

Department of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

YEAR-IN-REVIEW 2022-23



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DEI DEPARTMENT PARTNERS

Educational Equity:

Equip and empower leadership to continue to develop and to support ongoing district initiatives focused on creating more equitable learning environments.

NPS Leadership continued to increase and strengthen in its full commitment of an antiracist vision that was supported financially, structurally and intentionally. Leadership opportunities have expanded across roles and school buildings to include a diversity of representation of central administration, principals, educators, staff and families to engage in the education and implementation of culturally-responsive philosophy and practices.



The mission of the Newton ELPAC is to work to promote multilingual and multicultural values for all students and to aid in the integration process of new English language learners into the Newton community.



This group of diverse Newton families helps children learn about issues of power and inequality and how to stand up for racial justice. The organization seeks to generate understanding and curiosity about differences in our society, and to work together towards racial equity.



Our mission is to build an engaged and united Israeli-American community that strengthens the Israeli and Jewish identities of our next generations, that has a strong connection to the Jewish American community, and that promotes the bond between the people of the United States and the state of Israel.



Newton Coalition of Black Residents (NCBR)

We are a group of Black residents whose mission is to harness our collective strength to advance policies and political actions that directly support Black residents in our city's government, schools and community.



The Newton Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) Council is an umbrella organization composed of all 22 PTOs in the city of Newton, Massachusetts. Its members are the current and past presidents of each PTO. The Council's ultimate purpose is to support all Newton parents in the quest for the highest quality of education in the city.



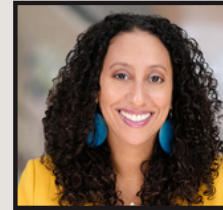
Newton Schools Foundation advances excellence and equity in the Newton Public Schools by making grants in 3 strategic areas: New approaches in the classroom, Professional Development for teachers and Programs that promote equity for all students



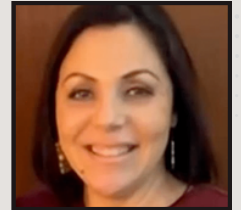
The Newton Special Education Parent Advisory Council (Newton SEPAC) is an all-volunteer group of parents of children with special needs in Newton, MA. As mandated by Massachusetts law, we provide feedback to the School Committee and school district on special education programs and policies, and participate in their planning and development.

DISTRICT PRIORITIES: DEPARTMENT UPDATES

The Department of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (created in July 2020) works closely with school leaders to identify strengths and areas of growth through a lens of equity, and developing improvement strategies that will best serve each school community. The Department of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion partners with school leadership teams and values student, parent and community contribution.



Kathy Lopes
Director



Angela Sasso
Administrative Assistant

DEI DEPARTMENT HIRES NEW ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, NAOMI JOSEPH

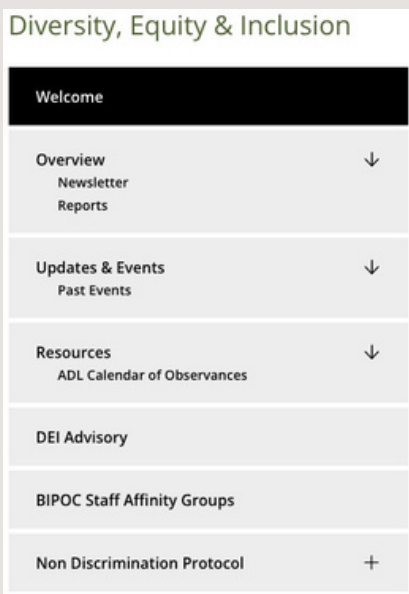


After a diligent search that included faculty, staff, parents and administration, the DEI Dept. welcomed Naomi Joseph as the new Assistant Director in January 2023.

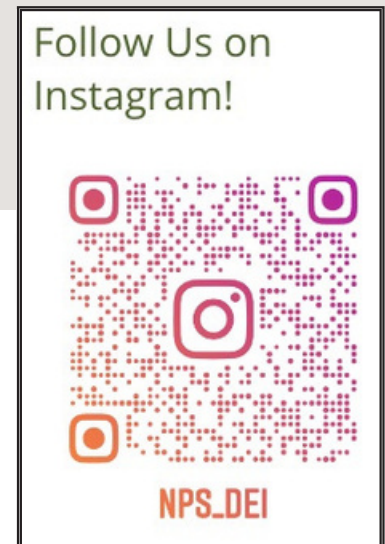
Naomi arrived at NPS with experience as an elementary educator and a DEI Liaison at her previous school where, alongside her classroom responsibilities, she worked to build programs, deliver professional development, and engage community members in the generative work of DEI.

Naomi has fit seamlessly into our small department and hit the ground running, leading initiatives and advisories throughout the district.

COMMUNICATION: DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION WEBPAGE, NEWSLETTERS & SOCIAL MEDIA



[CLICK HERE FOR MORE INFO](#)



DISTRICT PRIORITIES:

NON-DISCRIMINATION PROTOCOL

Educational Equity:

Continue to analyze and improve district structures and practices in key areas to ensure equitable outcomes for all students.

