



# Oak Park Elementary School District 97

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To: Oak Park Elementary School District 97 Board of Education  
From: Dr. Carol Kelley, Superintendent  
Date: October 27, 2020  
Re: Recommendation for BOE Approval of SY21 and SY22 Goals and Priority Action

*“Create a positive learning environment for all students that is equitable, inclusive and focused on the whole child.” - District 97 Vision Statement*

## **Vision Alignment**

Building upon the work undertaken to define our district's vision during the 2016-2017 school year, Oak Park Elementary School District 97 completed a five-year strategic plan with significant involvement of D97 stakeholders. [The plan – VISION97 4ALL](#) - outlined four aspirational goals for student learning, as well as four building blocks, professional practices and strategic objectives that assure a coherent roadmap for accomplishing our goals for student success.

A results-focused plan is the first step toward accomplishing our mission and goals. However, without disciplined implementation, the plan will founder and may not live up to its promise. After we “plan the work,” then we must “work the plan” to achieve desired outcomes.

During the 2017-2018 school year – the first full year of implementation of the “vision” plan – our leadership team embarked on a two-step process of “making sense” of the implications of our comprehensive strategic plan for our school system and executing some aspects of the plan for baseline/calibration purposes, particularly regarding our indicators for student learning and development. Our aim was to deepen the implementation process on multiple dimensions of the strategic plan. In doing so, we put more structures and systems in place at the school and district levels in order to help each student feel a sense of belonging, read at or above grade level by the end of grade 3, and be ready for advance course taking by the time they move into high school.

A brief summary of the actions undertaken have included the following:

### **1) Engaged and listened.**

Bringing all stakeholders into the work was critical. At the start of my Oak Park tenure, I engaged the community in a two-way dialogue to co-construct our current vision that integrated the community's collective values and wisdom (*"create positive learning environments that are equitable, inclusive, and focused on the whole child"*). And, as the work unfolded, we built in opportunities to listen and learn how the community and our educators were experiencing the work so we could correct mid-course.

Based on these core beliefs and values, we learned to place the highest priority on ***listening to students – more than any other stakeholder group*** – and integrating what we heard. As a result, the district saw the emergence of Student Voice clubs, townhalls (organized by and for students), and focus group opportunities where students could speak out and be heard about how microaggressions and discrimination impacted their school experience.

We also set up a communications and community engagement plan so the district could intentionally listen to parents, community members, educators, and students, and learn about the district's strengths and challenges regarding our equity agenda.

## **2) Set a course and ensure everyone is rowing in the same direction.**

A second key strategy for addressing persistent opportunity gaps involved identifying a specific focus area and then establishing a clear implementation plan. For the past several years, we have taken the following actions:

- Digging deeply into practices within the district, schools, and classrooms, and evaluating the extent to which they do or do not align with our vision and commitment to equity.
- Focusing heavily on teaching and learning with an emphasis on:
  - Ensuring that all students can access a rigorous and culturally responsive curriculum and instruction;
  - Nurturing and supporting highly effective teachers; and
  - Implementing data-based decision-making, to provide students with additional support or enrichment as needed.
- Strengthening leadership at the building level:
  - providing support for principals as well as leadership training for grade-level leaders and department chairs so they can lead and engage others in improving learning for all students, especially the traditionally underserved.
- Aligning school improvement plans and program-specific plans (e.g. special education) with the district's vision and overall implementation plan for accelerating growth in literacy.

**3) View everything we do through an equity lens.**

**A district can implement a program or action to eliminate racial disparities.** Rather, it requires an ongoing process of peeling back layers to understand the impact of policies and practices on individual students, and then developing improvements or new strategies to meet the students' needs.

Thus, District 97 should act as “host” or “convener” of meaningful conversations with key stakeholders as a way to engage the community while building capacity across the system. Then, by using a design cycle to test and prototype ideas for addressing the most critical equity challenges aligned to the district’s strategic priorities, the district is poised to effectively address those deep, persistent equity barriers.

As we enter the final two years of our five-year Vision97 4ALL plan, we will be using this approach even more so as we work to further strengthen the capacity of our building leadership teams and school/teacher leaders. In doing so, I believe District 97 will be poised to address the complexity of these challenges with a clear sense of purpose to mobilize the system in an aligned direction to effectively address the persistent racial disparities that we find in our system.

