

## CPS Inaugural Equity Plan

### Introduction

Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) formally launched the Office of Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (OEIB) in July 2021. The office currently includes both the Equity Office and the Family Engagement Office, which was previously established in 2019. Together, as the OEIB, our goal is to support the CPS mission to eliminate racial, cultural, and socio-economic opportunity gaps that exist throughout the school district, to develop and engage in equitable and meaningful stakeholder engagement practices, and to co-generate plans that will support inclusion and belonging.

The Equity Team spent the summer of 2021 reviewing the many equity-focused initiatives undertaken throughout the district. Over the past several years, CPS and stakeholders throughout CPS (scholars<sup>1</sup>, caregivers<sup>2</sup>, educators, and community members) have implemented multiple equity and racial equity initiatives. As the newly established OEIB, it is both an honor and a humbling responsibility to be charged with building on these efforts and developing and implementing a robust inaugural equity plan focused on advancing our commitment to becoming an anti-racist and anti-bias school district.

The primary goal of the CPS Inaugural Equity Plan is to support the district and school efforts to eliminate racial, cultural, and socio-economic opportunity gaps. CPS commits to providing every scholar in every classroom with a rigorous and culturally responsive student-centered teaching and learning experience. Implementing this plan requires long-term, multi-generational, and multi-faceted initiatives co-developed and facilitated by stakeholders at every level. There are no quick solutions to our challenges, but we believe that with collaborative and sustained efforts by all CPS stakeholders, none of the barriers to equity are insurmountable. This plan is the first iteration of a long-term vision for equity; this work is, by nature, evolving, and future iterations may look different as we learn and design our work together. The goals inherent in this plan will take several years to achieve but, the work must begin now.

To create the CPS Inaugural Equity Plan and goals, the team reviewed the [CPS Vision](#), [CPS Equity and Racial Equity Definitions](#), [CPS Anti-Racist Vision and Mission](#), [Building Equity Bridges \(BEB\) Core Principles](#), [Barriers to Equity in CPS](#), and the [BEB Commitments](#) that the CPS School Committee endorsed. In addition, the office met with and plans to continue centering and amplifying the voices of

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<sup>1</sup>We intentionally use the word scholars, instead of students, to emphasize their roles as both learners and leaders

<sup>2</sup> We intentionally use the word caregivers and not solely parents, to be inclusive of all types of caregivers



scholars, caregivers, and families especially those who have been traditionally marginalized<sup>3</sup> and to continue working in collaboration with district, department, and school leaders and educators. We have also conferred with equity offices in some of our regional school districts.

### **Plan & Goals**

- 1. Support the CPS Vision to provide rigorous, joyful, and culturally responsive learning and personalized support to eliminate the systemic racial, cultural, and socio-economic disparities that exacerbate opportunity gaps.**
  - i. Center and amplify the voices of scholars and educators to ascertain, “What does equitable teaching and learning look like, sound like, and feel like in preschool to post-graduate classrooms?” and incorporate their ideas and feedback to improve teaching and learning experiences and outcomes. *(BEB #5-Youth)*
  - ii. Work in collaboration with other departments to provide professional learning on anti-racism, anti-bias, systems of oppression, intersectionality, centering the history and perspectives of people of color and immigrant communities, and social-emotional learning (skill development, social competency, anxiety, depression, youth development, trauma-sensitive classrooms and engagement, and relationship-building). *(BEB #3-Professional Learning)*
  - iii. Co-curate and maintain, in collaboration with curriculum coordinators, district and school-based coaches, and educators, an up-to-date online bank of pedagogical resources, including culturally responsive and anti-racist teaching materials for educators to use with each other and scholars *(BEB #10-Curriculum)*
  - iv. Provide school leaders and educators with training, resources, and assistance in the implementation of classroom and school-based Equity Self-Assessments so that teams can identify and address inequitable school and classroom practices. *(BEB #3-Professional Learning)*
  - v. Co-develop and facilitate professional learning and training opportunities with Instructional Council, district and school-based coaches, and educators that promote the implementation of a culturally responsive and anti-racist teaching practices to all educators so that all scholars experience consistent and equitable learning experiences. *(BEB #3-Professional Learning)*

