Black Excellence Resolution: Overview

SLT Preview: 10/09/2020

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DPS Statement

Our Superintendent and the Senior Leadership Team stands with the Board as we take action and speak about our commitment to justice and support for our Black and African American students. Equity starts from the top. We have outlined below an acknowledgment of harm that has been done, what we believe is foundational to change and what we commit to do now, and for years to come, because we know one message, one statement, one training will not undo years of harm, trauma and racism. If we take action now for our Black students, leaders and educators, we will achieve our vision and ensure All students succeed.

Equity Statement *(Proposed)*

Racial and Educational Equity is our collective responsibility. We will achieve equity when we dismantle deeply rooted systems of oppression that have historically resulted in inequitable access and distribution of opportunities and resources for those who represent marginalized identities, including race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, language and ability. We will create conditions where we all belong, are included, have clear purpose (why) and have the autonomy to lead in our respective areas. By creating these conditions, we will eliminate the predictability of success or failure for our students and team members.

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Our Equity Approach

When we,

- **recognize**, **acknowledge** and **honor** communities, cultures and lived experiences
- **know** the public education system is inequitable and historically rooted in white, heteronormative, Eurocentric culture
- **accept** that our equity work is a journey and not a destination
- **center** and respond to the lived experiences of our most marginalized communities to create equity for all

Then we will be able to,

- **commit** to decentering these systems as the norm and to unlearn the beliefs, mindsets, and practices that create these structural and institutional barriers
- **lead** from an asset based mindset to eliminate predictability of student outcomes and success
- **redistribute** resources to our most marginalized students, families and team members

So that we,

dismantle oppressive systems and **structures** rooted in racism, and **center our most marginalized students** and **team members**, with a focus on racial and educational equity.

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Equity Cornerstone Goal

Dismantle oppressive systems and structures rooted in racism, and center our most marginalized students and team members, with a focus on racial and educational equity.

- Build asset based mindsets centering lived experience and unlearn beliefs, mindsets and practices that create barriers

- Address inequitable systems, structures policies and practices

- Establish a culture of shared ownership for equity

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Aligned Work

Start of a Strategy Description	The Work Lots of work is going on across the district which will help achieve the Equity Cornerstone goal. This list is not complete or final.	
Build asset based mindsets centering lived experience and unlearn beliefs, mindsets and practices that create barriers	• Equity Experience • Equity Leadership Development (NYCLA) • Harvard/RIDES coaching • CRE Mindsets	• Trauma Informed Practice Trainings • Transformative SEL (Equity, Anti-Racism, Culturally and Linguistically Responsive, Trauma Informed)
Address inequitable systems, structures policies and practices	• School data audits • Central Office audits • Affective Needs support redesign • CRE curriculum revisions • Become a 1:1 device district	• Expansion of Behavior Barriers Team supports • Advanced coursework opportunities
Establish a culture of shared ownership for equity	• STL equity commitment • Shared creation, lift and accountability for equity work • Setting personal equity goals	• Ongoing communication around what it means for equity to be our core identity • CRE work in schools

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Priority #4: Equity

Under Construction

	Leading Indicators	Outcome Measures
Black Excellence Plans	# of Black Excellence Resolution plans completed in the School Strategic Planning Process	X% of schools showing improvement on the following disparity data indicators for Black students: A. Increase in GT identification/rigorous course enrollment B. Decrease in SPED identification and disciplinary referrals C. *Increase in feelings of connection and belonging as reported by students and families' on perception surveys*
Equity Experience	# of team members who complete year 1 (cohort 2) of the Equity Experience # of team members who complete year 2 of the Equity Experience and team equity projects	X% increase in asset based mindsets using baseline data from Equity Experience year 1

Black Excellence Resolution (BER)

In response to the Black Excellence Resolution, the Culture, Equity and Leadership Team (CELT) is leading work and collaborating with other teams in DPS to respond to the asks.

This includes:

| The Ask	The Response
Implicit Bias Training for ALL members of Team DPS	The Equity Experience
Black Excellence Plans	School Strategic Planning Template-dedicated tab for Black Excellence Student Data Audit Protocol

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The Equity Experience

- A **9-month personal journey** to dig deep into our **beliefs, mindsets, histories,** and **behaviors**

- Build our internal capacity to **self-reflect** and **uncover biases and hidden spots** to **transform** the way we think and act.

