SCHOOL BOARD ACTION REPORT

DATE: September 9, 2020
FROM: Denise Juneau, Superintendent
LEAD STAFF: Sherri Kokx, Chief of Staff

For Introduction: September 23, 2020
For Action: October 7, 2020

1. **TITLE**


2. **PURPOSE**

This action creates a Superintendent Task Force per Substitute Resolution No. 2020/21-4, “to monitor progress, implementation and efficacy of the reopening plan and remote learning model.” This Task Force will convene from October 2020-June 2021 to develop key performance indicators and other tools to evaluate student outcomes, student/family engagement and satisfaction. Throughout the 2020-21 school year, the Task Force will make recommendations for mid-year course corrections, possible revisions and other continuous improvement ideas to the Superintendent and the Board.

3. **RECOMMENDED MOTION**

I move that that the School Board authorize the formation of the 2020-21 Remote Learning Reopening Plan and Remote Learning Model Task Force.

4. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

a. **Background** School districts across the United States are preparing for the 2020-21 academic year amidst a global pandemic and increased national unrest over systemic racial injustice and anti-Blackness in U.S. institutions. The result has been an overwhelming amount of uncertainty for many districts, including what role remote learning will play over the course of the year and how to address longstanding educational inequalities in consideration of the impending shift to remote learning. Seattle Public Schools (SPS) has begun the 2020-21 school year with 100% online learning for most students. The vision for remote learning in the Remote Learning Playbook states, “We are focused on racially equitable and culturally relevant remote learning systems and strategies (digital and otherwise) that support educators to meet individual learner needs, interests, and goals and are responsive to family and community priorities, interests, concerns, knowledge, and resources.” This plan has 5 design principles:
- **Racially equitable**: We promote racial equity in our remote learning plans by unapologetically prioritizing the needs of African American boys and teens and working to undo the legacies of racism in our educational system.

- **Health and wellness first**: We make teaching and learning decisions that, first and foremost, prioritize the mental, emotional and physical health and wellness of our community, including deferring to the public health guidance of local governments.

- **Community-responsive**: Our teaching and learning plans are informed by and responsive to ongoing feedback from and outreach to students, families/caregivers and educators, with an intentional prioritization of those supporting African American boys and teens.

- **Actionable**: Our recommendations will be easily deployed by educators and families/caregivers with the appropriate professional development and training, especially for those supporting African American boys and teens. We will keep tools, expectations, and communications as inclusive, accessible, clear, and streamlined as possible.

- **Adaptable**: We will proceed with the mindset that plans are adaptable starting points, i.e., teams will creatively adapt to meet the needs of different African American boys and teens, families/caregivers, and educators as well as adapt over time as needs evolve and the landscape changes.

The Seattle School Board passed a resolution to create an oversight task force for the reopening plan and remote learning implementation under SPS Policy No. 4110. This policy prescribes practices for Family and Community Advisory and Oversight Committees.

The Task Force will be short term, from October 2020 through June 2021, and will be focused specifically on monitoring the progress, implementation and efficacy of the reopening plan and remote learning model. The Task Force will be comprised of students, family members, educators, other SPS staff and community members who will develop/identify key performance indicators to evaluate student learning and student/family engagement and overall satisfaction as a form of formative information so that SPS can make mid-course corrections as needed to enhance the remote learning model and better serve students, educators and families.

Due to the nature of the work of this Task Force, the District will recruit and vet community members with expertise, prior experience, and knowledge of the related subject matter. This knowledge base may include, but not be limited to, people with experience and/or expertise with remote learning, racial equity, or educational research. The District will further seek to have geographic, racial and gender diversity on the Task Force.

