



# 2023-26 Continuous School Improvement Plan (C-SIP)

## Whittier Elementary School

### Purpose

The Continuous School Improvement Plan (C-SIP) is a product of collaborative inquiry around a comprehensive needs assessment led by school leaders and school staff in collaboration with district staff. The C-SIP provides an overview of district and school priority areas, student outcome goals, measures, strategies, activities and connected resource allocations.

### School Data and Building Leadership Team Members and Partners

**Current School Year:** 2023-24

**School Name:** Whittier Elementary School

**Principal:** Cindy Watters

**Members of the Building Leadership Team and Parent/Guardian Partners:** Maggie Shellenberger, Stephanie Turner, Julie Childers, Rose Boos, Shannon Mayo, Heidi Hansen, Rebecca Adamson, Kim Tracy (Parent), Kelsey Toppenberg (Parent)

**Community Partners (Community Based Organizations):** Math Agency, Ballard Food Bank, Phinney Neighborhood Association



[Whittier Elementary School Report](#)  
[Whittier Elementary School Climate Survey](#)

## School Overview

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.

## Seattle Excellence – Culture of Equity and Educational Justice

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

[2019-24 SPS Strategic Plan](#)

## Student Outcomes Focused Governance

The district has established Goals and Guardrails aligned to Seattle Excellence that provide a framework for Student Outcomes Focused Governance.

[Student Outcomes Focused Governance](#)

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## Priority Area: Learning Environments – Joyful, Safe, Anti-Racist

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.

Our [Foundational Beliefs for Supporting Students Learning](#) include recognizing and cultivating the gifts and strengths of every student and ensuring that we become culturally responsive and anti-racist practitioners. Students deserve learning environments that are welcoming, joyful and safe. \*

\*[African American Male Achievement 2021 Community Engagement Report](#)

## Learning Environments Measures and Targets

### Three-year Goal:

As of the 25-26 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.

### One-year Goal:

As of the 24-25 school year, by utilizing teacher and office data, 80% of our student body will be publicly recognized or celebrated at least twice through our PBIS school wide and classroom recognition system.

## Student Outcome Focused Governance

School staff will implement the following Guardrail to create conditions for students to meet the focus Learning Environments Goal.

Guardrail 5. The Superintendent will not allow any district department, school building, or classrooms to not provide welcoming environments.

### Evidence of alignment to student outcome focused governance:

Creating a welcoming environment in schools is crucial for fostering a positive atmosphere where everyone feels accepted, respected, and safe. Such environments can enhance learning experiences, promote positive relationships, and contribute to the overall well-being of students and educators. We will use teacher and office data.

## **Learning Environments Strategies**

Our school completed a comprehensive needs assessment and examined data to identify strategies, processes, procedures, and professional development that will lead to student outcomes aligned to our goals in this priority area. The needs assessment is available upon request from the principal.

### **Culturally responsive strategies, processes, or procedures staff will implement to meet the Three-Year Learning Environments Goal:**

- Restorative Practices: Implement restorative practices and restorative justice approaches to address disciplinary issues. Focus on building relationships and repairing harm rather than punitive measures.
- Diverse Literature Selection: Expand the library collection with books and resources that represent a wide range of cultures, languages, and experiences. Encourage independent reading and research on diverse topics.
- Culturally Responsive Lesson Planning: Support teachers in developing and sharing culturally responsive lesson plans that incorporate students' cultural backgrounds and interests.

### **Professional learning plan that will support implementation of the culturally responsive strategies, processes, or procedures:**

- Classroom Observations: Teacher teams will conduct regular classroom observations. Look for evidence of joy, safety, and anti-racist practices.
- Learning Walks: Organize learning walks where teachers visit each other's classrooms to observe and learn from effective teaching methods and strategies.
- Professional Development: Provide training for teachers on culturally responsive teaching, anti-racist pedagogy, and creating inclusive classroom environments.

