THE BELE FRAMEWORK EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BUILDING EQUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN THIS PERIOD OF CRISIS - COVID-19 AND SYSTEMIC RACISM - TO RESTORE OUR COLLECTIVE FUTURE

Our public education system is at a crossroads. With all of the structural inequities laid bare by the coronavirus pandemic and worsened still by recent acts of anti-black violence we're witnessing across the country - there is a critical decision to be made. **Will we choose to deliver the educational experiences black, brown, low-income and white children need and deserve – or will we choose to go back to normal, resurrecting learning structures and processes that are undeniably inequitable?** There has never been a more critical time to come together and rebuild the education system into one that truly serves every student. With the future of a generation at stake, we have developed a guide with values-centered, evidence-based practices to support those inspired to get the future right for our young people - for all of our sakes.

As we navigate this unprecedented season, the essential work of reimagining education for our youth must be undeterred. We recognize educators are being asked to make urgent decisions about budgets, resources and even distributing basic needs to young people and their families. While we are not strangers to the demand of accomplishing more with substantially less, this time is very different. We believe this uniquely challenging moment presents a rare opportunity to center student needs and our collective aspirations in ways that felt impossible before.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

SCHOOLWIDE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

STUDENTS

FAMILY, CAREGIVER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

DISTRICT AND STATE POLICIES

A. WHAT THE BELE FRAMEWORK IS

The Building Equitable Learning Environments (BELE) Framework is a guide for transforming student experiences and learning outcomes.

We can only be healthy and strong as a nation when every educational institution is a place where all children can learn, develop and thrive. The evidence and research are abundantly clear. Both confirm two things we know as educators: 1) a young person's academic, social and emotional development are inextricably linked, and 2) the quality of a child's learning environment, their experiences, and access to opportunity determines their developmental and academic outcomes.

Educators, system leaders, and communities committed to transforming education systems can use this guide to increase student engagement and agency, support adult development and practice, and ensure schools reliably produce equitable student experiences and outcomes.
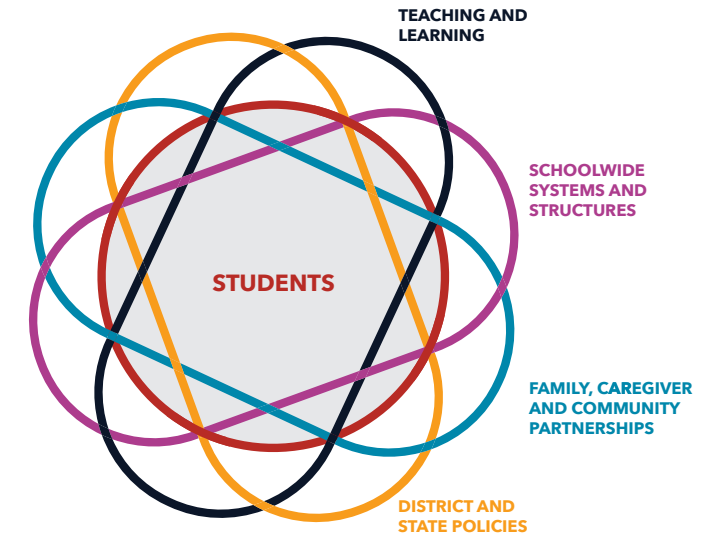
B. WHY BUILD EQUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

We all inherited a public education system that limits possibilities for many young people and reproduces inequities based on race and class. The outdated system ignores current research and science about what students truly need to learn and grow.

While we didn't create this inequitable system, it is our responsibility to redesign it now!

From students and teachers to principals and partners, each of us has power, responsibility and valuable contributions to bring a new shared vision of schooling to life. Progress will require new ways of seeing, engaging, and acting on the problems at hand. Leadership, courage and willingness to share power are necessary to co-design new approaches to teaching and learning alongside those most negatively impacted by the current system.

The BELE Framework, and the accompanying Equitable Learning Library, is not a "how-to" manual but rather a guide for co-designing public school systems in partnership with families and communities, using evidence-based tools. These resources will equip us to collectively design and test changes from the classroom to the state legislature.

C. THE IMPERATIVE TO CENTER STUDENT EXPERIENCE & DEVELOPMENT

We have an opportunity in this moment - with all the structural inequities of the outdated system visible for all to see - to center the experiences of young people by listening to them and ensuring that our decisions, actions and designs are informed by their voices, needs and aspirations.

Schools and classrooms can be places where students are affirmed, seen and known well; provided with tools and opportunities to learn; and supported to develop their agency, pursue their dreams and contribute to the collective well-being of our world.

If we listen, they will succeed. Research confirms that caring relationships and meaningful work support deep and engaged learning, fostering long-term interest and better academic outcomes. Designing truly equitable environments requires young people at the table as co-designers. We need young people, their stories, contributions and leadership to help us determine what to change in order to achieve greater equity.

D. EXPANDING OUR IDEAS ABOUT MEASURES OF STUDENT SUCCESS

Building environments that truly foster equitable learning and development requires going beyond measuring students' academic outcomes and towards indicators that actually measure their learning experiences and opportunities.

If existing measurement perpetuates inequity, evolved measurement spurs learning. Focusing solely on "achievement" reinforces deficit-oriented discourse and educator mindsets that blame underserved students, families, and communities for academic disparities. Narrowly focused academic measures reveal symptoms, but we believe it is possible to address the root causes of inequity. The research demonstrates that when we listen to and measure the learning experiences of young people, we can meaningfully improve their learning outcomes.

E. CREATING EXPERIENCES THAT YIELD POSITIVE RESULTS

Equity is a process and an outcome. How you engage in the process is as important as the changes you decide to make.

Equitable Learning Environments are designed so that every student experiences:

- An engaging, intellectually rigorous learning environment
- Physical, emotional, and psychological safety
- Meaningful and relevant work and classroom discourse
- Their cultural, spiritual, and/or ethnic values and practices acknowledged, honored, and respected
- Feeling seen, respected, and cared for by adults and peers
- Opportunities to set and meet goals, and to learn and recover from failure

Equitable Learning Environments result in the following student outcomes:

- Intellectual curiosity and strong academic skills
- A sense of agency and optimism for the future
- Self-love, self-acceptance, and pride in one's multiple identities
- Understanding of one's own and others' cultural histories and contributions
- Empathy for and meaningful connections with others

WHAT TO DO NEXT

In this moment, we recognize school and district leaders feel an urgent need to respond to the massive disruptions to young people's lives and learning caused by the COVID crisis. We also know that the biggest educational harm is falling on students who were already overcoming numerous barriers to engagement and success well before this pandemic.

