

# Seattle Excellence Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP)

## Montlake 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.

## 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

Montlake Elementary is an inclusive community of students, families and educators engaged in challenging curriculum that is enhanced by environmental science and the arts enabling every learner to reach their full potential. Our mission is that students will emerge from elementary school as readers, writers and problem-solvers, while being fit and healthy both physically and emotionally. Our school motto encourages our students to Be Safe, Be Kind, Be Fair and Take Responsibility.

## Priorities and Measurable Goals

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

#### **Priority Goal:**

100% of the scholars identified as not yet at grade level reading standards will make at least one full calendar year growth in reading by June, 2021.

3rd grade ELA goals:

- 100% of our scholars furthest from educational justice will make at least one full calendar year growth in reading by June, 2021.

- 100% of the Tier 2 and 3 scholars in our MTSS program will make more than one full calendar year growth in reading by June, 2021.

## Safe and Welcoming Environment Goal

### **Priority Goal:**

100% of Montlake scholars will engage with a minimum of four days of synchronous and/or asynchronous lessons per classroom per week by June, 2021.

100% of Montlake scholars will be able to identify the different parts of the revised and more inclusive Montlake Way by June, 2021.

## 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.

## 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.

The use of data to screen, diagnose, problem-solve and develop meaningful action for students is a foundational element of MTSS implementation. Our core Tier 1 instruction includes social, emotional, behavioral and academic expectations and is delivered to all students in a manner designed to offer differentiated and personalized support as we meet the needs of every student. Our MTSS system allows us to monitor student growth and standardize the targeted interventions necessary for students to stay on track with their learning as they progress through the Common Core State Standards in social emotional and academic learning.

During the 2019-20 school year an MTSS Leadership Team was created, which includes two classroom teachers, the school counselor and the principal. This team worked together to develop forms and create a system designed to utilize data three times a year from every grade level team in ELA (English Language Arts), math, and SEL (social emotional learning) benchmarks in order to identify and address any learning gaps that may be occurring within our classrooms. Once a learning gap has been identified, we work hard to develop targeted Tier 2 (small group) or more intensive Tier 3 (1:1) interventions in order to bring every student up to standard.

During the 2020-21 school year, grade level teachers will continue to provide personalized Tier 1 instruction to every student in their classroom, and our MTSS system will begin to bring parents into the process at a deeper level when their student has been identified as needing more support. During in-person instruction, grade level teams will receive a half-day of release time twice a year in order to refine which assessments to use as they continue to analyze baseline, formative, and summative data. Using this information, they will work with the MTSS Leadership Team in order to determine which of their students might need Tier 2 (small group) or Tier 3 (1:1) instruction as necessary, and to develop plans to address any learning gaps that may exist.

## 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.

We believe in expanding the capacity of as many adults as possible in order to provide successful literacy interventions. In order to address gaps that may have developed in reading, our Academic Interventionists, Tutors, Special Education Teachers, and English Language Learner experts have all been trained in and have access to SIPPS (Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words), a research-based foundational skills program proven to help both new and struggling readers in grades K–12 build skills and confidence for fluent, independent reading. Tutors and parent volunteers help students who might benefit from additional practice with fluency and comprehension. Our math curriculum (enVision math), incorporates interventions and extensions into every lesson, allowing teachers to use flexible grouping and other strategies to meet the learning needs of their students.

Once an intervention has been recommended and a student begins receiving more targeted support in order to meet their learning needs, the MTSS Leadership team continues to review that student's progress every 6-8 weeks in order to determine its efficacy. Our master schedule ensures that every classroom has small group time built into the school day so that students don't ever miss core Tier 1 instruction.

