![Albemarle County Public Schools logo]

Anti-Racism Policy Evaluation Report

WE STRIVE TO BECOME

ANTI-RACIST

The Albemarle County
School Board and School Division
· · · · · **reject all forms of racism** · · · · ·
as destructive to our mission,
vision, values and goals.

November 2020

Albemarle County Public Schools

401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, VA 22902 | 434-296-5820 | www.k12albemarle.org

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Introduction

I am both proud and humbled to welcome you to the first edition of the Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) Anti-Racism Policy Evaluation Report.

I say that I am proud because I am proud of the students, employees, families, and school and division leaders who have committed themselves to doing and overseeing the work it takes to transform our Anti-Racism Policy from words on paper to a life of its own in our hearts, minds and actions. I cannot possibly thank all of you enough for your courage and perseverance.

I say that I am humbled because I recently earned a Micro-Credential in Culturally Responsive Teaching, and it changed the way I see myself and our schools. Also, the participation in the Courageous Conversations about Race book discussion with the School Board and my Cabinet has elevated my racial consciousness to the broad impact of racism.

I have long held the belief that the American public school is a powerful force for good, and I still believe it is so. I used to believe that public schools—by virtue of their mere existence and without intention—would accomplish their charge to level the playing field for all children to reach their full potential. In reality, many of the structures we have in place in our schools—intentionally or unintentionally—perpetuate and enhance racial disparities against the mission we have to expand equity and inclusion.

The good news is that cultures can and do change. Our imperative role in cultural change is to harness our powerful force for good and drive it toward equity. Our Anti-Racism Policy and its portfolio of projects are that force. We are accountable to our students and staff to energize and perpetuate it in our daily work and keep this force moving in the right direction—toward equity.

While I would like someday during my tenure to hold up a sign that says, "Equity and Anti-Racism Accomplished," I am also humbled by the understanding that we have a long way to go and that authentic accomplishments will come one student and adult at a time, through collective empowerment.

Toward the end of this report, in the [Looking Ahead: Next Steps](#) section, we say:

> Now more than ever, we understand the imperativeness of disrupting the practices and structures that perpetuate racism in our school district. And, even as the social hashtags change and the media moves on to the next "hot topic," we refuse to lose momentum around this critical work.

I am proud and humbled that I was here when we started this work, and I promise to stay with it.

Sincerely,

Dr. Matthew S. Haas
Superintendent of Schools

Background

Historical Context About the Formation of the Anti-Racism Policy

The journey that led to the Commonwealth's first public school system's Anti-Racism Policy began with persistence from a group of concerned citizens. They reminded us of the degree to which systemic racism is woven into the fabric of our everyday experiences in the form of behaviors, practices and structures. An ad hoc committee was established by Dr. Bernard Hairston, Assistant Superintendent for School Community Empowerment, that included representatives of concerned citizens, school board members, and division staff. Discussions resulted in an awareness of the need to review multiple policies to address issues of racism. Through these collective efforts, modifications specific to the student dress code policy were presented at the July 2018 Albemarle County School Board meeting. This led to the board's decision to direct Dr. Hairston to oversee the creation of an Anti-Racism Policy for the school division.

Adversity was considered an opportunity to provide students with a real-world project-based learning experience. Eight county high school students were introduced to cultural competencies as part of a summer leadership academy, and a consultant from the University of Virginia (UVA) with experience in cultural diversity and policy writing was recruited to assist with the school board's charge. Their work began in August 2018 with training sessions on writing policies and regulations, defining racism, selecting curriculum materials, implications of tracking, and reviewing and understanding school division data. They engaged with instructional staff, legal advisors, researchers, community members, and parent council, and surveyed students and parents as they modeled the division's Lifelong-Learner Competencies.

The school board received updates on August 30 and November 8 and participated in a work session on December 13 to provide their feedback before adopting the policy on February 28, 2019.

The development and adoption of the policy and regulations are commendable first steps that will require significant shifts in how the school division does business, affecting all employees—bus drivers, office associates, teachers, principals, department directors, assistant superintendents, etc.

If we are true lifelong learners who are willing to learn from our past, we must have the integrity to do what is right, even when no one is looking. If we are willing to invest our hearts and minds in the practice of identifying, challenging and changing the values, structures and behaviors that perpetuate systemic racism, only then can we cultivate a movement of anti-racist educators and leaders throughout the division.

Context About the Formation of the Report

This report aims to provide the school board and broader community with a status update about the numerous regulations outlined in the Anti-Racism Policy. Since this is our first full year of implementation and we do not have baseline data for all of the subcommittees and regulations, this year's report will take a qualitative approach.

Overview of the Steering Committee

In an effort to oversee the implementation of the Anti-Racism Policy, a division-wide steering committee was established. The committee is composed of staff members from schools, departments, and division leadership. Together, we are tasked with carrying out the deliverables within the policy that are aimed at dismantling individual, institutional and structural racism.

In alignment with the regulations stipulated within the Anti-Racism Policy, the steering committee includes five subcommittees:

- Policy Communication;
- Leadership and Administration;
- Curriculum and Instruction;
- Training; and
- Policy Enforcement.

The steering committee meets monthly, and the subcommittees meet in between the committee meetings.

Additionally, we have a Student Equity Advisory Team (SEAT) that provides critical feedback on the development of some of the key deliverables, specifically around communications and training.

Refer to Appendix B to view the list of steering committee members and Appendix C for a list of students who serve on SEAT.

Status Update:
Policy Communication

The Anti-Racism Policy is directed at both division employees and students; therefore, the Policy Communication Subcommittee has the two-fold mission of engaging and informing the ACPS community about the policy as well as fostering opportunities for students to, themselves, be its advocates.

## Key Project: Student Equity Advisory Team (SEAT)

Students have been on the front lines of implementing the school division's Anti-Racism Policy. Formed under the supervision of Faculty Advisor Community Education Coordinator Karen Waters-Wicks, the self-named Student Equity Advisory Team (SEAT) is a diverse group of students from Albemarle, Monticello, Murray (Community Charter), and Western Albemarle high schools who promote equity and diversity and serve as leaders and spokespersons within their schools and the division. The group meets and plans to add middle school students to its ranks so that this important work can be institutionalized as a result of continuity provided by long-term student leaders. Among its members are students who helped to write the Anti-Racism Policy. SEAT is committed to "giving everyone a SEAT at the table."