Providing rich opportunities to learn is critical and starts with re-engaging, listening to, and building relationships with young people and families. Those furthest from the opportunity can offer the best insight on what they need to succeed. This is how we effectively respond, recover and redesign our systems in ways that are meaningfully responsive to their aspirations and needs and support their well- being.

The BELE Framework has many resources and goes into significant detail about commitments and practices we can all benefit from. If you find yourself wondering where to start, you might first consider prioritizing these **CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES**:

1) In **TEACHING & LEARNING**:
   a) ***Engage*** in healing-centered, trauma-informed classroom practices
   b) ***Promote*** authentic engagement and rigor among culturally and linguistically diverse students by building culturally sustaining and responsive learning environments
2) In **SCHOOLWIDE SYSTEMS & STRUCTURES**:
   a) ***Employ*** structures to support smaller learning communities that foster developmental relationships between adults and students, **e.**g., Advisory, Student Cohorts with Teacher Teams ("families", teams, "houses"), BARR Center Team Structures
   b) ***Employ*** a range of restorative practices throughout the school, from the use of affective language to formal conferences (see the Restorative Practices Continuum for helpful guidance)
3) In **FAMILY, CAREGIVER & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**:
   a) ***Co-design*** and organize pro-active community-building activities that promote positive relationships across roles and lines of difference (families, partners, local business owners, neighbors, artists, healers, and others)
4) In **DISTRICT & STATE POLICIES**:
   a) ***Provide*** and resource student support services, including physical and mental health services (e.g., Community Schools models)
   b) ***Adopt*** discipline policies that are restorative, empathic, and student-centered

CITATIONS

1) Cantor et al., 2018; Immordino-Yang, Darling-Hammond, & Krone, 2018; Jones & Kahn, 2017

   FULL REFERENCES: Cantor, P., Osher, D., Berg, J., Steyer, L., & Rose, T. (2018). Malleability, plasticity, and individuality: How children learn and develop in context. Applied Developmental Science, DOI: 10.1080/10888691.2017.1398649

   Immordino-Yang, M. H., Darling-Hammond, L., & Krone, C. (2018). The brain basis for integrated social, emotional, and academic development: How emotions and social relationships drive learning. Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute.

   Jones, S. M., & Kahn, J. (2017). The evidence base for how we learn: Supporting students' social, emotional, and academic development. Consensus Statement of Evidence from the Council of Distinguished Scientists. Washington, DC: The Aspen Institute.

2) Nagaoka, Farrington, Ehrlich, & Heath, 2015; Osher et al., 2018.

   FULL REFERENCES: Nagaoka, J., Farrington, C. A., Ehrlich, S. B., & Heath, R. D. (2015). Foundations for Young Adult Success: A Developmental Framework. Chicago: University of Chicago Consortium on School Research.

   Osher, D., Cantor, P., Berg, J., Steyer, L., & Rose, T. (2018). Drivers of human development: How relationships and context shape learning and development. Applied Developmental Science. DOI: 10.1080/10888691.2017.1398650.
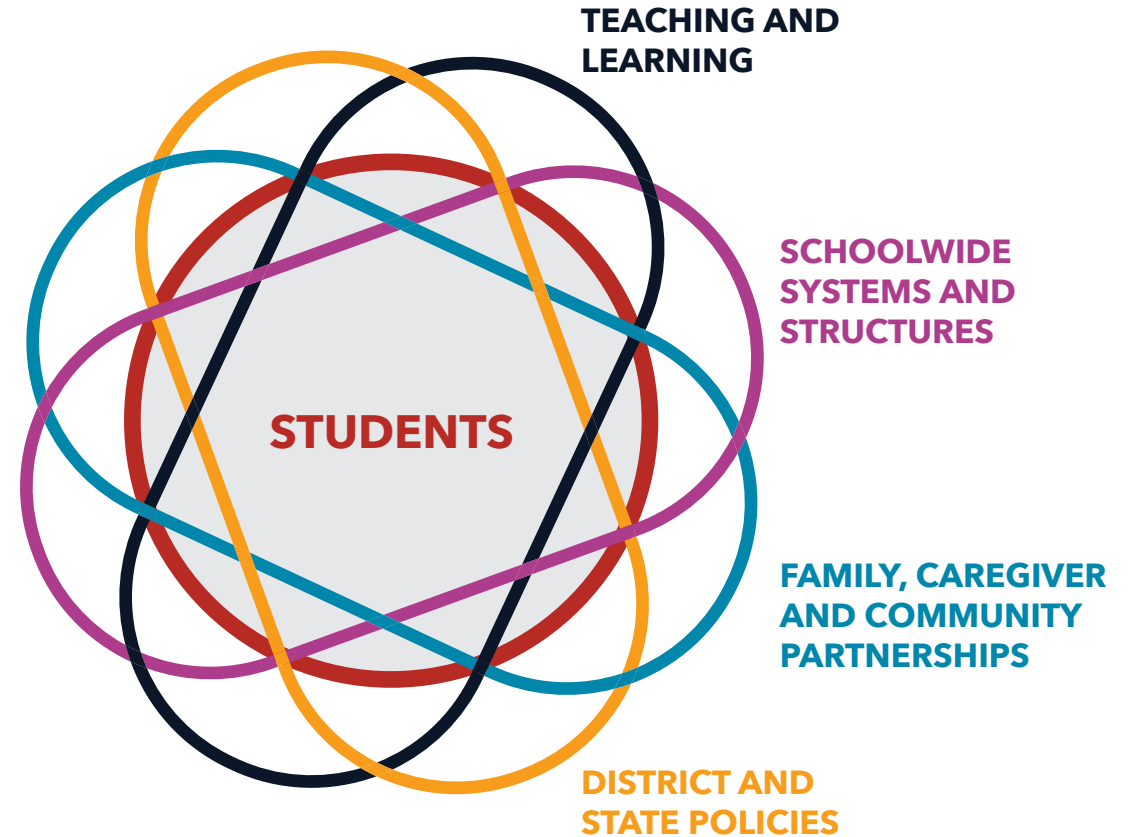
AN APPROACH TO BUILDING EQUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

CREATING THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS OUR CHILDREN NEED AND DESERVE

This guide is designed to support teachers, principals, district and state leaders, community leaders, and young people to use the power we each carry to help provide equitable access to joyful, culturally-affirming robust learning environments.