### **Components of Multiple Tiered System of Support (MTSS) that reflect Inclusive Practices and create the conditions for students who receive student support services to be successful in the general education setting:**

- Regular Data Reviews: Schedule regular meetings to review the collected data. Use this information to make data-driven decisions on which strategies are effective and where improvements are needed.
- Action Planning: Develop action plans based on data analysis. Implement targeted strategies to address specific challenges and areas for improvement.

### **Components of Multiple Tiered System of Support (MTSS) that meet the social-emotional and behavioral needs of students:**

Morning meetings, shared expectations, regular recognition of all scholars.

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## **Priority Area: Classroom Instruction and Academic Success—3<sup>rd</sup> Grade English Language Arts**

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.

Our [Foundational Beliefs for Supporting Students Learning](#) include recognizing that Teaching is intellectually complex, difficult and demanding work, and requires collaborative inquiry – educators

working together to examine practice through a cycle of planning, teaching, reflecting and applying to build students' academic mindset since "Intelligence" is not a fixed, inborn trait.

## **Classroom Instruction and Academic Success Measures and Targets**

### **Three-year Goal:**

In partnership with family, general education teachers, and support staff, Whittier Elementary will decrease the gap of 33.7% between the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade ELA SBA met standard percentages between all students and students of color FFEJ by 50% by June 2026.

### **One-year Goal:**

#### **Use of formative assessments and data to improve instruction and continuous improvement aligned to the three-year and one-year goals:**

Whittier Elementary School will develop and utilize a common assessment plan that is inclusive of formative, progress monitoring and summative assessments. These assessments will be used in the following ways:

- Identify students needing additional reteaching and/or enrichment and monitoring progress of students receiving these services
- Evaluate the effectiveness of our instructional programs, especially with regards to ensuring culturally responsive teaching
- Creating needs assessment related to instructional programs, climate data and
- Center our PLC work during grade level meetings and Wednesday collaboration time

## **Student Outcome Focused Governance**

School staff will implement the following Guardrail to create conditions for students to meet the priority Classroom Instruction and Academic Success Goal.

Guardrail 3. The Superintendent will not allow adult behaviors in central office, school buildings, or classrooms that are misaligned with district-wide vision, values, and anti-racism initiatives.

### **Evidence of alignment to student outcome focused governance:**

Whittier Elementary School is developing an MTSS handbook that outlines our instructional vision, learning programs and agreements. The purpose of this resource is to ensure that our work as a school is grounded in anti-racist practices and culturally responsive instruction. This MTSS handbook will also align with district-wide vision and strategic plan.

## **Classroom Instruction and Academics Strategies**

Our school completed a comprehensive needs assessment and examined data to identify strategies, processes, procedures, and professional development that will lead to student outcomes aligned to our goals in this priority area. The needs assessment is available upon request from the principal.

### **Culturally responsive strategies, processes, or procedures staff will implement to meet the Three-Year Classroom Instruction and Academic Success Goal:**

- Aligned instructional practices as outlined in district curriculum and school-based agreements. This includes both academic and social emotional learning.
- Reflection on student growth through common assessments and PLC work
- Consistent and aligned family engagement strategies.
- Engagement in professional learning centered on trauma informed practices, restorative practices, racial healing circles and warm demander strategies.
- Ongoing reflection with a racial equity lens facilitated through our racial equity team

- Active engagement of students and families who participate in special education and/or participate in multi-lingual education. Providing opportunities for decision making, feedback and leadership opportunities.

**Professional learning that will support implementation of culturally responsive strategies, process, or procedures:**

In addition to prior outlines, we will leverage our TLC to provide additional professional learning:

- Mentorship for new staff and staff new to grade
- Opportunities to observe other classrooms and engage in reflective conversations
- Student growth and TPEP support with a focus on using data to evaluate instructional programs with a focus on SoCFFEJ, multilingual learners and students receiving special education services

**Components of Multiple Tiered System of Support (MTSS) that reflect Inclusive Practices and create the conditions for students who receive student support services to be successful in the general education setting:**

- Regular Data Reviews: Schedule regular meetings to review the collected data. Use this information to make data-driven decisions on which strategies are effective and where improvements are needed.
- Action Planning: Develop action plans based on data analysis. Implement targeted strategies to address specific challenges and areas for improvement.