The Task Force will engage in a balanced process that is aligned with the Strategic Plan, Seattle Excellence, and will adhere to the Theory of Action and center Black boys and teens, as well as their families throughout the process. The members will utilize use research and data that recognizes the inherent brilliance in our students, especially those furthest from educational justice. Additionally, the task force members will be grounded in the Board and District’s priority of Educational and Racial Equity using the Racial Equity Toolkit, Implicit Bias Training and will begin the work with training on racial equity.

b. **Alternatives** Utilize the Research and Evaluation (R&E) department to monitor and evaluate the efficacy of remote learning. This is not recommended. First, the Board directed the formation of this task force. Second, while R&E is capable of designing
robust, equity-forward evaluation research using mixed methods and multiple measures, it will be important to partner directly and authentically with community members to develop a transparent progress monitoring plan that is closely aligned to the needs and concerns of stakeholders.

c. **Research** Districts across the country are adopting instructional frameworks that integrate instructional rigor with cultural responsiveness and anti-racism and adapted to the pandemic conditions. The SPS remote learning plan provides guidance and aims to establish clear expectations for what constitutes effective culturally responsive remote teaching, particularly for students furthest from educational justice. This is consistent with the SPS Strategic Plan Theory of Action, which is undergirded by research on the importance of culturally responsive practice in which teachers enact pedagogical shifts that challenge mIss, 1995). It will be imperative that these critical shifts toward anti-racist, culturally responsive teaching are not delayed or undermined.

To evaluate its progress consistent with its remote learning plan and Strategic Plan goals, SPS will partner with community members and stakeholders, school leaders, educators and external researcher partners from the UW College of Education to enact a robust, multipronged progress monitoring plan. In addition, the Task Force will stay abreast of external research from around the country and the globe. Although research on K12 online learning and distance education indicates that such instruction involves unique practices, the research field is thin on rigorous studies and “needs a revival in theory” (Lokey-Vega, Anissa and Pourreau, Leslie, 2018, Theoretical Perspectives in K-12 Online Learning, p. 72). To this end, research is underway around the county to learn best to enact high-quality remote learning. See for example:


5. **FISCAL IMPACT/REVENUE SOURCE**

Fiscal impact to this action will include the staff time necessary to manage and facilitate a Task Force and the costs of an External Facilitator, expected not to exceed $100,000. The funding will come from the Superintendent’s budget.

**Expenditure:**  ☒ One-time  ☐ Annual  ☐ Multi-Year  ☐ N/A

**Revenue:**  ☐ One-time  ☐ Annual  ☐ Multi-Year  ☒ N/A
6. **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

With guidance from the District’s Community Engagement tool, this action was determined to merit the following tier of community engagement:

- [x] Not applicable
- [ ] Tier 1: Inform
- [ ] Tier 2: Consult/Involve
- [ ] Tier 3: Collaborate

7. **EQUITY ANALYSIS**

The School Board’s priority as defined in Policy No. 0030, Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity, will help define the work of the Task Force. This Task Force will make recommendations for revisions to the remote learning model considering multiple factors, including racial equity.

8. **STUDENT BENEFIT**

The work of this Task Force will center student outcomes, specifically the outcomes of Black boys and teens in the remote learning model. This action-based research will provide real-time data and feedback to make course corrections as needed throughout the school year. As stated in Seattle Excellence, utilizing using the theory of Target Universalism, “We believe that an intentional focus on African American males will ultimately benefit every student. We will refine our systems and structures that will ultimately be used to better meet the needs of students throughout SPS. We will also learn how to develop and provide differentiated efforts to meet the needs of specific populations, allowing us to better serve the needs of additional student populations.”

9. **WHY BOARD ACTION IS NECESSARY**

- [ ] Amount of contract initial value or contract amendment exceeds $250,000 (Policy No. 6220)
- [ ] Amount of grant exceeds $250,000 in a single fiscal year (Policy No. 6114)
- [ ] Adopting, amending, or repealing a Board policy
- [ ] Formally accepting the completion of a public works project and closing out the contract
- [ ] Legal requirement for the School Board to take action on this matter
- [ ] Board Policy No. _____. [TITLE], provides the Board shall approve this item
- [x] Other: Board approval is necessary per Substitute Resolution No. 2020/21-4
10. POLICY IMPLICATION

Policy No. 4110, Family and Community Advisory and Oversight Committees, states: “It is the policy of the Seattle School Board to encourage participation by members of the community to advise the Superintendent and Board in school district decision-making processes. It is Board policy to facilitate engagement of those families and community members who have not historically been active or represented in decision-making by the district on Advisory and Oversight Committees. Families and community members can provide the Board and staff with valuable expertise, critical thinking and new perspectives, and can help alert the Superintendent and Board to issues of importance to the community.