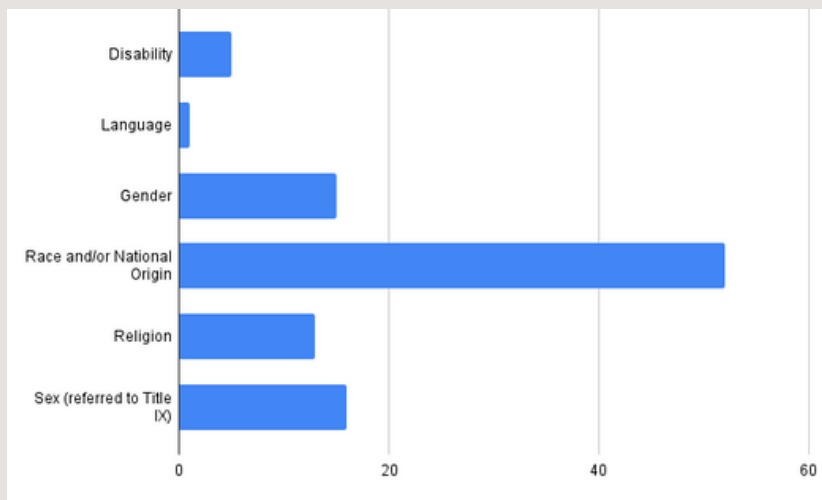
Social Emotional Wellbeing:

Promote safe, caring, and welcoming environments to ensure students' social and emotional needs are met in preparation for learning.

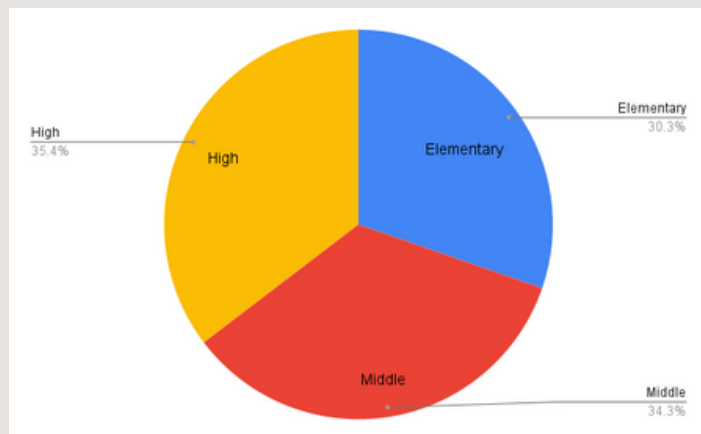
DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS (INITIAL REPORTING): SEPTEMBER 2022 - PRESENT

Total Reports Submitted: 99

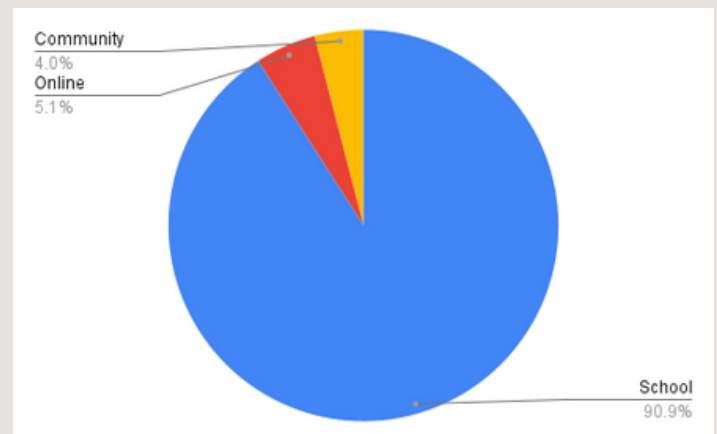
As established in our Non-Discrimination Policy, the Newton School Committee and Newton Public Schools are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members that is free from all forms of discrimination, harassment and retaliation. Using our revised protocol, NPS will respond promptly to any reports or complaints of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or other violations of civil rights. Where it is determined that discrimination has occurred, NPS will act promptly to address the conduct and will take developmentally-appropriate restorative, corrective, and/or disciplinary action.



Nature of Discrimination



Grade Level



Location of Incident

DISTRICT PRIORITIES:

HIRING & RETENTION

Educational Equity:

Continue to ensure NPS staff is representative of the diversity of our student body and community through the following actions.

Superintendent Search

The search for Newton's next Superintendent of Schools began in fall 2022 and was led by a search committee composed of a diverse group of Newton stakeholders, including a representative from the DEI Office. Using feedback from community surveys and focus groups, the committee developed a leadership profile and identified desired characteristics for the next district leader. The search committee reviewed applications, interviewed semi-finalists, and recommended three candidates to move to the final stage of the selection process.

Lasell University Partnership

This past January, we announced the official launch of our partnership with Lasell University, in support of reducing barriers for Unit C staff of color to attain advanced degrees and in hopes of increasing and retaining a diverse educator workforce here at NPS. The program offers significant financial assistance, as well as accommodations with a hybrid model and practicum flexibility. We are currently enrolling our second cohort in September after a successful first launch.



