

# Shrewsbury Public Schools

## Diversity, Belonging, Equity, & Inclusion

### Goals for the 2021-2022 School Year

#### Overview

Following the summer leadership retreat, district leaders created specific goals that depict our priorities for fostering cultures of belonging in 2021-2022, including:

- Effectively engaging families with diverse backgrounds
- Using data to identify opportunity gaps
- Increasing the diversity of SPS staff, and
- Increasing students' sense of belonging at school



Our big goal and theme for the year is *belonging*, and fostering a sense of belonging with families, staff and students has become a collective effort. Subsequently, the priorities detailed below were outlined in sequence. As we move forward with these action steps, we will use the information gathered to create a strategic plan for diversity, belonging, equity, and inclusion by June 2022 that will be incorporated into the next district planning cycle.

#### District Goals for 2021-2022:

<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Goal</i>
<b>Throughout the 2021-2022 year</b>	The district will continue to increase the diversity of applicant pools for professional and leadership positions by promoting ways to adapt search processes, reviewing existing district hiring practices, using new web tools like IMDiversity, and implementing new recruitment strategies including establishing relationships with diverse preservice teachers at local universities.
<b>Throughout the 2021-2022 year</b>	By virtue of continued staff participation in professional development on DBIE, educators will work to increase students' self-reported sense of belonging as measured by the Panorama survey tool. One of the 10-hour strands of professional development for professional educators provided during the early release days will be the course <i>Becoming an Equitable Educator</i> that was piloted with the District Leadership Team last year.

<p><b>Each trimester</b></p>	<p>Each trimester, district leaders at all levels will use district data to design, implement and monitor consistent Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) practices by level. This will include using assessment data to match evidence-based interventions in the classroom and the use of tutor and paraprofessional support to student needs, as well as identifying differences in the participation of different student groups (by race/ethnicity, English language learning status, socioeconomic status, etc.) in rigorous learning opportunities and school programs (such as AP classes, honors classes, academic co-curriculars, athletics, etc.)</p>
<p><b>In December &amp; May 2022</b></p>	<p>The district will reach out to students and families using digital tools, focus groups, etc. to identify potential barriers to engagement for students, families, and staff with diverse backgrounds in our schools. This outreach will seek feedback on recent survey data as well as current SPS practices and procedures (like registration, translation, and any policies that might be updated), with the goal of using feedback and information to increase engagement with schools by families across all demographics.</p>
<p><b>By April 2022</b></p>	<p>The district will form a team of teachers and other professionals to review current research, consider DBIE curriculum options, and to recommend how best to incorporate an improved understanding and appreciation of diversity within the SPS curriculum.</p>

**Next Steps**

To meet a goal, it’s essential to develop a plan of action that includes all stakeholders and clearly outlines which leaders are responsible for each action step. To be successful, district leaders must consider not just what we are committed to doing, but how.

The action steps below were crafted accordingly:

- Executive Director for Human Resources Barb Malone, together with her team, will work with principals and supervisors to identify the common elements of search processes that have resulted in diverse hires and long term retention. In addition, Ms. Malone and Dr. Lizotte will begin outreach to local universities. Additionally, Ms. Malone has created a team of educators from across the district to serve on the [Teacher Diversification professional learning community](#),

a team convened by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to collaborate with other districts to identify effective strategies for recruiting and retaining diverse staff.

- In each building, principals will form an instructional data / early intervening team to review student achievement data by trimester. In grades K-8, teams will analyze Star assessment data alongside district measures, with the goal of identifying students in need, implementing effective and evidence-based interventions and tracking student progress over time. In addition, at all levels a renewed focus on adjusting instruction to meet the diverse needs of students as we recover from the disruption caused by the pandemic will be key to developing effective long term support for students in need.
- Superintendent Joe Sawyer will reconvene the Shrewsbury Public Schools Coalition for Equity and Anti-Racism, initially to review the education recommendations from the town's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force, consider subsequent actions in light of those recommendations, and to hear progress updates from other district leaders.
- Assistant Superintendent Amy Clouter, together with Information Technology Director Brian L'Heureux, will use the Panorama tool to survey all students and families in the district. Ms. Clouter will report results to the public through a School Committee report.
- The instructional coaches and curriculum coordinators in Grades K-8 will solicit teacher representatives to join Ms. Clouter in reviewing curriculum materials that address anti-racism, diversity, belonging, equity, and/or inclusion. This group will convene in January with the goal of identifying a range of curriculum and instruction resources to support educators in teaching about these topics by April 2022.
- Shrewsbury High School leadership will work on the School Committee's charge to develop more robust educational programming relative to the history of the *Colonials* nickname, the Shrewsbury community, and the history of our Native

Nations. This work will be in concert with the ongoing work being done in academic departments regarding curriculum and instruction approaches that address anti-racism, diversity, belonging, equity, and/or inclusion.

Author Pearl Zhu once said, “The beauty of agile comes in with its incremental nature and use of empiricism to focus on three “I”s- interaction, iteration and improvement.” Strategic work is iterative. No doubt the progress we anticipate this year, taken together with the learning that results, will lead to more detailed plans and additional action steps in future.