The Task Force will ensure that the remote learning model is in alignment with SPS’ Mission of: “eliminating opportunity gaps to ensure access and provide excellence in education for every student,” its Vision that: “Every Seattle Public Schools’ student receives a high-quality, world-class education and graduates prepared for college, career, and community,” and the District’s 2019-24 Strategic Plan priorities:
- High Quality Instruction and Learning Experiences
- Predictable and Consistent Operational Systems
- Culturally Responsive Workforce
- Inclusive and Authentic Engagement.

11. BOARD COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

This motion was discussed at the Executive Committee meeting on September 16, 2020. The Committee reviewed the motion and moved the item forward for consideration by the full Board.

12. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Upon approval of this motion, staff will be assigned to begin recruiting for and the convening of the Task Force to review the reopening plan and remote learning model. The task force is short-term and will collect relevant data and provide regular reports to the Board and the Superintendent.

13. ATTACHMENTS

- Task Force Charter (For Reference)
Superintendent Task Force for the Reopening Plan (RPTF) and Remote Learning Model (2020-21 Remote Learning Task Force)

Prepared By:
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This document provides the public with background and overview information about the Superintendent's Task Force for the SPS Reopening Plan and remote learning (2020-21 Remote Learning Task Force).

CHARGE
In September 2020, The Seattle School Board passed Substitute Resolution 2020/21-4, which provided that, among other things, a Superintendent Task Force be established under Policy No. 4110, Family and Community Advisory Committees, which supports the authentic engagement of families and communities to advise SPS district leadership and decision-making. The purpose of this Superintendent's Task Force is "to monitor progress, implementation, and [the] efficacy of the reopening plan and remote learning model." The Superintendent will establish the 2020-21 Remote Learning Reopening Task Force (RPTF) and intentionally recruit students, community members, educators, and SPS stakeholders who can contribute to the equitable improvement of educational programs, policies, and procedures.

The RPTF Task Force will convene from October 2020-June 2021 to advise the development of key performance indicators and other tools to evaluate student outcomes, student/family engagement, and satisfaction. These metrics will allow SPS leadership to increase their understanding of broader community data and information. The end goal is that SPS will use these metrics to inform mid-course corrections as needed to enhance the remote learning model and better serve students, educators, and families. Throughout the 2020-21 school year, the Task Force will make recommendations to the Superintendent, and Board leadership in the Curriculum and Instruction Policy Committee on a quarterly basis, regarding mid-year course corrections, possible revisions, and other continuous improvement ideas.

Seattle Excellence and District Priorities
The RPTF Task Force will monitor the remote learning model implementation for its alignment with SPS' Mission of "eliminating opportunity gaps to ensure access and provide excellence in education for every student." Furthermore, the RPTF Task Force will consider the SPS vision that "Every Seattle Public Schools' student receives a high-quality, world-class education and graduates prepared for college, career, and community." The District's 2019-24 Strategic Plan, Seattle Excellence, will guide the Task Force's work with the following priorities:
• **High-Quality Instruction and Learning Experiences** - Educate the whole child through high-quality instruction and learning experiences that accelerate growth for students of color who are furthest from educational justice, with an intentional focus on African American males.

• **Predictable and Consistent Operational Systems** - Develop operational systems that provide a predictable and consistent experience to meet the needs of students and families and allow them to focus on learning.

• **Culturally Responsive Workforce** - Develop a culturally responsive workforce so teachers, leaders, and staff will effectively support students and families.

• **Inclusive and Authentic Engagement**. - Partner with students, families, and communities who are furthest from educational justice by conducting inclusive and authentic engagement.

**Five (5) 2020-21 Remote Learning Task Force RPTF Design Principles**

Building on the Seattle Excellence plan priorities above, the RPTF Task Force will use the following design principles from the Remote Learning Playbook as a starting place for grounding their work:

• **Racially equitable**: We promote racial equity in our remote learning plans by unapologetically prioritizing the needs of African American boys and teens and working to undo the legacies of racism in our educational system.