**Components of Multiple Tiered System of Support (MTSS) that meet the academic needs of students:**

Morning meetings, shared expectations, regular recognition of all scholars.

**Advanced Learning and Highly Capable Services:**

At Whittier students are provided opportunities to extend or deepen their learning when they demonstrate mastery of the grade level content standards. There is no district provided staffing or separate curriculum resources provided for advanced learning in neighborhood schools. There is not a separate classroom. Advanced learning differentiation is provided in the child's general education classroom and based on the child's ongoing demonstration of mastery of grade level common core standards and readiness to extend their learning/thinking.

At Whittier, we will provide advanced learning services within the Neighborhood School Model for students identified as HC or AL in the district-wide Universal Screening process and for any other students, identified by educators, in need of Advanced Learning services. Students identified as HC/AL typically are performing (or are capable of performing) above standard in reading and/or math.

For our students in need of advanced learning services (AL/HC) we will differentiate instruction by utilizing strategies such as: flexible grouping, project-based learning, small group instruction, enhancement to grade level curriculum and acceleration in depth and complexity, based on the needs of each student.

Talent development is provided for every student through curriculum embedded and/or school-wide enrichment activities.

Students who are achieving well above grade level standards are targeted under MTSS for Tier 2 interventions. Basic Tier 2 curriculum supports in Reading and Math are accessible to all educators on the AL Hub and Professional Development is provided on the district PD system, LEARN.

By the 2024-25 school year, the MTSS Tier 3 process will be in place for students with complex needs that can't be addressed in Tier 1 and Tier 2 supports. The Tier 3, MTSS process will result in an individual student plan, in collaboration with the AL Department.

HC eligible students who choose to stay in their neighborhood school and not to attend their HC pathway site receive Neighborhood School Model supports and services.

Through the MTSS process, planning for supports and services is done systematically for all students who receive services in ML, SPED, Title/LAP, and AL/HC. Similarly, student growth is reviewed at various points throughout the school year in PLCs and educators plan for the needs of all students in their classrooms.

Strategies in content areas are based in UDL and differentiation for ALL students, including those receiving services for ML, SPED, Title/LAP and AL/HC.

### **Expanded Learning opportunities for students through afterschool or summer programs:**

Whittier does not offer outside of school enrichment or instructional support due to lack of resources provided by the school district.

Within the school day, Whittier offers limited Tier 2 reading intervention funded by the Wittier PTA in addition to extended visual arti opportunities.

### **Homework Policy:**

In order to support the growth and development of the whole child, we value opportunities for students to play outside, participate in clubs and join sports teams. Students benefit from engaging in real-world application of skills such as shopping or cooking with family, socializing with others, reading for pleasure, and maintaining healthy amounts of sleep.

To that end, teachers will focus their energy on creating lessons that support the child's development and mastery of skills to be delivered within the classroom:

- K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade teachers will not assign work to be completed on a regular basis at home.
- 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers may assign no more than 50 min of homework per week (Monday-Thursday).

Teachers may occasionally give students "application" activities to enrich their learning in the real-world setting, such as identifying objects in their home with a particular shape or asking someone a question. Students may bring books to read in their free time and we highly encourage reading to and with your child. Thank you for supporting us in the effort!

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## **Priority Area: Family and Community Engagement**

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.

Our [Foundational Beliefs for Supporting Students Learning](#) include the belief that 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.

### **Family and Community Engagement Measures and Targets**

#### **Three-year Goal:**

Our goal is to increase Family and Community Engagement at Whittier through the use of talking points and languages services that meet the communication needs of multilingual families and will use the fragile family resource team to identify and mitigate financial barriers. We will measure this by comparing conference attendance rates, email engagement percentages (who is opening teacher emails) and attendance at school-wide events.

#### **One-year Goal:**

For the 2023-24 school year we will measure this by comparing conference attendance rates, email engagement percentages (who is opening and responding to teacher emails) and attendance at school-wide events.

## **Student Outcome Focused Governance**

School staff will implement the following Guardrail to create conditions for students to meet the priority Family and Community Engagement Goal.

