

# Highland Park Elementary



## Seattle Excellence Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP)

### Highland Park Elementary

#### 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.

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## 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

Highland Park Elementary is an inclusive, equitable community of students, staff and families which fosters authentic relationships. We are located in Southwest Seattle, near White Center, with about a third of our students speaking more than one language, over 85 % students of color, housing two preschool programs, a Social Emotional Learning program, and with long standing partnerships with local tribes and community-based organizations. We respect the whole child, focus on the joy of learning and grow empathetic agents of change capable of pursuing diverse and fulfilling life choices.

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## Priorities and Measurable Goals

### Elementary Focus Goal: 3rd Grade English Language Arts

#### **Priority Goal:**

For the 2020-21 school year, at least 30% of 3rd grade students of color furthest from educational justice will meet standards or higher on the ELA Smarter Balanced Assessment.

#### **Safe and Welcoming Environment Goal**

During the 2020-21 school year, staff will provide support to students within a pro-social, positive framework for instilling school pride, opportunities to develop social-emotional competency, and individual accountability. Tier one, positive behavioral support systems will be reinforced and expanded, with mindfulness strategies being strengthened to ensure all students feel safe and secure. English Language Arts blocks will be revamped to include ethnic studies within social studies, writing, and/or the core curriculum Making Meaning section itself. Most importantly, family communication and collaboration strategies will be reinforced and expanded, enabling more two-way communication and opportunities for families to both monitor their students' progress and provide feedback on schoolwide practices.

#### **Target Goal:**

By June, 2021, attendance rates for student furthest from educational justice (FFEJ) will increase from 76.3% in March 2020 to 90%, indicating effectiveness of safe and welcoming systems, routines and practices.

## 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.**

*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.

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## 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.

Utilizing the Seattle Public Schools Multi Tiered System of Supports Implementation Guide, our school is focused on the following Foundational Level Two practices:

- Equitable Access
- Teaming structures exist to support sustained and informed collaboration
- All students have access to standards-based core curriculum

For 2020-21, we will work to improve the system by which teachers and educators identify a tier I system of supports for all learners and identify, confer, and progress monitor interventions for learners identified for Tiers II and III. In order to do this, we will engage our staff in two changes: first, using a common Tier I framework, staff will self assess and receive observational feedback on the relative health of all foundational aspects necessary for all learners to safely access instruction and pro-socially engage with adults/peers; second, using a new student referral to tiered supports system, staff will implement a Coordination of Supports Team (COST) consultancy process whereby grade level teams confer twice monthly about students in need of additional behavioral or academic support, attempt at least a 4-6 week intervention, then review progress. If student is unresponsive to support, the school-wide MTSS team will join the consultancy and recommend next steps, which may include evaluation for specially designed instruction.

Our Reading and Math Interventionists, as a second MTSS team contingent, will provide testing supports, including opportunities for target population data disaggregation during early release time, formative assessment support, and enable professional learning opportunities with our other TLC teacher as lead, to analyze the overall effectiveness of core instruction, using Common Core standards and our tier I framework as guides.

## 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

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“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.

During the 2020-21 school year, staff will continue to participate in grade level and vertical teams to conduct inquiry of effective universal core practices, with an emphasis on positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) routines and practices and academically, utilize frequent formative assessment towards continuous improvement for students below, at, or above essential learning outcomes. Grade levels will team with ELL teachers, interventionists, Special Education staff, and CBO partners, and students to analyze progress on key essential learning achievement indicators within core academic subjects (reading, math, writing) and PBIS, tier I with a focus on the performance and growth of the following subgroups:

- Students Furthest From Educational Justice
- English Language Learners

Performance by these target sub group students, on curriculum-based, common formative measures, will be analyzed during professional collaboration on gap closing data days, twice per month.

## 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."

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.

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During the 2020-21 school year, staff will provide support to students within a pro-social, positive framework for instilling school pride, opportunities to develop social-emotional competency, and individual accountability. PBIS services will be reinforced and expanded, with mindfulness strategies being strengthened to ensure all students feel safe and secure. ELA blocks will be revamped to include the following: first, more culturally relevant textual material will both mentor text, whole group and for independent reading; second, we will implement once per week ethnic studies lessons focused on identify affirmation, origin stories, and deconstruction of systemic bias.

