

Kirkwood School District

Task Force Update

February 13, 2017

Our Primary Goal

We will ensure that Kirkwood School District students who are African American achieve at high levels, commensurate with their peers, in all academic areas.

Task Force Plan - Seven Objectives

1. We will learn from others.
2. We will ensure that our systems, practices, and policies are equitable.
3. We will engage our community to build shared ownership and responsibility for the success of all.
4. We will exhibit shared leadership that is courageous, collaborative, and transformative.
5. We will ensure that all staff members can successfully meet the varied needs of diverse learners.
6. We will teach into an inclusive curriculum that represents and respects diverse cultures and promotes rigorous and relevant instruction for all.
7. We will ensure that all learning environments are inclusive and reflect a commitment to the success of all students.

Year One Action Steps

1. Conduct **equity walks/audits** in all buildings, with subsequent changes based on audit feedback
2. Convene a study group to examine current and possible **early learning opportunities** across the district and within the community
3. Design a multi-year **training/development program** for all new employees to be implemented beginning in 2017-2018
4. Initiate **training for all staff serving in leadership roles** (principals, district admin, teacher leaders), with emphasis on those who will be facilitating professional learning going forward
5. Begin an **audit of policies, procedures, and curriculum**, with changes made as necessary and appropriate
6. Conduct **deep study around programs and practices** yielding success in local, regional, national schools that currently outperform the Kirkwood School District
7. Conduct regular engagement meetings and/or forums to learn from others and **strengthen relationships with community partners**
8. Convene a diverse group to **study disciplinary data and practices within the district**, with particular emphasis on understanding and addressing disproportionate gaps among black and white students

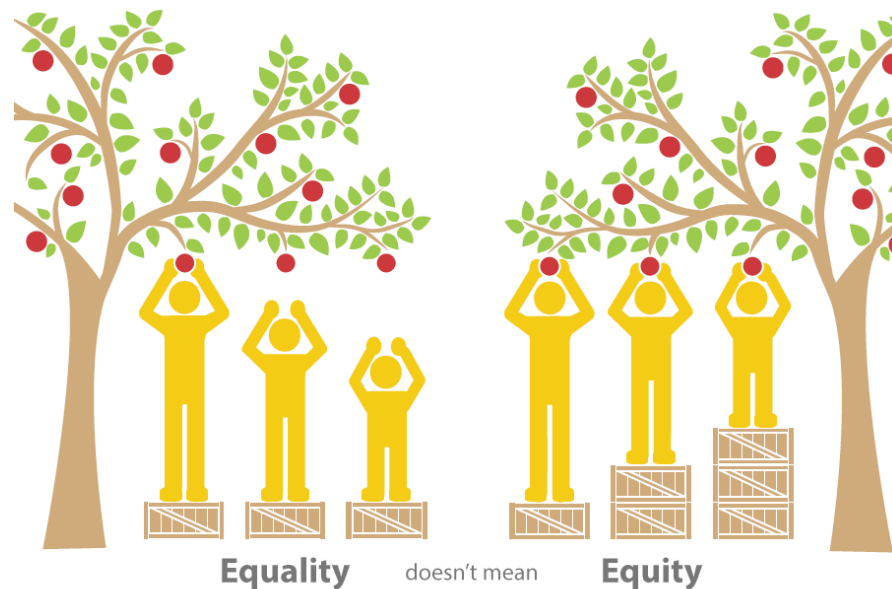
Year One Action Steps

9. Provide ongoing, intentional professional learning around **high quality instructional strategies** that lead to student engagement, visible thinking, and ownership in the learning process
10. Establish a Cultural Review Committee to **review and provide feedback about newly written curriculum**, prior to movement to the existing Curriculum Review Committee
11. Expand existing efforts to **retain, attract and hire diverse staff**, with an intentional focus on buildings/positions that are currently less diverse
12. Explore **funding opportunities** through friend-raising and active communication about needs and work related to the Task Force
13. Design and implement a systemic, intentional plan to **ensure diverse literature, instructional resources, and learning resources** are available and accessible in all classrooms
14. Conduct **comprehensive data analysis** – disaggregated on many levels, to provide greater insights into strengths, needs, and programmatic deficiencies at the building & district levels
15. Explore **a district-level position or consulting partnership** dedicated to diversity and implementation of Task Force recommendations.

Conduct **equity walks/audits** in all buildings, with subsequent changes based on audit feedback

- 58 people trained to conduct equity walks
- 30% of those trained are people of color
- 184 sets of data, with a minimum of 12 per campus

Staff will analyze/discuss building-based data on February 17



Convene a study group to examine current and **possible early learning opportunities** across the district and within the community



- Action group organized under leadership of Missy Sandbothe (KECC) and Rev. Jeff Moore (WGCC)
- Initial focus on readiness and family well-being
- 40+ people on committee, exploring programming and further support of early learning opportunities for children – especially for those in need
- Kirkwood Area Every Child Promise as been established, based on work in Springfield, Missouri
- Intentional efforts to team with multiple agencies/supports

Initiate **training for all staff serving in leadership roles** (principals, district admin, teacher leaders), with emphasis on those who will be facilitating professional learning going forward

- All administrators and facilitators are reading *Despite the Best Intentions: How Racial Inequality Thrives in Good Schools*
- Two days of training with facilitators from NCCJ, paid primarily through an ITEF Lean into Learning grant
- Multiple administrators attended session with Dr. Sharroky Hollie.



Convene a diverse group to **study disciplinary data and practices within the district**, with particular emphasis on understanding and addressing disproportionate gaps among black and white students

- Leadership group has convened to facilitate process - Jeffrey Blair (parent), Michele Condon (retired principal), Jenna Klenke (KHS), Romona Miller (KHS), & Damian Pritchard (North Glendale)
- Broad list of volunteers on multiple study teams, including students, teachers, parents, and administrators
- Initial data/policy needs identified for collection and review
- Leadership team from KHS attended multi-session Restorative Practices Academy in fall; Nipher and NKMS teams attending in this semester

Expand existing efforts to **retain, attract and hire diverse staff**, with an intentional focus on buildings/positions that are currently less diverse

- Four of twelve new KSD teachers are African-American
- New teachers of color matched with an African-American mentor, in addition to their grade level or content mentor at the building level
- New teacher orientation includes intentional work around equity, identity, privilege, and culturally responsive instruction
- 2017 Minority Recruitment Fair on February 22

Design and implement a systemic, intentional plan to ensure diverse literature, instructional resources, and learning resources are available and accessible in all classrooms

- Diverse text sets were purchased for each elementary school, including 10-12 individual titles for each K-5 classroom. Each elementary school also received five copies each of 24 titles intended for book clubs and small group reading instruction. In total, nearly 1400 new books were added to elementary schools across the district.
- Funds allocated to purchase diverse texts for middle and high schools, with a target of five copies each of 40 titles per school – totaling 600 new books.
- Initial book purchases are viewed only as a first-step, with a recognition that classroom/curricular audits will yield additional needs.