

Friday Memo to the Board

Superintendent's Highlights

for the week of October 21-November 1, 2019

Strategic Plan Update:

Goal leads and small cabinet spent two days in a retreat getting updates on the 19/20 goals and exploring the other goals in our Strategic Plan. Each goal has a staff goal lead(s) and a stakeholder work group, which meet to build out work plans for each of these goals. Stakeholders include community partners, parents, students and staff from schools and central office. In order to ground the work in serving black boys and young men, these groups have read passages from the book "We Dare Say Love." The two days were very powerful, and I am proud of the work our teams are doing to carefully think through what we must do differently to serve students furthest from educational justice, especially black boys and young men. I want to share a few things:

- I was struck by the amazing amount of coherence in all the initiatives in our Strategic Plan;
- Racial Equity was deeply imbedded in the all the work in every presentation; and
- The need for family, community and stakeholder engagement was tightly woven within each initiative and a value held strongly by all.

Here are some other highlights:

- 70 of our schools are engaged in PBIS training
- The Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction (CAI) division is convening a Racial Equity Team
- Student Services is reading "How to be an Anti-Racist" by Ibram X. Kendi
- The Advanced Learning team is reading Azure Savage's book, "You Failed Us"
- Equity, Partnerships and Engagement division is hosting a Data Geeks gathering to discuss asset mapping

Community and Partnerships:

- I met with Mayor Durkan and Director Chapelle for our monthly meeting. We discussed TAF, advanced learning, FEPP and the Seattle Promise. I look forward to our continued work together.
- Our team met with SCPTSA for our monthly meeting. We updated them on Ethnic Studies, TAF and advanced learning.
- I continued my meetings with Central Office teams to give updates about the Strategic Plan. I want them to see themselves in our work. Our whole system needs to change if we are going to serve students furthest from educational justice, especially African American boys and young men.
- A team attended the Council of Great City Schools conference in KY. The presentations were informative and affirmed that we are doing the right work and doing it well! The team attended sessions that were aligned to Seattle Excellence. We learned about:
 - data dashboards other urban districts are using to share data and inform their practices,
 - the work that other districts are doing to support African American boys and young men,
 - practices to help with recruitment and retention of staff, and
 - effective, systemic communication strategies.
- A team met with Senators Pederson and Saldaña to discuss Capital projects and advanced learning. They are great advocates in Olympia for our work.
- We held our monthly labor meeting with PASS to discuss issues important to our principals. We are so fortunate to have them leading the racial equity work in our schools.

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Office of Public Affairs

Essential Information for the week of 10/26/19 – 11/1/19

Goal 1: Media Relations

- 10/29/19 KUOW “Students and parents protest racial slurs at north Seattle school”
<https://www.kuow.org/stories/students-and-parents-protest-administration-response-to-racial-slurs-at-north-seattle-school>
- 10/28/19 Seattle Times “Feeling nostalgic about Lincoln High School? Here are some of the memories....”
<https://www.seattletimes.com/education-lab/feeling-nostalgic-about-lincoln-high-school-here-are-some-of-the-memories-more-than-100-of-you-shared/>
- 10/25/19 Seattle Times “Oakland’s school program for black males cuts dropout rates, study finds. Could Seattle adopt something similar?”
https://www.seattletimes.com/education-lab/oaklands-school-program-for-black-males-cuts-dropout-rates-study-finds-could-seattle-adopt-something-similar/?utm_source=referral&utm_medium=mobile-app&utm_campaign=ios
 - This headline was misleading and incorrect. We responded on Twitter: “Thanks @SeattleTimes for covering @AAMAOUUSD’s great work, but you may want to correct your headline. We ARE working on something similar. Our Dept of African American Male Achievement has been working with mentors @OUSDNews to best support our African American boys and young men.”
- 10/24/19 Crosscut “Washington state isn’t transparent about student arrests”
<https://crosscut.com/2019/10/washington-state-isnt-transparent-about-student-arrests-federal-law-says-its-supposed-be>