- An opportunity to **build foundational knowledge**, **common expectations** and **terminology** across DPS
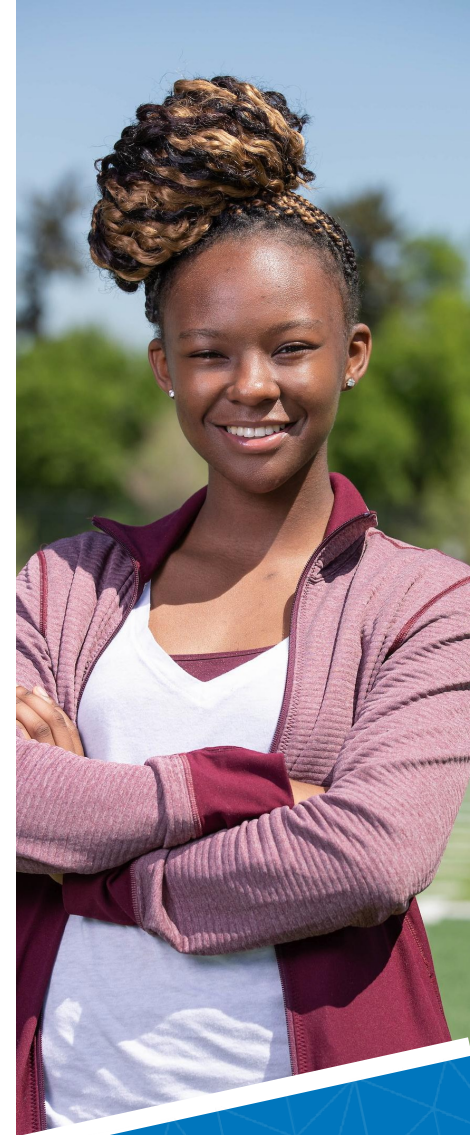
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The Equity Experience

	Cohort 1 1,208 Team Members	Cohort 2 2,187 Team Members
Enrolled	• All Central Office LIFT Team members	• All School Leaders and ILT members • Newly hired LIFT Team Members • Select whole-schools* and non-LIFT central teams*
SY 2019-2020	**Year 1: Modules 1-9** Completion rate:686.31%	n/a
SY 2020-2021	**Year 2: 3 additional Modules & development of an Equity Project**	**Year 1: Modules 1-9**

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*Select whole-schools participating in Cohort 2

- Centennial
- College View
- DCIS at Fairmont
- Farrell B. Howell
- Florence Crittenton
- Hamilton
- Martin Luther King Jr
- Montbello Career and Tech
- North
- North Engagement Center
- Trevista at Horace Mann
- Summit Academy
- Balarat

*Non-LIFT Central Teams participating in Cohort 2

- Denver Math Fellows
- Department of Social Work & Psychological Services
- Low Incidence Disability Team

Mindset Survey Results

Equity Experience Summary

- 68% of Equity Experience participants completed all nine modules and the average completion rate for each participant was 88%.
- On average, there was a **four percentage point increase in team member asset-based and culturally responsive mindsets** after completing the Equity Experience (as measured by pre-/post- mindset survey data)
  - Larger shifts occurred in recognition of being color-brave vs. color-blind.
- **Greater percent** of participants reported **shifts in beliefs and/or actions following completion of the later modules**.
  - The **percent of team members reporting shifts occurred to a moderate or great extent increased with each module**, ending with around three-quarters reporting so in module 9.
  - Many reported **greater awareness and understanding** or that they **learned something new**
- Some participants expressed concerns with **technical challenges**, while several expressed that content was review of previous knowledge, and a smaller number expressed pushback on the experience itself

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Mindset Survey Results

81% of Equity Experience participants indicated that they have become more asset-based and culturally responsive over the past year.

In open-ended responses, nearly half of participants expressed changes by having greater awareness and knowledge.

Which of the following statements best describes how your mindset has changed over the past year?	#	%
"I have become less asset-based and culturally responsive than I was before."	25	3%
"I am just as asset-based and culturally responsive as I was before."	120	14%
"I have become more asset-based and culturally responsive than I was before."	**669**	**81%**
Other	14	2%

Open-Response Code	%
realization/ learnings/ more knowledge/ awareness/ understanding/ insight	45%
tools, skills, and language; better prepared or equipped; strategies	12%
reflection/ questioning/ processing	10%
change action/ behavior	6%
No change	5%
change attitude/ mindset/ paradigm/ perspective	4%
General appreciation for modules/ DPS approach	3%
more commitment/ passion	2%
change in comfort level	1%

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Mindset Survey Results

...After this module, I am **more aware** of how often we accept single stories and how they shape our view of the world.

