



Austin ISD: 2021 Equity Action Plan

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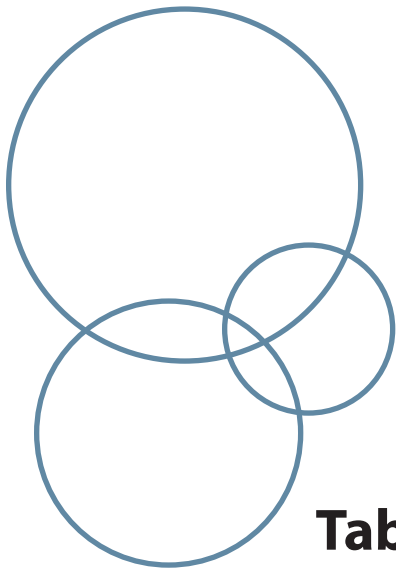


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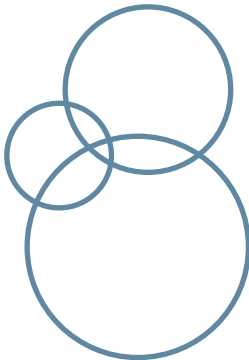
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Equity Action Plan Overview

Thank you

Thank you for participating in the Equity Action Plan process to help the district learn what we're doing well and where our equity challenges continue.

This plan is meant to provide a way for your voices/concerns/perspectives to be included in the development of the districtwide strategic plan.

People and Process

Over the course of a year (2019–20), the AISD Office of Equity met with you for a series of information-gathering sessions. Our goal with these sessions was to hear your concerns, what you thought about equity in our practices, and to find areas where we could adjust to be more equitable.

Examples of that feedback include

"There is a lot of magic that happens when you have teachers that looks like you."

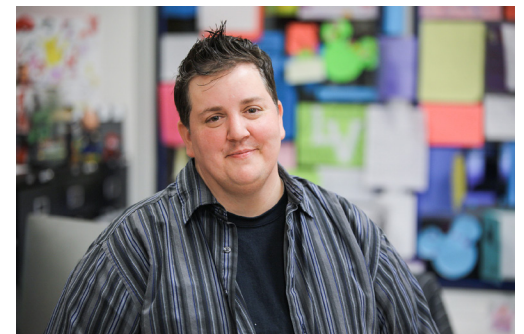
"Sometimes we just need to slow down and listen to the students."

"Curriculum at all levels has a number of biased and racist references and omissions of Indigenous, African, Asian, and Hispanic and Middle Eastern history."

More than 1,500 of you from a wide range of groups joined us, including:

1. students
2. caregivers
3. community members
4. individuals/groups representing historically marginalized populations
5. educators
6. civic organizations
7. advisory groups
8. internal and external partners
9. advocacy groups

OE staff heard your feedback, analyzed it and created a list of action steps for district leaders.





Using This Document

This document provides three important pieces of information: practices you identified as inequitable, your recommendations for responses to those inequities, and the actions district leaders are taking to respond.

This information is presented in a series of tables and aligned to the board of trustees' four priorities (student well-being and achievement, teacher and employee well-being, culture of respect/customer service, and financial stewardship and prioritization). This is a living document, and will be updated regularly as you share new areas of concern and new recommendations, and as AISD takes new action steps to aim for and achieve equitable outcomes for our students.

Austin ISD Definition of Educational Equity

Educational equity means that all children get what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential.

- Ensuring equally high outcomes for everyone in our educational system; removing the predictability of success or failures that currently relates to any social or cultural factor;
- Interrupting [Disrupting] inequitable practices, examining our biases, and creating inclusive multicultural school environments for adults and children; and
- Discovering and cultivating the unique gifts, talents and interests that every human possesses.