One example of this proactive work is the student-led town hall arranged by SEAT in May of this year as a means of educating the community on the concept of structural racism. Among the more alarming trends associated with COVID-19 has been its disproportionate impact in Black and Latinx communities. On Saturday, May 23, 2020, SEAT members organized and moderated a virtual community town hall called *2020 Vision: Seeing COVID-19 Through an Anti-Racist Lens* to examine these issues. The conversation brought healthcare and government officials together to talk about COVID-19 and its community impact.

Among the panelists was Dr. Cameron Webb, a director of health policy and equity at UVA and a gubernatorial appointee to the state Board of Medical Assistance Services. Webb was joined by Dr. Janice Underwood, Virginia's Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer, and Lawrence Pilkey, who serves in Sentara Martha Jefferson's Intensive Care Unit. Following the meeting, SEAT members were invited to join Governor Northam for one of his daily COVID-19 press briefings.
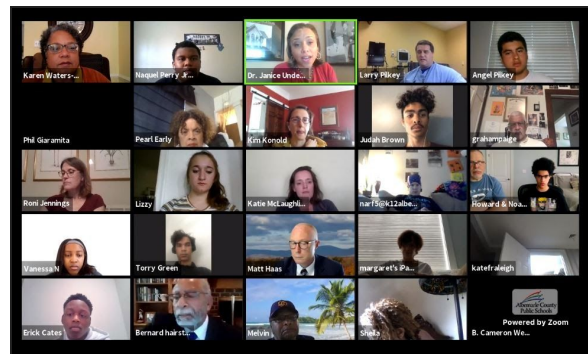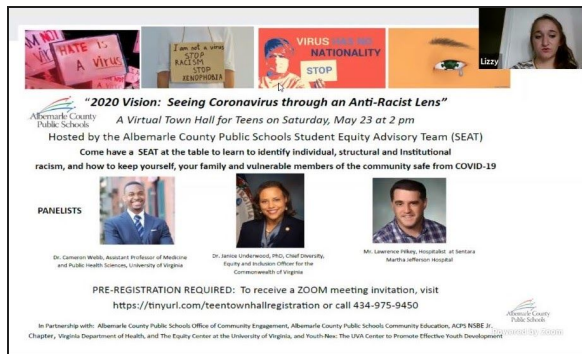
"WOW, that was awesome. I watched with my 7th and 10th graders … please pass along our thanks to all of the organizers and speakers!!!" — Alger Family
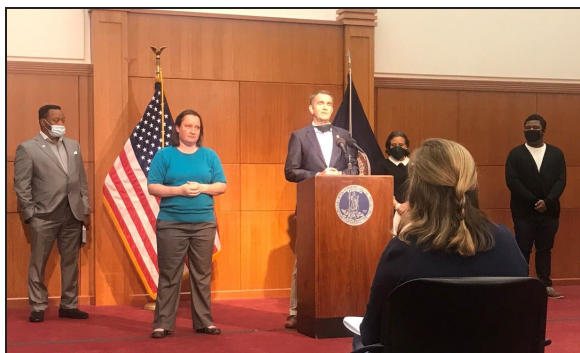
SEAT has already identified future priorities related to their anti-racism work. One is to generate greater awareness among their peers and within the broader Albemarle and Charlottesville communities of the school division's online reporting system, *Anonymous Alerts*. Additionally, next spring, SEAT plans to launch a social media campaign to mark the first anniversary of the Anti-Racism Policy and provide support for the work of other subcommittees of the Anti-Racism Steering Committee.

Key Project: Internal Communications

A first step in communicating our commitment to the Anti-Racism Policy was to inform the public of its existence. We are determined that our community will know of the ACPS Anti-Racism Policy; therefore, we have provided a link to the policy web page in the footer of the ACPS website, which is accessible sitewide. The page maximizes inclusion and accessibility by allowing for easy translation to approximately 108 languages. This online presence has grown to become a resource for the community and for anyone who strives to become anti-racist, as it details the implementation plans of the policy, which includes a glossary of definitions and other resources that are helpful to anyone who is working to create a policy in their own organization.

As our dedication to anti-racism in our division grows, our web page content expands with it. Prior to the start of the 2020 New Teacher Academy, Superintendent Dr. Matthew Haas and Assistant Superintendent Dr. Bernard Hairston published video statements that express their personal investment in anti-racism in ACPS, and they call on all ACPS employees to do the same. Both videos are posted on the Anti-Racism Policy web page, and we will continue to cultivate such content from our division's leadership in order to encourage division-wide commitment.

Further, we recognize the need to inform each school and department individually. In order to ensure that each of our employees and students has a deep familiarity with the policy, the Policy Communications Subcommittee oversaw the creation of a poster featuring racially-diverse ACPS students that displays the policy in both English and Spanish. The division printed and framed 115 copies of the poster, 55 of which were in Spanish. The posters currently hang in each of our school and department offices (e.g., Building Services, County Office Building, Department of Technology, etc.) in high-traffic areas, such as the hallway outside of a school's main office. The division also printed several hundred additional copies and provided them to teachers, by request, for display in their classrooms.

The posters read:

> Albemarle County Public Schools is committed to establishing and sustaining an equitable community that achieves the School Division's equity mission to end the predictive value of race and ensure each individual student's and staff's success. The Albemarle County School Board and School Division reject all forms of racism as destructive to their mission, vision, values, and goals.

The photos displayed on the posters were taken by ACPS employees and feature ACPS students in their everyday life.

Metrics

The 2019-20 school year captured preliminary data as a baseline for our commitment to equity. In the December 2019 – January 2020 community survey, we garnered the following responses to:

I support an increased focus on programs that identify and prioritize equity among all students, such as the division's Anti-Racism Policy.

