



# Seattle Excellence Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP)

## Northgate 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

The Northgate community is a team of parents, staff, and students committed to the core values of Connection, Compassion and Courage. Holding these core values at the forefront, we are dedicated to creating a positive, nurturing learning environment founded on relationships with our students and their families. We believe that if we create this learning environment we can systematically close opportunity gaps and assist students in realizing their full potential.

Northgate Elementary is a community of students, families and staff that:

- provides a welcoming environment that is safe, respectful, positive, and focused on academic achievement and social emotional learning
- provides a supportive and respectful educational foundation that will springboard our students into academic achievement
- embraces respect for all cultures and strives to build relationships and social emotional skills that promote success for all students
- implements a rigorous, integrated curriculum where all students are challenged and supported.



## Priorities and Measurable Goals

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

#### **Priority Goal:**

For the 2020-21 school year, at least 80% of 3rd grade students of color furthest from educational justice will read at or above grade level as measured by schoolwide assessment tools.

#### **Target Goal #1:**

All or nearly all of Latinx students who scored below grade level will achieve approaching grade level or higher in reading. Reading level will be determined by analyzing a variety of assessments\* including SPS reading screener, classroom-based assessments, running records, digital reading quizzes and teacher input.

\*Academic assessments used in determining reading level will align with grade level standards and will be communicated to all stakeholders.

### Safe and Welcoming Environment Goal

#### **Priority Goal:**

For the 2020-21 school year, at least 90% of Latinx students will have fewer than 5 excused or unexcused absences per semester 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.

## 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.

### **Our school regularly collects and analyzes data to determine goals to help targeted students meet grade level standards.**

In partnership our own intervention specialists, district MTSS Learning Support Team, Seattle Family and Education Levy and community-based partnerships we have used data to identify areas for academic and social emotional growth:

- Embed trauma informed practices in schoolwide policies and practices
- Clarify and strengthen MTSS behavioral systems in common spaces, in the classroom and in virtual spaces.
- Utilize social emotional and academic screeners to determine need for intervention
- Strengthen MTSS academic core instruction and intervention

In addition, our PLC teams regularly share and analyze data and whole-school data is shared and analyzed several times a year to facilitate whole school decision making about systems and support.

### **We use research-based strategies that help all students achieve and grow**

We will continue to employ the following research-based practices to increase the academic achievement and the social emotional development of targeted students:

Literacy intervention/enrichment blocks supported by teachers, specialists, instructional assistants and trained tutors.

- Research-based materials include LLI, Foundations, SIPPS and high-quality, culturally responsive literature
- Literacy groups are data-driven and fluid—providing students with access needed supports and enrichment

Math intervention/enrichment supported by teachers, specialists and trained tutors:

- Research-based materials include Math in Focus, Engage NY. Enrichment groups are largely provided in-class and involve more in-depth instruction on grade level mathematics.
- Math groups are data-driven and fluid, based on mathematical concept—providing students with access to needed supports and enrichments

Social-emotional intervention is supported by teachers, counselor and school psychologist:

- We use research-based intervention materials such as Super-Flex, RULER and Second Step
- Screeners and wellness checks provide data to support student identification for social-emotional supports

## **We employ interventions as needed**

Intervention specialists and school social worker periodically provide PD regarding interventions focused on testing procedures and plans, student identification for Tier II interventions and intervention design and practices

## **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.

## **Targeted Universalism at Northgate**

The MTSS Team will review missed instruction log and discipline incident data on a monthly basis, as well as the tiered fidelity inventory three times over the course of the school year to ensure systems and practices that promote racial equity are consistent school wide.

## **Latinx and ELL Students**

At Northgate over half of our student population is Latinx, many of whom are receiving English language learning support or have recently exited from qualifying for such support services. Therefore, it makes sense for us to design our targeted universalist approach by centering Latinx and ELLs. Recognizing that 3rd grade represents a key shift in focus from learning to read to reading to learn, our long-range goal is to have all 2nd grade students enter 3rd grade reading at grade level so that they may be able to fully access the 3rd grade content. Our starting points are expressed by the following goals:

All 2nd grade students who scored "far below grade level " on a baseline reading assessment in fall 2020 (May change due to COVID) will receive targeted intervention with a goal of reaching at least approaching grade level in reading by Spring 2021.

All 2nd grade students who scored "approaching grade level" on the baseline reading assessment in fall 2020 (May change due to COVID) will receive targeted intervention with a goal of reaching at least grade level in reading by Spring 2021.

## **Special Education Services**

Students who qualify for special education services will receive coordinated instructional support during the school day and as much as possible in the general education classroom. Our students in the SEL program have seen their access to general education increase dramatically in the remote learning environment. Additionally, our master schedule has improved our ability to coordinate services for students in our resource program.

All students who qualify for special education services will receive the number of minutes and the specific services outlined in their IEP.

## **Advanced Learning Opportunities**

At Northgate, any child who has demonstrated that they are able and ready for more challenging material, including students who have been identified as highly capable or spectrum, will be provided access to more challenge. We provide enrichment opportunities during our "Eagle Hour" literacy block in the form of book clubs that lead students in project -based learning around more challenging literature. We also have enrichment groups for advanced mathematics instruction in the classroom. These advanced mathematics groups may be introduced to higher level computation skills however, they will most often be focused on exploring grade level math concepts more deeply to create more complex mathematical understanding. In a few cases, students have demonstrated a readiness for walking to the next grade level of mathematics

## **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."

# Northgate Elementary



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.