What All Student Need to Be Successful

- Culturally proficient, experienced teachers and staff
- Recognition and cultivation of gifts, talents and interests
- High expectations and support to meet those high expectations
- Positive relationships with teachers and peers
- A sense of belonging, empowerment, connection and identity safety
- Rigorous, relevant and inclusive curriculum centering their language, racial and cultural identities
- Well-maintained facilities that support state of the art instruction and support cultural identities and safety

Contributors to the Office of Equity's Mission, Equity Framework & EAP

Community Members, Organizations & Advisory Groups

- District Advisory Committee
- LBJ-LASA UIL Task Force
- LGBTQIA Affinity Group
- Multilingual Education Advisory Committee
- Parents & caregivers
- Special Education Advisory Committee
- UpClose

Community Members, Organizations & Families

- Austin Area Urban League
- Austin Council of PTAs Executive Team
- Austin Voices for Education & Youth
- Blanton PTA
- City of Austin Equity Office
- East Austin Coalition for Qualitative Education
- Go! Austin/Vamos! Austin
- Institute of Urban Policy Research Analysis think tank
- Maplewood Equity Group
- Organization leaders & activists
- VELA
- Windsor Park Neighborhood Association

Students

- Austin and LASA high schools; Eastside Memorial, LBJ and Navarro early college high schools
- DCCE student engagement meeting
- SOAR panel discussion

Administrators & Departments/Staff

- Assistant principals
- Cabinet
- Central Office staff
- Child Study Systems
- Custodians
- Dept. of Communications & Engagement
- Education, Innovation & Research Grant Summit
- Elementary, middle & high school teachers
- Fall administrators training sessions
- High school administrators
- Multilingual Education staff
- Police/SROs
- Principals
- Race Equity Council
- Superintendent Team/School Changes Team
- Tech Design Team
- Translators



Student Well-Being and Academic Achievement

Inequities Identified by Stakeholders	Community-Informed Recommendations	District Action/Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racially disparate outcomes in discipline data (primarily for Black and Latino students) • Inequitable, biased policing practices (AISD Police) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise student code of conduct, and assess discipline practices • Deliver professional development (PD) for AISD Police regarding racial disparity in discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminating Racial Disparities in Discipline & Punishment in AISD: Community Retreat series (Office of Equity [OE], Office of School Leadership [OSL], Office of Human Capital [HC], Multi-tiered Systems of Support [MTSS], Social-Emotional Learning/Cultural Proficiency and Inclusiveness [SEL/CP&I], Student Support Services [SSS])+ • Revision of Student Code of Conduct for 2021–22 school year (SSS)+ • Revision of Length of Disciplinary Placements for 2021–22 (SSS)+ • AISD Police received training in de-escalation, cultural diversity, mental health and crisis intervention (AISD PD)+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inequitable facilities management for schools in marginalized communities • Culturally insensitive/racist school names and mascots with regard to Native American and Indigenous students and communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage facilities with equitable policies and practices • Mandate PD in cultural proficiency for Operations department • Engage communities in dialogue about the names/images associated with all schools/ school mascots 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term facilities planning protocol that centers equity (Operations)* • Planning for a districtwide, third-party equity assessment (OE)* • The district will continue to engage school communities on naming of schools (Department of Communication and Community Engagement [DCCE])+

* = Action items that are currently in development/planning stages

+ = Action items that have begun and are awaiting results

Student Well-Being and Academic Achievement

Inequities Identified by Stakeholders	Community-Informed Recommendations	District Action/Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal districtwide accountability regarding equity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop districtwide, equity-focused accountability measures beyond the scorecard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centralize Equity Action Plan strategies in the development of the district Strategic Plan (Executive Leadership Team [ELT])* Development of districtwide scope and sequence of available Cultural Proficiency/Anti-racism PD for all employees (OE, HC, SEL/CP&I)* Principals will continue to be provided with training in cultural responsiveness (OSL)+ The AISD Board of Trustees and ELT will participate in cultural proficiency training in August 2021 (OE)*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for development of leadership for racial equity and inclusiveness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandate ongoing inclusive and antiracist PD for all district leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of districtwide scope and sequence of available Cultural Proficiency/Anti-racism PD for the board of trustees, executive leadership team and all employees (OE, Human Capital [HC], Academics)*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited collection and appropriate use of disaggregated data in decision-making processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-evaluate data collection methods and promote use of disaggregated data in decision making processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All requests for data include disaggregated data (HC)* Decisions are informed by a review of disaggregated data (ELT)+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obstacles to equitable access to high quality and rigorous educational programs (barriers in application process to specialized/magnet programs, barriers based on language, and barriers based on race/ethnicity) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a districtwide plan to increase student enrollment in all programs, with an emphasis on marginalized student populations Identify the impact enrollment numbers has had on school closures Create a department/office dedicated to enrollment and engagement Conduct a formal third party equity audit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of current application process to specialized/magnet school programs (w/ input from the community) (OSL, OE)+ Planning for a third-party equity assessment (OE)* District will hire an Executive Director of Enrollment and Advocacy (Chief of Staff)+