BELE NETWORK VISION

We envision resilient school systems that ensure the academic, social, and emotional growth and well-being of all young people ensuring that social-cultural markers no longer negatively predict educational experiences and outcomes.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

SCHOOLWIDE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

STUDENTS

FAMILY, CAREGIVER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

DISTRICT AND STATE POLICIES

WHY THIS FRAMEWORK EXISTS

We all inherited a public education system that limits possibilities for many young people and reproduces inequities based on race and class. The outdated system ignores current research and science about what students truly need to learn.

While we didn't create this inequitable system, it is our responsibility to redesign it now! From students and teachers to principals and partners, each of us have power, responsibility, and valuable contributions to bring a new vision of education to life. Progress will require new ways of seeing, engaging, and acting on the problems at hand. Leadership, courage, and willingness to share power are necessary to co-design new approaches to teaching and learning especially with those most negatively impacted by the current system.

WHAT THE BELE FRAMEWORK IS

The Building Equitable Learning Environments (BELE) Framework is a guide for transforming student experiences and learning outcomes.

We can only be healthy and strong as a nation when every educational institution is a place where all children can learn, develop, and thrive. The evidence and research is abundantly clear. Both confirm two things we know as educators: 1) a young person's academic, social and emotional development are inextricably linked, and 2) the quality of a child's learning environment, their experiences, and access to opportunity determine their developmental and academic outcomes.

Educators, system leaders, communities, and field influencers committed to transforming education systems can use this guide to increase student engagement and agency, support adult development and practice, and ensure schools reliably produce equitable student experiences and outcomes.

The BELE Framework is not a "how-to" manual but rather a guide for redesigning public school systems with evidence-based practice and resources to support lasting change.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR BUILDING EQUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Creating robust learning environments that foster student leadership and agency, incentivize intellectual curiosity and meaning-making, while centering student identity and collective wellbeing requires an intentional shift in our planning, approach and implementation. There is no quick-fix to transforming a 300 year-old design - dismantling and engaging in collaborative redesign will be required.

How you engage the work in your school communities will be as important as *what* actions you choose to take. Equity is a process and an outcome.

Consider the following questions when using the BELE Framework:

• What do you understand about the history and people in the school community?
• What is happening here now? What are the inequities in your system you seek to address?
• Who is situated furthest from opportunity and what do you understand about their experience and context? What are the structural barriers that exist?
• What have young people and families shared about their experience in your system and how is the data informing your actions?
• Where in your system is there an opening, momentum or demand for action that will have a meaningful impact on student experience and learning?
• Which BELE commitments and core practices are within your sphere of influence, where do you have capacity and expertise? What do you need to learn?

Making progress will require a learning posture and a commitment to consistently using data and feedback to continuously correct course and improve.

TOWARD EQUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

Designing equitable learning environments require conscious SHIFTS in our values and our approach.

Shift FROM	Shift TO
Generic vision statements and goals that do not reflect unique and diverse school communities and do not name an explicit commitment to addressing inequitable experiences and outcomes that exist	Center Equity & Justice: A shared and articulated vision for and commitment to equity, diversity and belonging. - Identification of universal goals and targeted strategies based on how ommunities are situated relative to opportunity
Engaging, designing and decision-making that does not acknowledge the historical and social-political context of school. Understanding and talking about racialized experiences and inequitable outcomes as isolated and decontextualized events	Collective Wellbeing: Lead from an awareness of the history and harms of racism and structural inequity and from a belief that our fates are linked
Advantaging and accepting as the norm, white dominant culture behaviors, and values	Decenter Whiteness: Respect, value, and see as assets individuals' and communities' multiple ways of knowing, doing and being
Fear or distrust in the capacity of teachers, families and communities of color to generate critique, analysis and solutions to current inequities	Transform Power: Distribute leadership, center the voices and experiences of students, families and others closest to the work and consciously redistribute power across role groups and institutions
Creating and implementing plans, policies, and strategies FOR school communities	Co-Design: Invite, engage and design solutions and co-produce knowledge in partnership with students, teachers, families, and communities

STUDENT EXPERIENCE ➜ OUTCOMES

We have an opportunity in this moment – with the inequities of the old system visible for all to see – to center the experiences of young people by ensuring that our decisions, actions and designs are informed by their voices, needs and aspirations.

EQUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS ARE DESIGNED SO THAT EVERY STUDENT EXPERIENCES:	**EQUITABLE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS RESULT IN THE FOLLOWING STUDENT OUTCOMES:**

- An engaging, empowering, intellectually rigorous learning environment
- Physical, emotional, and psychological safety
- Meaningful and relevant work and classroom discourse
- Their cultural, spiritual, and/or ethnic values and practices acknowledged, honored, and respected
- Feeling seen, respected, and cared for by adults and peers
- Opportunities to set and meet goals, and to learn and recover from mistakes

- Intellectual curiosity and strong academic skills
- A sense of agency and optimism for the future
- Self-love, self-acceptance, and pride in one's multiple identities
- Understanding of one's own and others' cultural histories and contributions
- Empathy and meaningful connections with others

LEARNING CONTEXT AND CONDITIONS

Creating equitable learning environments necessitates we commit to a shared understanding of what we are all working toward in our respective areas or domains of the education system.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Research demonstrates that how young people experience their learning – what, how, and where they are taught – **substantially impacts their ability to learn and grow.** This domain focuses on creating meaningful relationships and learning experiences as the central work of an equitable school.

SCHOOLWIDE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

Equitable, high-quality schools are **organized** to ensure that people, resources, and opportunities are **prioritized and aligned** to support the core work of Teaching & Learning.

FAMILY, CAREGIVER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Schools belong to families and communities in service of nurturing their children's learning and development. Research proves that **trusting relationships, a shared vision, and authentic collaboration** are at the heart of equitable schools.

DISTRICT AND STATE POLICIES

Districts and states must **set the conditions and expectations and provide the resources** to ensure that school communities can fulfill the core commitments in the first three domains.