DESE Teacher Diversification Professional Learning Community

For the second year in a row, the NPS Human Resources Department secured the Teacher Diversification Pilot Program by Governor Baker and Lt. Governor Polito. Designed to support local school and district efforts to strengthen and diversify existing teacher recruitment and retention program. The FY23 grant was offered in the amount of \$35,654 and intended to support the following:

- Financial Incentives (Relocation Assistance, Signing Bonuses, Loan Repayment): \$23,770
- Tuition Assistance: \$11,884

In order to receive the funding, school districts must commit to a monthly professional learning community on recruitment, hiring and retention strategies. NPS is represented in this yearlong training series by the Director of HR, Director of DEI, Asst. Supt. of Teaching & Learning and Principal of Underwood Elementary.

BIPOC Staff & Admin Affinity Groups



Staff of Color in NPS represent a small percentage of the overall school population. This may present challenges of isolation, exclusion and lack of community. The hope is that providing affinity spaces will offer a place for support and safety which will positively impact experiences in NPS and increase retention. With support from Newton Schools Foundation, we have launched district-wide affinity groups for all NPS staff who identify as BIPOC. We have also created a space specifically for our BIPOC Administrators to meet twice a year.



Staff Demographics

All Current Employees As of October 21, 2021

Race	Unit												Total	%
	Central Staff	Elementary Principals	Secondary Principals	Non-Aligned Staff	Unit A Members	Unit B Members	Unit C Members	Unit D Members	Unit E Members	NESA Members	Custodians			
American Indian or Alaska Native				1	1		1						3	0.1
Asian		2	1		69	1	34	1	2	5			115	4.7
Black or African American	2		1	1	41	10	71	6	3	9	6		150	6.2
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander					1		2						3	0.1
Two or More Races	1		1	1	17		10			1	1		32	1.3
White	7	13	3	26	1258	66	526	45	27	70	83		2124	87.5
Total Employees	10	15	6	29	1387	77	644	52	32	85	90		2427	

All Current Employees As of May 15, 2023

Race	Unit												Total	%
	Central Staff	Elementary Principals	Secondary Principals	Non-Aligned Staff	Unit A Members	Unit B Members	Unit C Members	Unit D Members	Unit E Members	NESA Members	Custodians			
American Indian or Alaska Native				1	1								2	0.1
Asian	1	2	1		67	1	34	10	2	4			122	5
Black or African American	3		1	1	43	6	85	3	3	9	6		160	6.5
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander					1								1	0.04
Two or More Races		1	1	1	24	1	7	2		1	0		38	1.6
Hispanic or Latino					50	1	40	4		4	9		108	4.4
White	6	12	3	26	1173	72	501	52	26	64	78		2013	82.3
Total Employees	10	15	6	29	1387	77	644	52	32	85	90		2444	

*Minor increase in number of employees who identify as Asian, Black or African American and Multiracial

**Although increase in numbers appears minimal, data suggests positive retention rates

***Decrease in number of employees who identify as White may be a reflection of additional category of Hispanic or Latino in this year's data

DISTRICT PRIORITIES: STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Academic Excellence:

Provide professional learning experiences that promote student access to grade-level content and standards in supportive learning environments.

Educational Equity:

Continue to provide professional learning experiences to educators that promote deeper understanding and applied knowledge in key area

M.A.S.S. Racial Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (REDI)

Members of the Central Administrative Team committed to six days of training provided by the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents. The M.A.S.S. Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (M.A.S.S. REDI) is an organization-wide, long-term strategy of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (M.A.S.S.) designed to ensure that every school in Massachusetts learns to model the antiracist, inclusive practice required for every adult and student to learn and thrive.

Summer Training

The DEI Department offers Culturally Responsive Instruction workshops for teacher leadership teams and administrators at the elementary and middle school level, as well as supporting the high schools as they continue applying these practices. In this workshop, NPS staff explored the philosophy and brain research to support culturally responsive instruction in the classroom. This content was a follow-up and supplement to the Racial Identity Development training that schools have been participating in since last school year. This train-the-trainer model was implemented throughout the year through staff professional development days.



CRI & Department Collaboration

As an extension of summer training, school-based leadership teams in all elementary, middle and high schools, led anti-bias professional development sessions throughout the year. The DEI Department was also able to support schools and other partner groups with programming held for faculty, students, and families.

What is the definition of SCHOOL CULTURE?

.....

All the ways of life including behaviors, customs, traditions, languages, and beliefs passed down from grade level to grade level.

What is the definition of CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING?

.....

Culturally Responsive Teaching means using students' customs, characteristics, experience, and perspectives as tools for better classroom instruction.



Elementary Professional Learning Community

A Professional Learning Community (PLC) led by Asst. Superintendents of Teaching & Learning, Elementary Education, and Student Services met monthly and included a variety of roles across the district, i.e. curriculum coordinators, student services, special education and more to deepen the understanding of the implementation and evaluation of culturally-responsive practices.

Culturally Responsive Pre-Summer Planning Team

We have developed a Culturally Responsive Instruction Pre-Summer Planning Team consisting of elementary administrators, educators, social-emotional practitioners, and curriculum coordinators to support our department's summer programming for the upcoming school year. The team's goal is to develop a scope and sequence for culturally responsive instructional workshops next year that would provide a degree of consistency across the 15 elementary schools.

DISTRICT PRIORITIES: INTERNAL STRUCTURES & SUPPORTS

Educational Equity:

Continue to analyze and improve district structures and practices in key areas to ensure equitable outcomes for all students.