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<sup>3</sup>We define marginalized communities as those we traditionally do not hear from including Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), scholars with learning disabilities, emerging multilingual students/English Language Learners, immigrant families, community members with low-income, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community



- 2. Cultivate culturally responsive community engagement and center and amplify the voices of stakeholders that have been traditionally marginalized and incorporate their needs at both school and district-level equity initiatives.**
  - i. Conduct a landscape analysis of all the varied equity-based initiatives in CPS and in the community and build on some of these efforts, such as the Building Equity Bridges Project, and partner with all CPS stakeholder groups (scholars, caregivers, educators, and community members) to continue advancing this critical work. *(BEB #12-Community)*
  - ii. Support the launch of a student-facilitated Youth Equity Leadership Summit, focused on examining “What does equity look like, sound like, and feel like in CPS?” from the youth perspective. These findings will then be used to inform the ongoing work of the office and, where applicable, the work of individual schools and district-level departments. *(BEB #5-Youth)*
  - iii. Provide healing centered engagement opportunities focused on building youth’s leadership skills, self-awareness, and healing (Story Exchange, Student Advisory Council, career internships). *(BEB #5-Youth)*
  - iv. Support and co-create resources and spaces, such as family affinity groups, community conversations, students of color coalition, and advisory groups, that center and amplify the voices of and respond to the needs of stakeholders that have been traditionally marginalized to restore trust and cultivate healing. *(BEB #2-Healing, #5-Youth & #11-Families)*
  - v. Provide and support culturally responsive ways (OEIB Webpage, translated newsletters, interpretation in meetings, videos, events) to communicate with and meet regularly with different stakeholder groups throughout the year, especially groups that have been traditionally marginalized to uplift their voices, restore trust, cultivate alliances, and ensure inclusion. *(BEB #2-Healing, #11-Families & #12-Community Accountability Plan)*
- 3. Create and provide support, coaching, professional learning, and consultation on issues related to educational equity, anti-racist leadership, equity-centered stakeholder engagement, and social-emotional learning to all school, department, and district-level administrators and educators.**
  - i. Co-develop and facilitate professional learning for school, department, and district-level administrators and educators focused on “What does anti-racist leadership and teaching look like, sound like, and feel like in CPS?” Professional learning will include the creation of communities of practices and the sharing of equity-based research and best practices on topics such as centering equity in the workspace, conducting Equity Self-Assessments and Audits, implementing culturally responsive teaching, learning, and family engagement, engaging in restorative justice practices,



supporting affinity groups, cultivating spaces of healing, and collecting and analyzing disaggregated data, etc. (*BEB #3-Professional Learning & #4-Discipline*)

- ii. Support current or assist in the development of Equity Teams at every school site and department to address specific equity-based issues, including those highlighted through Equity Self-Assessments and Audits.

*(BEB #9-Review)*

- iii. Collaborate with school and department Equity Teams to coordinate the execution of Equity Self-Assessments or Equity Audits to assess systems, policies, practices, and curriculum and to create an action plan that actively addresses the issues of inequities highlighted from the Equity Self-Assessments or Equity Audits conducted.