Most importantly, family communication and collaboration strategies will be reinforced and expanded, enabling more two-way communication and opportunities for families to both monitor their students' progress and provide feedback on schoolwide practices.

We will know we are on track to providing a safe and secure learning environment based on 3x per year student/staff Pulse surveys, showing improvement in three target climate data targets: a trusted adult, feeling of belonging, and positive self-identity.

Within core instruction, we will implement, measure, and improve our use of the following strategies:

- Implementation of 2-3 culturally responsive practices (as depicted and aligned to text, Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain) at each grade level, with trust building as a cornerstone. Race and Equity team driven analysis of current practices and recommended next steps for 2020-21.
- PBIS core, Tier I look fors framework (developed and piloted with grade 3 team in 2019-20 in collaboration with district behavioral support team). Teacher Leader Cadre representative on staff will take lead on this project, coordinating opportunities for professional learning via lesson study and observation, with feedback.
- Professional Development series and lesson study of ELL, GLAD based language acquisition strategy best practice, with a preK-5 emphasis on improving classroom conversations (will be developing look-for tool with central office ELL staff).

## 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.

For 2020-21, Highland Park will be continuing the use of three practices with demonstrated success in our community: creating a positive climate by partnering closely with scholars' families, doubling down on

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proven social emotional learning (SEL) practices, like daily class meetings, and reinforcing Tier I positive behavioral intervention system (PBIS) look fors.

For positive climate by connections with home, we will start the year with home visits with every scholar and their family. This can be conducted in a range of settings, but all families will receive this touch point to build a strong relational foundation for future collaboration and trust.

For SEL, we will continue to add to our RULER program curriculum and embed opportunities for students to engage in practical, skill building sessions with classmates that both increase their self-awareness and hone skills for self-regulation.

For PBIS, we will build on a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade pilot developed last year to describe all the supportive classroom elements that need to be implemented by staff to ensure students feel safe and supported universally.

## 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:**

Highland Park will continue to implement a multi-year plan to move engagement along a continuum to a place of more power sharing and responsibility. For 2020-21, staff will improve their use of two-way communication to increase family participation in decision-making and byway of such interactions, facilitate respectful dialogue that leads to true partnership. Ultimately, this should lead to a place in 2021-22 of more shared responsibility and decision-making, with families playing a key role developing a schooling model that reflects community values.

### **Plans for Family Engagement**

At Highland Park Elementary, we have been following a 3 year family engagement plan that strategizes the following:

- Strategy 1: Create a welcoming environment
- Strategy 2: Practice two-way communication

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- Strategy 3: Facilitate respectful interactions
- Strategy 4: Share power and responsibility

Based on family engagement survey data, we feel that our goals should center on strategies 3 and 4, for the 2020-21 school year.

Building on a safe, welcoming environment and effective two way communication, we will create and sustain opportunities for continued interactions and power sharing with our community and families, with opportunities to help guide our decision making and responsiveness using with the following steps taken:

- Continue to use Dojo (or Seesaw) to communicate frequently with parents.
- Monthly or bimonthly after school family meetings, led by each classroom teacher, targeted on one subject area at a time. Starting by broadly reviewing what students are learning in that subject area, then focusing in on current student progress, and steps/activities that can be done at home to support the students in this work. Families and teachers can work together to set goals for their kids during this time. This is similar to an 'Open House', but recurring and far more collaborative.
- Hold workshops and conversations (possibly led by district or community supports) around things like racial equity/social justice, mental health, career exploration, technology lessons, etc. These could also be held off-campus if that is preferred by families. Teachers should attend these to provide more opportunities for two-way communication and relationship building.
- Hold a monthly morning coffee/tea parent meeting in the library with the admin team.
- Implement an optionally anonymous “communication” box in the main office for families to ask questions, voice concerns, and offer suggestions for improvement.