

**NORTH THURSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
305 COLLEGE STREET NE
LACEY, WA 98516**

RESOLUTION NO. 2-20/21

EQUITY IN EDUCATION

**A resolution of the Board of Directors of North Thurston Public Schools (NTPS)
Lacey, WA to affirm NTPS's commitment to equity in education.**

North Thurston Public Schools recognizes:

- **WHEREAS**, in an equitable educational system, every student is provided healthy, safe, engaging, high quality, supportive, and culturally responsive educational opportunities that lead to high academic and social-emotional outcomes.
- **WHEREAS**, equitable educational systems monitor how individual identities intersect with education and enact policy decisions that support justice for all. Identities include and are not limited to race, language, religion, persons with disabilities, socioeconomic status, nationality, sexual orientation, and gender.
- **WHEREAS**, all families flourish within a united and just society. This requires compassion for all humanity and institutions that uphold equity and justice among all racial and identity groups.
- **WHEREAS**, we want to attract, develop, and retain a highly qualified, motivated, anti-racist, and diverse workforce both in our schools and at the District office who reflects our student population.¹
- **WHEREAS**, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) Educators² prepare all students to live in a multicultural society by breaking down negative stereotypes and help all students understand and confront racism.³
- **WHEREAS**, while we will work to recruit, hire, and train BIPOC and anti-racist educators, we commit to develop among our staff the knowledge, understanding, mindset, and skills needed to examine personal hidden biases, including how White dominant culture⁴, privilege, and fragility impacts historically marginalized and oppressed subgroups.
- **WHEREAS**, we recognize that embracing each and every student as a valued and important member of the school community, to include students with disabilities, is a foundation of equity and inclusionary practices.

¹ For example, studies show Black children are far more likely to be academically successful. Black teachers are less likely to perceive Black students as disruptive, inattentive, or unable to do work.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2332858415622175?fbclid=IwAR2B06Ju-ejjswXXscAOZsTUjittJwFDVhDxNr2cxwgXxztNI3Hyd74ITYs&>

² "Educators" in this document include certificated and classified.

³ <https://www.edutopia.org/video/why-teachers-color-matter-students-color-succeed>

⁴ http://www.cswsworkshop.org/PARC_site_B/dr-culture.html

- **WHEREAS**, inequities in our academic data and discipline data for non-white students are the result of systemic racism. Systemic racism is defined as racial biases, intentional or unintentional, that lead to policies and practices that result in racial inequities and injustices. In addition, we acknowledge that other racial inequities, not measured, exist for North Thurston students. Racial inequity is defined as when two or more racial groups are not standing in approximate equal footing.
- **WHEREAS**, inequities of other marginalized populations are the result of systemic oppression. Systemic oppression is defined as biases, intentional or unintentional, that lead to policies and practices that result in inequities and injustices.
- **WHEREAS**, implicit bias, racism, ignorance, prejudice, silence, and a lack of culturally responsive practices amongst staff causes harm.⁵
- **WHEREAS**, listening to diverse viewpoints, building sincere relationships, showing genuine appreciation through knowledge, engaging in truthful and safe discourse facilitated by skilled educators and industry partners with anti-racist, anti-bias training, fosters the well-being of all students and the betterment of society.
- **WHEREAS**, all NTPS employees, future employees, and the School Board must display a strong commitment to Anti-Racism.⁶ Anti-Racism recognizes, affirms and defends the truth that all racial groups are equal; and directs the Superintendent to enact policies and practices that lead to sustained racial equity and justice and ensure full participation and compliance.
- **WHEREAS**, we stand in support of peaceful demonstrations for civil rights to call attention to injustices in our community,
- **WHEREAS**, Black Lives Matter at School⁷ is an affirmation of civil rights and a call for ending racial and economic injustice in education, in solidarity with a group of people who have been subject to a history of systemic racism. We are committed to imagining and creating a world free of prejudice where every Black person can thrive.
- **WHEREAS**, research shows aligning LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, or asexual) inclusive resources in schools leads to higher levels of student feelings of safety and engagement, increases in academic performance, improvements in attendance, increases in graduation rates, and reports of students expressing a more positive connection to school.⁸ LGBTQ+-inclusive curricula leads to a reduced risk of suicide among LGBTQIA+ students. In addition to benefiting students who identify as LGBTQIA+, students who do not identify also benefit from improved school climate as a result of reduction in bullying and harassment.⁹

⁵ <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2019/03/20/dear-white-teachers-you-cant-love-your.html>

⁶ https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/all-students-need-antiracism-education?fbclid=IwAR2k0dh-ICQA1IMiGWHA_Kzy8rmsn0SDvQFCmjAyZEL9HWrRxVmkK7Yhehs