**Our Impact**

The results we have achieved since the first full year of implementation of the “vision” plan is outlined in the chart below:

<b>Student Outcome Indicator</b>	<b>SY20 - Winter Data</b>	<b>SY18 - Winter Data</b>	<b>SY20 vs. SY18</b>
<b>BAS</b> Instructional Level Expectations (Literacy Assessment) - % met/exceed	Black: 47%	Black: 24%	<b>+23 points</b>
	IEP: 31%	IEP: 17%	<b>+14 points</b>
	Free/Reduced: 43%	Free/Reduced: 23%	<b>+20 points</b>
<b>AIMSWeb Plus</b> (Math Assessment) - % of students at low risk for not meeting target	Black: 47%	Black: 42%	<b>+5 points</b>
	IEP: 35%	IEP: 34%	<b>+1 point</b>

by Spring	Free/Reduced: 39%	Free/Reduced: 45%	<b>-6 points</b>
<b>NWEA MAP</b> College Projected - % at/above 70 percentile (reading)	Black: 25%	Black: 25%	<b>0 points</b>
	IEP: 25%	IEP: 23%	<b>+2 points</b>
	Free/Reduced: 25%	Free/Reduced: 26%	<b>-1 point</b>
<b>NWEA MAP</b> College Projected - % at/above 70 percentile (mathematics)	Black: 17%	Black: 15%	<b>+2 points</b>
	IEP: 24%	IEP: 20%	<b>+4 points</b>
	Free/Reduced: 16%	Free/Reduced: 19%	<b>-3 points</b>

Additional highlights include the following:

- A 5.6% increase in students self-reporting on the question: *“When I’m at school, I feel a sense of belonging.”* (Fall 2017 to Fall 2019)
- Finally, based on D97’s state report card data, between 2015-2016 and 2018-2019, the gap between the academic performance of low-income and non-low-income student groups declined 24% in English Language Arts (ELA) and 11% in Mathematics.

**District Equity Challenge & Priorities**

Despite these efforts and results, there are still persistent racialized outcomes in our system. Our African American students are reporting that they are not experiencing a strong sense of belonging in our schools, nor receiving access to equitable educational experiences in our schools as demonstrated by student learning data, discipline data and student survey data.

The administrative team and I believe that these disparities will exist until we can create the necessary conditions (culture) where all students can thrive - in every school, in every classroom. Our essential question is:

***How might we organize our coaching, our leadership and teacher teams to engage in a focused effort to learn about and address the challenge of creating equitable learning conditions and experiences for our African American students?***

We plan to do this by focusing our collective efforts on supporting our **Building Leadership Teams (BLTs)** with designing and practicing the use of coaching that specifically supports teachers to shift their thinking about students and design equitable learning environments via **strengthening teacher leadership of teams**.

Additionally, we will focus on supporting our BLTs with reflecting and evaluating their School Improvement Plans (SIPs) through an equity audit that will inform the design of their 2021/2022 SIP and **related instructional coaching priorities**.

Underlying this support, we plan to convene an **Equitable Systems Design Team** to apply the skills and mindsets of a student-centered **Liberatory Design Process** to test new ideas and monitor progress toward effective implementation of [BOE Policy 7:12](#). This expanded design team will participate in the *National Equity Project Midwest Network* of school districts to learn collaboratively with districts from across the region and will be a hub for cross-system/cross-role learning in Oak Park ESD 97.

Together, our BLTs and Equitable Systems Design Team will be working to intentionally develop an identity as an **equity leadership team** that vigorously seeks to set the conditions to address the district's equity challenge through the evaluation and implementation of their School Improvement, Professional Development plan and use of data cycles in partnership with Central Office Leaders.

In this document, you will find the key action steps we are recommending for the 2020-2021 school year. We believe this collective focus will further strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of our operations and infrastructure as a whole, so that our schools and students can thrive.

If approved by the Board of Education in early November, over the course of the upcoming school year, we intend to monitor these priorities continuously during school-level BLT meetings or district-level leadership team meetings. Additionally, as a collective team, we will share evidence-based progress reports with the Board of Education on the following dates:

- *Tuesday, February 9*
- *Tuesday, June 8*

Doing so will strengthen our stakeholders' trust in and commitment to our school district, and will facilitate successful accomplishment of the aspirational goals of our strategic plan.