Equip and empower leadership to continue to develop and to support ongoing district initiatives focused on creating more equitable learning environments.

DEI Advisory

Last school year (2021-22), the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Advisory was formed with the purpose of addressing NPS DEI issues and topics. In the spring of this year, the committee was relaunched with the focus on gender-affirming practices. Staff and administrators from across the district began developing a statement of values and commitment to gender identity and began developing a field trip considerations resource.

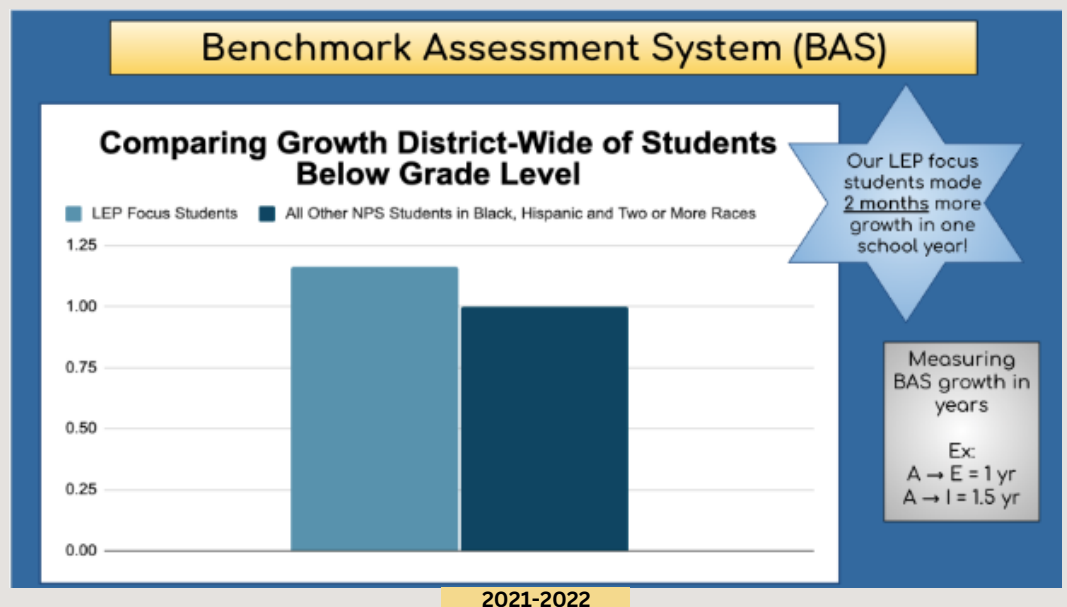
Building Consultations and Supports

The DEI Department continues to partner with school leaders and committees across the district to develop equitable school practices and community spaces. Serving as consultants, we are able to support professional development workshops, provide educational resources, and collaborate on ongoing needs.

Academic Programming

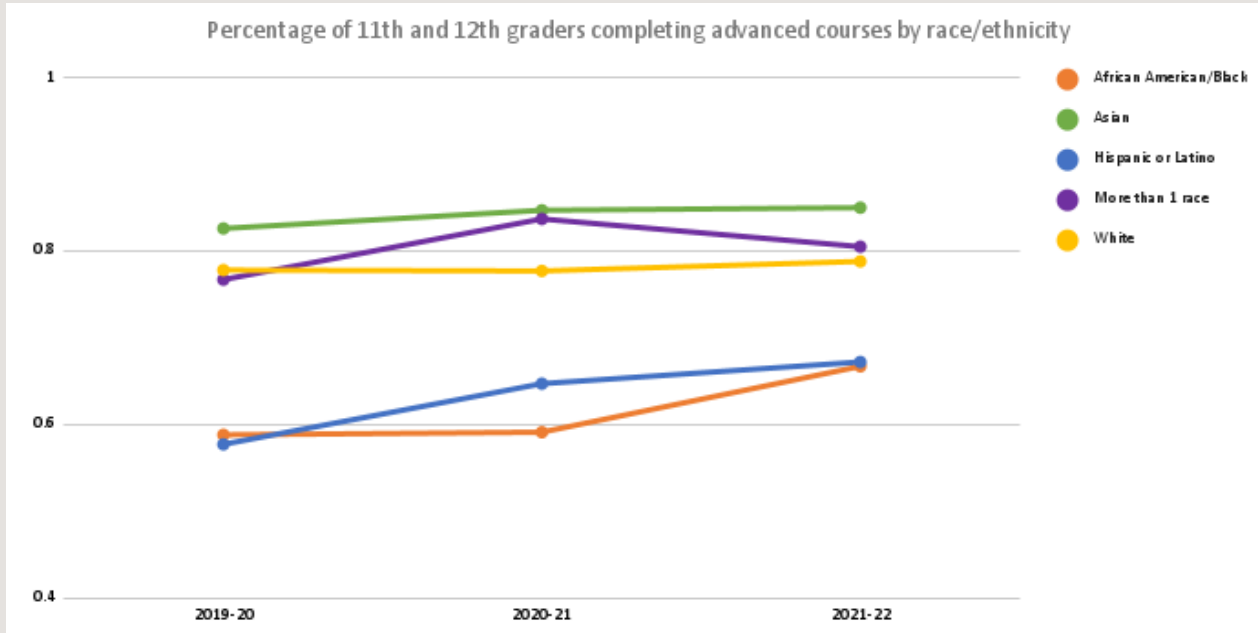
Literacy Equity Project (LEP)

The DEI Department met with the Literacy Equity Project (LEP) several times throughout the year and provided consultation to its participants. This data from LEP highlights that students of color who were below grade level, yet enrolled within the program grew at an accelerated rate in comparison to students of color who were below grade level, but not yet enrolled in the program.