Stakeholder	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know/Not Applicable	Total Responses
Community Member	5.2% [4]	10.4% [8]	20.8% [16]	31.2% [24]	32.5% [25]	0% [0]	77
Employee	0.3% [1]	2.1% [7]	12.3% [40]	48.5% [158]	35.3% [115]	1.5% [5]	326
Parent	3.5% [27]	4.8% [37]	14.7% [112]	35.0% [267]	38.8% [296]	3.1% [24]	763
Student	*Student surveys were supposed to go out in the spring of 2020, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the closing of schools, student surveys were not administered.*						

We will continue to monitor this data point.

Status Update: Leadership and Administration

The Leadership and Administration Subcommittee is tasked with:

- Conducting a systemic equity needs assessment for the division to identify processes and practices that cause or contribute to inequitable outcomes;
- Implementing alternative discipline processes to reduce racial disparities in discipline and suspension; and
- Addressing disparities in course participation.

This subcommittee recognizes the need and urgency to ensure that the ACPS Leadership Team (including division, school and department leaders) implements anti-racist practices and structures that disrupt racial inequities.

Key Project: Equity Needs Assessment

The Anti-Racism Policy calls for a division-wide equity needs assessment. As a first step, we launched a department-based equity needs assessment for the Human Resources (HR) Department. In alignment with the Anti-Racism Policy and the school board's directive to increase minority representation in the teaching ranks to match student minority representation, HR formed a department-based equity team to conduct an equity needs assessment to determine best practices that support diverse instructional staff, and to develop and promote inclusive policies and procedures within the department.

The established goals of the team include:

- Recruiting and retaining diverse staff;
- Supporting the school division's goal of increasing the number of minority teachers to better reflect minority student enrollment in the schools; and
- Promoting the equity and inclusion work of the Anti-Racism Policy Steering Committee.

A small core group of HR team members began initial planning for this work in the fall of 2019, then the group expanded to include a larger group of HR team members in the spring of 2020. The HR Equity Team has been working collaboratively with Lars Holmstrom, Equity Specialist in the Office of Community Engagement, and Jasmine Fernández, Project Advisor for the Department of Instruction and Program Manager for the Anti-Racism Steering Committee, to learn more broadly about the experiences of teachers of color through such means as articles, podcasts, and other data and research; examine specific experiences/dynamics of ACPS teachers of color through surveys, interviews, artifacts, and focus group feedback; and determine strategies HR can implement that best support teachers of color to be successful in their roles and professional relationships.

Experiences of teachers of color in ACPS are often different from those of their Caucasian colleagues. The experiences of teachers of color can sometimes be negative, and the character of those negative experiences may have a specific racial component that is unique and different from the negative experiences of their Caucasian colleagues (Griffin & Tackie, 2016).[1]

In an effort to understand more about our own racial lenses, the way the lenses of individuals contribute to larger systems, and how this impacts our relationships with each other and the larger community, the HR Equity Team has been self-assessing and unpacking perceptions of White Culture within the Human Resources Department by utilizing the Transforming Organizational Culture Assessment (TOCA) tool (MP Associates, 2016).[2]

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[1]Griffin, A., & Tackie, H. (2016, November 3). Through Our Eyes: Perspectives and Reflections From Black Teachers. *The Education Trust*. Retrieved from <https://edtrust.org/resource/eyes-perspectives-reflections-black-teachers/>.

[2]MP Associates. (2016, June). Transforming Organizational Culture Assessment Tool (TOCA). Retrieved from. Retrieved from <http://www.mpassociates.us/uploads/3/7/1/0/37103967/toca_toolpotapchuk_.pdf>.

The initial HR Equity Planning Team (fall 2019) selected the TOCA tool from a list of reviewed racial equity assessment tools suggested by *Racial Equity Tools*. The HR Equity Planning Team first self-assessed and discussed their self-assessment, and then led the other school team members within the HR Department to follow a similar process.

The HR Equity Team believes that through identifying and reflecting on the way that White Culture is entrenched within our systems and practices, we will be able to identify opportunities to create more racially equitable systems and practices. Utilized appropriately, the TOCA tool can be instrumental in deepening internal organizational work on advancing racial equity by specifically addressing White culture. The TOCA tool provides an opportunity for individuals within an organization to reflect on:

- Explicit use of terms in organizational documents;
- Experiences and perspectives on how race, racism, and White privilege are discussed; and
- How policies and practices are aligned with the value of racial equity, specifically manifestations of White/dominant culture in organizational policies and practices.

The HR Equity Team has been utilizing the TOCA tool for discussion to better understand differing points of view, as well as the impact of policies and practices on different stakeholders. The TOCA tool is assisting HR in determining our roadmap for what needs to be addressed and what strategies should be implemented to reach our goals. A major part of the process that the HR Equity Team has embarked on requires that the team spend time determining the root cause and looking at it from differing perspectives to determine whether there is a problem.

The HR Equity Team assessed the current state in relation to racialized experiences, through the examination of existing exit survey data and feedback from employees exiting the division. In order to explore and understand more of the specific challenges faced by educators of color, the HR Equity Team examined artifacts such as letters of resignation and interviews with researchers that discuss this issue. Limited information was available surrounding racial feedback within current exit survey data and employee feedback due to the practice of not soliciting racial feedback from employees, plus exiting employees are often vague and guarded with their feedback/responses in an effort not to damage/sever any relationships in the division. The work ahead includes seeking racialized feedback, understanding factors that hinder teacher retention, and having frank and transparent conversations with school administrators regarding current school practices impacting equity and retention.

Key Project: Alternatives to Suspension

The Center for Public Integrity (CPI) reported that Virginia led the nation in sending students from schools to police or the courts, a trend referred to as the "school-to-prison pipeline."[3] Subsequently, Dr. Gerard Lawson, associate professor in Virginia Tech's School of Education, released a study that supported the findings in the CPI report. According to Lawson's study, African American students and students with disabilities were disproportionately represented in referrals to juvenile justice in Virginia schools.[4]

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[3]Ferriss, S. (Updated 2016, February 19). Virginia Tops Nation in Sending Students to Cops, Courts: Where Does Your State Rank? *The Center for Public Integrity*. Retrieved from <https://publicintegrity.org/education/virginia-tops-nation-in-sending-students-to-cops-courts-where-does-your-state-rank/>.