Being complacent is contributing to the problem

*It was interesting to **reflect on my previous behaviors** in the different roles I have played in the district*

*I **already feel** that I accept individuals with other gender and cultural identities*

confronted beliefs I was unaware of

*gave words and **legitimacy to my experiences** as a person of color*

*Learning about the **appropriate use of pronouns** was very helpful*

*I am **more conscious** of being "ableist"*

*I am **more conscious** now that I **have many biases** and need to work on identifying them*

*I didn't realize the **damage I contribute myself when internalizing racism** while interacting with my white counterparts. It shows up in ways that I didn't realize in all my pro blackness. I am a contributing member of the broken system*

*I **always thought that white supremacy was limited to group of radical individuals** but as a white male I see that **I'm part of** the non radical **white supremacy group**. This means that I need to make changes to my fundamental beliefs.*

I appreciate the sentence stems to help continue or being a dialogue. I will be working to employ those in my conversations.

*Understanding that being in **silence is not being polite** - it is being complicit to inequalities*

*science behind our thinking **helped explain bias more deeply** and how to interrupt those damaging thoughts.*

*this was **not at all new** to me*

*this was the **most impactful module** for me.*

I think the sentence stems are a useful and applicable tool to give space and validate the perspective and lived experiences of people of color.

*...the **strategies of facilitating difficult race conversations is a useful tool** that can be realistically implemented in teams and classrooms*

*I have become **more active** in my day-to-day life in **addressing racist actions and attitudes** in my friends and families. We talk on our DPS team more about race/racism white supremacy than previously.*

*Based on how I was able to **relate to this module, I did not experience a large shift** in my beliefs*

Equity Projects

- Focal point of **year 2** of the Equity Experience

- Provide team members an opportunity to **apply their learning** from year 1 to a project that will **dismantle and rebuild** an inequitable structure, practice or policy within their sphere of influence

- Team members **will learn more** about the Equity Projects this Fall

- We will **officially launch** Equity Projects in **January**, with design and development through the spring semester

- Our goal is to **showcase the progress** of each team's Equity Project in **June, 2021**

- In **partnership** with the **Impact Team**

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Black Excellence Plans (BEP)
Student Data Audits

Purpose: **assess gaps** and plan to **increase academic excellence**

- **Disparity data**
- **School Strategic Planning Template**
- **BER Student Data Protocol**
  - Includes **recommendations** on:
    - Unpacking disparity data
    - Suggested resources to support the 'why' Black students
    - Resources to conduct root cause analysis
    - How to communicate and prep a team to engage in the work
- Additional Supports
  - Open Houses
  - Principal Consultancies

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BEP: District-Wide Indicators

- In **partnership** with the **Schools Team**

- Recognize **RAIS/RISE team** are the **experts** and ultimately **accountability** is within their scope

- Focused on f**inalizing district wide indicators** and **metrics** to progress monitor through the school year

- Will include the **indicators,** a system for monitoring and key dates for BEP review

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Thank you!