LEARNING CONTEXT AND CONDITIONS

TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Systematically gather and value students' feedback on and input into their learning experiences in school
- Provide frequent, formative, growth-oriented feedback that affirms high academic expectations and support for all students
- Facilitate community building, routines, and rituals that reduce stress, address trauma, promote healing and belonging, and prepare the brain for learning
- Nurture student agency, self-directed learning, and critical consciousness
- Represent, affirm and support students to explore their personal, cultural, racial and academic identities and proactively dispel stereotypes

SCHOOLWIDE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

- All school efforts, structures, resources and people align around a clear, schoolwide vision of equitable learning and development and a shared understanding of why and how this drives everyone's work
- Professional processes, structures, and cultures build the individual and collective efficacy of educators and staff while supporting their personal well-being and providing opportunities for ongoing inquiry and critical reflection
- Systematic use of a broad range of disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data to enhance equitable opportunity, experience, and success
- Differentiated opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate mastery, with punitive or discriminatory grading practices identified and eliminated
- School structures and practices promote student leadership and agency
- Time and learning opportunities are flexibly designed and organized to prioritize student experience and learning goals, including cultivating supportive relationships and authentic learning
- The goals of discipline policies and practices are to support student learning and development and to repair community rather than to punish or exclude students
- School and classroom spaces are inviting, physically and emotionally safe, and support learning and engagement of all stakeholders
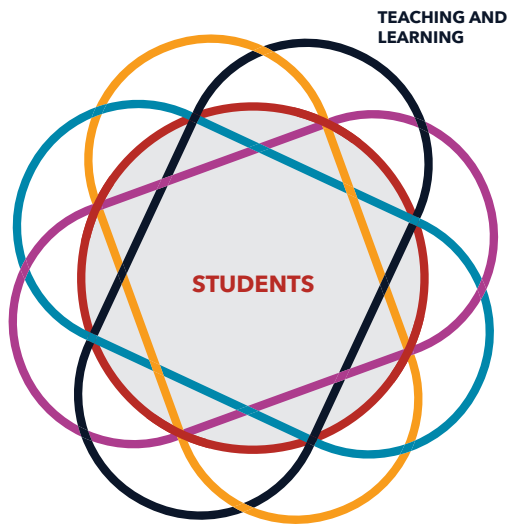
FAMILY, CAREGIVER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Families and school staff work in authentic partnerships to develop and advance a shared definition of student success
- Families and school staff build meaningful relationships that foster mutual trust, understanding, and appreciation across cultures and other differences
- Share information and resources and collaborate across schools, families, and community partners in support of student learning and development
- Families and community members co-design and co-govern schools so that policies and practices are equitable and support all students

DISTRICT AND STATE POLICIES

- Approach policy making with a commitment to Targeted Universalism
- System goals and aligned accountability policies focus on equitable whole student learning and development
- Policies and resource allocations promote the development of school environments that support student safety, belonging, agency, wellness, and thriving
- Policies and resources support the hiring and development of staff who have the mindsets and skills to build equitable and effective learning environments
- Structures and requirements are in place to ensure authentic engagement of students, families, and communities in directing state and district policy and practice
- State and district data and accountability systems support site-level equity focused continuous improvement processe
- Resources (e.g. funding, teachers, courses, early childhood education, etc.) are adequate and equitably distributed
- Structures and resources prioritize mastery and engagement to require and advance deeper learning
- School leaders are held accountable for advancing these commitments while being given autonomy and ownership to find the most locally-appropriate path to fulfill those commitments

TEACHING AND LEARNING
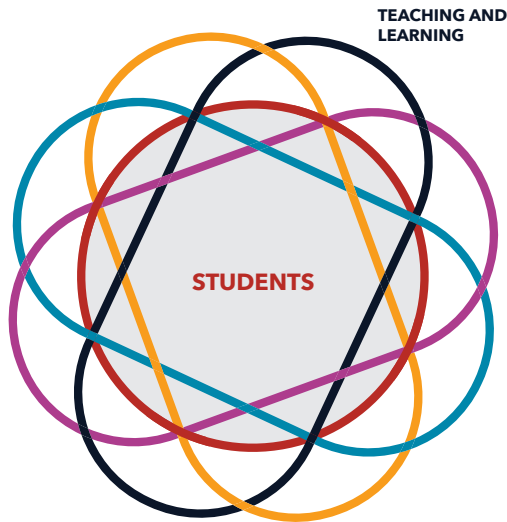
TEACHING AND LEARNING

STUDENTS

COMMITMENTS

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

Systematically gather and value students' feedback on and input into their learning experiences in school

- Use short surveys to regularly get student feedback on classroom learning conditions, e.g., *Copilot*
- Use mobile devices and exit tickets for immediate student feedback and input during class time

Provide frequent, formative, growth-oriented feedback that affirms high academic expectations and support for all students

- Use a *Universal Design for Learning* approach to ensure all students have appropriate access to lesson materials and choice in demonstrating their learning and can therefore meet high expectations
- Share models of high-quality work to communicate expectations for excellence, e.g., *Austin's Butterfly*
- Set high standards for all students and then give actionable critical feedback along with reassurance, e.g., *Feedback for Growth*
- Provide formative, *Diagnostic Feedback Without A Grade*

Italicized phrases correspond to entries in the Equitable Learning Library. Find the growing library at equitablelearning.org/discover.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

**TEACHING AND LEARNING**

STUDENTS

COMMITMENTS

Facilitate community building, routines, and rituals that reduce stress, address trauma, promote healing and belonging, and prepare the brain for learning

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

- Demonstrate care and interest through opening and closing routines to begin and end lessons
  - *Build Community With Classroom Circles*
  - *Get to Know Students as People*
- Use *Collaborative Classroom Structures*, e.g., jigsaw work groups, dyads/pair shares, Liberating Structures, to ensure learning engagement and equity of voice
- Build culturally sustaining and responsive learning environments, e.g., *Make Lessons More Culturally Responsive*
- Engage students in the *Value Affirmation Activity*
- Provide guided breathing and moving breaks
- Engage in *Healing-Centered Practices*, also known as trauma informed practices

TEACHING AND LEARNING
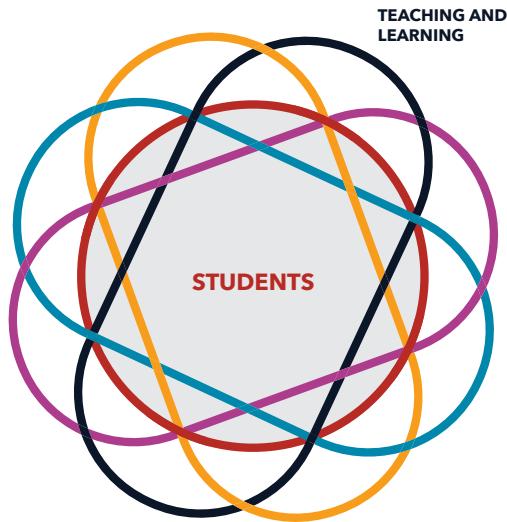
TEACHING AND LEARNING

STUDENTS

COMMITMENTS

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

Nurture student agency, self-directed learning, and critical consciousness

- Provide opportunities for high quality project-based learning, e.g., PBLWorks
- Engage students in *Youth Participatory Action Research* (YPAR)
- Audit and strengthen opportunities for student agency
- Provide rich opportunities for civic education and engagement
- Support metacognitive reflection and connection-making, e.g., *Build Connections*
- Provide student choice in what students learn, how they engage in learning and/or how they demonstrate their learning, see *Building A Student Choice-Based Classroom*
- Design lessons to develop students' critical thinking skills, see *Habits of Mind Protocol*
- Engage students through critical / inquiry-based pedagogy
- Provide classroom opportunities for student leadership and student-taught lessons

