

Seattle Excellence Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP)

Hamilton International Middle School

Purpose

The Continuous School Improvement Plan provides an overview of the school, student outcome goals and a brief narrative description on how the school plans to collaboratively meet these goals over time. It is intended to offer families and community audiences an overview of improvement work aligned to the strategic plan and written in language that is accessible by a diverse audience.

Introduction

WHEN WE FOCUS on ensuring racial equity in our educational system, unapologetically address the needs of students of color who are furthest from educational justice, and work to undo the legacies of racism in our educational system by doing the following:

- Allocating resources strategically through a racial equity framework
- Delivering high-quality, standards-aligned instruction across all abilities and a continuum of services for learners
- Creating healthy, supportive, culturally responsive environments from the classroom to central office
- Directly and consistently working in partnership with families and communities who represent students of color who are furthest from educational justice; and
- Making clear commitments and delivering on them

THEN we will eliminate opportunity and achievement gaps and every student will receive a high-quality, world-class education.

Seattle Public Schools Foundational Beliefs for Supporting Student Learning

In Seattle Public Schools, we understand that a shared vision of practice is essential to fostering the learning communities that each of our students and adults needs to thrive. This shared vision enables educators to work in concert to build their practice with a focus on student learning.

As such, we believe:

- 1) **Teaching is intellectually complex**, difficult and demanding work, and the development of skillful teaching requires deep collaboration and non-defensive self-examination of practice in relation to student results.
- 2) **By collaborating with families in authentic partnerships**, we create a path for students to reach their highest potential, engaging with families as the first and lifelong teachers of students.
- 3) **"Intelligence" is not a fixed, inborn trait**. All children come to school with cultural capital and intelligence, and all have the raw material to learn rigorous academic material at high standards. Therefore, our work is to **build students' academic mindset**
- 4) **By recognizing and cultivating the gifts and strengths of every student**, we can get each student to believe in themselves and deconstruct any of their own internalized stereotypes.
- 5) **Racism in our society exerts a downward force on the experiences and achievement of students of color that must be met with active countermeasures.**

Our commitment to these beliefs is the route to institutionalizing racial equity and fostering a context where each child receives what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential, and we make educational equity and justice the cornerstone of our system.

School Profile

Mission

Hamilton International Middle School, a rigorous academic and collaborative learning community, educates students to succeed and contribute in a diverse world. At Hamilton International Middle School, we value continuous growth, respect, diversity, integrity and teamwork.

Vision

A collaborative community of inspired and engaged learners.

Hamilton International Middle School is part of the International School model for Seattle Public Schools and is the dual language continuation site for the Northwest Region of the district. We use the following strategies as part of our international education model:

- Immersive language instruction
- Problem-based learning activities in multiple disciplines that relate to a global theme and an opportunity to show work

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- Incorporation of cross-curricular themes such as social studies to support student learning across disciplines
- Host regular guest speakers for students to learn more about local and global issues
- We offer World Language Credit testing on site during the school day to get at least 90% turnout for Japanese and Spanish immersion cohorts
- A focus on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

Seattle Public Schools International Education Vision and Components

To prepare students, in partnership with families and community, for global citizenship in an increasingly interdependent world.

Three Components of SPS International Education

- World Languages (offerings and immersion)
- Global Perspectives (education providing global perspectives)
- Global Competency (application of knowledge)

Social Emotional Support

The counseling department serves all students through its comprehensive school counseling program which focuses on academics, social and emotional awareness, and career and college exploration. Our counseling department provides interventions through small groups, individual counseling, consultation, and advisory presentations. Our students are enrolled in a daily advisory class which focuses on school climate and study skills.

Racial Equity Team (RET) Description & Goals

Hamilton's (HIMS) Racial Equity Team (RET) comprises representation from multiple grade levels, subject areas, building roles, and positionalities. As one means of implementation of the Ensuring Educational and Racial Equity Policy, the purpose and driving goal of HIMS RET is to support the HIMS staff and community in the engagement of authentic and meaningful self-reflection about, intentional analysis of, and direct, anti-racist action in response to public education's role in the perpetuation of white supremacy, HIMS' complicity in racism and other forms of systemic oppression, and the individual responsibility of every public educator to identify, dismantle, and rehabilitate their own racist mindsets, patterns, and practices.

