FOCUS ON ACHIEVEMENT
CLOSING THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

MAY 4, 2017
THE DENVER PLAN 2020

GOAL #1
Great Schools in Every Neighborhood

GOAL #2
A Foundation for Success in School

GOAL #3
Ready for College and Career

GOAL #4
Support for the Whole Child

GOAL #5
Close the Opportunity Gap
One of our five key goals in the Denver Plan 2020 is to close the opportunity gap:

- By 2020, the graduation rate for African-American and Latino students will increase by 25 percentage points.
- By 2020, reading and writing proficiency for third-grade African-American and Latino students will increase by 25 percentage points.

All of our students deserve access to educational opportunities that allow them to achieve at the highest levels.
Consider

How will DPS mount a multidimensional response to the multidimensional challenges posed by persistent and pervasive opportunity gaps?
DPS HAS CONSISTENTLY CALLED FOR CLOSING OPPORTUNITY GAPS

By 2020, the graduation rate for African-American and Latino students will increase by 25 points.

Reading and writing proficiency for third-grade African-American and Latino students will increase by 25 percentage points.

Vision of a DPS Classroom:
• Celebrate the diversity of our students
• Ensure every student is known and appreciated for the gifts she/he brings

Vision of a DPS Graduate:
• I use my native language and culture as an asset.
• I value and embrace cultural and linguistic diversity.

DPS has defined one of its shared core values as Equity. The district has a vital role in establishing expectations and practices to ensure equity for all students, especially those with the greatest needs and fewest privileges.
THE OPPORTUNITY GAP ACROSS THE COUNTRY

NAEP Results - 4th-Grade Reading

- White Student
- Black Students
- Latino Students
THE OPPORTUNITY GAP IN COLORADO

3rd Graders Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on Literacy

![Graph showing the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations on literacy for White, African-American, and Latino students in 2015 and 2016.](#)
3rd Graders Meeting or Exceeding Expectations on Literacy

THE OPPORTUNITY GAP IN DPS

Denver Plan Goal

- White Students: 60% (2015), 58% (2016)
- African-American and Latino Students: 18% (2015), 19% (2016)
COMBINATIONS OF RACE, POVERTY, LANGUAGE AND DISABILITY STATUS IMPACT STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Academic Proficiency (2016)

76% of white students who are not low income and do not have a disability achieved academic proficiency.

The proficiency rate decreases for English learners and African-American students who are not low income and do not have a disability, and declines even further for African-American students who are low income and African-American students who have a disability.

Only 2% of low-income African-American students with disabilities achieved proficiency.

Source: CELT Equity Bootcamp, November 2016.
Average of ELA and Math proficiency rates for each subgroup.
WE MUST ACCELERATE PROGRESS FOR UNDERSERVED STUDENT GROUPS IN ORDER TO MEET OUR GOALS

We have made slower progress toward our vision, Every Child Succeeds, for students of color than white students, and no progress for students with disabilities.

Math Proficiency

Includes grades 3-9 for all DPS schools.
AS WE PREPARE FOR THE NEW GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS, WE ARE CONTINUING TO FOCUS ON GAPS IN COLLEGE READINESS

Notes: These college ready rates cannot be compared to on-time graduation rates because college ready rates include all graduates. Data for ELL students does not include those who were exited or redesignated at any point before graduation.
TARGETED UNIVERSALISM:
The framework through which we will establish the transformational equity work we need in all of our strategies

Targeted Universalism involves setting a single universal goal for all students and then adopting targeted tactics that are aligned with the unique situation of each subgroup.

1. Set a universal goal.
2. Assess progress as a whole toward the universal goal.
3. Assess progress of each subgroup toward the universal goal.
4. Understand the unique situation of each subgroup.
5. Adopt targeted tactics for each subgroup to reach the universal goal, aligned with their unique circumstances.

Video overview of targeted universalism (3 min.):
http://haasinstitute.berkeley.edu/targeteduniversalism

Note: Log in with your dpsk12.net Google account to view the video.
Early literacy

Students who are on grade level in reading and writing in the third grade are four times more likely to graduate on time.

• Yet, currently fewer than 1/4 of our students of color are on grade level in reading and writing in third grade.

DPS’ Early Literacy initiative focuses on building an essential foundation for our kids.

• It includes additional training and supports for teachers working with our highest-needs students that will help close opportunity gaps for these students.
College and career readiness

We want to ensure that all our students are well-prepared for college and career upon graduation.

To do this, we are:

• Dramatically expanding access to college level courses, such as concurrent enrollment and advanced placement courses.