Represent, affirm and support students to explore their personal, cultural, racial, and academic identities and proactively dispel stereotypes

- Incorporate examples from students' communities and cultural groups in every curriculum unit
- Use lesson plans from Facing History & Ourselves
- Implement *Ethnic Studies Classes*

SCHOOLWIDE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

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STUDENTS
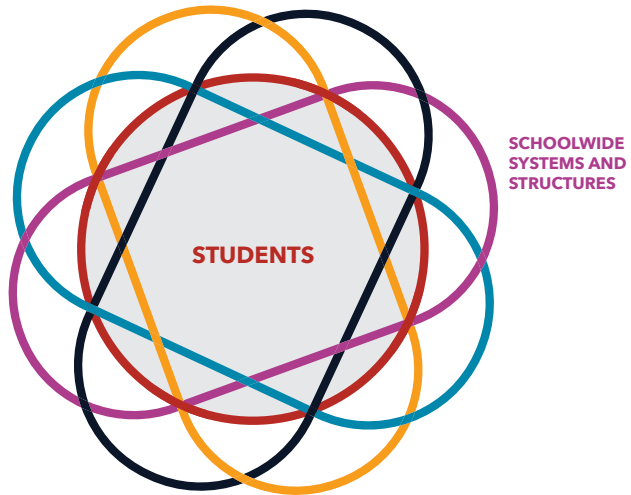
COMMITMENTS

All school efforts, structures, resources and people align around a clear, schoolwide vision of equitable learning and development and a shared understanding of why and how this drives everyone's work

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

- Engage in a structured process to interrogate and align school personnel, systems, and budgets around a shared set of values and principles, e.g., Summit Public School's Aligned School Model framework
- Assess the extent to which schools and classrooms provide developmentally supportive learning environments, e.g., using *Copilot* student surveys or UChicago Cultivate survey

SCHOOLWIDE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES
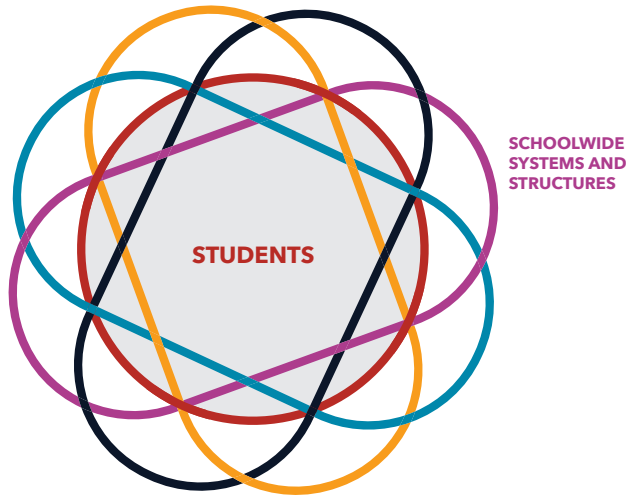
COMMITMENTS

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

SCHOOLWIDE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

STUDENTS

Professional processes, structures, and cultures build the individual and collective efficacy of educators and staff while supporting their personal well-being and providing opportunities for ongoing inquiry and critical reflection

- Invest in growth-oriented professional development based on adult learning principles that is sustained, supportive, job-embedded, team-based, and student-centered
- Recruit, hire, and retain a diverse faculty and staff that is representative of and culturally and emotionally attuned to the students in the building
- Engage educators and staff in collective learning, discussion, and reflection on key topics: learning and development, stress and trauma, the importance of learning environments to human behavior and development
- Distribute formal and informal leadership across educators and other staff members
- Establish weekly staff circles to support adult relationships and collaborative meaning-making
- Structure time in the school day for frequent teacher collaboration and professional learning, e.g., by grade-level, content area, and/or student cohort
- Provide educators with models, protocols, and opportunities for practice for any new endeavor
- Use tools to support educators' mindful reflection and self-assessment for bias (e.g., the Mindful Reflection Protocol for Checking Unconscious Bias)
- Establish mentoring and leadership development opportunities for interested teachers, administrators, and other staff members

SCHOOLWIDE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

STUDENTS

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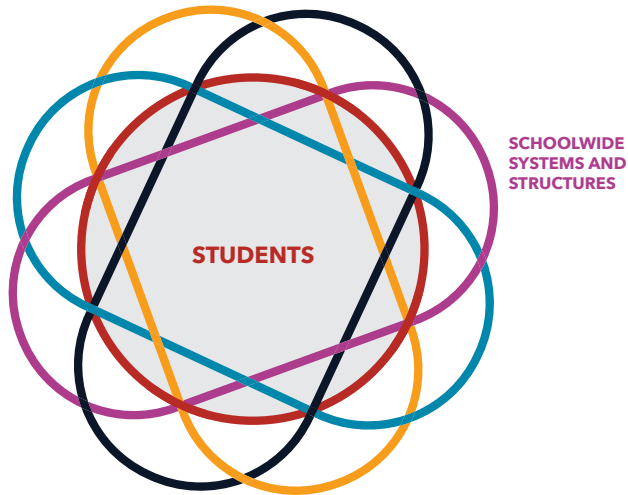
COMMITMENTS

Systematic use of a broad range of disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data to enhance equitable opportunity, experience, and success

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

- Structure opportunities for teacher and staff teams to meet regularly to review individual student data and develop individualized responses and supports (e.g., Freshman OnTrack 9th grade teacher teams, BARR Center team meetings, Student Support Services Teams)
- Regularly collect, review, and act upon student experience, parent satisfaction, and school community climate data (e.g., Equal Opportunity Schools Student Insight Cards, CRE Wellness Index, family & student surveys, Copilot school-level measures) to inform and contextualize traditional academic data (e.g., grades, attendance)
- Hold regular events for families and other community stakeholders to collect and make sense of data together, e.g., Community Data Nights or Data in a Day sessions, CPS community meetings on Funding Equity

