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# **Improving, Expanding and Fully Integrating Supports and Services for Students Who Identify as Black/African American Using a Targeted Universalism Approach**

Meeting of the Board of Education  
June 22, 2021

- Mark Cerutti, Deputy Superintendent, Education Services & Schools
- Jenifer Avey, Director, Curriculum and Professional Learning
- Nicole Brown, District Head School Counselor
- Dr. Mathew Espinosa, Program Specialist, Office of Educational Equity
- Lysette Lemay, Community Partnerships Coordinator, Office of Family and Community Engagement
- Don Ross, Director, Student Support and Health Services

# Defining the Need

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- The Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD) is committed to the success of all students in the District. As part of this commitment there is a need to provide improved, increased, and fully consolidated supports to students who identify as Black/African American.
- Historically, EGUSD has implemented universal strategies to support all students. These efforts have resulted in improved academic, social emotional, and behavioral outcomes but disproportionately less so for students who identify as Black/African American.

# Targeted Universalism

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- The Elk Grove Unified School District (EGUSD) is employing a methodology of planning and implementing supports for students termed targeted universalism. Targeted universalism is the practice of setting universal goals pursued by targeted processes to achieve those goals. Within a targeted universalism framework, universal goals are established for all students and student subgroups. The strategies developed to achieve those goals are targeted based upon the unique supports needed for different subgroups of students within the District. Targeted universalism is goal oriented, and the processes are directed in service of the explicit, universal goal.
  - *The definition is adapted from the work of Powell, Menendian, and Ake; May 2019, Targeted Universalism Policy and Practice*

# Strategic Goals

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## High-Quality Curriculum & Instruction

All students will receive high quality classroom instruction and curriculum to promote college and career readiness and close the achievement gap.

## Student Assessment & Program Evaluation

All students will benefit from instruction guided by assessment results (formative, interim and summative) and continuous programmatic evaluation.

## Wellness

All students will have an equitable opportunity to learn in a culturally responsive, physically, and emotionally healthy and safe environment.

## Family & Community Engagement

All students will benefit from programs and services designed to inform and involve family and community partners.

# Preservice

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- Our theme for the 2021-2022 school year is *Moving Forward Together*. Preservice will feature keynote, Michael Bonner who will break down important principles of environment & culture through an equity lens, the importance of purposeful collaboration, and how self-development can create a higher level of performance through Metacognition in supporting ALL students as we move forward together into the 2021-2022 school year.
- Mr. Bonner started his career as a teacher at South Greenville Elementary in Greenville, NC. For the past 6 years, Mr. Bonner has highlighted the importance of student engagement, relationships, and developing culturally relevant content.

# Stakeholder Input and Feedback

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- District actions and services have been, and continue to be, informed by stakeholder input and feedback from groups, including but not limited to: Families of Black Students United (FBSU), Black Student Unions (BSUs), Site Equity Councils, Race and Equity Advisory Team (REAT), and parents, students, and staff through needs analysis surveys

All students will receive high quality classroom instruction and curriculum to promote college and career readiness and close the achievement gap.

# Strategic Goal 1 – Universal

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## Framework for High Quality Instruction (FHQI):

- Provide training on students interacting with content and culturally and linguistically responsive teaching practices

## Instructional coaches:

- Increase capacity of instructional coaches to facilitate professional learning on culturally and linguistically responsive practices

## Instructional materials review:

- A formalized process is in place to review materials through the lenses of equity, diversity, and inclusion

# Strategic Goal 1 – Universal

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## Implement a culturally responsive school structure:

- Build on foundation of student learning, cultural awareness, and socio-political consciousness

## Racial justice:

- Incorporate racial justice into districtwide curricular activities (e.g., art showcase, essay or speech competition, history events)

## Improve Your Tomorrow (IYT):

- Academic and social-emotional supports to increase the number of young men of color to attend and graduate from colleges and universities (Edward Harris, Jr., Samuel Jackman, and James Rutter middle schools; Florin, Monterey Trail, and Valley high schools).