• Expanding professional workplace experiences while students are in high school, through our innovative CareerConnect program.
Great teachers and leaders

Nothing is more important to the success of our kids than the quality of our teachers:
• Attract and retain great teachers.
• Encourage them to serve in our highest-needs schools.
• Give them supports and coaching.
• Similarly invest in developing school leaders.

Parents and families

The role you play is vital. You are our most important partners.
• Working to strengthen relationships between families and teachers.
• Expanding efforts like the nation’s largest Parent Teacher Home Visit program.
HOW IS DPS WORKING TO ELIMINATE THE GAP?

English language learners

- Dedicated English language development for every English language learner
- Bilingual education
- Seal of Biliteracy
Building a culture of equity

Equity is a Shared Core Value – and a shared responsibility of all our educators.

- Listening to the experiences of our students and educators of color – Dr. Bailey’s Report.
- Inclusive Practices school cohorts to develop and share data-driven practices for improving outcomes.
DPS HAS SEVERAL INITIATIVES TO BUILD MINDSET AND BELIEFS ACROSS MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS

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# Targeted Universalism

We can leverage existing tools at all levels to apply Targeted Universalism to close opportunity gaps.

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VOICES FROM THE FIELD

Amy Gile, High Tech Elementary
Shane Knight, Knapp Elementary
Pam Kirk, Asbury Elementary
Renard Simmons, Denver Center for 21st Century Learning
Christian de la Oliva, John F. Kennedy High School
Kaci Coats, Strive Prep
DISCUSSION

• How do you utilize the existing school systems and school planning process to accelerate closure of the opportunity and achievement gaps? (Think about in terms of mindsets and beliefs AND skills and practice)

• What strategies have been most successful for you in supporting different student groups, reducing or avoiding gaps? What supports are you missing from the central office?

• What challenges do you see in your school, and the district as a whole, in being ready to lead for equity?

• How has the introduction of the Equity Indicator influenced work in your school?
OUR ASK TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

For all Denver Plan strategies & supports that we implement, are we asking:
How is this going to help our students affected by the opportunity gap?
PRE-READING
STUDENT OUTCOME GAPS
Academic Proficiency

CMAS Proficiency (2016)

ELA

Math

District Average: 36%

District Average: 29%

Includes all grades 3-9 for all DPS schools.
STUDENT OUTCOME GAPS
Academic Growth

CMAS Growth (2016)

ELA MGP

Math MGP

District MGP: 55

District MGP: 51

Includes all grades 3-9 for all DPS schools.
GAPS IN THE PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS READING SIGNIFICANTLY BELOW GRADE LEVEL INCREASE FROM K TO 3RD GRADE.

SBGL stands for “Significantly Below Grade Level” in reading. Low-income students as measured by free or reduced lunch. Based on Fall 2016 READ Act assessment.
Chronic absenteeism is defined as less than 90% attendance (missing 17 or more days of school). Attendance data for 2016-17 as of March 23. Includes students present in October count.
OSS rates have seen substantial decreases over the past 10 years.

*The 2015-2016 data has not been submitted via the annual SDA submission. This data is based on the most severe resolution, and is subject to change.*
Student Outcome Gaps
OSS Disproportionality

In March, 54% of schools had eliminated significant disproportionalities in OSS rates among subgroups.

Out-of-School Suspension (Middle School)

OSS is highest in middle school across almost all subgroups.

OSS rates have decreased across all subgroups over the last 10 years, but significant disproportionalities remain.

Percentage of middle school students who received at least one out of school suspension in 2016-17, as of March 23.
Student Outcome Gaps
GT Identification Disproportionality

Gifted/Talented Identification Rate

District Average: 12%

Based on 2016 October count.
Student Outcome Gaps
SpEd Identification Disproportionality

Special Education Identification Rate

District Average: 11%

Based on 2016 October count.
CMAS Proficiency for **GT Students** (2016)

### ELA

- District Average: 80%

### Math

- District Average: 69%

Includes all grades 3-9 for all DPS schools.
Students with Disabilities
SWD have better outcomes when students without disabilities do well.

Each dot represents a single school.

More students with disabilities achieve academic proficiency at schools where the students without disabilities are doing well.

This reflects that students with disabilities spend the majority of their time with general education teachers, as well as the importance of the quality of tier 1 instruction in the general education classroom for students with disabilities.