Dr. Carol L. Kelley (Superintendent)

# SY21 - SY22 Goals and Measures of Success

## Vision Element: Inclusive

*The collective responsibility to provide equitable opportunities for access and promote active participation of all stakeholders in an accepting and supporting environment*

### GOAL 1 - Every Oak Park District 97 student is a **known, nurtured and celebrated** learner.

Description	Key Performance Indicators
African American students report a higher sense of belonging in our schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Hanover Research [Social Emotional Learning Survey]</b> % students favorable responses to "When I am at school, I feel, I belong"</li> </ul>
Increased levels of student engagement for African American students, students who receive free or reduced lunch and students with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>BrightBytes Clarity</b> % students to receive feedback from others in the classroom</li> <li>● <b>BrightBytes Clarity</b> % students to collaborate online with students at other schools</li> </ul>

**Vision Element: Positive Learning Environment**

*Is a place where all members of the school community are engaged in hands-on, real-world experiences and feel safe, empowered, supported and valued.*

**Goal 2 - Every Oak Park District 97 student is an *empowered and passionate* scholar.**

Description	Key Performance Indicators
African American students, students who receive free or reduced lunch and students with disabilities will be provided with equitable access to high quality instruction, culturally relevant curricula, necessary for them to succeed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>PowerSchool</b> % students who are chronically absent from school</li> <li>● <b>BrightBytes</b> % students with access to computing devices and access to internet</li> </ul>

**Vision Element: Equity**

*Is the practice of beliefs and creation of systems that provide access and opportunities for all students in order to eliminate the predictability of outcomes associated with race, gender and socioeconomic status.*

**Goal 3 - Every Oak Park District 97 student is a *confident and persistent* achiever.**

Description	Key Performance Indicators
African American students, students who receive free or reduced lunch and students with disabilities will have increased access to learning experiences and opportunities that improve their learning outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improvement in % of students who met/exceed grade level by Spring <b>[District Common Assessment Data - reading]</b></li> <li>● Improvement in % of students who met/exceed grade level by Spring <b>[District Common Assessment Data - mathematics]</b></li> </ul>

**Vision Element: Whole-Child-Focused**

*Supporting, measuring and celebrating all aspects of a student's development (social/emotional, academic, physical, artistic) through caring and respectful relationships.*

**Goal 4 - Every Oak Park District 97 student is a *creative critical thinker and global citizen.***

Description	Key Performance Indicators
<p>African American students, students who receive free or reduced lunch and students with disabilities will participate in accelerated programming in Mathematics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Percentage of students</b> participating in accelerated programming in Mathematics</li> </ul>
<p>Students with disabilities will participate in courses previously unavailable to them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Percentage of students</b> with disabilities who receive specially designed instruction in an inclusive general education setting</li> <li>● <b>Percentage of teachers</b> who have received a score of 90% or above on the Quality Indicators of Specially Designed Instruction rubric</li> </ul>

## SY21 - SY22 Priority Strategies (“Equity” Implementation)

Strategy	Background
<p><b>Strengthen Teacher Leadership of Teams</b></p> <p><i>[Pillar 3: Effective Teachers, Leaders and Staff for Every Student, for Every School]</i></p>	<p><b>What equity imperative/policy does this priority action address? What is the compelling why for the Priority Action?</b></p> <p>To ensure that we provide equitable learning experiences and outcomes for our students, BOE Policy 7:12 stipulates that we must provide effective professional learning for our instructional staff around issues of differentiation, root cause analysis, along with other professional learning topics. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are the hallmarks of professional learning that is not “limited to institute days, but shall be ongoing in our buildings and will include resources for our teachers and staff to engage with as questions arise.”</p> <p>High functioning teacher team meetings (PLCs) is a framework that will lead to greater success for students via student-centered instruction. Individual and collective efficacy has a significant impact on student outcomes. According to John Hattie, “collective teacher efficacy” is one of the top factors in raising student outcomes (1.57 effect size). This means that if teachers in a building or on a team truly believe that their work together can positively impact student achievement, they can accelerate student learning by almost 4x in one school year. In other words, high functioning teacher teams are a significant lever in improving outcomes for students and making progress in our student data.</p> <p>In order to foster this collective efficacy, <i>we need effective team leaders for every teaching team</i>. Effective team leaders are capable of leading difficult conversations about data and practice with their colleagues, as well as leading and interrupting conversations about equity. We need to prepare these team leaders to lead these conversations through our professional learning for them.</p> <p><b>Brief Description of Priority Strategy</b></p> <p>The primary plan to support teacher leadership development is a professional learning stream that we are calling Leading Teacher Teams (LTT). This professional learning stream will be designed and delivered by the Instructional Coach team, led by the Director of Organizational Learning and in collaboration with the Senior Director of Equity.</p> <p>As a result of this professional learning, we want teacher leaders to embrace, adopt and design the PLC agenda with the district’s equity challenge at the center. Specifically, this professional development will:</p>