[4]Virginia Tech Daily. (2017, May 24). Virginia Tech Study Provides New Context on Troubling School-to-Prison-Pipeline Report. Retrieved from <https://vtnews.vt.edu/articles/2017/05/clahs-school-to-prison-pipeline.html>.

In an effort to provide school boards with guidance on how to revise local student codes of conduct, the Virginia Board of Education created *Model Guidance for Positive and Preventive Code of Conduct Policy and Alternatives to Suspension*.[5]

This "Model Guidance" focuses on prevention; recognizes the need for instructional interventions and behavioral support when students do not meet behavioral expectations; and defines equitable approaches to school discipline. In alignment with the directive to address identified needs and ensure equity for all students, the changes to the following ACPS policies focused on school discipline and attendance:

- JED, *Student Absences/Excuses/Dismissals*;
- JFC, *Student Conduct*; and
- JGD/JGE, *Student Suspension/Expulsion*.

Moreover, as explained in the Model Guidance, research has shown that out of school suspension and zero tolerance policies impact the social and academic outcomes of students, especially students from marginalized backgrounds. With the intention of standardizing behavioral expectations, minimizing disparities, and tailoring behavioral supports and approaches to school discipline, the division has made significant changes to the ACPS Behavioral Management Handbook, including:

- Introducing a new **behavioral infraction language** as found in the Model Guidance. This language is introduced using a crosswalk document that will allow administrators to learn the new language while also using the offense codes within the Discipline, Crime, and Violence (DCV) Report (an annual mandated state report) for the final year.
- Introducing the new **Leveled Administrative Responses to Behavior**, which also flow from the Model Guidance and establish parameters for appropriate consequence for student behavior.

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[5]Virginia Board of Education. (2019, January.) Model Guidance for Positive and Preventative Code of Student Conduct Policy and Alternatives to Suspension. Retrieved from <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/student_conduct/2019-student-code-of-conduct.pdf>.

- Introducing a new section focused specifically on **restorative justice**. Restorative justice is an approach that involves organizing a meeting between the person who was harmed and the person who caused the harm. Often through a restorative circle, the meeting aims to promote individual responsibility and participation, repair harm, and build relationships. This new section is intended to guide the development of appropriate responses to behavior and includes the Principles of Restorative Justice and restorative justice questions that administrators are encouraged to use during their investigations of student infractions.
- Introducing a new section that describes the division's **Anti-Racism Policy**, along with a new abbreviation, **ARP**, which will be added to behavior infractions that appear to violate the Anti-Racism Policy.
- Requiring that all staff members use the **electronic behavioral referral** developed several years ago and previously piloted in a number of schools across the division. This referral document allows for a more granular review of the source and disposition of behavior referrals.

Key Project: Addressing Disparities in Course Participation

In reviewing Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Enrollment (DE) courses, the schools have clearly seen a disparity in enrollment with several enrollment groups compared to their White counterparts. As a first step in addressing disparities in course participation, in 2019-20, principals and counseling directors developed common language and a consistent approach with procedures for educating families about course options and registration.

This year, students and families had greater input in the course registration process. By changing the registration process and allowing students and families to register first before teacher recommendations, students and families had increased choice in course selection followed by teacher and counselor support. This new process has already resulted in less change in course selection and more students being successful in our high-level offerings.

Additionally, removing the course override process that forced families and students to put into writing why they did not agree with the teacher recommendations has decreased racial barriers for students and their course selection. Now, teachers instead say how they will support students in the challenging courses they choose to attempt.

This year's data will be used as a baseline to understand student interest and outcomes. Below are several other systematic practices that our schools use in order to advertise and support students in their course enrollment choices:

- Arrange classroom visits for students.
- Host in-person and virtual curriculum fairs.
- Schedule meetings between school counselors and students/families.
- Communicate amply with families about the course selection process and opportunities.
- Collaborate and plan with teachers to promote and retain students in higher level classes, with a focus on demographic data.
- Cover the cost of AP testing for students with financial need.
- Cover the purchase of books for DE students with financial need.
- Share information with all DE students regarding on-campus support and resources available to them (e.g., Writing Center, academic support).
- Unlevel and detrack several core classes at the middle school level.
- Provide students with field experiences at the middle school level to promote early exposure to and exploration of career academies.
- Create opportunities for middle school students to explore and cultivate their strengths, talents and interests; collect artifacts showcasing their talents; and help them design their own dynamic, future-ready learning path.
- Offer professional learning to cohorts of educators using CRT framework elements to build the capacity to partner with students and families to co-construct and successfully navigate a pathway plan.

Metrics

As a part of our equity mission, ACPS aspires to have a proportionate representation of our student demographics in all classes, including our center and academy enrollment. The work that the leadership and administrative teams did this year starts moving us toward that goal by partnering with students and families to become more knowledgeable of their options and removing some systemic barriers that may have kept students from certain courses.

ACPS Enrollment in AP Courses by Membership Group
2019-2020
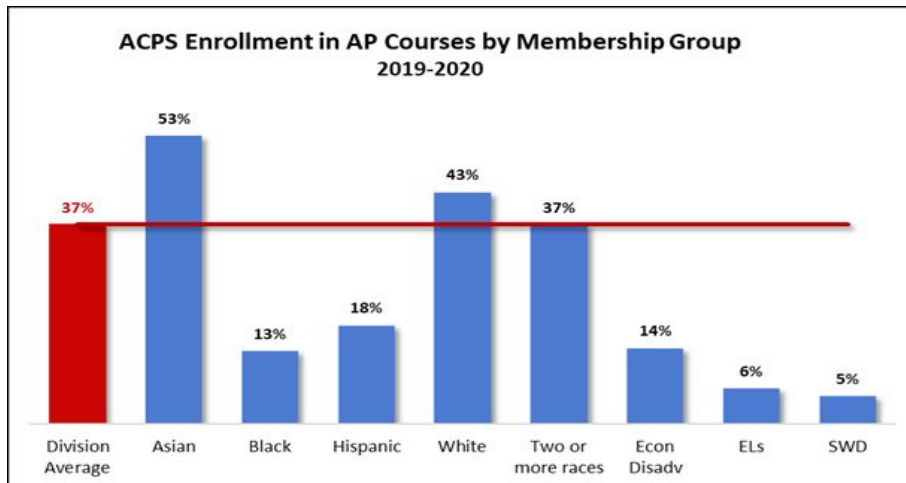
The following charts illustrate student enrollment in our Advanced Placement (AP) and Dual Enrollment (DE) courses by membership group for the 2019-20 school year:

