

# Seattle Excellence Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP)

## Whittier 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 Whittier Community is committed to ensuring educational justice by creating an engaging, supportive and culturally responsive environment for all students, families and staff. Through teaching and nurturing the whole child our staff strives to cultivate compassionate, resilient and creative children.

## Priorities and Measurable Goals

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

#### **Priority Goal:**

By Spring of 2022, at least 90% of our third, fourth and fifth grade students furthest away from educational justice will read and write at or above grade level according to state, district and classroom assessments.

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

By the spring of 2021, 100% of Whittier second graders will complete BAR reader set 10 and read proficiently as measured by district, and building curricular assessments.

## **Target Goal #2:**

By the spring of 2021, 100% of Whittier first graders will complete BAR reader set 5; and all of our K students will complete set BaR set three as measured by building curricular assessments.

## Safe and Welcoming Environment Goal

### **Priority Goal:**

By spring break of 2021, multiple data points will reveal, that students furthest away from educational justice will view Whittier as a welcoming and safe environment. The SEL goal will be measured by maintaining 98% student attendance rates for all subgroups and will be progress monitored by the PBIS Tier Fidelity Walk Through results, data from PBIS Recognition System, and student surveys or interviews.

### **Target Goal:**

For the 2020-2021 school year, by utilizing teacher and office data, 100% of our student body will be publicly recognized or celebrated at least **three** times through our PBIS school wide and classroom recognition system.

## 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

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integrated, comprehensive framework that focuses on CCSS, core instruction, differentiated learning, student-centered learning, individualized student needs.

All students at Whittier will have access to standards-based core curriculum that is horizontally and vertically aligned. Teachers will utilize BaR, BaW and MM assessments throughout the year. Teachers will also utilize exit tickets and unit assessments in math to measure progress. Grade level teams will agree upon two exit tickets in math to track and monitor a week. During the 2020 school years teachers will learn to “tag” math, ELA, science, and SEL standards through Seesaw. The Seesaw data analysis will allow individual teachers and grade level teams monitor progress on important standards throughout the year. Grade level teams will meet once a month to analyze data in reading, writing and math. The MTSS team will meet four times a year starting the week of October 26<sup>th</sup>, to analyze data to provide additional support to individualized student needs. The MTSS team will include our reading specialist, special education staff, ELL staff, and a teacher that specializes in behavior to support teaching teams to better support students in the classroom. Whittier Elementary uses a Positive Behavior Incentive System. Teachers explicitly teach the expectations in the classroom and for school wide common areas. In addition, each month the staff and community focus on an important virtue/values that will help students be more successful at school and in life.

## 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.

All students at Whittier will have access to standards-based core curriculum that is horizontally and vertically aligned. All staff will utilize small group instruction to create the appropriate challenge for students. The literacy curriculum is differentiated by skill. As students get older, literacy groups will be differentiated based on skill and interest. Teachers will provide feedback to students through individual reading and writing conferences to meet the diverse needs and strengths in our building. Grade level teachers will work collaboratively and utilize data to make sure all students are being appropriately challenged. Third through fifth grade teachers have intentionally created a 25 minute block of time to provide additional instruction or challenge to meet the needs and interests of all students when we return for in person learning. Our special education staff, reading specialist and ELL staff will provide specially designed instructions students during

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small group literacy rotations or during independent reading and writing time so they do not miss any core 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.

The Whittier staff utilizes classroom meetings to create a safe and welcoming environment. Student voice is honored and supported with classroom jobs and positive behavior incentives. Whittier utilizes flexible small group instruction targeted to students assessed needs. Our K-3 grade teachers will implement Being a Reader small group literacy instruction. In addition, all teachers will have regular individual reading and writing conferences. Third through fifth grade students will publish and get feedback on three performance tasks. The frequency of these meetings in small groups and individually will be differentiated based on students needs.

## 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.

Whittier staff are utilizing student and adult focused emotional learning. During classes and meetings for adults staff are utilizing welcoming routines, engaging practices, and optimistic closure. Whittier is finishing

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its third year implementing positive behavior system of interventions. Whittier will continue to teach and reinforce expectations throughout the year and utilizing system of reinforcements when students are able to meet those expectations. In addition, teachers will continue to use daily class meetings, CCC, RULER and district created Social Emotional Learning lessons. In addition, the staff agree upon monthly values and virtues to teach and reinforce throughout the year. Last year, the staff completed the Zaretta Hammond's book and the district's PD on Trauma informed instruction. This year the staff will continue to learn through a virtual district PD called *Strengths Based Classroom Management* and is participating in a school wide study of the book *Stamp*. Staff is utilizing the remote learning handbook and participating in the district's digital learning cadre. Our focus for the following year will include the essential practices of positive feedback, warm demander protocol and continue to develop and implement SEL framework. Due to Covid 19 and remote learning, teachers conducted family connections meetings and are available for students and families during small groups and family connections meeting. This year, Whittier has formalized the work of the CARE team. The CARE team meets weekly to discuss student or family concerns around attendance, engagement and basic 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:**

[By Spring break 2021, all families will authentically engage with school at least three times as measured by teacher data tracking system. The following are examples of Whittier Engagement; Family connection Meetings, Parent Conference, Writing Celebration, Family Education Evening, Phone/Teams Conferences, PTA Family Fun Events, Volunteering, Principal Teams Coffee or Brown Bag Meetings and Parent led grade level meetings.

### **Target Goal:**

For the 2020 – 2021 school year, all families furthest away from educational justice will authentically engage with their child's teacher at least three times a year as measured by teacher data tracking system.

### **Plans for Family Engagement**

- Every teacher had a family connections meeting prior to the start of school.

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- In October, teachers are required to follow up with families who are still struggling to engage during family connections designated time.
- Teachers are expected to send weekly communication to families about required learnings and activities for the upcoming week.
- In November, every family will engage in a parent-teacher conference.
- Grade level teams are working together to provide opportunities to engage through Seesaw, Schoology, email and Teams and planning grade level celebrations every trimester.
- The principal sends weekly newsletter and encourages families to participate in a Teams coffee or brown bag to ask questions and support. The principal and ELL team are also hosting a monthly *Cafesito* to provide time for our Spanish speaking families the opportunity to connect.
- Whittier Care Team meets weekly to discuss supports and options for families that are struggling or need extra support.
- The Librarian is hosting weekly library hours on the playground.
- The PTA is hosting safe family events and hosting grade level support meetings.
- PTA leadership is hosting opportunities for the Whittier community to engage in anti-racist practices.