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Appendix
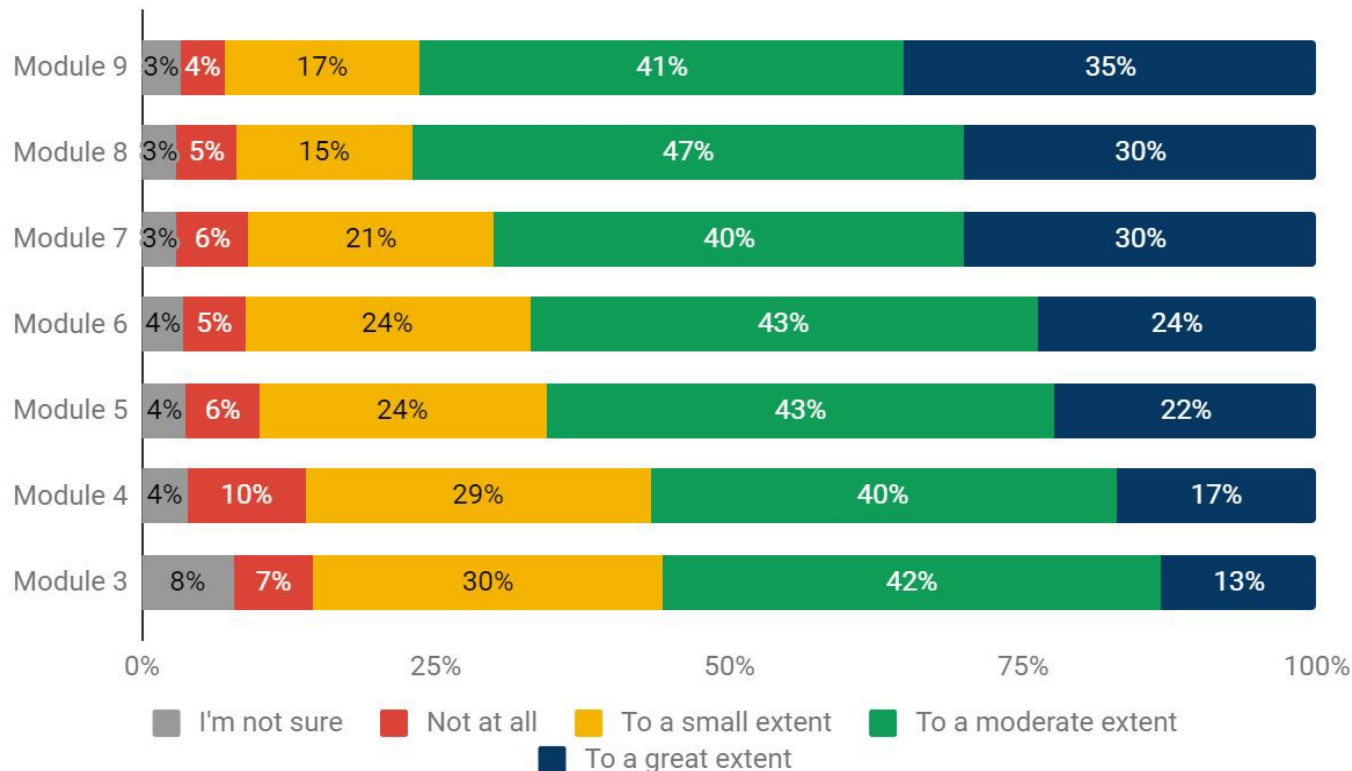
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Mindset Survey Results

Participants reporting changes in beliefs and/or actions increased with each module.

Did you experience a shift in your beliefs and/or actions after completing this module?

Module	I'm not sure	Not at all	To a small extent	To a moderate extent	To a great extent
Module 9	3%	4%	17%	41%	35%
Module 8	3%	5%	15%	47%	30%
Module 7	3%	6%	21%	40%	30%
Module 6	4%	5%	24%	43%	24%
Module 5	4%	6%	24%	43%	22%
Module 4	4%	10%	29%	40%	17%
Module 3	8%	7%	30%	42%	13%

Legend: ⬜ I'm not sure   🟥 Not at all   🟨 To a small extent   🟩 To a moderate extent   🟦 To a great extent

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Mindset Survey Results

Overall, there was a ~four percentage point increase in team member asset-based and culturally responsive mindsets.

Greatest shifts in DPS team member mindsets were related to color-blindness. Following completion of the Equity Experience, there was nearly a twenty point change in team member mindsets changing from color-blind to color-brave.

		Asset-Based Mindset Metric (Mean of 5 Factors)	Factor 1: "Individual and Social Responsibility"	Factor 2: "Color-Blindness"	Factor 3: "Cultural Explanations Inequality"	Factor 4: "District Obligation to the Differently Abled"	Factor 5: "Gender and LGBTQ+"
PRE	N = 760	78.0%	89.8%	58.0%	84.7%	88.3%	69.3%
POST	N = 844	81.9%	92.5%	77.6%	84.2%	87.0%	68.0%
Change		**3.9%**	**2.7%**	**19.6%**	**-0.5%**	**-1.3%**	**-1.3%**

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Equity Experience Year 1 Completion Report

Overall Completion - 68% of participants (821/1208) completed the Equity Experience, meaning they completed each of the nine modules.

Division	% Completed	Avg. Completion	# Participants
Operations	71%	91%	511
Academics	67%	88%	254
Equity & Engagement	70%	90%	252
Chief Schools Department	54%	77%	106
Impact Office	72%	88%	32
Chief of Staff / Communication	55%	70%	31
Legal	62%	84%	13
Portfolio Management	44%	60%	9
Total	**68%**	**88%**	**1208**

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Priority #4: Equity

We will know we are successful when we see team members across DPS:

- Changing the ways in which they **talk about and reference** students and families
- Self-report **shifts in their beliefs, mindsets and behaviors**
- Engage in **conversations centered on race** and educational equity
- Know when they are **perpetuating systems of oppression**, and can **disrupt** and **dismantle t**hose practices
- Can **articulate what it means for racial and educational equit**y to be our core identity
- Deepening their **commitment** to our **Shared Core Value**