Percentage of students who met or exceeded expectations on CMAS in 2016. Schools with fewer than 16 students with or without disabilities are not shown. Includes all grades 3-9.
Gaps in academic proficiency have been growing over time, and achievement for students with disabilities has been stagnant for the last decade.
CMAS: Students with Disabilities
DPS versus the State for students with and without disabilities
The components of the equity indicator can identify the specific subgroups for which schools have challenges.

Schools do not necessarily struggle to support every subgroup.

Schools highlighted in red, here, have challenges supporting **English learners**.

**Isabella Bird** has challenges supporting **low-income students**, but not **English learners**.

Schools highlighted in orange, here, have challenges supporting **low-income students**.
The equity indicator identifies specific areas for targeted support.

Schools may struggle to support some student subgroups but not others.

Schools highlighted in blue, here, have challenges supporting **students of color**.

Southmoor Elementary has challenges supporting **students of color**, but not **students with disabilities**.

Schools highlighted in purple, here, have challenges supporting **students with disabilities**.

Lowry Elementary has challenges supporting **students of color**, but not **students with disabilities**.

Lowry Elementary has challenges supporting **students with disabilities**, but not **students of color**.

Schools Ordered by **Student of Color** Measures

Schools Ordered by **Student with Disability** Measures
How are we monitoring the results of our schools’ efforts to improve equity for all students? The use of an equity indicator in our School Performance Framework helps accomplish this in the following ways:

- **Pulls apart data** to show how well schools are serving all students in the areas of math, literacy, science and English language acquisition, and assists in identifying which subgroups are most in need of support.

- **Spotlights the opportunity gaps** that exist in even the highest-performing schools, so that schools can focus supports to improve academic achievement for all students.

- **Creates urgency** around school and community efforts to:
  - Provide equitable resources and supports to all students.
  - Eliminate performance disparities between students.
  - Eliminate postsecondary outcome disparities between students.

*While we recognize the equity indicator is not in itself, a guarantee of effective action at the school level, we believe it plays an important role.*
THE EQUITY INDICATOR IDENTIFIES SCHOOLS WITH DISTINCT CHALLENGES THAT ARE NOT HIGHLIGHTED BY THE OVERALL SPF

Schools highlighted in light blue, here, have low overall SPF scores.

Despite being green on the SPF overall, Denver Montessori Jr HS faces substantial equity challenges, highlighted by the equity indicator.

Schools highlighted in dark blue, here, have low equity indicator scores.
SOME DPS INITIATIVES UNDERWAY TO ADDRESS GAPS

SPF Equity Indicator
• Intensifies schools’ focus on achievement gaps.

Targeted Supports for English Learners
• Including: high-quality ELD implementation, high-quality bilingual program implementation, Seal of Biliteracy and increasing enrollment of ELs in ECE.

Supports for Students with Disabilities
• Improving instruction, increasing meaningful access to general education, earlier identification, increasing graduation rates and promoting meaningful parent and student engagement.

College and Career Readiness for Students with Disabilities
• Building a coherent four-year support plan over the course of high school to improve readiness and graduation rates for students with disabilities.
• ACEConnect and Transitions team has a 94% graduation rate for students with disabilities who have participated in their internships and career readiness program.
• Reading clinics program has helped students who are multiple years behind in reading make multiple years of progress in just one year.
SOME DPS INITIATIVES UNDERWAY TO ADDRESS GAPS

**Equity Resource Bank**
- Connects schools with tactics for supporting vulnerable student subgroups.

**FACE Equity Initiatives**
- Community partnerships to support family self-sufficiency, continuing education and mentoring for students of color.

**African-American Equity Task Force**
- Identifying structural barriers to equity for African-American students and educators in DPS and developing a set of prioritized recommendations to address these barriers.

**CELT Equity & inclusion PD**
- Equity-focused professional development including: culturally responsive PDUs, foundational bias training, Equity Boot Camp.

**Superintendent Advisory Teams**
- Provide the superintendent and DPS leadership with a connection to the priorities and needs of African-American and Latino students and educators.
**Inclusive Practices School Cohorts**

- Participants visit national exemplar schools, participate in regular training and cross-school learning opportunities, and receive weekly coaching support. The four original cohort members are outperforming the district in both proficiency and growth for students with disabilities.

**Opportunity Gap Cohorts**

- Peer-to-peer learning opportunities to deepen research-based knowledge, explore best practices, and focus on student engagement and achievement to support educators in confronting persistent gaps.

- Students with disabilities cohort is now in its third year. Linguistic Excellence, African-American Excellence, Latino Excellence and Excellence for All cohorts were launched in Spring 2017.
The Dr. Bailey Report highlights systemic issues related to equity and beliefs that have contributed to persistent achievement gaps among students of color.