1. Build the capacity of teacher leaders to lead effective PLCs, in order for PLCs to have a positive impact on student outcomes.
2. Empower our teacher leaders to lead and confront our district equity challenge.

This professional learning stream now consists of a virtual learning experience in the summer where Building Leadership Teams (BLTs) will come together to build their team, finalize their SIP, and engage in professional learning (PL) around leading adults. This professional learning stream will continue with follow-up sessions throughout the school year. Lastly, this work will remain a stream of conversation and reflection for the Instructional Coach team and the Ad Leadership team throughout the year.

**How do these leaders support the School Improvement Process?**

Teacher leaders and building administrators are the leading authors of each building's School Improvement Plan (SIP). The plans are drafted throughout the spring and summer, and finalized each fall. At least one full day of the Leading Teacher Teams summer work is dedicated to professional learning and finalization of the SIPs. SIPs are available on the district website when they are finalized, and can be found here: <https://www.op97.org/about/school-improvement-plans>.

In alignment with the SIP, teacher leaders lead the development of Cycles of Inquiry (COI) with their teams. COIs are 6-8 week instructional plans, aligned to the SIP, written by a teacher team. COIs are how the SIP lives and breathes at the teacher team level. At the elementary level, each grade level team is responsible for developing and working through a COI at regular intervals throughout the year. At the middle schools, the COI process is embedded into the IB unit planning process, and is done with each unit taught. In a COI process, teacher teams set student learning goals aligned to standards, define the instructional practices and strategies they will use to achieve the goals, identify the assessments they will use to measure success, and engage in reflection on their work that cycle. The work of Leading Teacher Teams, including and especially the follow-up meetings throughout the year, supports our teacher leaders with the knowledge and skills needed to lead this process for their teams. Principals and Assistant Principals also provide accountability and support for the COI process in their buildings.

**Who are the stakeholders involved and what is their level of involvement? What is expected of them?**

- **Chief Academic and Accountability Officer (CAAO):** The CAAO assists in setting the vision for PLCs and School Improvement Plans (SIPs). The CAAO may also be involved in designing and delivering professional learning for principals and teacher leaders as needed.

- **Senior Director of Equity (SDE):** The SDE will need to support the instructional coaches in designing professional learning, through collaboration with the DOL and planning Instructional Coach meeting time around this initiative.
- **Director of Organizational Learning (DOL):** The DOL will need to support the principals, instructional coaches, IB Coordinators, and team leaders in designing and delivering professional learning, side-by-side coaching as needed, and monitoring implementation of PLC expectations. The DOL also works to set the vision for PLCs in the district, and how PLCs support SIPs.
- **Principals/APs:** Principals and Assistant Principals need to monitor their grade level, department, and MTSS team performance. They also need to provide accountability for team leaders and team members, along with providing coaching as needed for team leaders. Principals and APs need to engage in professional learning around leading PLCs and implementation of Cycles of Inquiry (COIs) in August 2020. At least one Ad Leadership meeting every month or every other month would be dedicated to the principal support of this initiative.
- **Instructional Coaches & IB Coordinators:** Coaches and Coordinators need to provide professional learning to team leaders in how to be an effective team leader. They design and deliver the Leading Teacher Teams summer learning and follow-up sessions throughout the year. They also attend PLCs in their buildings to provide support, coaching, and specific professional learning as needed by team leaders and team members. At least one of the Friday coach professional learning meetings every other month would need to be dedicated to the Coach support of PLCs.
- **Team Leaders (Grade Level Leaders, Department Chairs, and MTSS Team Leaders):** Teacher team leaders need to become effective team leaders through professional learning and leading well-organized teams focused on results for students. Team leaders will need to actively participate in summer learning and follow-up sessions throughout the year.
- **Teachers:** Teachers will need to actively participate in their weekly PLC meeting and implement the instructional strategies and planning done in those meetings.