Legacy Scholars

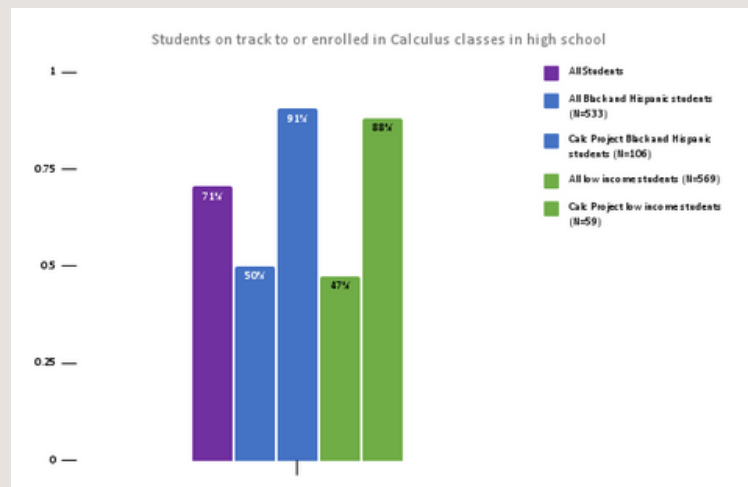
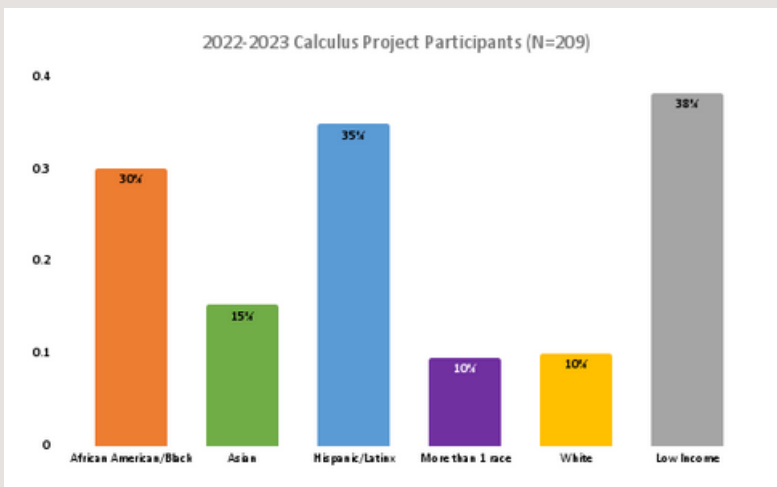
“The mission of the NPS legacy scholars programs is to enhance and expand the academic experience and achievement of children, such as Black and Latinx students, who have been historically underrepresented in our highest level academic programs. NPS Legacy Scholars programs do not exclude students based upon color, race, ethnicity, or religious background, and any student may apply.”



Calculus Project serves students in grades 8 through 12 in Newton. Students participate in summer session and receive support through the school year. This year, 209 students are participating.

Calculus Project

The Calculus Project is focused on narrowing the achievement gap in math for African American, Hispanic, and low income students. For the last several years, the DEI Department participated in the recruitment and hiring process, as well as supported staffs' summer professional development and continued reflection about how their own and students' identities engage with the project.



Students participating in the Calculus project are more likely to be enrolled in courses leading to Calculus or in Calculus courses than their peers in their grade level overall.