## **Our school offers professional development that is high quality and ongoing.**

Professional development (PD) is planned and coordinated by the Building Leadership Team guided by needs assessments and goals. Our on-going professional development plan aligned with goals is as follows:

### **Professional learning communities (PLC)**

The PLC structure is research-proven best practice for supporting adult learning. Our PLCs are focused on professional inquiry focused on a problem of student learning and strengthening practices such as common planning, designing common assessments and co-analyzing student assessment. We will continue to strengthen and improve our existing PLC practices.

### **Social Emotional Professional Development.**

Northgate has a partnership with Committee for Children to use the Second Step curriculum as our Tier I social emotional program. Staff receive PD in the implementation and use of the program as well as specific training on the school wide anti-bullying recognizing, reporting and safety plan implementation.

We are also working in partnership with the district behavior team and our school social emotional helath team to provide PD designed to address how to prevent and deal with behaviors associated with children experiencing trauma.

### **Tutor and Instructional Assistant Professional Development**

All academic tutors receive on-going professional development in their area of focus (literacy or math). This PD will be designed and implemented by our intervention specialists.

All instructional assistants have access to whole-staff professional development. The district also provides professional development for instructional assistants in their area of expertise. We will be exploring ways create and support professional learning communities for instructional assistants.

### **New Staff On-boarding**

New staff receive training in the systems and procedures of Northgate as well as access to critical baseline training that the rest of the staff has already received.

### **Technology Professional Development**

# Northgate Elementary



Teachers lead PD designed to maximize the use of technologies in their classroom. During COVID closures, teachers received extensive PD for Microsoft Teams and Seesaw platforms. Our strategy includes ongoing education and support for families learning how to navigate remote learning.

## **Our staff is involved in decision-making.**

Building Leadership Team is engaged in making budget, professional development and CSIP decisions. BLT has approved a decision-making matrix which clearly outlines how decisions are made and who is responsible for making them. The discussion of community needs, specifically student academic needs, is ongoing and collaborative. Northgate Elementary staff have a culture of looking at student data in real time, collaborating openly to ensure all supports possible are in place and everyone has access to the resources they need. This is an open minded, highly engaged, collaborative staff who work together, listening to each other and all stakeholders when making decisions.

## **We assist our students to make significant academic gains**

Students will be assessed regularly (at least every 6 weeks) using F&P, MAP, benchmark assessment, classroom-based assessment or formative assessments (assessments will vary during COVID). Students are placed in math and/or literacy interventions or enrichment groups based on this data. Groups are fluid so that students may access intervention and/ or enrichment as they need. Student needs are discussed in intervention team meetings, MTSS team meetings and individual meetings with teachers regarding students of concern. Tier II interventions are regularly evaluated to ascertain whether and the degree to which they are successful. When Tier II interventions are not working, the intervention team and classroom teacher refer students for a formal Student Intervention Team meeting to have a more formal discussion with families, specialists and teachers to find out what additional or different supports a student may need in order to meet standard.

## **We retain high quality, highly effective, and highly qualified staff**

Northgate's hiring process is designed to find staff from diverse backgrounds who have an asset mindset about ALL children and families, are equity-focused, are data-driven, who understand and are curious about unpacking issues of racial and social justice, are reflective about their practice, are culturally competent and are able to successfully implement trauma-informed practices. To promote retention of staff all new staff will receive professional development which will acquaint them with the systems, procedures and culture of Northgate. Additionally, the Building Leadership Team and Social Committee are committed to providing staff with opportunities to build meaningful professional relationships with one another. We also understand that a positive school culture is key to retaining staff. To maintain a positive school culture, it is imperative that staff, students and leadership work together to design, cultivate and implement both technical and adaptive solutions that will lead to positive cultural outcomes. Furthermore, we feel that decision making should be characterized by integrity, transparency, compassion and a focus on student academic and social emotional needs. Additionally, we make every effort to ensure that staff has the opportunity to have a healthy work-life balance. In 2019-20 our retention rate was over 90% of instructional staff.



## **We support the transitions of new students and families into our school**

At Northgate we have to be prepared to welcome new families at any time of the year. In fact, our office is often the first contact that families have with Seattle Public Schools. Our office staff and family support worker, counselor, special education staff and ELL staff make every effort to make our school welcoming and responsive to a variety of needs that families might have such as transportation, translation, interpretation, assistance with enrollment, transfer of records, accessing ELL services, continuation of advanced learning opportunities and continuation of special education services. We also solicit parent feedback regarding what feels welcoming to them and what we can do better to meet their needs.

## **Safe and Welcoming Environment**

**Students thrive in healthy, safe, engaging, supported, and challenging environments in which they can 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.

- All families are offered alternatives to suspensions to include but not limited to: family meeting, restorative justice circle, family visit to class. This has resulted in 0 suspensions in 2019-2020 (pre-COVID).
- We have instituted at least 20 minutes of school-wide dedicated instructional time for social emotional learning time.
- The school Wellness Team meets weekly to assess and address student social emotional support needs.

## **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:**

For the 2020-2021 school year, we will have structures in place to facilitate effective two-way communication with families.

### **Plans for Family Engagement**

Strategies to increase parent/family engagement.

- Weekly, translated newsletters to parents
- Prioritizing time in our schedule for family connections
- Regularly seeking feedback from families
- Use of technology tools such as Talking Points to more effectively communicate with families in their home language
- Support for the growth of our Parent Teacher Organization (PTO). Being sure to provide multiple access points for families of all racial and linguistic backgrounds to engage and participate
- Frequent check-ins with families during remote learning

### **Homework Policy**

- Each August, the homework policy will be reviewed, updated and communicated to parents. Our goal for homework is to make it reasonable, research-based and aligned with classroom instruction. During remote learning, assigning homework is suspended. Students can work on their asynchronous assignments.