**What data supports this need?**

Data from the Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI) survey and the 5E (5Essentials) indicate that we are holding relatively steady in the area of Effective Leaders, and experiencing a slight decline in the area of Collaborative Teachers. The SAI also identifies that our Ongoing Support for Professional Learning is only rated at a "Basic" level,

meaning that we need to provide multiple opportunities for ongoing learning, reflection, and application of the professional learning we provide teacher leaders. We were specifically rated Basic in the sub-areas of Collaboration, Participation, Effective Communication, and Accountability. In the 2019 5Essentials (5E) administration, the district was rated as Average Implementation in the Collaborative Teachers essential, with Less Implementation in the measures of Collective Responsibility and School Commitment. These data speak directly to the issue of collective efficacy and how teachers perceive their role as a team in improving achievement for students.

**Budget**

Annual cost of approximately \$15,000 for summer hourly work for Coaches. This would not represent new dollars, as it has been built into the budget for the past 2 years.



Learning	LTT initial survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey teacher leaders at the conclusion of summer learning to assess readiness for the fall</li> <li>Analyze survey data w/ Coaching team</li> <li>Determine potential changes needed to LTT based on data</li> </ul>	8/24/20 9/30/20 9/30/20	Emily Fenske
	LTT follow-up survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey teacher leaders mid-year to determine perceived effectiveness of learning now that the work is underway, as well as areas of strength and opportunity for follow-up learning sessions throughout the year</li> <li>Analyze survey data w/ Coaching team</li> <li>Determine potential changes needed to LTT based on data</li> </ul>	2/28/21 3/31/21 3/31/21	Emily Fenske
	System-Wide Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spring 2021 Standards Assessment Inventory (SAI) administration</li> <li>SAI data analysis w/ Coaching team</li> <li>Determine potential changes needed to LTT based on data</li> </ul>	May 2021 5/31/21 5/31/21	Emily Fenske
	Student data impact analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate sources of student data for SY21 and how that data will be made available for analysis (consider collaboration with Hanover)</li> <li>Analyze opportunity gaps present in the data and determine if those opportunity gaps have changed in SY21 compared to prior years</li> <li>Determine potential changes needed to LTT based on data</li> </ul>	11/30/21 5/31/21 5/31/21	Emily Fenske
Equitable Systems Professional Learning	Improve coherence of equity driven strategies that reflect a holistic approach to leading and designing equitable systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share work and progress across work strands, and departments including implementation of:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UDL</li> <li>MTSS/Restorative Practices</li> <li>BLT/Teacher Leadership Development</li> </ul> </li> <li>Collaboratively review data from tests of change to learn and adjust in service of advancing equity and ensuring the well-being and academic success of African American students in Oak Park                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Including Co-Pilot/Elevate student data</li> </ul> </li> <li>Engage in consultancies to leverage vertical team knowledge in service of designing policies and practices that increase student engagement and learning</li> <li>Identify patterns and themes from across the district to inform</li> </ul>	Monthly August - June	Carrie Kamm

		<p>changes in practice and policies to center relationships, strengthen school/family/community partnerships, increase student engagement, and increase social emotional wellness and academic performance for every student while dismantling structural inequities and advancing the development of a healthy, equitable system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote and enhance cross-initiative and double loop cross-district learning and communications</li> </ul>		
	<p>Leverage a partnership relationship with BOE that bolsters the district's equity imperative and bolsters a partnership with the community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design and host collaborative partnership retreats with the BOE, Supt, Executive Team and the Midwest Network Team, (January and May) that includes common learning 1-2 key content strands focused on liberatory design and a deep dive reflection and calibration process that nurtures a cycle of inquiry and partnership.</li> </ul>	2x/year	Carol Kelley