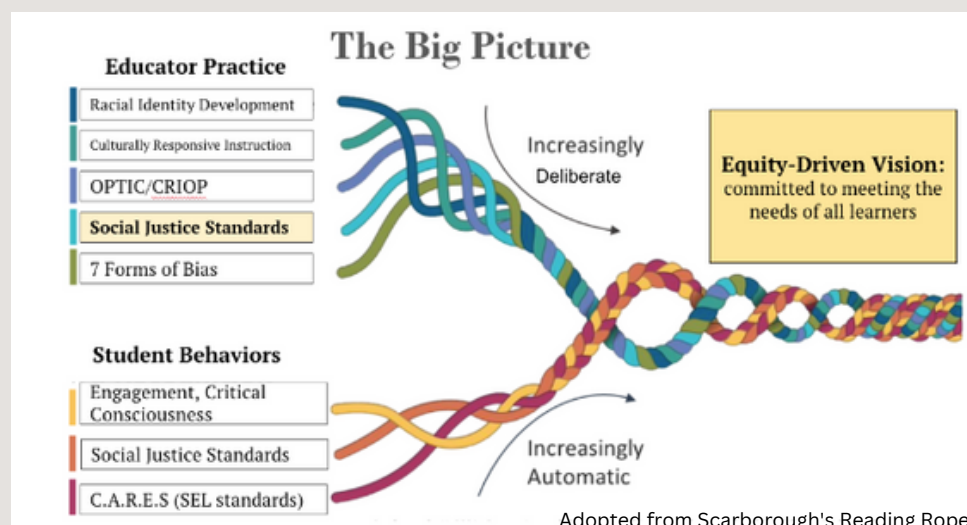
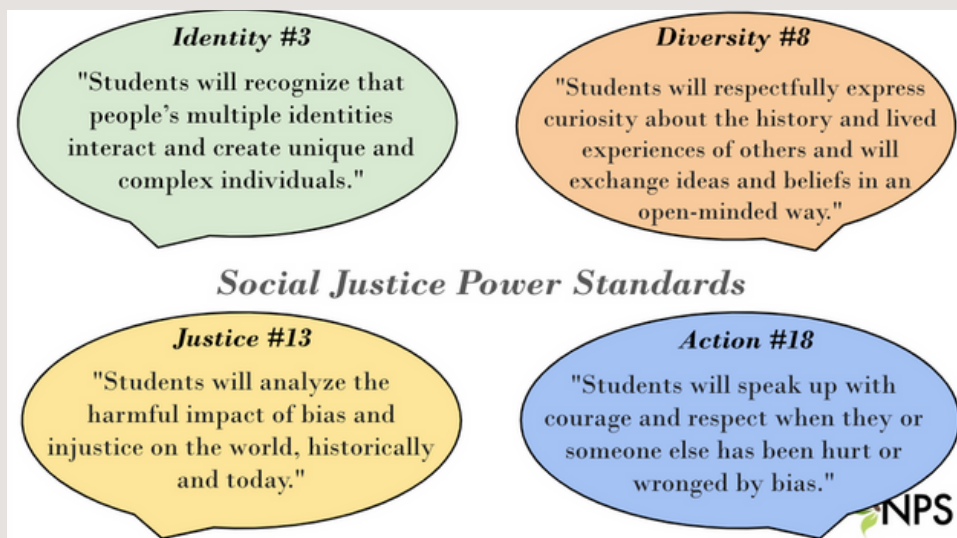
DISTRICT PRIORITIES: CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT & REVISIONS

Academic Excellence:

Continue to revise and support the implementation of a challenging, inclusive, and engaging curriculum

Antiracism Curriculum & Instruction Committee

This year the committee focused on reviewing and synthesizing lessons and resources provided by educators last school year. After reviewing, the committee prioritized fostering a deeper understanding of the 4 Social Justice Power Standards, and providing district leaders with samples of what this work does/could look like across the district, to consider with their school communities.



*This graphic, adopted from Scarborough's Reading Rope, visualizes how the different initiatives throughout our NPS are interconnected.

Instructional Resources

Wellness Committee

The NPS Wellness Committee monitors, reviews, and as necessary revises the district Wellness Policy and Guidelines. This year, the committee's areas of focus was exploring the 5th grade Puberty Lesson and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Members of the committee included representation from the DEI office to ensure that equity and inclusion were considered in the planning and implementation process.

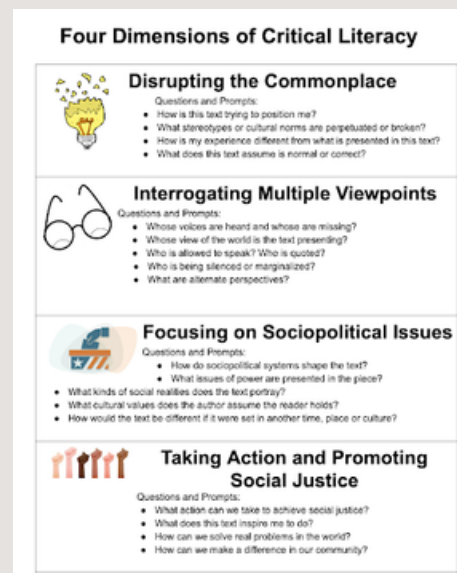
Social Justice Library

This year the Elementary SEL and DEI Departments introduced the Social Justice Library, a virtual and tangible collection of resources for elementary schools to combat bias, racism, and ableism through developmentally-appropriate pictures books and corresponding discussion guides.



Critical Literacy Website

Introduced to elementary schools at our summer CRI training, the [Critical Literacy Website](#) is a page designed NPS Literacy Coordinators to support classroom educators. This site contains information, resources and lesson plans for Elementary and Middle School teachers.



Cultural Resources

In partnership with the Department of Teaching and Learning, curriculum resources were gathered and assembled to provide lesson plans, class activities, videos and more to engage student learning in all grades on the diversity of cultures, contributions, and celebrations.



DISTRICT PRIORITIES:

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION

Connectedness:

Engage in purposeful work around family collaboration and antiracism in order to actively dismantle systems that create harm and are not inclusive.

Identify opportunities to engage families in dialogue and discussion about district priorities, processes, initiatives, and timely topics.