*(BEB #9-Review)*

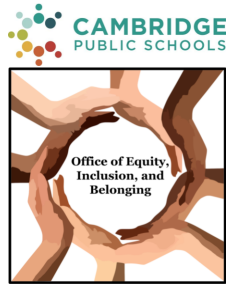
**4. Create an Equity Dashboard to track the progress made on goals identified by the school and department Equity Teams based on the Equity Self-Assessments and Equity Audits.**

- i. Adapt a district, school, and a classroom Equity Self-Assessment or Equity Audit that will be used by school and department Equity Teams to track progress on equity-based goals focused on measures such as instructional practices, student achievement, social-emotional learning, school and classroom culture, student discipline, student and family engagement, hiring practices, and community partnerships. (*BEB #9-Review*)
- ii. Develop and maintain an internal Equity Dashboard that will track the findings of the Equity Self-Assessments and Equity Audits, identify the recommended next steps, goals, and action plan, and highlight the progress made by each school and department. (*BEB #12- Accountability*)
- iii. Develop and institute a multi-pronged anonymous online incident reporting and responding system that will be monitored by the Superintendent's Office. The OEIB will provide all administrators with training on the new reporting and responding system protocol.

*(BEB #1-Incidents)*

**5. Develop and sustain strategic partnerships with academic institutions, community groups, and non-profit organizations to leverage opportunities to collaborate on initiatives focused on centering equity in CPS.**

- i. Define the components of the Community Accountability Plan. (*BEB #12-Accountability*)
- ii. Partner with district stakeholder groups including, but not limited to, the Cambridge Education Association (CEA), Cambridge Families of Asian Descent, Cambridge Families of Color Coalition, CPS Family Engagement Team, Educators of Color Coalition, Equity Collaborative, and school-based equity teams to center equity and inclusion, promote anti-racist practices, support family and



community engagement, and to advance the development of the Community Accountability Plan. *(BEB #12-Accountability)*

- iii. Partner with community groups and institutions including, but not limited to, the Cambridge Agenda For Children Out-Of-School Time, Cambridge Community Foundation, Friday Night Hype, Harvard Graduate School of Education Equity Fellows, MBK-Cambridge, Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC), The Leadership Academy, NAACP, National Consensus Project, Young People’s Project, Breakthrough, Cambridge School Volunteers, Tutoring Plus, and other community partners to collaborate on opportunities to promote antiracist/anti-bias initiatives, social-emotional learning opportunities, support student academic success, and to advance the development of the Community Accountability Plan. *(BEB #12-Accountability)*

**6. Develop and implement a clear organizational commitment and vision to become an anti-racist school district.**

- i. Actively promote the district’s Equity, Racial Equity, and Anti-Racist statements *(BEB #7-Statement)*
- ii. Work with the district, department, and school leaders and in collaboration with youth, educators, and caregivers to actively integrate and sustain the district’s equity, racial equity, and anti-racist statements into school improvement plans, policies, practices, and protocols. *(BEB #7-Statement)*
- iii. Facilitate the execution of Equity Self-Assessments with district, department and school-based Equity Teams to assess district-wide, department-based, and school-based systems, policies, practices, protocols, and curriculum and actively address issues of inequities highlighted *(BEB #9-Review)*
- iv. Coordinate consultant-led Equity Audits in schools, where needed. *(BEB #9-Review)*
- v. Identify CPS policies to be considered by the School Committee for revision to better center equity. *(BEB #9-Review)*



**\* BEB Commitments previously enacted:**

- BEB # 7 - Developed an Anti-Racism Statement
- BEB # 8 - Created an Office of Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

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**OEIB Definitions:**

**Achievement gaps** refer to any significant, persistent disparities in academic performance between groups of students, based on income level, race, language, or program participation.

**Anti-bias lens** refers to an intentional approach designed to increase understanding of differences and to center equity and actively challenge bias, stereotypes, and all forms of discrimination.

**Anti-racist lens** refers to an intentional focus by schools that acknowledges that racist beliefs, structures, and anti-Blackness sentiment are pervasive in education and requires schools to actively work to dismantle those beliefs and structures.

**Equity lens** refers to is a process for analyzing the impact of the design and implementation of policies and procedures on under-served and marginalized individuals and groups, and to identify and potentially eliminate barriers.

**Opportunity gaps** refer to gaps in access to resources, programs, etc.

**Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)** is the process through which all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.