• **Health and wellness first**: We make teaching and learning decisions that, first and foremost, prioritize the mental, emotional and physical health and wellness of our community, including deferring to the public health guidance of local governments.

• **Community-responsive**: Our teaching and learning plans are informed by and responsive to ongoing feedback from and outreach to students, families/caregivers, and educators, with an intentional prioritization of those supporting African American boys and teens.

• **Actionable**: Our recommendations are articulated for operationalization by educators and families/caregivers and include consideration for appropriate professional development and training, especially the support of African American boys and teens. We will keep any prescribed tools, expectations, and communications as inclusive, accessible, and streamlined as possible.

• **Adaptable**: We will proceed with the mindset that plans are flexible starting points, i.e., teams will creatively adapt to meet the needs of different African American boys and teens, families/caregivers, and educators as well as to adapt over time as their needs evolve and the landscape changes.

The Task Force will align with the Seattle Excellence plan and adhere to the Target Universalism policy (Policy 0030) and center African American and Black boys and teens, as well as their families throughout
the process. Stakeholder engagement will include internal and external partners such as the Seattle Public Schools i-Tech team Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC), the Health & Safety Workgroup outlined in the SEA/SPS MOU, and community-based Affinity groups. The Task Force members will be briefed on the Board and District’s priority of Educational and Racial Equity and make use of the Racial Equity Toolkit, Implicit Bias Training, and start with training on racial equity.

SCOPE

School districts across the United States are preparing for the upcoming 2020-21 academic year amidst a global pandemic and increased national unrest over systemic racial injustice and anti-Blackness in U.S. institutions. The result has been an overwhelming amount of uncertainty that has necessitated transition for many districts, including the need to start the 2020-21 school year 100% remote. As SPS builds on experience and lessons learned from the abrupt switch to remote learning in spring 2020, a significant guiding question for our work is how to address longstanding educational inequalities in consideration of 100% remote learning.

Here, it is vital to state that despite any uncertainty due to the pandemic or national climate, SPS remains evermore committed to providing high-quality instruction to every student, beginning with students who are furthest from educational justice. The Seattle Excellence plan and Policy 0030 (i.e., Targeted Universalism) mandates that this commitment starts with an intentional focus on African American males. Furthermore, SPS understands the need to serve each of our students in a manner that meets their needs in the remote learning setting. In this work, the meaningful involvement of parents and supportive community agencies is an essential part of attaining excellence for each student.

The 2020-21 Remote Learning Reopening Plan Task Force provides a District-recognized forum for the parent community, organizations, and agencies that support the learning needs of our scholars throughout their instruction in the remote learning model. The primary responsibility of the 2020-21 Remote Learning Task Force Reopening Plan Task Force (RPTF) is to provide SPS leadership with parental, community organizations, and agencies’ perspectives on reopening plans and goals in consideration of SPS’ mission and vision, operation, management, and policies. The 2020-21 Remote Learning Task Force Reopening Plan Task Force (RPTF) will present its findings, recommendations, and opinions to the Superintendent throughout the period the Task Force convenes. A final report will include a review of all projects and activities as well as all recommendations of the Superintendent.

Policy Considerations:

As part of its charge and scope, the RPTF-Task Force shall take SPS policy and applicable state and federal guidelines under consideration. Specifically, Policy No. 4110 prescribes practices for Family and Community Advisory and Oversight Committees under which the RPTF-Task Force operates. This policy states:

"It is the policy of the Seattle School Board to encourage participation by members of the community to advise the Superintendent and Board in school district decision-making processes. It is Board
policy to facilitate engagement of those families and community members who have not historically been active or represented in decision-making by the District on Advisory and Oversight Committees. Families and community members can provide the Board and staff with valuable expertise, critical thinking, and new perspectives and can help alert the Superintendent and Board to issues of importance to the community."