SCHOOLWIDE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES


SCHOOLWIDE
SYSTEMS AND
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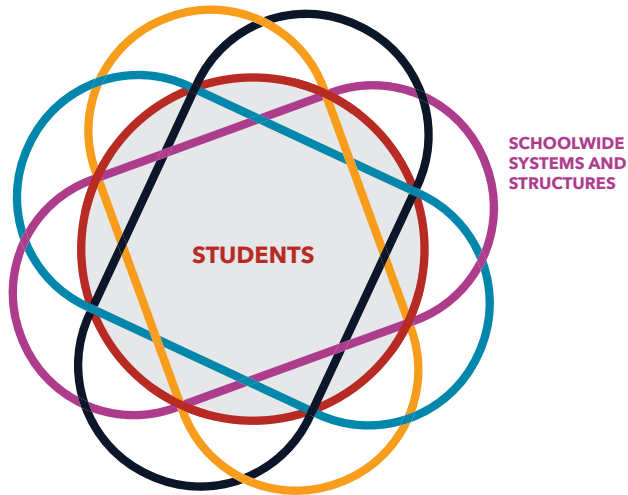
STUDENTS

COMMITMENTS

Differentiated opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate mastery, with punitive or discriminatory grading practices identified and eliminated

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

- Implement student portfolios as demonstrations of learning
- Implement equitable grading practices schoolwide, for example, moving from 100-point scale (percentages) to a 0-4 scale for individual assignment grades (see Grading for Equity)
- Ensure that all students have opportunities to retake assessments or to redo assignments to demonstrate their new learning as their skills and knowledge develop
- Structure formal, public opportunities for self-reflection and celebration of learning to mark year-end promotions or graduations (e.g., Graduation by Exhibition)
- Move to a school-wide system of competency-based grading
- Establish competency-based graduation pathways

SCHOOLWIDE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES
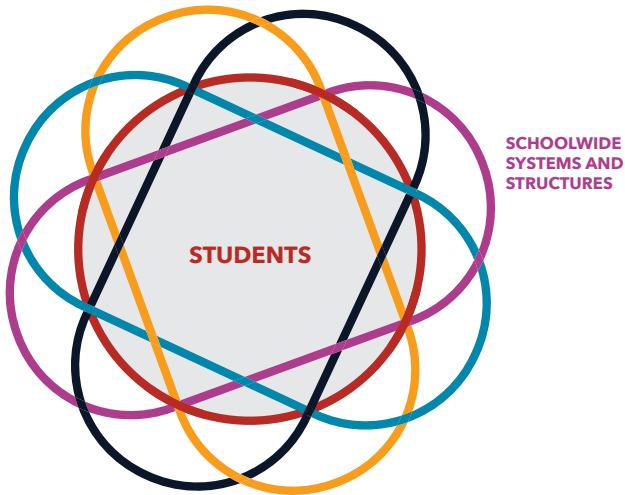
SCHOOLWIDE
SYSTEMS AND
STRUCTURES

STUDENTS

COMMITMENTS	CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES
School structures and practices promote student leadership and agency	• Include student representatives on leadership teams and school boards • Hold quarterly *Student-Led Conferences* • Set up and empower Student Voice Committees • Create opportunities and structures to support student-led civic engagement projects • Establish a meaningful system of student government to share decision-making power
Time and learning opportunities are flexibly designed and organized to prioritize student experience and learning goals, including cultivating supportive relationships and authentic learning	• Establish small learning communities that foster developmental relationships between adults and students, e.g., Advisory, Student Cohorts with Teacher Teams ("families", teams, "houses"), BARR Center Team Structures • Structure time across the day, week, and year to provide different opportunities for student learning and development, e.g., intersession, block schedules, early release/late arrival • Develop expanded/personalized student learning opportunities beyond the classroom, e.g., Internships, online learning, dual enrollment, flipped classrooms, field experiences

SCHOOLWIDE SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

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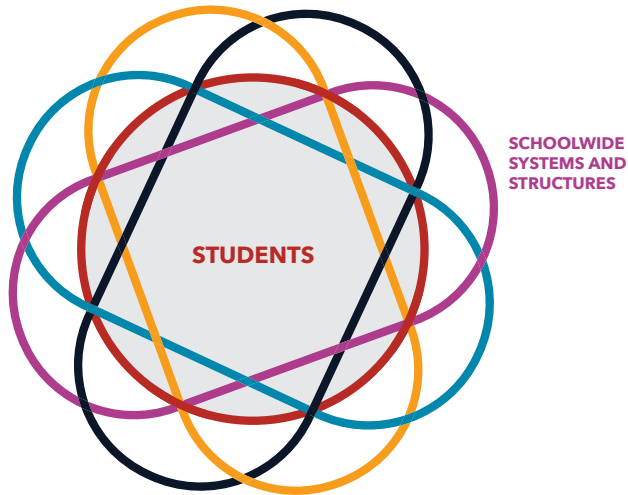
STUDENTS

COMMITMENTS

The goals of discipline policies and practices are to support student learning and development and to repair community rather than to punish or exclude students

School and classroom spaces are inviting, physically and emotionally safe, and support learning and engagement of all stakeholders

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

- Find opportunities to employ a range of restorative practices throughout the school, from the use of affective language to formal conferences (see the *Restorative Practices* Continuum for helpful guidance)
- Eliminate zero tolerance policies
- Support teachers to *Address Discipline Problems with Empathy*

- Create a visibly multilingual and multicultural school environment by displaying signs, banners, and other materials that acknowledge and celebrate the identities of students and families
- Include students as co-designers of school and classroom spaces and/or virtual learning spaces
- Display student work, awards, and celebrations of achievement, as well as products designed by community members that reflect relevant cultural and historical context
- Ensure that public spaces (including bathrooms) are clean, well-appointed and have necessary supplies
- Arrange classroom furniture to promote inquiry and collaboration
- Designate special space for families and community members visiting or working in the school (e.g., family resource center)
- Avoid hardening of schools, e.g., find alternatives to metal detectors or armed on-campus police

FAMILY, CAREGIVER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS
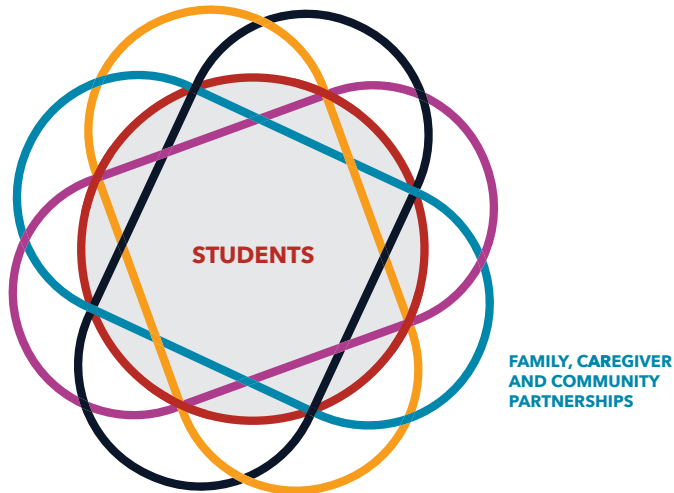
STUDENTS