Goal 2&3: District Messaging – Outbound Communications, Customer Service

- Since creating a new custom form in *Let’s Talk!* for the Advanced Learning team, this has become the top interest area with 181 Dialogues received for this team. Many simple and complex questions have come in from parents regarding getting their students enrolled in services or testing, and the staff has been very responsive with great feedback from our customers!
 - “The response was quick, informative and to the point. I appreciated the prompt feedback.”
 - “Quick response, good follow-up clarifying questions, prompt action. Thank you!”
 - “Each time I get some troubles and need your help. You fix them for me right away. Thank you!”
- Unified Schools Kick-Off Promotes Access and Inclusion:
https://www.seattleschools.org/district/calendars/news/what_s_new/unified_schools_kick-off
- Vaccine information distributed to families, posted on the website and on social media:
https://www.seattleschools.org/district/calendars/news/what_s_new/student_vaccination_requirements
- Know Your Rights Workshop promoted on website, targeted emails, and across social media in collaboration with Legal:
https://www.seattleschools.org/district/calendars/news/what_s_new/know_your_rights_workshop

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Teaching and Learning Division

Essential Information for the week of Oct. 28-Nov. 4, 2019

RESEARCH & EVALUATION

2018-19 Educational Research & Evaluation Studies

In accordance with Board Policy No. 2090, the **2018-19 District Educational Research & Program Evaluation Plan** was approved by the School Board in December 2018. The plan identified key programs and initiatives in Seattle Public Schools (SPS) that were to be studied during the 2018-19 school year.

Consistent with the Board policy and the approved plan, the Research & Evaluation Department has prepared final reports for the studies listed in the plan and will be posted on the Research & Evaluation website by December 2019. The **evaluations and strategic research studies** in the plan were developed in a collaborative manner with senior program and initiative leaders and implemented in partnership with District- and school-based practitioners. Summary reports for three **research-practice partnerships** (RPPs) involving researchers from the University of Washington College of Education are also included. The Research & Evaluation Department provides ongoing support for these RPPs, including data sharing, planning research activities, interpreting and disseminating findings.

A list of reports prepared by the Research & Evaluation Department ¹ for the School Board are provided below. Where noted, the Research & Evaluation Department co-developed the report with outside research partners.

2018-19 Educational Research & Program Evaluation Studies

1. Superintendent SMART Goal: Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)
2. Superintendent SMART Goal: Secondary Revisioning
3. Elementary ELA Curriculum Adoption (Year 2 of 3-Year study)
4. School Mathematics Curriculum Adoption (Year 1 of 3-Year study)
5. Detracking: Preliminary Case Study of Integrated Honors at Garfield (Year 1 of 2-year study)
6. English Language Learners Preliminary Program Review (Report co-developed with WestEd) ²
7. International Baccalaureate Program Review ³

Research-Practice Partnerships (All reports co-developed with the University of Washington College of Education)

8. Peer Assistance & Review (PAR)
9. Building Systemic Equity through Racial Equity Teams (RETs)
10. English Learner Access to Advanced Math & Science Courses (Project PIMSELA)

Formative research findings are shared with District partners during the year, and findings from studies have been utilized to support ongoing improvements to programs and initiatives. Select findings from some studies have been shared with principals at Leadership Learning Days (LLDs) and utilized by District leaders to support workshops and focused engagement with school leaders and teachers.

If you have questions, please contact Dr. Diane DeBacker, Chief Academic Officer at dmdebacker@seattleschools.org.

¹ Research & Evaluation has multiple responsibilities in addition to conducting these research and evaluation studies, including: annual accountability reports; ongoing data/research support for the strategic plan; design and administration of districtwide surveys; ad hoc requests for data and research; review of external research applications and support for data sharing agreements; and technical assistance for other central office departments.

² WestEd was selected to support a preliminary program review from a competitive RFP process managed by the Research & Evaluation Department. Research & Evaluation contributed significantly to preparing the preliminary report. A decision was made not to renew the contract with WestEd for further program evaluation research.

³ The final report for the International Baccalaureate program review is still being finalized and will be sent to the School Board before the end of November 2019.