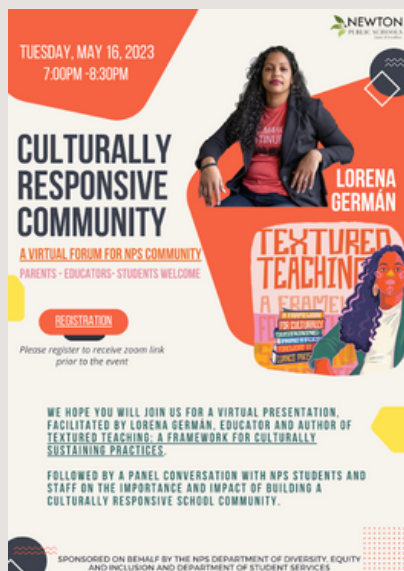
Public Hearing Community Response

In response to a public hearing that was held in Newton, over 800+ Newton members came together as a community. We heard from current students, educators, alumni, families, neighbors about the importance of DEI work in ensuring student excellence, and success.

NPS Community Forums

For the last several years, NPS leaders have been engaged in professional development and training to enhance culturally responsive instruction (CRI) in the classroom and beyond. This conversation was intended to help broaden the community's understanding of the values, components and impact of a culturally responsive school community which acknowledges and embraces ALL identities and learning needs represented within NPS.

“ Thank you for making Newton a district where we can address the biases when we see them and know that the district is fully onboard to support us.” - NPS Educator



“ I'm so appreciative of the efforts to address the questions of culturally sustaining education as a community, inviting educators, students and parents to reflect together as partners. Lorena Germán was intellectually powerful, our teacher was inspiring, our students curious and thoughtful, and our parent connected, committed and engaged. Thank you for this opportunity!” - NPS Educator

“ I'm grateful to the Newton Public School District for inviting Lorena German to give this webinar. While I feel incredibly fortunate to live in a city where a majority of residents try to be culturally sensitive and open-minded, we still have a lot to learn about why this is important, what it really means to be an ally, and how it can be done most effectively.” - NPS Parent/Guardian

No Place for Hate

Middle and high school students came together at Newton North and Newton South for another powerful “No Place for Hate” rally. Student volunteers shared their personal experiences and spoke out to condemn all acts of hate and discrimination, calling for continued action in order to make schools safe and inclusive communities.

NEWTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS IS
No place for hate

NORTH & SOUTH SIDE STUDENT WALK & RALLY
THURSDAY, MAY 4TH
3-4PM

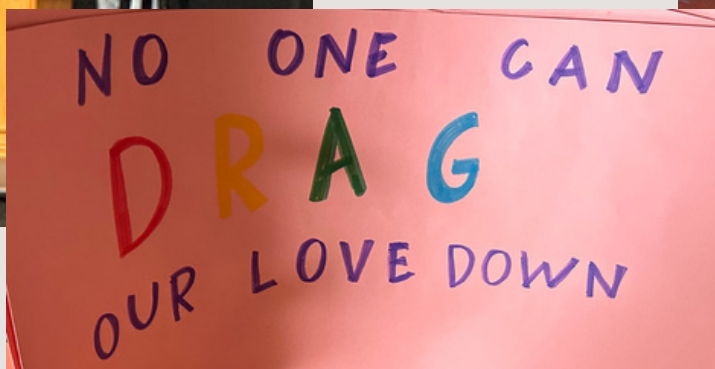
JOIN NPS MIDDLE AND HIGH STUDENTS STAND IN UNITY AND SOLIDARITY AGAINST **ALL** ACTS OF HATE AND DISCRIMINATION.

SOUTHSIDE
BROWN & OAK HILL MIDDLE SCHOOL WALK TO MEET NSHS FOR RALLY ON WINKLER STADIUM

NORTHSIDE
DAY & BIGELOW MIDDLE SCHOOL WALK TO MEET NNHS FOR RALLY ON TIGER DRIVE FIELD



NEWTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Quality & Excellence



DISTRICT PRIORITIES:

EVALUATION TOOLS & MEASUREMENTS

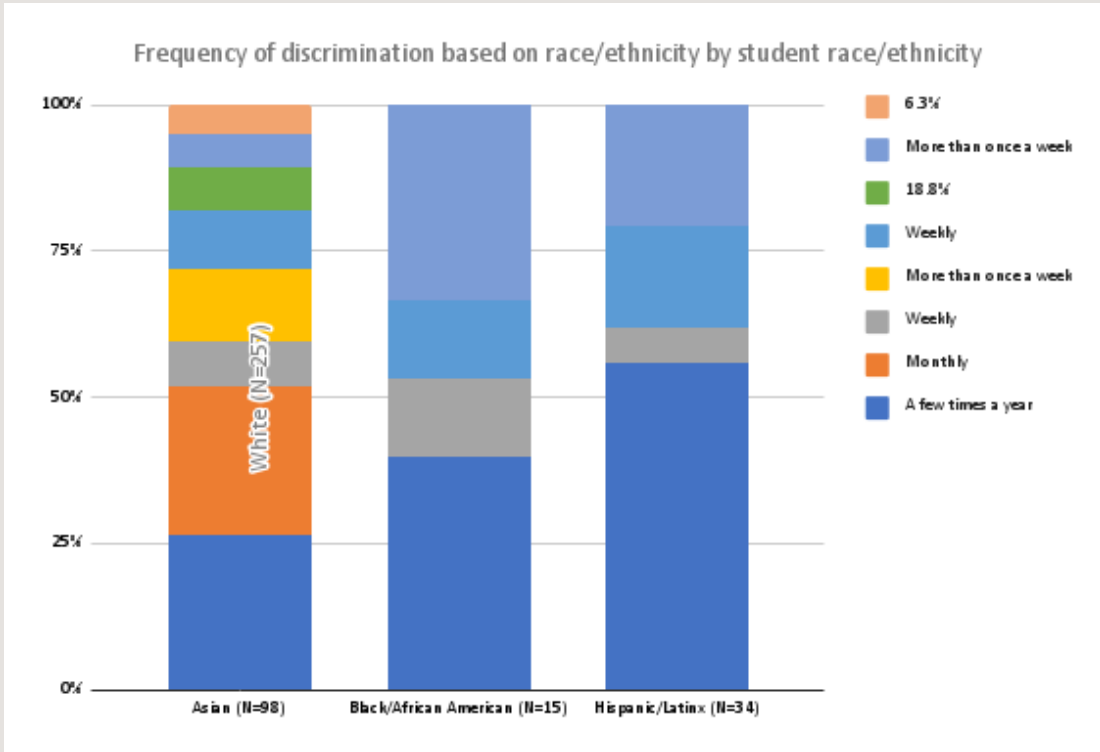
Communication:

Leverage new and current communication tools to inform, educate, and engage NPS families and the larger Newton community.

Student Experience

High School Connectedness Survey

*Tenth grade students were asked how frequently they had personally heard, noticed, or experienced discrimination based on various factors within their school communities.



*62% of respondents reported hearing, noticing, or experiencing discrimination based on race/ethnicity; this was the most frequently reported type of discrimination.

**Students identifying as Black/African American or Hispanic/Latinx were more likely to report hearing, noticing, or experiencing discrimination based on race/ethnicity more than once a week than Asian, White, or multi-race students.

Discipline Data

MA DESE 2018-2019 Student Discipline

Race/Ethnicity	# of Students	% of Students	# of Students Disciplined	% of Students Disciplined
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.	19	0.14%	2	0.70%
Asian	2,525	19.21%	24	8.36%
Afr. Amer./Black	626	4.76%	53	18.47% ↑
Hispanic/Latino	1,013	7.71%	46	16.03% ↑
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	850	6.47%	17	5.92%
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.	4	0.03%	0	0.00%
White	8,105	61.67%	145	50.52%
All Students	13,142	100.00%	287	100.00%

***Hispanic/Latinx & African-American/Black Students were disciplined at disproportionately higher rates than Asian & White Students**

MA DESE 2021-2022 Student Discipline

Race/Ethnicity	# of Students	% of Students	# of Students Disciplined	% of Students Disciplined
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.	14	0.11%	0	0.00%
Asian	2,534	20.5%	12	6.38%
Afr. Amer./Black	582	4.71%	37	19.68% ↑
Hispanic/Latino	1,205	9.76%	28	14.89% ↑
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	987	7.99%	12	6.38%
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.	8	0.06%	0	0.00%
White	7,022	56.85%	99	52.66%
All Students	12,352	100.00%	188 ↓	100.00%

MA DESE School Safety and Discipline Report (SSDR), 2023

*** Overall number of Students Disciplined decreased**

****Hispanic/Latinx & African-American/Black Students Students were disciplined at disproportionately higher rates than Asian Students**

***** White & Hispanic/Latinx Students decreased in margin of disproportionality**

Staff Evaluation Tools

Survey Feedback

“This year I thought we finally implemented the work we have been doing into my classroom.”

“Each month's meeting is built thoughtfully upon the previous month's focus. It supported a feeling of growth and understanding. I also liked the focus on actionable take-aways in my classroom and as a member of the Bowen community.”

“Not only is the staff growing, the CRI Leadership team's facilitation skills are growing, too! ♥

This has been an impactful continuation of this work. People seem excited for next year's focus! Exciting!”

“I was pleased today to hear most teachers saying that they feel more comfortable talking about race with their students. Additionally, my and others' level of insight seems higher!”

CRIOP/OPTIC

As the district continues to train and educate community members on the philosophy and practices of culturally-responsive instruction, we have introduced both tools to all elementary and secondary administrators to begin to design a systemic process of evaluation of implementation. We will continue this work in the upcoming school year.

Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol (CRIOP)

The Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol (CRIOP) is a comprehensive framework and evaluation tool that operationalizes culturally responsive instruction. The CRIOP is intended for use as a classroom observation guide for coaches, principals, instructional coaches, etc. to support classroom teachers in the development of more culturally responsive instruction.

MA DESE Online Platform for Teaching and Informed Calibration (OPTIC) Tool

A professional development tool that supports Massachusetts educators to build a shared understanding of high-quality instruction and improve the feedback that teachers receive. The platform provides educators with a training experience aligned to the Standards of Effective Teaching Practice and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. OPTIC supports groups of educators to develop and refine common expectations for practice and feedback based on snapshots of instructional practice.

NPS 2023-24 DISTRICT PRIORITIES

Ongoing Staff
Development

Gender
Guidance
Protocols

Staff and
Student
Evaluation
Tools

Elementary
Affinity
Groups

COSEBOC
Partnership