# Strategic Goal 1 – Targeted

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## **High Quality Instruction:**

- Prioritize during training and planning of high-quality instruction the academic, behavioral, and socioemotional supports of students who identify as Black/African American in classrooms and schools

## **Support college enrollment with partnerships:**

- Cosumnes River College to provide outreach to African American students that increases early college awareness, enrollment, and completion at Florin, Monterey Trail, and Valley high schools

## **Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB):**

- Recruitment strategies at all high school specific to students who identify as Black/African American

# Strategic Goal 1 – Targeted

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## College application support:

- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority's "College Application Program" partnership for Black/African American students to complete excellent college applications

## 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Black/African American Academy:

- A small learning community structured to positively transform the secondary school experience for students who identify as Black/African American—pilot programs at Florin and Valley high schools

## Augment school libraries:

- Purchase recommended texts that feature Black/African American stories, culture, history, and characters

## Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU):

- EGUSD will continue to host an annual fair to strategically expand and support student/family awareness and student application rates to HBCUs

## Strategic Goal 2 – Universal

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All students will benefit from instruction guided by assessment results (formative, interim and summative) and continuous programmatic evaluation.

### Student assessment:

- Expanding the use of interim assessments in ELA and Math

### Social Emotional Learning (SEL)/Climate Survey:

- Review and revise as needed the Social Emotional Learning/Climate Survey items relating to race and culture to ensure students may provide sufficient feedback on the status of racial justice programs in schools

### Assessment literacy development:

- Developing educators', students', and parents' understanding of the purpose, targets, methods, and communications related to assessment

### Data and program evaluation:

- Program Implementation Continuum (PIC) for major program efforts and data Reports for progressing monitoring and mid-course correction

## Strategic Goal 2 – Targeted

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### **Assessment literacy:**

- An assessment literate student understands the purpose of assessment and has the ability to assess their own learning allowing them to have greater control over their academic performance. Teachers will be trained to strategically support students who identify as Black/African American in developing assessment literacy skills.

### **Monthly discipline disproportionality reports:**

- All schools will complete a monthly discipline disproportionality report. Students who identify as Black/African American, Foster Youth, or Students with Disabilities will be the focus due to the persistent disproportionality that exists. Data will be analyzed and used by site MTSS, and PBIS Tier 1 teams and District administration to implement individual student and school-wide preventative and restorative actions.

### **Special education assessments:**

- Continue to research and evaluate the cultural appropriateness of current metrics utilized for assessing students for specialized services in order to address disproportionate numbers of students identifying as Black/African American qualifying for special education services.

All students will have an equitable opportunity to learn in a culturally responsive, physically, and emotionally healthy and safe environment.

## Strategic Goal 3 – Universal

### Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS):

- Consolidation of culturally and linguistically responsive practices into all MTSS processes

### Social Emotional Learning (SEL):

- Deepening definitions and implementation at all schools

### Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS):

- Consolidation of Restorative Practices and explicit references to race/racism in PBIS behavior matrices, and culturally and linguistically responsive practices including norms for discussions on difficult issues like race and racial justice

### Stop-Walk-Talk bullying prevention:

- Consolidate antiracist practices into the Expect Respect and Stop-Walk-Talk bullying prevention programs to distinguish hate-motivated bullying from other forms of bullying

# Strategic Goal 3 – Universal

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## Removing labels:

- Utilizing site plans for disrupting negative expectations about students and schools

## Speaker series:

- Host a monthly, community-wide virtual speaker series on racial justice topics

## School plan for responding to hate and bias:

- Plans have begun at the secondary level and will be will be expanded to elementary schools

## Student Equity Councils (SEC):

- Engage in the development of site LCAPs with a specific focus on the unique supports for racial subgroups

## US vs Hate Campaign:

- Promote participation and collect entries from students to showcase

# Strategic Goal 3 – Universal

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## Student Bill of Rights:

- In development with intent to bring for Board approval in 2021

## Empathy-building virtual culture series:

- Host virtual opportunities in alignment with heritage and diversity resolutions

