# Student Opportunity Act Plan: SY 2021-2023

# Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

→ **Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups**

**Which student groups will require focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life?**

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School is committed to ensuring all of our students achieve success in school, and we work to close achievement gaps among student subgroups. Looking at data trends over the last three years (MCAS, IOWA test of basic skills, SAT10 test of basic skills, in-house assessments) tells us that not all student groups are not currently experiencing the same level of success.

1. Our economically disadvantaged students have lower achievement and growth scores in ELA compared to non-economically disadvantaged students.
2. Girls have lower achievement and growth scores in mathematics compared to boys.
3. Our educator workforce does not mirror our student population. Just about 5% of our staff are people of color/multi-racial compared to 20% of our student population. Our students of color would be more engaged and better supported by a more diverse staff.

We are working hard on several fronts to close achievement and opportunity gaps for these three student subgroups (economically disadvantaged students, female students, and students of color). In the next three years, we see this work as happening through direct student services, family engagement, professional development, policy work, and curriculum review/revision.

# → Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps

**What evidence-based programs will your charter school adopt, deepen, or continue to best support the closure of achievement and opportunity gaps? What resources will be allocated to these programs?**

1. Research-based early literacy programs in pre-kindergarten and early elementary grades

Last year, at the conclusion of a year-long curriculum review process, Hilltown adopted a science-based reading program (Being a Reader through Collaborative Classroom). We arrived at this choice with the goal of closing the gap between economically disadvantaged students and non-economically disadvantaged students in reading. We recognized that students who are school-dependent for learning to read were not flourishing at the same level as students who were not school-dependent, and MCAS scores showed a persistent discrepancy between economically disadvantaged students and non-economically disadvantaged students. This program we selected includes phonics, a phonics intervention program, a literacy component, easily accessible professional development, a social skills component, and a social justice component (culturally responsive teaching embedded into the curriculum): “Our social justice frame should prompt us to ask these questions: *How are students code breakers, how are they text users, how are they text critics, and how are they meaning-makers*?” (Zaretta Hammond, source here). In the last year, teachers have participated in professional development and coaching and targeted PD work on literacy and culturally responsive teaching that will continue to be a part of our three-year plan.

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| Being a Reader Curriculum and PD | $14,237.60 | CoronaVirus Relief Fund Professional Development |
| Teaching Assistants | $18,800 | Title I |

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| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | Research-based literacy programs in pre-kindergarten and early elementary grades  Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum |
| **SOA program categories:** | D (hiring school personnel), E (PD) and F (purchase of curriculum materials) |

# Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum.

At Hilltown, we have noticed a persistent discrepancy between the achievement and growth of male and female students in math, with boys having higher achievement and growth than girls. We see closing the math achievement gap as a task of pedagogy, curriculum, and school culture. Our plans include implementing high-quality curriculum and supporting educators in doing so. Two years ago, we replaced our 6th-8th grade math program with a

research-based, common core aligned curriculum (Illustrative Math). Now we are in the process of reviewing our K-5 math program with anticipated pilots happening next year and a new curriculum selection scheduled for next spring. Teachers have and will continue to participate in professional development in math teaching and in creating classroom cultures that promote growth mindset and fair access to participation in all subjects.

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| Teaching Assistants | $18,800 | Title I |
| Workshop on engaging students remotely | $429.00 | Professional Development |
| Technology workshop | $600.00 | Professional Development |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | | Supporting educators to implement high-quality, aligned curriculum.  Inclusion/co-teaching for students with disabilities |
| **SOA program categories:** | | D (hiring school personnel), E (PD) and F (purchase of curriculum materials) |

# Diversifying the educator/administrator workforce through recruitment and retention

Our workforce does not mirror our student population, a fact which we believe lowers the engagement and academic success of our students of color. We have intentionally focused on hiring practices and policies that will expand our prospective candidate pool at all levels of the institution. To support students and staff, and to become a school that is worthy of a diverse applicant pool and diverse student body, we have focused on culturally responsive teaching practices and professional development aimed at becoming an anti-racist institution. We review and revise our school curriculum and our school environment to make our commitments to equity ever more meaningful, visible, and to ensure availability of “mirrors and windows”.