Concrete steps toward meeting this goal include:

- RET facilitating and/or leading staff training
- RET creating and administering surveys to collect relevant data, inform decision-making, and solicit stakeholder insight and feedback
- Various building teams and decision-making bodies collaborating with RET
HIMS staff attending and participating in RET facilitated and/or led staff trainings

Professional Development

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Hamilton Staff engage in ongoing professional development focused on 1) Racial Equity; 2) Creating Alignment and common experience for students; 3) Fostering a Safe & Welcoming environment. Opportunities are offered for teams of teachers to meet at least twice a month in continuous cycles of inquiry in which they are identifying essential learning standards, developing ways to measure students' levels, determining what adjustments are required for whole classes, groups of students, or individual students, and collaborating to make those adjustments. We also budget money so that teachers can access outside PD to support the needs identified above.

Priorities and Measurable Goals

Middle School Focus Goal: 7th Grade Mathematics

Priority Goal:

For the 2020-21 school year, at least 66 % of 7th grade students of color furthest from educational justice will meet standards or higher on the Math Smarter Balanced Assessment.

Safe and Welcoming Environment Goal

Priority Goal:

By June 2021, the rate of chronic student absence will decrease from 9.5% (as of March 2020) to 2% of students experiencing chronic absence, indicating effectiveness of safe and welcoming systems, routines, and practices. "Chronic absence" is defined as students who miss 10% of days enrolled.

Supplementary Goals

By June 2021, 100% of students at Hamilton will have opportunities to engage in activities that build on global thinking and problem solving. As part of the International School model for Seattle Public Schools, HIMS provides students with linguistic skills, higher-order thinking skills, and a global perspective.

High Quality 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.

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To achieve educational justice, Seattle Public Schools (SPS) strives to provide safe learning environments, curriculum that incorporates a student’s life experiences and culture, and instruction delivered by high-quality, culturally responsive educators. Unfortunately, many students from certain ethnicities have not historically experienced equitable opportunities for all or part of their educational journey (including African and African American, Asian Pacific Islander and Pacific Islander, LatinX, and Native American students). These students are our priority – with an intentional focus on African American males.

School-wide Systems and Structures (MTSS)

MTSS offers the potential to create the alignment of systems necessary for all students’ academic, behavioral, and social success. In addition, MTSS promotes needed systematic change through intentional design and redesign of services and supports that quickly identify and match the needs of all students. MTSS is an integrated, comprehensive framework that focuses on CCSS, core instruction, differentiated learning, student-centered learning, individualized student needs.

Hamilton has a building-wide commitment to monitoring and reducing out-of-class time. We use data to select and enroll, monitor and exit students from interventions and support classes when appropriate. We have teams at each grade level who review students’ grades, discipline and attendance and to whom teachers and teacher-teams refer students who may need further assistance meeting standards. If necessary, these teams, in conjunction with teachers, recommend ways to support students or, if further supports are needed, will identify supportive interventions for students.

Gap Closing Practices and Special Services

Seattle Public Schools is committed to eliminating opportunity gaps to ensure access and provide excellence in education for every student.

Delivering high-quality, standards-aligned instruction across all abilities and a continuum of services for learners is a core element of Seattle Excellence. Our Theory of Action is guided by the principles of “Targeted Universalism.” Our universal goal is every Seattle Public Schools’ student receives a high-quality, world-class education and graduates prepared for college, career, and community. Targeted Universalism holds that targeted and differentiated efforts are required to meet the needs of specific student populations, so every student meets the universal goal.

By focusing on students of color who are furthest from educational justice, especially African American males, we will make the greatest progress toward our collective vision. We believe that an intentional focus on African American males will ultimately benefit every student.

To meet the needs of our students receiving Special Education Services:

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- Hamilton students with IEPs receive services within the Seattle Public Schools continuum of services model so that each student learns in their least restrictive environment. Hamilton currently provides services at the following levels: Resource, Access, Focus, & Social Emotional Learning.
- All Special Education students with grade level goals have access to support classes for reading and writing, study skills and social skills as well as specialized instruction in their specific goal area(s).
- Special Education staff communicate with the general education staff about specific learning needs of each student.

To meet the needs of our English Language Learners

- Students whose English language skills are developing are supported by a designated teacher who works in and out of class to support their language development and access to the Hamilton curriculum.
- Our ELL teacher consults with general education teachers to problem-solve instructional challenges for ELL students.

To meet the needs of our advanced learners

- Hamilton International Middle School is designated site for the Highly Capable Cohort. We provide services for our Advanced Learners through HCC specific courses in Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science. Our advanced math learners are generally grouped by grade and skill level in order to meet the unique needs and pacing of accelerated math students.
- Spectrum identified learners receive differentiated supports and acceleration to meet their learning needs. Our Language Arts and Social Studies team will provide an "honors" option for all learners who would like to pursue a greater challenge.