Status Update: Curriculum and Instruction

The Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee is tasked with creating materials for all grades that reflect cultural and racial diversity and include a range of perspectives and experiences, particularly those of historically underrepresented groups of color. Additionally, the subcommittee is charged with examining curriculum materials for racial bias and providing in-class and extracurricular activities that provide cross-cultural and cross-racial interactions.

Key Project: Culturally Responsive Curriculum Assessment

Education about the history and current relevance of race in America plays a key role in systems of inequity. By improving the ways we approach history in ACPS, we believe we can make progress toward overcoming the deep-seated perceptions and mindsets that block advancement in racial equity in our district.
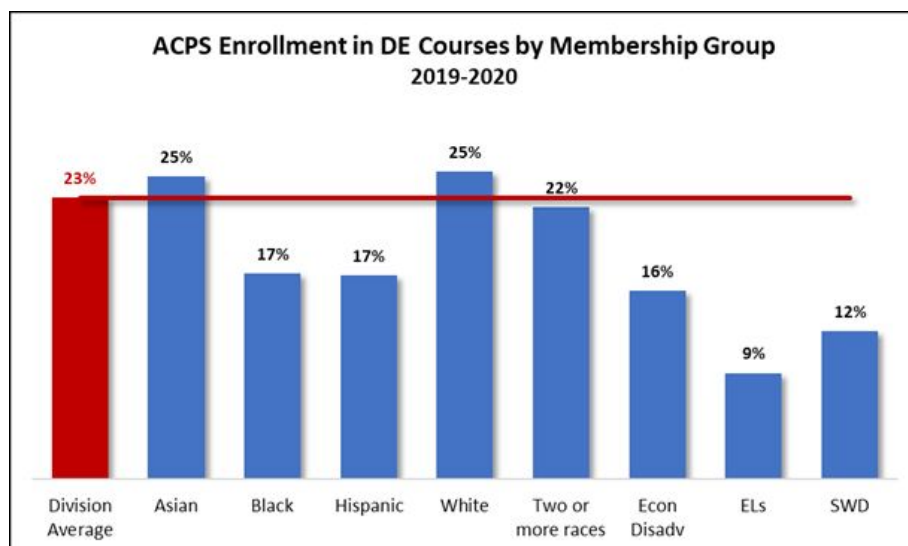
However, as reported by the EdWeek Research Center, only 22% of non-White teachers and 9% of White teachers felt they had the training and resources to teach anti-racism curriculum.[6] In an effort to ensure our teachers are equipped with the necessary support to effectively teach anti-racism curriculum, the Department of Instruction has been working on developing an anti-racism curriculum specifically in K-12 social studies and secondary English/language arts. Last year, as a team, we developed an [Anti-Racist Vetting Tool](). We also adopted a [Culturally Responsive and Anti-Racist Curriculum Assessment Tool](). Through these tools, we aim to ensure that all resources used will be vetted using the Anti-Racist Vetting Tool and that our curricular frameworks are anti-racist.

Key Project: Curriculum Assessment and Resource Review

We have begun the large task of tackling curriculum assessment in a couple of subject areas and look forward to incorporating the lessons learned into other subjects (e.g., science, math) in the near future.

English Language Arts

We have taken the following actions in the past school year, from the fall of 2019 to present, in secondary English Language Arts (ELA) classes:

- We drafted the **ACPS ELA Equity Toolkit** to support secondary ELA educators as they adopt teaching approaches in alignment with the ACPS Anti-Racism Policy.
- Seventeen (17) educators (including high school ELA teachers, media specialists, and instructional coaches) participated in an online discussion group about **Letting Go of Literary Whiteness** in order to build specific practices for implementing anti-racist literature instruction. Over the

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[6]Schwartz, S. (2020, September 23). You Have Anti-Racist Curriculum Resources. Now What Do You Do? *Education Week.* Retrieved from <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/09/23/you-have-anti-racist-curriculum-resources-now-what.html>.

course of eight weeks, they collaborated to build collective efficacy around these learning practices.

- Six teams of UVA English faculty, graduate students, and experienced teachers from local schools (including ACPS educators) began developing **lessons and resources to "teach hard literature."** This partnership will be ongoing with the UVA Center for Liberal Arts to develop approaches to teach contemporary issues that often go unaddressed.

Social Studies

In social studies, we have completed the first of our three-year grant-funded initiative, *Reframing the Narrative*, which is intended to develop anti-racist and culturally responsive curricula for grades 6-12. The first year of the cohort involved teachers in US History I (6th grade), US History II (7th grade), and VA/US History (11th grade).

There are three main components of *Reframing the Narrative*:

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- **Purpose:** Teachers understand and are committed to anti-racist and culturally responsive curriculum and have more efficacy around the teaching and learning of hard history.
- **Process Outcome:** From our cohort, 25 teachers attended the *Facing History and Ourselves* workshop, "Race and Membership: The Eugenics Movement" (Video: [Professional Learning for *Facing History and Ourselves*](#)). Also, 70 teachers came together from across the state to study Teaching Tolerance's *Hard History and Social Justice Framework*.

FIELD EXPERIENCES

- **Purpose:** Students have more efficacy around learning hard history.
- **Process Outcome:** Last year, 1,258 ACPS students participated in field experiences at Montpelier (Google Slides: [Copy of Writing on History's Blank Pages](#)).