Additional key policy considerations for the RPTF Task Force include:

- SPS Remote Learning Playbook
- Policy0030
- SPS 2019-24 Strategic Plan
- OSPI Reopening Washington Schools 2020 Planning Guide

The Work of The Task Force

The RPTF Task Force is an essential component of SPS' commitment to ensuring that authentic community feedback and accountability are a normative part of SPS' operation and decision-making throughout these unprecedented times. The vision for the work of the Task Force includes:

1) To monitor the progress, implementation, and efficacy of the reopening plan and remote learning model.

2) To monitor the implementation of the guidance provided to educators in the SPS Playbook and advise the Board and Superintendent throughout the 2020-2021 school year on possible revisions and continuous improvements.

3) To establish recommendations for how the District should change, adjust or remain constant in current policies, procedures, processes practices, and procedures to ensure and prioritize equitable access to high-quality instruction and supports during remote learning.

The Task Force's work to monitor and advise SPS on reopening and remote learning has direct implications for how SPS values data and our data practices. To this extent, SPS recognizes that the Task Force should consider new and existing data points, action-based research, metrics, and performance indicators, including but not limited to the following Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for SPS work:

- Strategic Plan Priority: High-Quality Instruction and learning experiences
  - Effectiveness of synchronous, live instruction, and asynchronous instruction
  - Schedules
  - % of students attending synchronous, live instruction – Task Force knowledge around the efficacy of SPS provided live instruction
  - Attendance Procedures
  - Effectiveness of Supports provided for SPED, 504, and ELL Students
• Opportunities for peer-to-peer interactions, with a focus on relationships and SEL
• Educator instruction support (guidance, PD/training)
• # of remote learning specific PD provided to teachers
• % of teachers that attended PD
• Inventory and efficacy of guidance docs and resources supplied to educators
• Social-Emotional Learning
• Effectiveness of Practices (three signature student social-emotional learning practices)
• Culturally Responsive Curriculum and Instruction
• Efficacy of priority standards, CAI guidance, and curricular resources
• Meaningful feedback provided to students and families
• Progress Monitoring
• Delivery of MTSS (multi-tiered systems of supports) –
• McKinney-Vento and Foster care students
• Grading and Progress Reporting Policies & Practices

• Strategic Plan Priority: Predictable and consistent operational systems
  • Student access to resources (devices, hot spots, and learning materials)

• Strategic Plan Priority: Inclusive and authentic engagement
  • Consistent and streamlined communication from the District and its schools to students/families
  • Virtual Focus Groups / Town Halls, or other direct outreach methods
  • Consistency and cultural responsiveness in student and family/caregiver experience across schools and classrooms

With support from SPS, the Task Force will consider applicable state laws, district policies and commitments and examine research and current best instructional practices. To maximize the diversity of its membership, the Task Force will engage in an inclusive process that aligns with the strategic plan, Seattle Excellence, and adheres to the Theory of Action and center African American and Black boys and teens, as well as their families throughout the process. Task Force members will avoid deficit-based discourses and approaches and utilize research and data in ways that recognize the inherent brilliance of students, especially those furthest from educational justice. Additionally, the Task Force members will be grounded in the Board and District's priority of Educational and Racial Equity using the Racial Equity Toolkit, Implicit Bias Training, and will begin the work with training on racial equity.

To the greatest extent possible, the Task Force will consider and develop recommendations informed by current SPS practices and results, including the history of services that continue to impact procedures and practices today. In short, the Task Force will strive to identify and prescribe innovative and creative approaches that meet the academic, socioemotional, and behavioral needs of students in Seattle Schools.
**TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP AND SELECTION**

To ensure the efficacy of the Task Force, SPS will recruit community members with relevant experience and prior knowledge related to the Task Force charge. We will prioritize community members who have firsthand experience, documented work histories, and direct relationships with students furthest away from educational justice. Among these prioritized candidates, SPS will particularly seek those with experience in relevant domains such as remote learning, racial equity, academic research, and information management, and will strive to have geographic, racial, and gender diversity. The goal is to be selective of applicants to ensure there is a balance of perspectives and backgrounds, including voices that traditionally marginalized in SPS decision-making. Thus, this Task Force will represent the diversity of Seattle Public Schools, students, and families and comprised of teachers, principals, parents/guardians, community members, and staff members from various backgrounds and departments at our central office.