FAMILY, CAREGIVER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

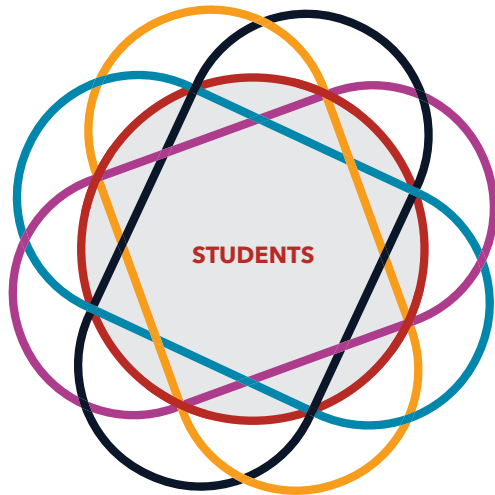| COMMITMENTS	CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES
Families and school staff work in authentic partnerships to develop and advance a shared definition of student success	• Co-develop a Profile of a Graduate with your local community to guide educational decisions and resource allocation • Implement student-led conferences to build partnerships and affirm shared notions of student success • Create regular/predictable opportunities for families and other community stakeholders to actively contribute to the school's vision, priorities and practices
Families and school staff build meaningful relationships that foster mutual trust, understanding, and appreciation across cultures and other differences	• Engage educators in community learning walks • Engage educators in home visits • Provide space for teachers and staff to process and determine how to engage with students and families after social and political events that impact the wider community • Support intentional paraprofessional or volunteer programs to increase school community partnerships to support student learning • Co-design and organize pro-active community-building activities that promote positive relationships across roles and lines of difference (families, partners, local business owners, neighbors, artists, healers and others)

FAMILY, CAREGIVER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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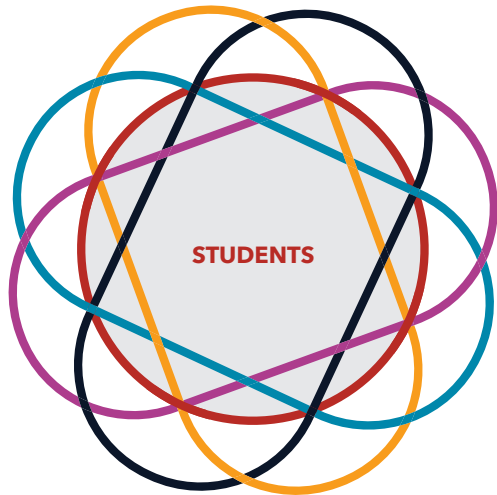FAMILY, CAREGIVER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

COMMITMENTS

Share information and resources and collaborate across schools, families, and community partners in support of student learning and development

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

- Co-design formal and informal structures and processes for educators and families to share relevant information (e.g., student progress toward grade-level standards and expectations, developmentally appropriate tools and resources)
- Hold regular community and family discussion groups and workshops
- Become a Community School (see the Coalition for Community Schools for tools and guidance)
- Implement a whole-school model of integrated supports for student development, e.g., the Comer School Development Program
- Partner with businesses, industry leaders, and community organizations in support of students' aspirational pathways, e.g., internships, job training, mentors

FAMILY, CAREGIVER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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**FAMILY, CAREGIVER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

COMMITMENTS

Families and community members co-design and co-govern schools so that policies and practices are equitable and support all students

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

- Build and support formal structures for family and community leadership (see the SFUSD Rubric for Family Leadership and Governance)
- Include families and community representatives on all standing school council/leadership teams
- Include all stakeholders in advisory/working groups (families, teachers, students, community members) to guide co-design and collaborative school decision making across functional areas (e.g.,finance, staffing, instruction etc)
- Incorporate family & community voices in the hiring process
- Be transparent about decision-making processes, timelines and opportunities for influence and review

DISTRICT AND STATE POLICIES
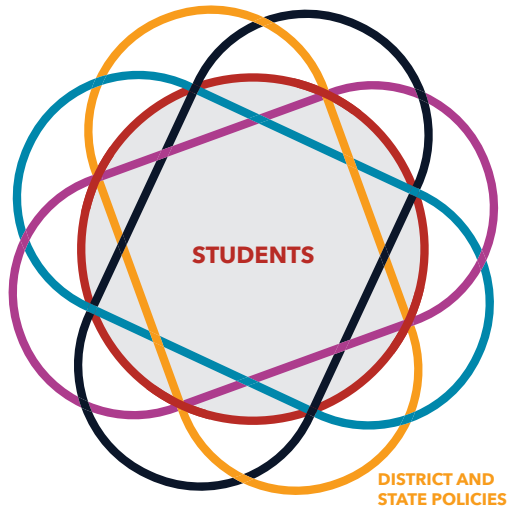
STUDENTS

DISTRICT AND STATE POLICIES

COMMITMENTS

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

Approach policy making with a commitment to Targeted Universalism
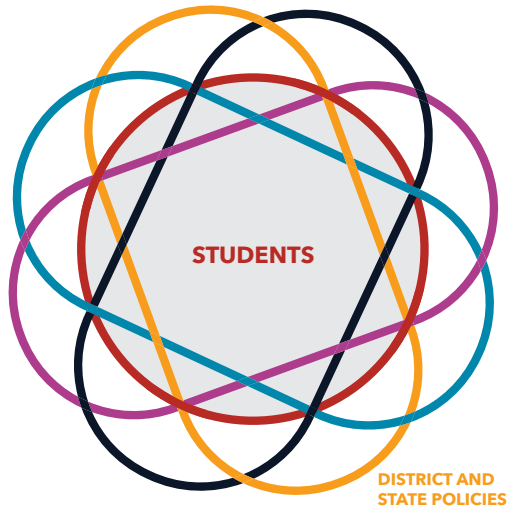
- Set universal goals
- Review data to understand where different student groups and communities are relative to the universal goals
- Conduct an equity audit to understand the policies and structures limiting access to opportunity and causing harm
- Develop policies that take into account the ways different groups of students and communities have differential access to opportunity and implement policies that dismantle and/or mitigate structural barriers to opportunity

System goals and aligned accountability policies focus on equitable whole student learning and development

- Conduct Race and Equity Impact Assessment for all Policies and Decision Making
- Work with community stakeholders to develop systems for mutual accountability that advance holistic student development
- Adopt policies to support integrated social, emotional and academic development (e.g., Aspen Institute policy recommendations)
- Periodically audit policies and practices to identify and eliminate structural barriers to opportunity and those that harm the experiences, opportunities, or outcomes of students, staff, and families of color

Italicized phrases correspond to entries in the Equitable Learning Library. Find the growing library at equitablelearning.org/discover.