## Age-appropriate resources:

- Provide students, families, and staff a directory of age-appropriate resources related to racism and racial justice

## Catapult Incident Reporting System:

- Increase awareness of the online reporting system with a particular focus on reporting incidents of discrimination

## Strategic Goal 3 – Targeted

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### **Black Educators Network:**

- Provide networking, mentorships and development opportunities specifically designed for staff who identify as Black/African American

### **Safe Black Space Task Force:**

- Develop systematic guidance and staff training to ensure all schools provide safe spaces on campuses for students who identify as Black/African American

### **Black Student Union (BSU) staff:**

- Coordinate opportunities for advisors to meet to develop and share best practices; collaboration among BSU advisors and Student Equity Council (SEC) advisors; provide all BSU and SEC advisors training in student advocacy and leadership development, particularly as it relates to supporting students who identify as Black/African American

### **Black Student Union (BSU) students:**

- Opportunities to lead campus-wide racial justice initiatives

## Strategic Goal 3 – Targeted

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### Grant acquisition:

- Pursue grants to support actions and programs focusing on the racial justice issues and/or the socioemotional supports for students who identify as Black/African American

### Healing circles:

- Host District healing circles/morning meetings for Black/African American students to process current events relating to social justice and experiences upon returning to school

### Dress code Board Policy (BP) and Administrative Regulations (AR):

- Recommended revisions will be brought to the Board of Education in 2021 with an intended outcome being the elimination of the disproportionate impact of the dress code policy on student who identify as Black/African American

## Strategic Goal 3 – Targeted

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### **Book studies:**

- EGUSD will host book studies for staff focused on addressing the impact of systemic racism on students who identify as Black/African American selected from the following list: *The New Jim Crow* (Alexander, 2010); *We Want to Do More than Survive* (Love, 2020); *How to Be an Antiracist* (Kendi, 2019); *White Fragility* (DiAngelo, 2018); *Cultivating Genius* (Muhammad, 2020)

### **Social justice student book clubs:**

- EGUSD will host opportunities for students to engage in conversations pertaining to racial justice, focusing on the Black experience in America selected from the following list: *The New Jim Crow* (Alexander, 2010); *This Book is Antiracist* (Jewell, 2020); *Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You* (Reynolds & Kendi, 2020)

All students will benefit from programs and services designed to inform and involve family and community partners.

## Strategic Goal 4 – Universal

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### **Family education:**

- Workshops focused on academics and wellness

### **Professional learning:**

- Staff training focused on partnering and communicating with families

### **Parent liaison training and support:**

- Training provided for staff to increase capacity to positively and productively partner with parents and families

### **Family engagement support for all schools:**

- Providing guidance, resources, monitoring and evaluation of programs, events and services

# Strategic Goal 4 – Universal

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## Positive home visits:

- Training, outreach, support and evaluation

## Creating welcoming schools:

- Support, resources and training to create welcoming environments on school campuses

## Student attendance support:

- Coordination of attendance improvement and support activities and resources

## Talking Points communication tool:

- Training, creation of resources and support for all school staff

# Strategic Goal 4 – Targeted

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## Enrollment and school support:

- Resources and workshops for newcomer students and families that are new to the United States

## Families of Black Students United (FBSU):

- A safe space for our Black/African American families (and allies) to build community, to facilitate the advocacy, agency, and activism for our Black /African American students

## Current community partnerships:

- International Rescue Committee, World Relief, Elk Grove and Sacramento Food Banks, Common Ground Covenant Church, La Familia

# Strategic Goal 4 – Targeted

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## **Future community partnerships:**

- A priority on direct support for middle and high school students/families who identify as Black/African American

## **Student focus groups:**

- Engage students who identify as Black/African American and families in focus group feedback sessions relating to racial justice

## **National Equity Project:**

- Continue our partnership with the National Equity Project to focus on developing liberatory mindsets and engaging in liberatory design cycles to improve the educational experiences of students who identify as Black/African American

# Thank You

