



**Croton-Harmon**  
*Equity Stakeholder*  
*Team*

## *Context for the work:*

- Initial phase of this work
- Phase 2 and alignment with a national imperative
- Community conversation, October 2020
- Administrative council training and coaching
- Board goal discussion
- Board retreat
- All-staff professional development
- Student leader sessions
- Equity stakeholder team

## *Purpose of the Equity Stakeholder Team*

The CHUFSD Equity Stakeholder Team began meeting during this year with the explicit purpose of promoting community that shares a language and commitment to equity and racial justice; affording representative stakeholders a voice in school climate and district climate; serving as an accountability mechanism for monitoring and addressing disparities in attendance, achievement, discipline, access, opportunity, and lived experience in the district.

# *Croton-Harmon Equity Stakeholder Team Members*

**Andrea Furey**

**Maria Modica-Snow**

**Anamika Bhatnagar**

**Erica Adler**

**Iris Bugliosi**

**Tom Faranda**

**Claire Hilbert**

**Karin Sansaricq**

**Joshua Diamond**

**Tully McGowan**

**Dana Sunshine Moldovan**

**Leah O'Donnell**

**Deborah August**

**Sherry Horowitz**

**Deslyn Dyer**

**Liz Poling-Hiraldo**

**Deborah O'Connell**

**Natalie Zwerger**

**Jessica Dieckman**

**Sarah Deri Oshiro**

**Kerri Bianchi**

**Alyssa Gonzalez**

**Kenna Weiner**

**Abigail Dixon**

**Laura Dubak**

**Joseph Pascarelli**

**Michael Mui**

**Aliyah Simpson**

**Michael Plotkin**

**Kira Herbert**

**Benjamin Faber**

**Kate Bretas**

**Jackie Burton**

**Marlena Horton**

**Dana Dago-Clark**

**Michael Armati**

**Kendra Shedenhelm**

**Johanna Mustacchi**

**Elisa Rader**

**Paige Jones**

**Lisa Bogdan**

**Adam Moore**

**Elisha Simpson**

**Rose Schupack-Dias**

**Valeria Montenegro**

## *Purpose of the Equity Stakeholder Team*

The Equity Stakeholder Team engaged in critical self and collective reflection, capacity-building, shared narrative and experience, and reviewed best practices and research on promoting equity and racial justice from districts around the country.

Leveraging the brilliance of the community, the team settled on 5 top areas to design recommendations for the district. Over a number of months, the team fleshed out the ideas to be presented to you this evening.

The team will be forming sub-committees in each of these 5 areas to ensure there is a structure and support to operationalize the goals below.

## *Climate Consciousness - overview*

*In order to develop climate consciousness, students, parents, educators, and the community must feel safe, supported, and able to learn and grow together over time in CHUFSD. In order for this to happen, for this assessment of, and response to, the pulse of the lived experiences of district community members, individuals must feel heard and represented, and confident that their story matters.*

# *Climate Consciousness - goals*

## **Short-term goals (1-2 years)**

- The district will work collaboratively with each building to establish an Equity Team. This will include diverse, representative stakeholders including teachers, staff, administrators, community members, parents, and students (at the secondary level) and will work to develop a climate consciousness that attends to the varied and often unheard lived experiences of students, families, teachers, staff, and administrators.
- Each Equity Team will ensure that district community members know why assessing and addressing climate is essential and create staff meetings and professional development sessions as forums to embed awareness of and dialogue about school climate.
- Conduct a climate survey and benchmark the climate survey touching on expectations- students' expectations for their own academic destinations- to help us reflect on alignment or misalignment with our expectations for students.

## **Long-term goals (3-5 years)**

- Stakeholders will be surveyed annually and more informal mechanisms for climate assessment will be used frequently. Building Equity Committees will conduct regular walkthroughs. Community-building efforts through restorative practices will be embedded in the fabric of each building.

## *Curriculum - overview*

*We must strive for a representative, responsive curriculum that attends to the race, ethnicity, language, country of origin, gender, sexuality, ability, culture, and religion of Croton-Harmon students and the community at large, while supporting teachers to use anti-bias, anti-racist, and anti-oppressive pedagogy. This approach must include a Welcoming and Affirming Environment, High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction, Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment, and Ongoing Professional Learning and be in line with the New York State Culturally Responsive- Sustaining Education Framework (2019).*

# *Curriculum - goals*

## **Short-term goals (1-2 years)**

- District teams representing all three schools will identify a scalable and iterative strategy for auditing curricular materials. This work will unfold with the support of the Equity Team during the 2021-22 school years.
- The district team will develop:
  - ✓ A process for evaluating assessments at every grade level with respect to equity and inclusion;
  - ✓ A pilot project with early adopters to use a self-assessment tool to evaluate books, classroom resources and practices, library materials being used and whether they represent accurate history, current experience, and the global community. The self-assessment is piloted among early adopters in 2021-22, while other staff are trained and will start using these self assessments in the 2022-23 school year.
  - ✓ A published index of tools and avenues for student participation in matters related to equity and inclusion.

## **Long-term goals (3-5 years)**

- All three schools will utilize a scalable and iterative strategy for auditing curricular materials into their building level action plans. This work will unfold with the support of the Equity Team during the 22-23 and 23-24 school years.
- There are opportunities for professional learning and capacity-building for teachers and staff. Teachers are afforded forums to deeply dive into curriculum and identify opportunities to promote multiple perspectives and diverse teaching strategies.