## 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.

[Montlake teachers have been trained in and believe strongly in the importance of implementing culturally responsive practices across classrooms. Our Teacher Leadership Cadre (TLC's) have developed a "culturally responsive walk-through tool" that allows teachers and administrators to give feedback about the implementation of our CCC curriculum. Classroom teachers intentionally use classroom routines to foster a culture of collectivism, inclusion and identity safety, and create regular structures and opportunities for student voice and agency during instruction. Instruction is delivered with high expectations for every students' intellectual engagement and to support their development as independent learners. Our Building Leadership Teams routinely uses the Racial Equity Analysis Tool and the Racial Equity Analysis Action Plan to drive school improvement and planning processes. Our school's CSIP, Budget, and Professional Development Plans reflect priorities that center the needs of families and students who have historically been furthest from educational justice.

## 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.**

# Montlake Elementary



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.

During the three-year span that represents the 2020-23 school years we will continue to create a culture of collaboration and communication by ensuring that teachers, staff and parents are working together in the service of student-centered learning and growth. We are currently working to implement systems across the school and community that involve different groups to create and maintain open, two-way communication.

An example of this cross-collaboration exists between our internal Race and Equity Team and the newly formed Montlake Families Equity and Inclusion group, which is a group of parents, guardians, and community members dedicated to ensuring that training, education and community relations at Montlake Elementary school have a focus on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for all. Using the tenets and best practices implemented to dismantle systemic racism and advance an anti-racist environment for our young people, the Building Leadership Team (BLT) and Race and Equity Team (RET) are working with the Montlake Families Equity and Inclusion group on a strategic plan that will involve a review of the current Montlake Way as we create a more inclusive and equitable Montlake community.

Other examples of implementation around our shared vision include working with BLT and PTA to collaboratively find creative ways to continue and support social-emotional programs at Montlake, including the use of the RULER and Kelso's Choice. At the start of the 2019-20 school year, the Montlake PTA funded professional development opportunities for staff from Sound Discipline, which emphasized building resiliency, engaging youth exposed to trauma, and utilizing firmness tools based on the Positive Discipline model. We also implemented "Wolfpacks," cross-grade level groups that meet at least once a month on Wednesdays, which will continue into future years as we fold in new Kindergarten students. In the 2020-21 school year we will engage in professional development relating to how best to have difficult conversations in order to improve staff climate and give us the tools to be able to effectively solve problems. Our PBIS committee will continue to establish, teach, and reinforce school-wide and classroom behavior expectations, and our Safety Committee will shift their focus to the creation of systems and norms related to social distancing and hygiene in the COVID-19 era.

## 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:**

90% of our families – including our families of color – will attend curriculum night and other school-wide events such as parent/teacher conferences.

We believe that when families are engaged in decision-making and student learning, we see better student outcomes and are able to build better, sustainable solutions. Our goal is to work with the Montlake PTA to ensure that 90% of our families – including our families of color – attend curriculum night and other school-wide events. We will continue to apply the Racial Equity Analysis Tool as we take a deep look at our traditions and community events in order to ensure that we are in alignment with our shared ideals of equity and inclusion for all students and their families.

During the 2019-20 school year the Montlake Families Equity and Inclusion Group was established, a group of parents, guardians, staff, and community members dedicated to ensuring that training, education and community relations at Montlake Elementary school have a focus on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for all. Using the tenets and best practices implemented to dismantle systemic racism and advance an anti-racist environment for our young people, our internal Race and Equity Team is working with this new group to create a strategic plan that will involve a review of the current Montlake Way. We hope to accomplish this work during the 2020-21 school year.

### **Plans for Family Engagement**

As we continue to analyze our current work and strive to make student-centered decisions, we will continue to utilize the Racial Equity Analysis Tool and the Racial Equity Mapping Tool provided by SPS. We will continue to create community events that are inclusive and welcoming to all of our families.

Communication and collaboration with families comes in multiple forms:

- All-school emails
- Weekly newsletter to the community (a joint effort between the school and the PTA)
- Weekly newsletters from classroom teachers
- Phone calls home
- Postcards/notes to students through the mail or via Schoology and Seesaw
- Parent/teacher conferences
- Opportunities for family feedback (surveys)
- Welcome coffees and remote listening sessions with the principal