⁷ <https://www.blacklivesmatteratschool.com/>

<https://neadjustice.org/black-lives-matter-school-resources/>

⁸ <https://www.youthadvocacy.us/lgbtqia-education>

⁹ <https://www.edutopia.org/article/schools-struggle-support-lgbtq-students>

- **WHEREAS**, Children as young as 3 years old will display racial preferences and by age of 6 can be conscious of social stereotypes.¹⁰ In addition, we recognize that silence about topics of race along with dominance of White perspectives in our curricula has caused harm within our multicultural society.¹¹
- **WHEREAS**, at NTPS, we must display an unwavering commitment to racial justice and equity while dismantling White dominant culture and the racial disparities it has established within our schools and the greater community. In this work, we will continue the cycle of centering Voices of Color, owning our impact, learning from mistakes, and revising policies as we learn.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of North Thurston Public Schools No. 3 Thurston County, WA endorses and encourages our staff, students, families and community to support the following action items:

North Thurston Public Schools commits to:

Hiring and Retaining a Workforce that Reflects the Diversity of our Student Body	
a.	The District will prioritize retaining and hiring BIPOC staff in our schools and at the District office at all levels. A special emphasis will be placed on increasing the percentage of BIPOC educators and administrators. The District will amplify Voices of Color by collaborating with the NTPS Minoritized Educator Roundtable, NTPS Social Justice League, Student and Parent Affinity Groups, and local community partners in this work.
b.	The District will research and report how other districts have built strong relationships with their BIPOC communities and the policies and procedures that support those relationships. In addition, they will research and report how other districts have used mentor/mentee programs to support retention of BIPOC staff.
c.	The District, in consultation with Educators and Experts with bi-literacy skills, will explore ways to appropriately compensate bi-literacy skills.
d.	The District will compensate staff who lead and organize school and District equity initiatives as well as those who have been requested to attend meetings/conferences where they can build a network of support that results in hiring of BIPOC educators and administrators.

¹⁰ <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/teaching-young-children-social-justice-jinnie-spiegler>

¹¹ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/developing-minds/201304/are-kids-racist>

Ethnic Studies, Anti-Racism Education and Culturally Responsive Practices	
e.	Ethnic Studies is a K-12 framework that can be applied to all content areas; it is a mindset that informs how a subject is taught and not just what is taught. Ethnic studies centers on the humanization of education as well as the knowledge and perspectives of diverse racial groups, reflecting narratives and points of view rooted in that group's lived experiences and intellectual scholarship. The District will mandate age appropriate Ethnic Studies K-12 for all classrooms to be given throughout the entire school year. The four areas of focus in Ethnic Studies include Identity, Power and Oppression, History of Resistance and Liberation, Action and Reflection. The District will provide a timeline for full implementation, with initial implementation to begin in the 2021-2022 school year.
f.	Until K-12 Ethnic Studies is fully implemented, Educators will adopt the Social Justice Standards ¹² to build a foundation towards the implementation of Ethnic Studies and to help develop students who are critical thinkers and solution seekers. The Social Justice Standards focus on Identity, Diversity, Justice and Action.
g.	Until K-12 Ethnic Studies is fully implemented in all buildings, administrators will require Professional Learning Communities, along with Instructional Coaches, to analyze curriculum with an anti-bias, anti-racist lens to ensure a safe climate and strong relationships with all students, families, and community. The District will provide guiding questions to use during this analysis.
h.	Until K-12 Ethnic Studies is fully implemented, all schools will review the Equity Text Tool and NTPS developed Black Lives Matter resources ¹³ to develop culturally responsive and inclusive learning plans that move beyond surface level attention to cultural differences and foster a sense of belonging by embracing and giving power to diverse points of view. They will give special attention to decolonizing curriculum and balance the perspectives of Black History and Native American History. ¹⁴
i.	The District will create a system for a school to share these culturally responsive and inclusive learning plans with other schools.
j.	Educators will consult cultural or special education representatives or Equity Advisory Teams to review projects, lessons or events, involving cultural learning, to prevent perpetuation of stereotypes and to ensure respectful and multidimensional representation of another culture or lived experience.
k.	Educators and Administrators will engage in ongoing discussions about how language, and everyday conversations, can lead to bias. Every child will be free from educator-bias based on past performance and behavior.

¹² https://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/2017-06/TT_Social_Justice_Standards_0.pdf

¹³ The Equity Text Tool and Black Lives Matter resources are currently being developed by the NTPS Equity Advisory Team.