**Dr. Bailey Report**

An Examination of Student and Educator Experiences in Denver Public Schools through the Voices of African-American Teachers and Administrators

The August 2016 report by Dr. Sharon R. Bailey identified themes perceived by African-American teachers and administrators as having a negative impact on achievement and opportunity gaps of African American students, including:

- Lack of qualified, diverse, culturally competent teachers and African-American role models.
- Disproportionate discipline – suspensions and expulsions.
- Consent decree – English Language Learner (ELL) requirement – equity for African-American students.
- Low expectations/deficit thinking regarding African-American students.
- Lack of access to quality enrichment, academic and support programs.
- Lack of culturally relevant curriculum and pedagogy.
Awareness and mindset among some educators does not match the urgency of our equity issues

CollaboRATE

Awareness of district action on Closing the Opportunity Gap was lower than for most of the other district priorities.* Only 59% of respondents on the 2016-17 CollaboRATE survey said they knew what DPS was doing to achieve the goal.

In addition, multiple CollaboRATE survey respondents made comments questioning why the district is continuing to focus on equity.

*Closing the Opportunity Gap had the second lowest level of awareness out of the 6 priorities; Great Schools was the lowest of the 6 priorities (58%).
Opportunity Gap Action Team
Scope of Work

Project Scope
✓ Addressing unique, high potential, research based levers for change for each group
  ▪ Supporting collaboration in cross-departmental efforts
  ▪ Solving related problems of practice
✓ Systemization of equity and inclusion best practices across strategic action team priorities
  ▪ Prioritized against Denver Plan 2020 goals of increase in literacy and graduation rates
✓ Leverage work in other priorities to address needs of our most vulnerable students

Key Deliverables
Comprehensive Logic Models for the three student groups
  ▪ English Learners -- complete
  ▪ Students with disabilities -- complete
  ▪ African-American and Latino students -- community input being gathered through African-American Equity Task Force.

Development of Resources
  ▪ Identification of schools with the biggest gaps (as identified in equity indicator)
  ▪ Identification of exemplar schools
  ▪ Mapping of resource needs to quality supports
  ▪ Communication plan -- clarification of why, definition of equity and associated behaviors
TARGETED UNIVERSALISM

Overlaying the Targeted Universalism framework to graduation rates helps us understand the gap, the work we’ve done and the work we need to do.

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<td>DPS</td>
<td>DPS Graduation Rate Goal = 90% Graduation rate</td>
<td>2016 DPS Graduation Rate = 67% Graduation rate</td>
<td>2016 Graduation rates = 64% African – American 63% Latino 49% ELL 41% SwD</td>
<td>Gather Community Feedback Ex: • AAETF • ELA DAC • Parent &amp; Student Surveys Review data Ex: • Attendance &amp; Discipline Reports • Environmental Scans • Grad rates by school, neighborhood &amp; Network</td>
<td>Targeted Strategies to shift mindsets</td>
<td>Targeted Strategies to grow knowledge &amp; skill</td>
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<td>• Foundational Bias Training • Equity Bootcamp • Equity Indicator</td>
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School Insights on Pursuing Equity

The action team identified schools who scored highest and lowest on the equity indicator for each subgroup. The team conducted interviews with school leaders to uncover strategies that contribute to success and supports needed to address equity.

**Strategies that contribute to success**
- High expectations of all students – belief that all students can succeed
- Inclusive school culture and growth mindset
- Mentality that language and culture is an asset
- Intentional integration of social and emotional support
- Ensuring culturally competent and diverse teachers (representative of the students)
- School priorities are consistent year over year and equity is a priority
- Actions match commitments – for example scheduling (both staff & student’s time) and resource allocation aligned to equity priorities
- Use of data to identify where different student groups are disproportionally represented and adjust (instructional, discipline, attendance, parent and student satisfaction) strategies accordingly

**Supports needed**
- Support to more creatively engage in scheduling for opportunity/ inclusion/ access
- Better ongoing progress monitoring and diagnostic tools
- Effectively engaging student and community voice
- Recruiting diverse/ bilingual teachers and leaders
- Root cause assessment tool for identifying areas to target equity improvement
- How to identify data that addresses culture that can be used to inform school planning process
The National Equity Project provides a framework for thinking about readiness for addressing equity issues.

Note: This framework has been condensed into Mindsets & Beliefs and Skills and Knowledge for our framework on slide 12.