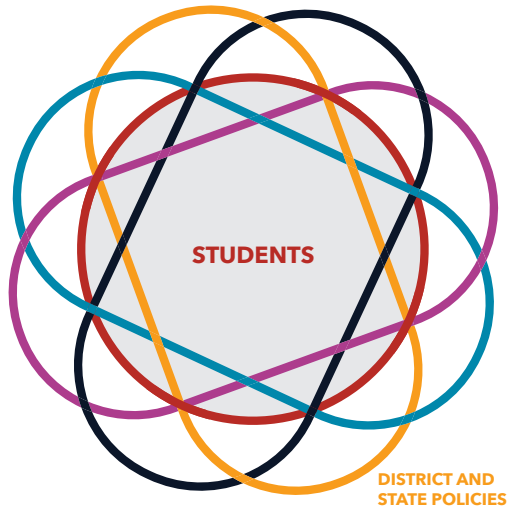# DISTRICT AND STATE POLICIES

STUDENTS

DISTRICT AND
STATE POLICIES

COMMITMENTS

Policies and resource allocations promote the development of school environments that support student safety, belonging, agency, wellness, and thriving

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

- Require and provide culturally responsive, identity affirming, and rigorous curriculum and pedagogy
- Advance structures, schedules, and staffing that allow for the establishment of positive relationships and provide personalized instruction and engagement
- Adopt discipline policies that are restorative, empathic, and student-centered
- Provide adequate resources and staff training to implement a rigorous ethnic studies curricula
- Provide and resource student support services, including physical and mental health services - Community Schools models

DISTRICT AND STATE POLICIES

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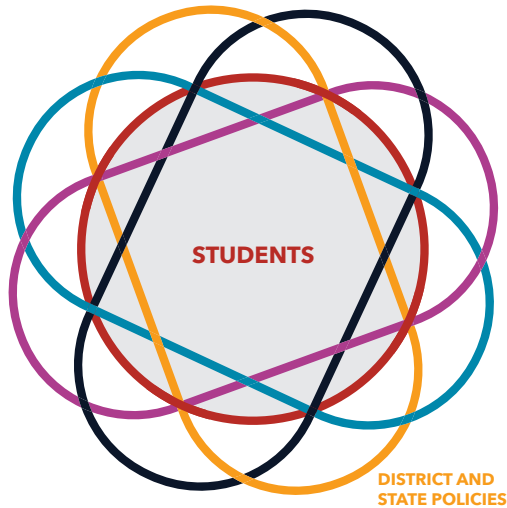
COMMITMENTS	CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES
Policies and resources support the hiring and development of staff who have the mindsets and skills to build equitable and effective learning environments	• Increase hiring and retention of educators of color through improved incentives and conditions for teachers of color; focus on robust local pipeline development • Fund ongoing job-embedded coaching to support educators in developing the technical and relational skills needed to be effective, culturally responsive, and affirming • Ensure teacher licensure and certification requirements include the skills/ knowledge necessary to establish equitable learning environments • Hire, retain and develop state, district and school leaders and staff who are committed to equity and whole student learning and development
Structures and requirements are in place to ensure authentic engagement of students, families, and communities in directing state and district policy and practice	• Engage students, families, and communities in co-planning at the state and district levels, including in setting goals, defining success, strategic planning, and decision-making

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DISTRICT AND STATE POLICIES

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DISTRICT AND STATE POLICIES

COMMITMENTS

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

State and district data and accountability systems support site-level equity focused continuous improvement processes

- Establish regular collection and analysis of student outcome, student experience, and school climate data that are disaggregated by race, ethnicity, socio-economic level, gender identity, sexual orientation, English learner status, immigration status, and different ability status
- Allocate systems, time, and expertise to develop and implement action plans in response to data analysis

Resources (e.g. funding, teachers, courses, early childhood education, etc.) are adequate and equitably distributed

- Allocate resources to districts and schools commensurate with each student's needs
- Create and implement statewide equitable funding formulas
- Allocate most effective/experienced teachers with students most in need
- Fund lower class sizes for children living in poverty
- Prioritize wrap around services in schools in high poverty neighborhoods
- Develop facilities plans that prioritize upgrades and improvements in high poverty neighborhoods
- Review site-based expenditure reporting to ensure equitable distribution of funding

DISTRICT AND STATE POLICIES

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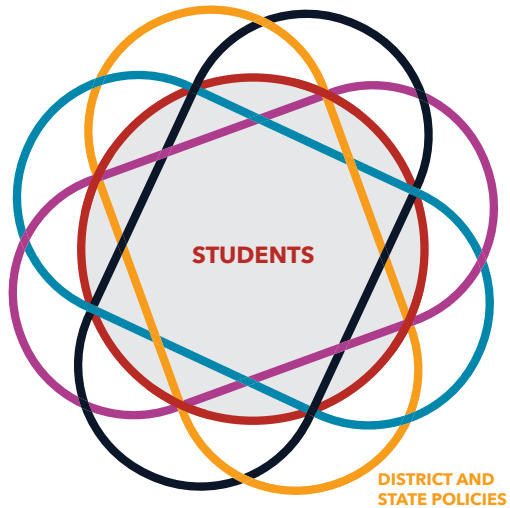
COMMITMENTS

Structures and resources prioritize mastery and engagement to require and advance deeper learning

School leaders are held accountable for advancing these commitments while being given autonomy and ownership to find the most locally-appropriate path to fulfill those commitments

CORE PRACTICES & POLICIES

- Require and enable schools to provide high quality educational experiences for all students
- Replace Carnegie units with competency-based approaches focused on mastery
- Provide varied assessments that allow for differentiated opportunities to demonstrate mastery
- Provide competency-based graduation pathways

- Create local school councils to democratize decision making at the local level
- Implement school-based budgeting that aligns funds with student needs
- Provide sufficient flexibility at the school level to allow schools to be responsive to community priorities consistent with the goals of equitable learning environments and whole student development

TOGETHER WE CAN

Today's students and families are ready for change. Join our community of individuals and organizations committed to educational equity. Visit www.belenetwork.org.