CURRICULUM DESIGN

- **Purpose:** Develop anti-racist and culturally responsive curricular experiences.
- **Process Outcome:** Eighty (80) teachers partnered with 25 experts in the field to design 25 "critical inquiries" that merged the Inquiry Design Model with social justice principles (Video: [Inquiry Design Model](#)).

As a result of our work, we have developed 20 draft inquiries using the Inquiry Design Model that are being implemented this school year in US History I, US History II, and VA/US History. Additionally, the school board approved and we have purchased (through grant funding) copies of *Stamped: Racism, Anti-Racism, and You* for every 11th-grade student.

We have recruited about 25 teachers to participate in the second year of our cohort of World History and World Geography teachers, which will include teachers and leaders from six additional school districts. We have scheduled six workshops with *Facing History and Ourselves* entitled, "Teaching for Equity and Justice." Additionally, teachers will be sending their students to Montpelier for virtual field trips. Finally, in June, we will convene to design curricula for World History I-II and World Geography.

Status Update: Training

Implementation of the ACPS Anti-Racism Policy calls for ongoing professional development in order for all staff to engage in personal and professional learning about race and racism; ensure all staff are knowledgeable about the policy; and support the implementation of other domains within the policy, such as curriculum and administration. With that in mind, professional development and training activities will be varied in format and purpose and rolled out in conjunction with other aspects of policy implementation, such as the curriculum assessment project, *Reframing the Narrative*. In conjunction with overseeing ongoing professional development for all staff, the Training Subcommittee will offer tailored support and trainings to schools and department leaders.

Key Project: Anti-Racism Policy Training

We acknowledge that the level of expertise across our schools and departments vary with regard to race and racism. Building the racial consciousness and ability to address acts of racism of individuals and the division as a whole takes time. During the past year, we focused on laying a basic foundation about race and racism through the development of the following activities:

Community Conversations

A required summer professional development session for all teachers and administrators focused on examining equity gaps and Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) practices. "Community Conversations" explored equity gaps and predictive patterns in ACPS data and offered an overview of CRT and strategies to teach to and through culture. This session was offered to all teachers and administrators in summer 2019, and to all teachers new to ACPS in summer 2020.

*Community Conversations (summer 2019)*
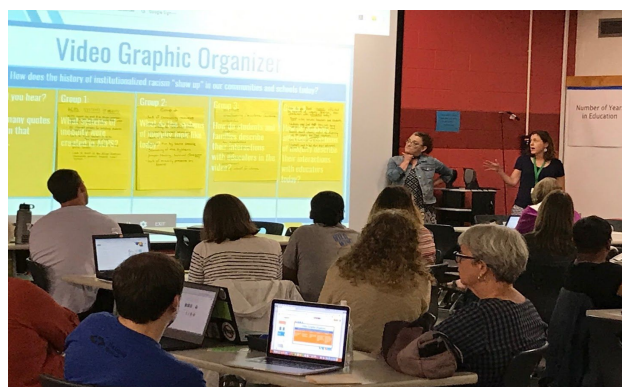
Courageous Conversations About Race

To effectively identify and challenge the racial achievement disparities, our entire school community, including members of every racial/ethnic membership group, need to be able to talk about race without fear of judgment. In an effort to deepen not only the racial consciousness of our staff, but also their ability to engage effectively and beyond surface conversations about race, we have launched a division-wide book study and train-the-trainer model focused on Glenn Singleton's *Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools*.

This ongoing effort features a series of protocols based on Singleton's guide that have been piloted with critical ACPS leadership groups, including the school board, the Superintendent's Cabinet, and the division-level Leadership Team.

We have integrated these protocols into professional learning opportunities offered in the 2020-21 school year. School administrators and department leaders have been tasked with facilitating the book study and training their staff. We are offering ongoing support for division leaders as they implement the protocols, including a facilitator's guide. Additionally, we have incorporated the *Courageous Conversations About Race* protocols into school and department improvement plans as a means of tracking progress made around this work.
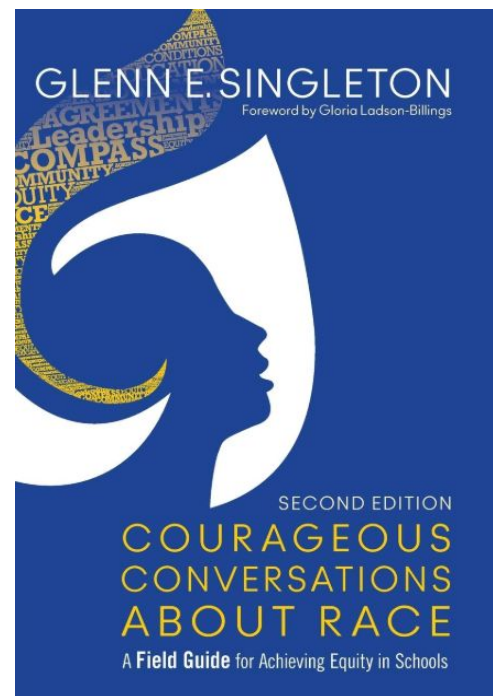
All-Staff Orientation to the Anti-Racism Policy

We are launching an online orientation that formally introduces our Anti-Racism Policy to all ACPS staff. The orientation will feature:

- Video messages from [Superintendent Haas](#) and [Assistant Superintendent Hairston](#);
- A review of the policy's purpose, guiding principles, and definitions; and
- Video exemplars to support understanding of key concepts.

To ensure accessibility, the orientation includes a voice-over and is translated into Spanish. Launch is set for November 16, 2020, and we will utilize a verification and reflection tool to track completion by all employees.

Key Project: Training in Cultural Awareness and Culturally Responsive Teaching

In support of the goals and processes of the Anti-Racism Policy, ACPS continues to expand its professional development opportunities for educators around Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT). Any ACPS educator or administrator who

is committed to closing equity gaps for traditionally marginalized students may pursue [ACPS Certification in Culturally Responsive Teaching](#). Certification involves a rigorous year-long process that provides an opportunity for ACPS educators to receive recertification credit and compensation for:

- Documenting their learning across the three ACPS characteristics of CRT;
- Continuously and robustly integrating CRT into their instructional practice; and
- Demonstrating a positive impact on student achievement and learning.