* = Action items that are currently in development/planning stages | + = Action items that have begun and are awaiting results

Student Well-Being and Academic Achievement

Inequities Identified by Stakeholders	Community-Informed Recommendations	District Action/Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortage of opportunities for student agency (self-advocacy) and student voice in decision-making processes • Limited support for students based on their identities: race/ethnicity, sexual orientation/ gender identification, dominant languages, ZIP code, and ability • Inconsistent social-emotional learning (SEL) support for students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver equity-focused PD for the Office of School Leadership, Academics, SEL, Student Services • Conduct a formal third party equity audit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of districtwide scope and sequence of available Cultural Proficiency/Anti-racism PD for all employees (OE, HC, SEL/CP&I)* • Planning for a districtwide, third-party equity assessment (OE)* • School Leadership has provided principals with professional development on Creating Cultural Responsiveness (OSL)+ • The AISD Board of Trustees and ELT will attend professional development in August 2021 (OE)* • In 2021–22, the Superintendent will create a Teen Board (Superintendent)*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for more diverse/specialized teachers and staff to support marginalized student groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire and retain diverse and culturally proficient staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of district hiring practices (HC)* • PD for the Office of Human Capital regarding equitable hiring practices (OE)*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent professional learning to support culturally relevant/sustaining practices for teachers and staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a districtwide PD plan focused on racial equity, cultural proficiency and inclusiveness, culturally relevant/sustaining pedagogy, and anti-racist educational practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of districtwide scope and sequence of available Cultural Proficiency/ Anti-racism PD for all employees (OE, HC, SEL/CP&I)*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of culturally relevant/sustaining curriculum • Few alternative curricular options (i.e. trade programs) • Concerns regarding teach-to-test teaching vs. content mastery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement strategies for, the development of culturally relevant/sustaining, anti-racist curriculum • Develop capacity within Academics to engage and solicit feedback from marginalized communities in the curriculum development process 	

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Teacher & Employee Well-Being

Inequities Identified by Stakeholders	Community-Informed Recommendations	District Action/Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimal opportunities for teacher agency (self-advocacy) and teacher voice in decision-making processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve and sustain an inclusive work culture and climate for employees with a specific focus on those with marginalized identities Assess and revise existing systems of support that provide safe spaces for district staff to express their views. Develop and support pathways for campus administrators to engage in outreach/communication with staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During the 2020-21 school year, the Superintendent held monthly Teacher Roundtables and Principals' Focus Groups. This will continue in the 2021-22 school year (Superintendent)+ For the 2021-22 school year, the Executive Directors for each feeder pattern will hold monthly teacher focus groups (OSL)*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inequitable recruitment and incentive methods Inequitable and exclusionary hiring practices that exclude community input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase hiring and retention of teachers/staff with marginalized identities Provide hiring leaders with PD to support equitable hiring practices Assess and revise protocols for campus hiring interview committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Human Resources department has changed on-boarding practices (HC)+ The Human Resources department is creating community affinity groups for employees (HC)* The Human Resources department has an individual dedicated to pipeline development for teachers and administrators from HBCUs and HSIs (HC)+ Interview questions have been revised (HC)+ Evaluation rubrics have been revised (HC)+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistent professional development (PD) that promotes and supports equitable practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a districtwide PD focused on racial equity, cultural proficiency and inclusiveness, and anti-racist practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of districtwide scope and sequence of available Cultural Proficiency/Anti-racism PD for all employees (OE, HC, SEL/CP&I)*

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Culture of Customer Service & Respect