To meet the needs of our historically under-served students

- Students have access to a variety of clubs during Advisory, including La Chispa and Black and Brown Student Union (BSU) which focus on leadership and empowerment.
- In 2019-2020 Hamilton implemented the AVID elective – a college prep class focusing on writing, inquiry, collaboration, reading, note-taking and organization.

Practices and Strategies

We will recognize and serve the academic, social, cultural, emotional, and behavioral strengths and needs of students, providing high-quality, culturally responsive instruction, curriculum, and social-emotional learning supports delivered by educators who set high expectations, so students graduate ready for college, career, and community.

Whole child education goes beyond a focus on academic achievement. When educators focus on educating the whole child, students are healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged. In Seattle Public Schools, this means that we appreciate and serve the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral strengths and needs of students, which we believe comprise the needs of the "whole child."

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High-quality instruction is focused on student-centered learning and achievement, intentional about student engagement, and aligned to standards with consistent and appropriate feedback.

At its foundation, culturally responsive education means that students are in an environment where they have the individual safety and comfort to learn within a classroom that has a common culture that is respectful of all backgrounds.

Hamilton staff will focus on 1) Creating regular structures and opportunities for student voice and agency (in the course of instruction, to inform instruction, and to assess instruction); 2) Delivering instruction with high expectations for every student's intellectual engagement and to support their development as independent learners; 3) Delivering core instructional strategies that are effectively differentiated and culturally responsive and anti-racist. Hamilton's BLT will routinely use the Racial Equity Analysis Tool and Racial Equity Analysis Action Plan to drive school improvement and planning processes and center the needs of families and students of color furthest from educational justice and foster foundational culturally responsive and anti-racist practices across the school environment. We will monitor progress through staff/student surveys/reflections, missed instructional time and observation.

Safe and Welcoming Environment

Students thrive in healthy, safe, engaging, supported, and challenging environments in which they can to learn to their full potential. Instruction must be high-quality, culturally responsive, focused, and aligned to standards for students to develop as independent learners.

Student voice should be evident, and students must be seen and celebrated for their authentic selves. Significant increases in academic outcomes for students furthest from educational justice are possible when social, cultural, emotional, and behavioral needs of students are met by educators that share an unconditional belief in the potential of every student they serve.

Hamilton Staff will foster student social-emotional learning through student enrollment in an advisory period. During Advisory, students participate in activities that promote community-building, self-reflection, and self-regulation strategies. These activities are supported by the Character Strong program, by meetings led by our Student Equity team, and by the social-emotional learning framework that engages students and staff in Welcoming Routines, Engaging Practices, and Optimistic Closures. The Student Equity Team invites students to participate in a collaborative process with faculty and administrators and ensures that they have a voice in school systems. Hamilton staff will also track data at the school, classroom, and student levels in order to analyze behavioral trends, to make informed decisions, to implement anti-racist practices, and to develop proactive strategies that anticipate and prevent conflicts and other behavioral concerns.

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Inclusive and Authentic Engagement

Partner with students, families, and communities who are furthest from educational justice by conducting inclusive and authentic engagement.

We will proactively and consistently work in partnership *with* students, families, and communities to identify needs, determine solutions, and support the implementation of the initiatives that will best meet the needs of students of color who are furthest from educational justice. We will use culturally responsive ways to engage so we build trusting relationships and empower the voices of those who can help us meet these needs.

Family and Community Goals

Priority Goal:

We will have a system for regular & authentic two-way communication with families and other community stakeholders, anchored in culturally responsive and appropriate means of communication. Families and community representatives will be present at BLT and RET meetings and will partner with school staff to ensure qualitative and quantitative data about policy, budget, programs, professional development, and instructional practices are shared with our stakeholders, especially our families of students furthest from educational justice. By June 2021 100% of families will feel confident about accessing school resources and navigating school structures as measured by a survey developed by the RET & BLT and conducted BLT/RET/SET/family partners.

Plans for Family Engagement

We build relationships with our families and community stakeholders by sharing information about events, programs, teaching practices, social-emotional supports, restorative justice practices, and opportunities for collaboration. We communicate and seek feedback using email updates, family newsletters, and culturally responsive means of communication. We evaluate the content and approach of our communications using our Racial Equity Analysis tool, to ensure that we receive qualitative and quantitative feedback from all stakeholders, especially communities of color, non-native English speakers, and families of learners with special needs. We host weekend events to build relationships and partnerships with members of our community, with two events per year for families of 8th graders who are furthest from educational justice, engaging them in the topic of transitioning to high school. We will monitor success and progress by surveying families about their experience, satisfaction and recommendations for family engagement.