Also, any ACPS educator or administrator may pursue the [ACPS Micro-Credential in Culturally Responsive Teaching](#), which provides an opportunity for ACPS educators to receive recertification credit and compensation for their participation in learning, application, reflection, and evidence of CRT pedagogy to impact student results.

Metrics

As of October 2020, a total of 140 CRT awards have been earned by our educators through the Micro-Credential or Certification programs. This [CRT Data](#) chart represents the current placement of the 112 educators who have successfully completed the programs and are still employed by ACPS, organized by their current location. It is important to note that some educators have received both their Micro-credential and their Certification, and that others have left the county since having earned their award.

Qualitatively, we are seeing certified and credentialed educators from previous years becoming leaders and mentors for others. More quantitatively, we are using the ACPS [Equity Dashboard](#) to monitor the impact of Culturally Responsive Teaching on student achievement.

Status Update: Policy Enforcement

The regulations specified within the Policy Enforcement section of the Anti-Racism Policy center on implementing and evaluating the policy. The division hired a program manager to keep key initiatives on track and to coordinate the execution of multiple projects at once. The Policy Enforcement Subcommittee meets with all of the project managers and the program manager to ensure strategies are monitored. Much of this year was about collecting baseline data.

A key parallel project is the creation of the ACPS Portrait of a Graduate and the development of a new strategic plan for the division.

Also, within the Anonymous Alerts reporting app, staff have added a category for reporting racial incidents, and, as previously reported, the student anti-racism team will create a communication plan to ensure that students know how to use it.

Key Project: Annual Report and Evaluation Plan

This annual report is a key deliverable of the Anti-Racism Policy and the Policy Enforcement Subcommittee. Prior to finalizing the report, a draft was shared with partner groups. In conjunction with providing the report to the school board, we will share the report with the general public.

Our three-year Evaluation Plan is presented in Appendix D.

Metrics

Our outcome metrics include the [Equity Dashboard](#), which serves to document and monitor certain indicators that demonstrate disparities across student membership groups. The Equity Dashboard currently includes "Equity Tables" for each school year beginning in 2016-17 and continuing through 2019-20. This effort supports the shared mission of our schools to end the predictive value of race, class, gender, and special capacities on student success by working together with families and communities to ensure each individual student's success.

Lessons Learned

As with any division-wide effort, the success of an initiative is contingent on whether there is buy-in from the relevant stakeholders, thorough oversight, internal capacity, and continuous improvement. The Anti-Racism Steering Committee spent the fall developing its internal infrastructure and identifying its goals (refer to the Anti-Racism Logic Model in Appendix A). Then, the twin pandemics of COVID-19 and the pervading racial injustice occurred, triggering some unexpected challenges and a renewed commitment to this work.

Key lessons learned include:

Strengthening the Committee and Division's Proficiency Regarding Race

Through some of the initial committee meetings and conversations with members of the division-level Leadership Team, it became apparent that everyone did not have the same understanding of what it means to be anti-racist, nor was everyone fully comfortable talking about race. Flash forward to the spring: A number of leaders reached out seeking support on how to engage their staff about the racial injustices occurring across our country. To ensure we were not being reactive, but rather, were thoughtfully investing in our division's internal knowledge and skillset to effectively engage in these conversations, we made the decision to implement a division-wide book study. Modeled after Glenn Singleton's *Courageous Conversations About Race*, the school board and Leadership Team are being trained in using the tools of the book. For more information, please refer to the Training Subcommittee's project work around [Courageous Conversations About Race](#).

Expanding Internal Capacity

We realized that the members of the steering committee were the same people tasked with implementing other key initiatives and programs across the division. Even more detrimental, we noticed our committee did not fully represent the numerous roles across the division. Over the summer, we expanded the committee's membership to include more principals as well as school and department staff.

Student Voice

In hope of emphasizing and centering student voice during our committee meetings, halfway through the year, we invited two seniors to join our committee as student interns. The two students have since graduated, but we are in the process of backfilling those roles. Additionally, SEAT currently includes only high school students. Our hope is to eventually recruit and engage middle school students.

Looking Ahead: Next Steps

Now more than ever, we understand the imperativeness of disrupting the practices and structures that perpetuate racism in our school district. And, even as the social hashtags change and the media moves on to the next "hot topic," we refuse to lose momentum around this critical work. We recommit ourselves to taking explicit steps to addressing institutional and individual racism in the calendar year ahead (2020-21) by focusing on the following activities and projects:

Policy Communication

Reporting Acts of Racism: The Student Equity Advisory Committee (SEAT) will partner with our Director of Student Services to understand how students can use Anonymous Alerts to make reports about acts of racism and other infractions.

Public Awareness Campaign: SEAT and the Policy Communication Subcommittee will co-create a social media public awareness campaign that educates the public on the types of racism that exist and the ways one can become anti-racist. The public awareness campaign will kick off in February 2021 in honor of the two-year anniversary of the school board's approval of the ACPS Anti-Racism Policy.

Leadership and Administration

Course Enrollment Disparities: The Department of Instruction will monitor and evaluate all courses, including academy and center enrollment, for racial disparities.

Human Resource Equity Team: During the spring of 2021, we will disseminate an engagement survey as well as convene focus groups of teachers of color to hear about specific experiences and gain feedback.

Curriculum and Instruction

Anti-Racism Curriculum Framework: We will continue making progress and refining our English Language Arts and social studies curricula while developing our plans to begin assessing our science and math curricula.

Winter 2020 Discussion Group: Letting Go of Literary Whiteness: We will hold a discussion group this winter to build specific practices for implementing anti-racist literature instruction.

Book Collection Audits: Teachers will begin auditing classroom collections and book rooms this year to build collections that include more diverse and inclusive selections.

Critical Literacy Pedagogy: We will develop professional development opportunities for teachers to practice Critical Literacy Pedagogy (CLP) strategies. CLP is an instructional approach that examines media for discrimination and bias by analyzing messages.