## *Hiring and retention practices - overview*

*If we want our graduates to contribute to a world that is increasingly more equitable and diverse, we need the environments in which they learn to be a microcosm of that world. Our schools must be a place where all students can see themselves reflected in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, language, and ability, in the adult world around them. Every child should have adults with whom they can identify.*

# *Hiring and retention practices - goals*

## **Short-term goals (1-2 years)**

Our goal is to find a diverse pool of qualified candidates reflective of our global community. In furtherance of this goal, we recommend CHUFSD:

- Hire candidates with diverse life experiences and skills as listed in the description of the position being hired;
- Look to recruit those of various races, ethnicities, genders, sexualities, religions, abilities, and native languages;
- Onboard and support candidates as they move through the early years of their career;
- Engage with new hires and set up mentorship opportunities; and
- Keep central to our mission of a commitment to ensuring that employees have a full opportunity to thrive.

*CHUFSD should:*

- Review recent hiring data and measure the impact of participating in the 2021 Diversity Job Fair.
- Expand searches beyond OLAS.
- Review and define bias for interview committees.
- Be conscious of the vendors with whom we partner, as well as the performers, speakers, and authors who are invited in to interact with the children.
- Review & update interview questions and scenarios used to elicit candidate's understanding of and commitment to promoting equity and CR-SE.
- Redefine mentorship and foster professional spaces where people can interact and share their lived experiences.

## **Long-term goals (3-5 years)**

- Set measurable tangible outcomes for hiring with a goal of increasing underrepresented populations.
- Examine our approaches to hiring to deconstruct how our efforts to diversify can be more impactful. Specifically, note how community, regional, and global connections and networks can support future efforts.
- Begin a practice of collecting feedback from recent hires on their experience with the hiring process and onboarding in the district.
- Conduct exit interviews of staff to collect data on their experiences.
- Develop ways to foster an environment attractive to educators from underrepresented populations.

# *Parent, guardian, and community engagement - overview*

*We want our children, parents, and community to have access to the full and diverse perspectives that exist within our growing community to learn from each other, and to feel and be included in their education through active engagement.*

*The BOE should create a policy that clearly states how we intend to (a) listen, (b) communicate, and (c) co-design an engagement strategy for the benefit of students, parents/guardians, and community members at large. The policy should include but not be limited to:*

- Offering multiple forms of listening (town halls, emails, posters, multiple languages);*
- Varied events and timing with responsive communication; and*
- Periodic review of the policy based on student, parent, community feedback.*

# *Parent, guardian, and community engagement - goals*

## **Short-term goals (1-2 years)**

- Send a communication [by September] to reiterate the **why** of our efforts to the full Croton community, **when** they can expect us to reach out to get their perspective, and **how** they'll be able to do that;
- Develop parent-specific communication format and timing for 2021/2022; and
- Share the *NYS Board of Regents Call to Action on DEI & Policy Statement* with parents consistently and ensure they are aware of the *NYSED Culturally Responsive- Sustaining Education Framework*.

## **Long-term goals (3-5 years)**

- Prepare students who are well-equipped to live and lead in a diverse world.

## *Professional development - overview*

*Embed professional development opportunities for all district staff to develop an equity lens that they employ daily to identify and address the impact of race and bias, ethnicity, language, country of origin, gender, sexuality, ability, religion, and socioeconomics in all spaces in the CHUFSD. There is a need to be slow and thoughtful in our work and process while at the same time acknowledging that there is an urgency to the work for our students. Through professional development and coaching, our staff will develop shared language, practices, understanding, and tools and grow as teachers and learners as we learn to educate through an equity lens.*

# *Professional development - goals*

## **Short-term goals (1-2 years)**

- *Phase 1:* Identify key priorities at buildings that need to be addressed immediately. Support intervisitations to other classes for teachers to see early adopters taking on this work.
- *Phase 2:* Yearlong professional development plan should be centered on this work. Directed experiences throughout the year to develop ourselves with spaces to talk about and process our learning on an ongoing basis. Consider a community conference event to have students, parents, and staff attend.
- *Phase 3:* After self assessment/curriculum audit, there should be opportunities for summer curriculum work projects. Create standing affinity groups to engage with at multiple points along the way.

## **Long-term goals (3-5 years)**

- Every faculty/staff member participate in some coaching with a small specific group with someone trained as a facilitator.
- Conduct the curriculum audit through an asset-based lens to develop recommendations for change and allocate resources to support the recommendations.
- Use grade level teams and departmental structures as forums for professional learning.
- Build capacity for staff leaders to be “equity leaders” to continue to develop and turnkey over time.
- Offer learning opportunities during new teacher training.
- Ultimately, we will see the work in the classroom and curriculum maps (post curriculum audit).



*Members of  
The Equity Stakeholder Team  
share their experiences*

## *Next steps*

- Share this presentation and committee findings with the Board of Education
- Engage the Board of Education in discussion to gather their feedback and endorsement of this work
- Share this work with faculty and staff
- Communicate with our entire community the “WHY” and “WHEN”
- Prioritize recommendations for short and long term action
- Continue and expand the District Equity Stakeholder Team
- Create Equity Teams to support each building in this work
- Engage the curriculum leaders in this work to date
- Continually evaluate our progress through the lens of cultural responsiveness and culturally-relevant teaching



*Questions?*



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