¹⁴ <https://www.pbs.org/education/blog/decolonizing-our-classrooms-starts-with-us?fbclid=IwAR24x8ztuYJdgpZtM9z9OT0dW7xlzAo2XyfQRR7ombSGB9vNu4b5l3Q6RHs>

l.	K-12 building administrators will report on how Since Time Immemorial Curriculum ¹⁵ is being utilized effectively and appropriately in every grade level in their building to support the teaching of tribal sovereignty, tribal history, and current tribal issues at the secondary level. NTPS will continue to develop specific courses based on Indigenous perspectives and scholarship.
m.	The District will give clear guidance to teachers regarding LGBTQIA+ materials and resources to ensure true representation for all students in our curriculum and supplemental materials. The resources will ensure that teachers and staff members are equipped with the knowledge, vocabulary and resources to effectively include LGBTQIA+ perspectives in the classroom and that students, families, and staff understand that the LGBTQIA+ community is supported by NTPS.
n.	The District will give clear guidance to teachers regarding students with disabilities materials and resources to ensure true representation for all students in our curriculum and supplemental materials. The resources will ensure that teachers and staff members are equipped with the knowledge, vocabulary and resources to include students with disabilities' perspectives in the classroom and that students, families and staff understand that students with disabilities are supported by NTPS.
Data Analysis	
o.	The District will engage in continuous analysis and reflection on the disproportionality that exists in many data points within our system to acknowledge the areas in which the District has perpetuated this disproportionality. This data will be provided to building staff so they can use it for meaningful work in their School Improvement Planning process and actively seek to recognize and remove barriers to education.
p.	All educators and staff will know their discipline, achievement and attendance data as it pertains to marginalized populations. Educators will set goals to eliminate disproportionality and complete training in areas of need with an equity lens.
q.	The District will increase use of the data dashboard which provides buildings with the ability to disaggregate several types of data (by race, students with disabilities, and poverty), including discipline, attendance, district/statewide assessment, and grades. The data will be used to co-create action plans with families and communities.
r.	The District will use the data dashboard to continue to find the bright spots in the District where marginalized students reach educational justice and recognizing and celebrating where gaps are being eliminated through specific practices within our District.

¹⁵ <http://indian-ed.org/>

Policies & Practices	
s.	The District will identify system inequities by reviewing all policies through the Equity Decision-Making Tool to evaluate the impact of the decision on all racial communities. All future decisions, in every District department and schools, will be evaluated using this tool.
t.	The District will develop a survey and implementation plan for conducting an annual assessment of all educators, and leaders, in implementing anti-racist, anti-bias practices. The results of the assessment will be used for planning professional learning.
Professional Development	
u.	The District will provide mandatory, differentiated professional development focused on anti-racism, racial equity, and inclusionary practices (to include the Universal Design for Learning principles) for all certificated and non-certificated staff. Building administrators will be intentional about differentiated racial equity lessons for all staff. They will also respect and honor requests from staff of color who may express alternative needs.
v.	School Board Members will be provided the Equity resources on anti-racism and inclusionary practices that district leaders and staff study and are encouraged to report on equity training and initiatives during Board Meetings.
Social & Emotional Support	
w.	The District will outline an implementation plan of training for teachers, caregivers, school staff and students on restorative practices. The plan will include how we will imbed restorative practices into PBIS, SEL curriculum, and our approach towards discipline. ¹⁶
x.	The District will evaluate ways to reallocate funds for professionals in the areas of mental health, child-welfare, substance abuse, homelessness, etc. connected with the schools to address these issues with families and students. With building administrators, mental health professionals, students, and SRO's, the District will develop an ongoing review of procedures and experiences of our work with SRO's. In addition, they will verify that NTPS's policies meet OSPI's mandatory training requirements for the School Resource Officer programs to ensure compliance.
y.	The District will assure that student affinity groups receive facilitation of clear pathways to achieve their goals.

¹⁶ <https://www.iirp.edu/pdf/IIRP-Improving-School-Climate.pdf>

Community Messaging	
z.	The District will create an attractive, easy to navigate, Equity Web Page for students, families, and current and future employees to better understand the details of our racial justice work. The webpage will include a statement affirming Black Lives Matter at School, this Resolution and updates on each of these actions. In addition, it will include the outcomes of the District Leadership Team’s work in Equity from the 2019-2020 school year.
aa.	During the 2020-2021 school year, the District will research and report on the impacts for marginalized communities with state and local testing and create plans to identify and eliminate racist or biased policies in relation to our assessment system and the use of assessment data.
bb.	The District Multicultural Action Committee will assist schools in diving deeper in cultural events and experiences to make space for more meaningful learning about the issues that are relevant to diverse cultures.
cc.	The District will use the research based Universal Design for Learning as a system-wide inclusionary decision-making framework, building awareness with key players inside and outside the system and recognize and remove barriers to education and/or meaningful engagement in enrichment and extracurricular activities

Be It Further Resolved, that the Board encourages our educators, students, families and community members to embrace opportunities that commit to equity in education at North Thurston Public Schools.

Work on commitments a-cc will begin in the 2020-2021 school year. The District will report to the School Board on the progress of every commitment by December 2021.

PASSED by the Board of Directors of North Thurston Public Schools No. 3, Thurston County, Washington, at the regular meeting held on September 8, 2020.

Board President

Board Vice President

Board Member

Board Member

Board Member

Superintendent/Board Secretary