Student Opportunity Act Plan

Berlin-Boylston

# Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups

*Student subgroups requiring focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life.*

* Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic/Non-Latinx students
* African American/Black students
* Hispanic or Latinx students

*The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.*

The Berlin-Boylston Regional School District is working to expand our global understanding and appreciation of cultural and racial diversity through expanded course work, professional development for staff and administrators, as well as cultural opportunities and exploration. Our goal in doing this is to support each of our students to become global citizens who are adaptable and appreciative of cultures, races, and peoples across the world, and to deepen staff's awareness of unconscious biases, including their own, and in the classroom.

Although we are a small district with limited teacher turnover, we are investigating how we may be able to attract a more diverse teaching staff. Currently, data shows that our educator workforce does not adequately mirror our changing student population. In 2014, 99.1 % of Tahanto Middle/HS students identified themselves as white, and less than 1% of students identified themselves as other races (combined). In 2020, 85.1 % of Tahanto students identified themselves as white, with 14.9% of students identified as other races. This change in our demographics over the last five years has made us all aware that we need to become more aware about racial equity in our schools. Our 2019 student and staffing data shows the following:

TRMHS(2019)

* Staff: 1 Multi race non-Hispanic, (1.3%) other than white
* Students- 15.4% other than white

Berlin (2019)

* Staff: 36.1white-(100%)
* Students (2019)- 11.5% other than white

Boylston(2019)

* Staff: 37.4 white, 1 multi race non-Hispanic, ( 2.6% ) other than white
* Students- (2019)- 16.8%other than white

In addition to cultural shifts, we will work to close achievement gaps for these student subgroups and ensure equitable access to services. This includes early learning skills and participation in advanced placement courses.

**Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps**

The Berlin-Boylston Regional School District identified the increasing diversity in our communities over the last few years and is actively working to educate ourselves on how to best support all of our students in closing achievement and opportunity gaps. We will follow through with important initiatives already underway.

Focus Area 1: Research-based early literacy programs in pre-kindergarten and early elementary grades (E, F, and G)

Additional Explicit Phonics Instruction for all students in grades K-3, with targeted intervention for students who struggle as identified through standardized benchmark data. Our research and data related to state and benchmark assessments have identified gaps and weaknesses in phonics across the elementary grade levels. We introduced the Fundations program as a systematic and explicit phonics instruction tool for all students, beginning this year (2019-2020) in kindergarten will add on each year through grade three. In doing so, our goal will be to both support all students and reduce special education referrals.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount: enter number, do not use the $ character** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Fundations Materials** | **7,000** | **Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology** |
| **2** | **Fundations Training** | **2,100** | **Professional Development** |

## Focus Area 2: Increased personnel and services to support holistic student needs (C and/or D)

Expanded Time for Academic Support and Enrichment: The Berlin-Boylston Regional School District is committed to giving all students equal opportunities to participate in activities and to receive academic support both during and after school. For this reason, the District implemented an after-school bus (2019-2020 school year) that operates at the middle/high school at least two days per week. The opportunity to provide transportation to middle/high school students has enabled all students to attend after-school tutoring, including tutoring for AP classes and MCAS prep, as well as participate in the Arts and club activities. We intend to keep data on the transportation usage as well as monitor enrollment in AP classes and MCAS results by subgroups.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Increased transportation** | **2,000** | **Operations and Maintenance** |

## Focus Area 3: Diversifying the educator/administrator workforce through recruitment and retention (D and/or H)

Cultural Diversity and Inclusive Practices: As a first step to diversifying our workforce, we will do more equity work with our staff. We plan to increase professional development around cultural awareness as well as increase the availability of culturally diverse reading materials in our school libraries in order to make our schools a welcoming place for all students, families and staff. This was a recommendation from the staff and parents we met with at our school councils. Our colleagues at the Diversity Network meetings also encouraged us to work on the school's global culture and inclusiveness as a first step to diversifying our workforce. Given our demographics, and the limited number of new hires each year, we were encouraged, and will continue to work on making our district culturally and racially diversified.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Cultural Diversity Training** | **$2600** | **Professional Development** |

**Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets**

*Outcome metrics that will be used to measure progress in closing gaps for selected student groups.*

* Additional Indicators: Percentage of 11th and 12th graders completing at least one DESE-identified advanced coursework
* Custom District Metric 1: Aimsweb growth - letter naming fluency and letter sound
* Custom District Metric 2: Data on use of after-school bus
* Custom District Metric 3: Data on diversity of new hires

**Commitment 4: Engaging All Families**

*District plans for ensuring that all families, particularly those representing identified student subgroups most in need of support, have access to meaningful engagement regarding their students’ needs.*

Our intentions in ensuring that all families, particularly those representing student subgroups most in need of support, have access to meaningful engagement regarding their students' needs include the following:

* The facilitation of Parent Camps for students entering kindergarten and sixth grades in order to make transitions smoother, support parents in methods to help their children at home, and to welcome families into the Berlin-Boylston School communities.
* An increase in the translation of materials and added translators using Title IV funds
* A committed effort to reach out and encourage parents of students of color, EL students, students with disabilities, and those from low-income backgrounds to join our school councils and parent-teacher organizations including SEPAC, and to provide translators as needed.
* A Measurement of the engagement of subgroup membership and attendance at each of the school council meetings, parent-teacher organization meetings, and family attendance at the Parent Camps.

**Certifications**

*Certification that stakeholders were engaged in accordance with the Student Opportunity Act.*

Through the months of February and early March, administrators met with School Councils in each building to solicit feedback on ways to better support our students from our identified subgroups. These Council members represent staff, administrators, parents, teachers and support staff. We also met with SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council) and brought forward our draft plan to the School Committee for review and feedback. Finally, we extracted specific data from our annual parent survey on School Climate as it related to our goals.

*Certification that School Committee has voted (or is expected to vote on the district’s Student Opportunity Act Plan.*

Date of Approval: 04/07/2020