at the Western Washington University Lhaq'temish-ew'xw ets'e Xwlemi' - House of Healing. The Native American Family Committee and graduating students helped to organize and host the event, which provided ceremony and recognition for 8 students, over 28 family members, district staff, and community members. Individual family recognitions along with group honors, including song, gift, and blanketing ceremonies, engaged all participants in cultural traditions. Family members contributed to the community meal with traditional foods from diverse tribes. This ceremony served as a strong reminder of how critically important it is to listen to families, honor tradition and celebrate the diversity of our students.



- **New/update: Use of the Class Profile**— The class profile is an inclusive planning tool that supports identifying the intersectionality of students in a classroom environment. The process focuses on student strength, identities, and the assets that each student brings with them to the classroom community. With the training and support of Dr. Yemi Stembridge, our teachers are using this tool to better understand each individual student as well as the students as a group of learners. We will continue to invest professional development as we expand our use of this tool as a powerful anti-racist framework that centers student identities, family culture and allows for more inclusive and culturally relevant instruction.

Statement of Compliance: The superintendent is **in compliance** with EL-10 Race, Equity and Inclusion.