Teaching Hard Literature: We will partner with the UVA Center for Liberal Arts to develop approaches to teaching contemporary issues that often go unaddressed. We will field-test resources across ACPS and other local schools next year.

Training

Redesign the Teacher Performance Appraisal (TPA): Human Resources will be undertaking a large project to update the TPA. We will embed Culturally Responsive Teaching into the framework and use an anti-racist lens to delete, edit or add new look-fors.

Policy Enforcement

Shifted Evaluation Timelines: We moved the evaluation timelines in response to the disruption caused by COVID-19. We have extended the implementation "year" through the current 2020-21 school year.

Staff and Student Channels to Report Racism: The Policy Enforcement team will work together to identify current means for staff and students to report racism. After we review the current state, we will move forward with project plans to develop additional means, as necessary.

Appendices

Appendix A. Resources

Anti-Racism Guide

Our Anti-Racism Guide includes an overview of what it means to be anti-racist, including frequently asked questions and a glossary of terms.

Anti-Racism Logic Model

ACPS uses the Anti-Racism Logic Model (October 2020) as a planning tool and visual. The model is updated frequently.

Anti-Racism Policy

The division's Anti-Racism Policy was adopted by the school board on February 28, 2019, and can be accessed through the Anti-Racism Policy web page on the ACPS website and as a printable PDF document through ElectronicSchoolBoard.

Culturally Responsive and Anti-Racism Curriculum Assessment

We use our Culturally Responsive and Anti-Racism Curriculum Assessment as a tool to review curriculum with an anti-racist lens.

Transforming Organizational Culture Assessment Tool

The Transforming Organizational Culture Assessment (TOCA) Tool is a racial equity assessment tool developed by MP Associates and used by the ACPS Human Resources Equity Team when self-assessing and unpacking their perceptions of White culture within the Human Resources Department.

Appendix B. Anti-Racism Committee Members

Committee Leadership

- **Cabinet Sponsor:** Dr. Bernard Hairston | Assistant Superintendent for School Community Empowerment
- **Program Manager:** Jasmine Fernández | Project Advisor

Policy Communication Subcommittee

- Alfred Toole | Learning Technology Integrator
- Helen Dunn | Legislative and Public Affairs Officer
- Karen Waters-Wicks | Community Education Program Coordinator
- Phil Giaramita | Communications Officer

Leadership and Administration Subcommittee

- Daphne Keiser | Director of Education Quality
- Jay Thomas | Director of Secondary Education
- Kasaundra Blount | Principal
- Nicholas King | Director of Student Services
- Pearl Early | Student Support Program Manager
- Seth Kennard | Principal

Curriculum and Instruction Subcommittee

- Catrina Sims | Lead Coach
- John Hobson | Lead Coach
- Leilani Keys | Equity Specialist
- Michele Castner | Director of Elementary Education

Training Subcommittee

- Ayanna Mitchell | Equity Specialist
- Jim Foley | Director of Transportation
- Jennifer Sublette | Director of Professional Development
- Joe Letteri | Director of Building Services
- Lars Holmstrom | Equity Specialist
- Rosaura González-Muñiz | Assistant Principal

Policy Enforcement Subcommittee

- Chris Gilman | Coordinator of Research and Program Evaluation
- Gwedette Crummie | Principal
- Jamie Gellner | Director of Program Evaluation

Appendix C. Student Equity Advisory Team Members

Staff Facilitator: Karen Waters-Wicks | Community Education Program Coordinator

- Elizabeth Elvgren* | Albemarle High School | Grade 12
- Naquel Perry | Albemarle High School | Grade 12
- Angel Pilkey-Chevez | Albemarle High School | Grade 12
- Princey Reyes-Lopez | Albemarle High School | Grade 12
- Amya Edwards | Monticello High School | Grade 11
- Brian Bryne* | Western Albemarle High School | Grade 11
- Ada Kindrick | Community Charter School | Grade 10
- Aliyah Hawkins | Monticello High School | Graduate
- Catherine Taylor | Monticello High School | Graduate
- Judah Brown | Murray High School | Graduate
- Kaydin Edwards | Murray High School | Graduate

Member of the original committee that drafted the Anti-Racism Policy

Appendix D. Evaluation Plan

Year 1 Evaluation Plan

2019-20 School Year (initial implementation) through the 2020-21 School Year

Year 1 Report, Fall 2021:

1. Did the policy clearly identify the critical implementation steps?
2. Was the policy implemented according to the policy requirements?
3. What inputs and resources were required to implement the policy? Were all of these inputs and resources available?
4. What is the status of the policy implementation indicators (i.e., number of acknowledgements on the community survey; number of procedures developed and communicated across secondary schools; number of educators trained in CRT and the Anti-Racism Policy; status of curricula that has been "reframed")?
5. Based on the fall 2020 report, what is the current status of implementation and objectives?

Year 2 Evaluation Plan

2021-22 School Year

Year 2 Report, Fall 2022:

1. What key activities were completed during policy implementation? Did the activities result in the anticipated outputs?
2. Was the policy implemented consistently across communities or environments?
3. Were there any unintended consequences?
4. What external factors influenced implementation?

5. What is the status of the policy implementation indicators (i.e., number of acknowledgements on the community survey and measure of interest; AP/DE enrollment shifts; number of educators trained in CRT and the Anti-Racism Policy; update on minority new hires; update on impact of CRT on student success; status and impact of reassessed curricula)?
6. Based on the fall 2021 report, what is the current status of implementation and objectives?

Year 3 Evaluation Plan

2022-23 School Year

Year 3 Report, Fall 2023:

1. Evaluate annual report indicators based on logic model outcomes and required indicators.
2. Report changes in:
    -   Participation in AP and DE courses;
    -   Suspension rates;
    -   Leadership pipeline/staffing demographics;
    -   Acknowledgment and understanding of the Anti-Racism Policy and what it means to be anti-racist;
    -   Student achievement due to changes in the curriculum framework;
    -   Teacher practice due to anti-racism and/or CRT training; and
    -   Student data based on School Improvement Plans.