



Portland Public Schools Racial Equity Plan  
2011 - 2016



## **WHY RACIAL EQUITY?**

### **PPS Racial Educational Equity Policy**

On June 13, 2011 the Portland School Board unanimously approved the Portland Public Schools Racial Educational Equity Policy (2.10.010-P). The policy calls out race-based disparities in schools, identifies the district's role in erasing them and holds up high expectations to ensure that all students reach their academic potential.

“The Board of Education for Portland Public Schools is committed to the success of every student in each of our schools. The mission of Portland Public Schools is that by the end of elementary, middle, and high school, every student by name will meet or exceed academic standards and be fully prepared to make productive life decisions. We believe that every student has the potential to achieve, and it is the responsibility of our school district to give each student the opportunity and support to meet his or her highest potential.

In light of this mission and our beliefs, Portland Public Schools’ historic, persistent achievement M



Portland Public Schools

5-Year Racial Equity Plan (Version 3.31.14)

formal equality- where all students are treated the same- to fostering a barrier-free environment where all students, regardless of race, have the opportunity to benefit equally. Educational equity benefits all students, and our entire community. Students of all races shall graduate from PPS ready to succeed in a racially and culturally diverse local, national and global community. To achieve educational equity, PPS will provide additional and differentiated resources to support the success of all students, including students of color.”

The policy establishes six goals to achieve racial equity for our students:

A.



## **5-YEAR RACIAL EQUITY PLAN**

In order to successfully achieve the stated goals in its Racial Educational Equity Policy, Portland Public Schools has developed a 5-year plan. This plan directly addresses the six stated goals in the policy with the ultimate goal of educational equity: raising the achievement of all students while (1) narrowing the gaps between the lowest and highest performing students and (2) eliminating the racial predictability and disproportionality of which student groups occupy the highest and lowest achievement categories.

The 5-year plan outlines key strategies to achieve racial equity, along with metrics to evaluate progress. These key strategies will drive annual action plans which outline more detailed department-level work.

### **Racial Equity Strategies**

Portland Public Schools identified the following four key areas that require significant investment and attention in order to achieve racial equity in the district.

#### **1. Culturally Responsive Teaching & Learning**

In order for the district to achieve educational equity, we must provide students of color with rigorous, culturally responsive, and engaging learning environments which accelerate their academic achievement and personal growth.

We believe:

If we provide students of color with equitable access to common core courses and high quality teachers who demonstrate culturally responsive instructional practices, they will achieve academic and personal success.

If we enroll emerging bilingual students in effective dual language programs, they will experience increased academic and personal success while preserving their native language, cultural identity and cultural heritage.

If we provide school and central leadership with professional development on culturally responsive positive behavior support systems, then referral rates for exclusionary discipline and special programs will decrease markedly for students of color.

If we partner with culturally-specific community organizations to provide personalized supports for students and families of color, then students of color will experience more inclusive and culturally relevant learning environments and ultimately, increased success.



## **2. Culturally Responsive Workforce**

In order for the district to achieve educational equity, we must recruit, hire, promote and retain racially conscious and culturally responsive employees at every level across the organization.



engagement- which clarifies roles and responsibilities and reduces barriers to participation for underserved communities- then we will see increased participation from students, families and communities of color.

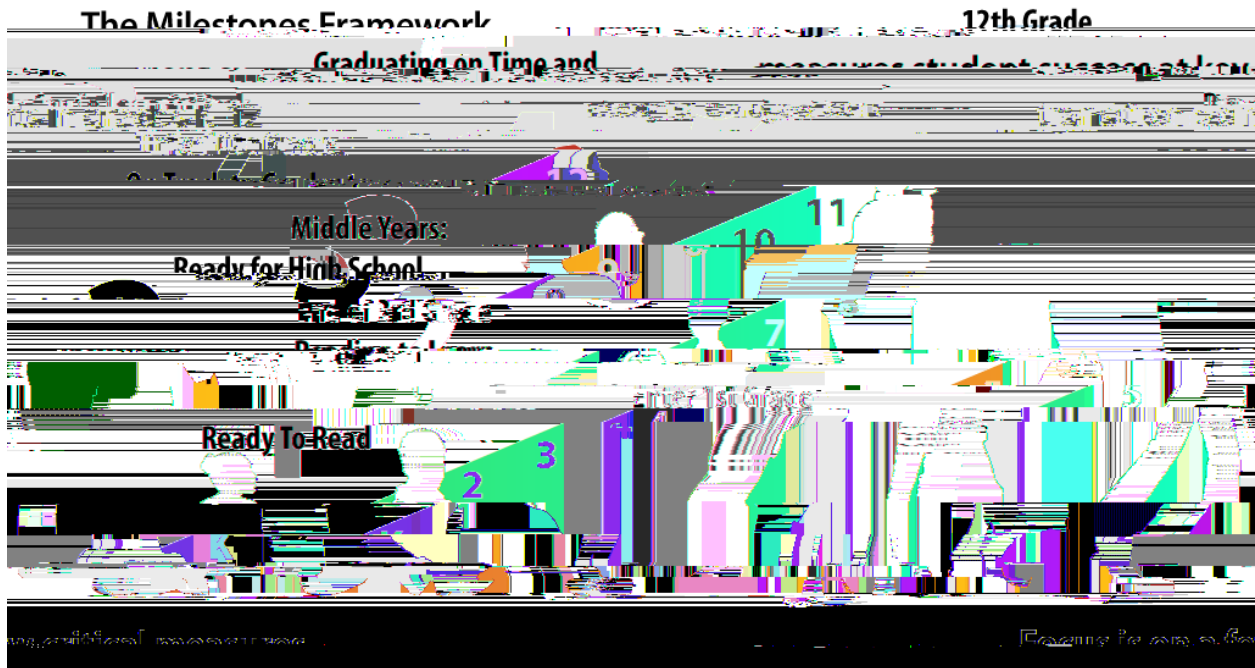
#### **4. Cultural & Organizational Transformation**

In order for the district to achieve educational equity, we must undergo a cultural and organizational transformation to build a culture of inclusion and acceptance- one that actively challenges institutional racism. The Board and District leadership must actively examine and



## MEASURES OF SUCCESS

As a result of implementing these key strategies, Portland Public Schools will significantly improve achievement outcomes for students of color as measured by the Milestones Framework.



## ENDNOTES

- 1 For the purpose of this policy, “race” is defined as “A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly color), ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification, and the social, economic, and political needs of a society at a given period of time. Racial categories subsume ethnic groups.” Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, and Pat Griffin, editors (2007). *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook*.
- 2 Singleton, Glenn & Linton, Curtis (2006). *Courageous Conversations About Race*.
- 3 Adapted from Randall B. Lindsey, Kikanza Nuri Robins, and Raymond D. Terrell (Corwin Press, 1999, 2003). *Cultural Proficiency*