Guardrail 1: The Superintendent will not allow school and district initiatives to go forth without engaging students of color furthers from educational justice and their families, following stakeholder engagement principles that are utilizing current adopted best practices.

### **Evidence of alignment to student outcome focused governance:**

Our Fragile Family Team, Racial Equity Committee, Positive Behavior Intervention Supports Committee and Creative Advantage Committees and Building Leadership team will ensure the engagement of students of color and their families as stakeholders.

## **Family and Community Engagement Strategies**

Our school completed a comprehensive needs assessment and examined data to identify strategies, processes, procedures, and professional development that will lead to student outcomes aligned to our goals in this priority area. The needs assessment is available upon request from the principal.

### **Professional learning plan that will support implementation of educator development about the power of parents in transforming and improving teacher-parent communication and opportunities for dialogue and understanding:**

Whittier Elementary professional learning will be inclusive of gaining authentic feedback from our families including input into, decision making and educational partnerships. This feedback will guide our professional learning and family engagement opportunities and support us in work to mitigate, disrupt, or dismantle systemic inequities.

### **Culturally responsive strategies, processes, and/or procedures that support sharing power with families to support new structures of parent leadership and centering families' voices are various levels:**

- Family conferences and partnership meetings that are intentionally inclusive of the input, ideas, needs and goals of the family. Creating plans together vs. seeking approval for pre-determined plans.
- Meeting families within the community and inviting families in to provide input and feedback.
- Actively seeking feedback from marginalized families - not relying on standard survey procedures.

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## **Priority Area: Culturally Responsive Workforce**

Our [Foundational Beliefs for Supporting Students Learning](#) include ensuring that we become culturally responsive and anti-racist practitioners.

## **Student Outcome Focused Governance**

School staff will implement the following Guardrail to create conditions for students to meet the priority Culturally Responsive Workforce Goal.

Guardrail 3. The Superintendent will not allow adult behaviors in central office, school buildings, or classrooms that are misaligned with district-wide vision, values, and anti-racism initiatives.

### **Evidence of alignment to student outcome focused governance:**

Guardrail 3 supports Whittier's vision that helps students feel safe, valued, and more ready to learn. When adults entering our building and classrooms

We will actively work as a staff through our Equity training days to remove any cultural biases, focusing on supporting students in culturally responsive teaching.

## **Culturally Responsive Workforce Strategies**

Our school completed a comprehensive needs assessment and examined data to identify strategies, processes, procedures, and professional development that will lead to student outcomes aligned to our goals in this priority area. The needs assessment is available upon request from the principal.

### **Culturally responsive strategies, processes, and/or procedures that support Belonging and Relationships:**

We have monthly staff check-ins through our RET days to ensure that staff have a platform to share about our work around the *Rebellious Read Alouds* text.

### **Culturally responsive strategies, processes, and/or procedures that support a culturally responsive and anti-racist work environment:**

Using our recent staff survey, our RET team learned that staff are hoping to have professional development around different scenarios that come up (such as how to talk to a family who objects to a teacher reading a book about a transgender person). Staff also want to have guest speakers (own voices) come in and present during our RET days. Others would love to have time to gather and organize resources to teach our topics surrounding our culturally responsive lessons with students.

### **Culturally responsive strategies, processes, and/or procedures that support leadership opportunities:**

Our Race and Equity team is comprised of a team of Whittier staff and led by a TLC member. We work closely with our principal and our school PTA to find resources that our school needs, including physical materials (books, curriculum, etc.) as well as relevant training during our RET days.

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## **Budget Allocations to Support Continuous Improvement**

The following describes how the school allocates funds to support and improve student learning.

**Academic Year:** 2023-2024

**Funding Type:** Specific

**Funding Source:** LAP

**Amount:** \$40,000

**How will funds improve student learning?** Reading Intervention

**Academic Year:** 2023-2024

**Funding Type:** Specific

**Funding Source:** PTA

**Amount:** 0.5 FTE

**How will funds improve student learning?** Reading Intervention