Inequities Identified by Stakeholders	Community-Informed Recommendations	District Action/Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of communication of equity accountability measures with marginalized communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create and communicate districtwide accountability measures focused on eliminating disparities in access and outcomes Develop a protocol to share district decision making processes with community stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminating Racial Disparities in Discipline & Punishment in AISD: Community Retreat series (OE)+ Superintendent's Community Conversations and District Dialogues + Planning for a districtwide, third-party equity assessment (OE)*
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited accessibility and direct engagement with caregivers and families in marginalized communities Narrowed opportunities for caregiver/family agency (self-advocacy) and caregiver/family voice in district decision making processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a districtwide plan to increase community engagement, with an emphasis on marginalized populations Hire and retain culturally competent staff who can help community stakeholders navigate the AISD system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of Equity Advisory Committee+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-transparent and non-inclusive communication practices regarding major decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate with the community in all languages and multiple modes and in a timely manner Prepare district leadership to engage and listen to community stakeholders, and act upon the expressed needs of marginalized communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Superintendent's Community Conversations and District Dialogues + To increase transparency, all board agenda documents are posted two weeks in advance of board action (Governmental Relations and Board Services)+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified need to build authentic relationships/trust with marginalized communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase capacity-building for district leadership to learn to develop trusting relationships with marginalized community members and students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eliminating Racial Disparities in Discipline & Punishment in AISD: Community Retreat series (OE, OSL, HC, MTSS, SEL/CP&I, SSS)+ Superintendent's Community Conversations and District Dialogues (Superintendent)+ Operation: Reconnect (OSL)+

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Financial Stewardship & Prioritization

Inequities Identified by Stakeholders	Community-Informed Recommendations	District Action/Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited focus on equity in budget allocations • Minimal focus on equity in the distribution of general resources • Lack of equity in financial support of staff/staffing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance, Budget and the State & Federal Compliance and Accountability Departments should prioritize reviewing the processes and formulas in which local, state, and federal financial allocation decisions are made and funds are distributed • Each department and campus should engage the Equity-focused Planning, Evaluation & Budgeting Toolkit: Tools To Reinvent The Urban Experience For Equitable Outcomes on a regular basis • Each department and campus should engage marginalized community partners or campus-based decision making committees in the budgeting process • Each department and campus should make the appropriate budget adjustments based upon marginalized student needs and interests • Provide professional development to finance, budget, and operations staff on equity-based budgeting and decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AISD Equity in Budgeting ToolKit (early adopters process) (OE)+

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Selected References

Austin ISD Definition of Educational Equity adapted from <https://nationalequityproject.org/>

Austin ISD Equity Framework: <https://www.austinisd.org/sites/default/files/dept/equity-office/docs/Equity-Framework-%26-Key-Questions.pdf>

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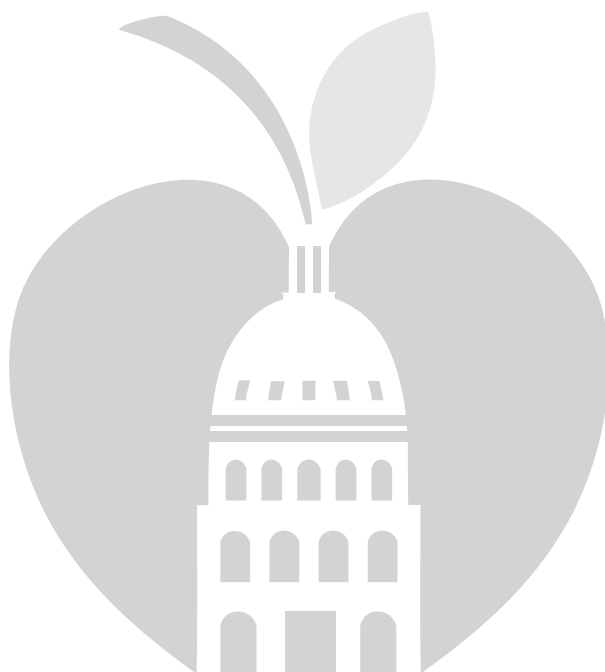
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Austin ISD
2021 Equity Action Plan