**Number**

The RPTF Task Force will include up to twenty (20) members appointed by the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee. A minimum of one-third of the members will be parents of students furthest from educational justice. The balance of the RPTF Task Force will include parents, students, staff representatives, agency personnel, and civic groups.

**Qualifications and Selection Criteria**

- **Students**
  Students who are currently attending Seattle Public Schools. Preference shall be given to students who reside within the District.

- **Parent/Family Members**
  Parent/family members who have a student currently attending Seattle Public Schools. Preference shall be given to individuals who reside within the District.

- **Community Organization Representatives**
  Community representatives may hold positions in educational, service government, or not-for-profit organizations/associations with an interest in and knowledge of Remote Learning. A representative of the organization should be nominated by the executive director or senior manager of the organization.

- **Parent and Community Representative(s)**
  - SEA President or designee,
  - SPS educator
  - SCPTSA President or designee
  - Community-Based Organization Representative
• **Staff Representatives**

Staff representatives may include, but not be limited to certificated teachers, building administrators, Educational Staff Associates, and central office staff/administrators.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Central Office staff will be appointed as aides and facilitators to the Task Force but not considered as members including:

- Chief Academic Officer
- Chief of Student Support Services
- Director of Stakeholder Engagement
- Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction
- Director of Race and Equity Advancement
- Seattle Schools Director
- Department of African American Male Achievement

To the greatest extent possible, appointments to the Task Force will be made so that collectively the group will represent the diverse population of Seattle Public Schools in terms of ethnicity, language, race, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, type of family (e.g., two parents, single-parent, foster care/kinship, etc.), geographic location within the city, and school level (pK-12).

**Selection Process**

1. Applications are due by Wednesday, October 7, 2020, at 9:00 am.
2. Applications are reviewed by the review committee between October 7 and October 12.
3. Members of the review committee will be appointed by the Superintendent of Seattle Public Schools or designee

**Review Process**

1. The review committee recommends appointees and alternates to the Superintendent
2. Invited appointees notified by email no later than **Wednesday, October 14, 2020**, with the first meeting scheduled to occur on or before **October 31, 2020**. Further meetings will be scheduled in collaboration with the Task Force Members.
3. Invited appointees to accept or decline a seat on the Task Force by **Friday, October 16, 2020**.
4. Alternates will fill remaining seats
5. Membership will be posted on the District website

No one may serve on the Task Force who has a financial interest in the outcome of the recommendations made by the Task Force.

**Manner of Notification – Notice of Nomination Process**

The District shall provide a public notice to individuals and organizations that may reasonably be interested in serving on the Reopening Task Force. Notice shall include the following activities:

1. District Website
2. Direct written notice to active community organizations which may have an interest in participation
3. Direct written notice to all Parent Teacher Student Associations (PTSAs) at all school sites
4. News release to news outlets, including community and ethnic newspapers

Discussion of Consideration & Efforts
Members will be selected and appointed per School Board Policy 4110: Family & Community Advisory and Oversight Committees, and the accompanying Procedure 4110SP.

Duration of Task Force and Terms of Office
1. The Reopening Task Force is established as a Task Force to run for one full year and may extend due to the needs and progress of the work.
2. The initial term of office is set at one calendar year (October 2020 to June 2021).

TASK FORCE OPERATIONS

Staffing
The 2020-21 Remote Learning Task Force Reopening Plan Task Force (RP TF) will operate fully on the work of its members and volunteers
1. School District resources may be used for the following activities at the discretion of the Superintendent Scheduling meetings
2. Distributing agendas, handouts
3. Preparing and distributing minutes

Orientation
An orientation session will be held to begin the work of the newly appointed members.

Responsibilities
Task Force members will be expected to maintain 85% attendance at monthly meetings (dates and times to be decided) and attend an initial orientation training. Each member must agree to abide by the community norms and agreements established by Task Force members with the support of SPS appointed facilitators.