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| **FY21 budget item** | **Amount** | **Foundation Category** |
| Social Justice Workshop for Students Collaborative for Educational Services | $1,580.00 | Community Fund |
| Social Justice Workshop for Staff and Board through Collaborative for Educational Services | $3,160.00 | Professional Development |
| **Evidence-based program identified by the Department:** | | Diversifying the educator and administrator workforce  Increased personnel and services to support student holistic needs |
| **SOA program categories:** | | D (hiring school personnel) and E (PD) |

# → Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets

**What metrics will your charter school use to monitor success in reducing disparities in achievement among student subgroups? Select from the list of Department metrics or provide your own.**

* What data will you monitor to see if your evidence-based programs are successful? Select at least three outcome metrics to include in your plan. These can include metrics from the list provided by the Department (see below) or custom metrics. How will these chosen metrics demonstrate the reduction of opportunity or achievement gaps for specific groups of students?
* Where possible, align outcome metrics with the evidence-based programs described in Commitment 2.
* If you create custom metrics, you must also identify targets for each custom metric.

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| **Category** | **Outcome Metrics** |
| **Student Achievement**   * Improved proficiency scores in ELA for economically disadvantaged students. * Improved proficiency scores in mathematics for female students. | * English language arts (ELA) achievement * Mathematics achievement |
| **Student Growth**   * Improved ELA mean SGP for economically disadvantaged students * Improved Mathematics mean SGP for female students. | * ELA mean student growth percentile (SGP) * Mathematics mean SGP |

**Additional Indicators**

* Increase diversity on staff and close the gap between 5% staff of color and 20% students of color.

**Department outcome metrics:**

* MCAS achievement scores
* MCAS SGPs

**Custom metrics (must include targets as well):**

Faculty profile will reflect increased diversity and close the gap between 5% staff of color and 20% students of color.

# → Commitment 4: Engaging All Families

**How will your charter school ensure that all families, particularly those representing the student subgroups most in need of support, have the opportunity to meaningfully engage with the charter school regarding their students’ needs?**

A core tenet of the mission of the Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School is to sustain a strong community of students, staff, families and local community members that guide and support the school and its educational program. We prioritize family engagement as essential to ensuring success for all students. Parents make up most of our Board of Trustees, are involved in all governance committees and are welcome to come into the school at any time to meet with administrators, visit classrooms or assist with projects. Parents are invited to walk their children to their classrooms each morning and, at the end of the day, K-5 parents come into the school to sign their children out. These opportunities for casual contact among parents and with teachers help build a sense of natural connection. We publish a weekly e-newsletter that goes to all parents and any grandparents who request it and we schedule monthly family events, either social or educational, in the evening or on the weekend.

We know that it is particularly important to find ways to effectively engage the families of our economically disadvantaged students, students of color and students with disabilities and that for some of the families in these subgroups the current engagement opportunities may not be adequate. To specifically support those subgroups, we conscientiously plan family programs meetings and teacher conferences to accommodate a variety of work schedules. We promote participation in our parent-led SEPAC through emails and a dedicated space in the weekly Newsletter and we are currently creating a Parent Equity Team to support families of color and offer recommendations.

We measure family engagement through tracking of attendance at events, teacher records and an annual satisfaction survey sent out to all parents.

# Certifications:

X **By checking here, I certify that our charter school has engaged stakeholders in our community in accordance with the Student Opportunity Act**

**Please summarize your stakeholder engagement process, including specific groups that were engaged:**

* Curriculum committees including administrator and teachers
* Parent surveys
* Parent focus groups
* Teacher focus groups
* Staff professional development
* Board committees including community, parent and staff members
* A parent letter was shared during public comment in our May and June 2020 Board of Trustees meetings. A primary concern for families was the lack of educator diversity in our school.

# X By checking here, I certify that the Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School Board of Trustees voted on our Student Opportunity Act Plan.

**Date of vote: 1/13/2021 Outcome of vote: Affirmative**