AURORA INSTITUTE

SYMPOSIUM BREAKOUT SESSION
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2021 | 1:15-2:15 PM ET

Calling the Equitable Open System into Existence: How Colorado School Districts Partnered with their Students, Families, and Community Members to Create DEI Taskforces to Move from Talk… to Action

PRESENTERS:

- Landon Mascareñaz, Colorado Education Initiative
- Sarah Forbes, Colorado Education Initiative
- Jim Smith, Academy School District 20

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Calling the Equitable Open System into Existence:

How Colorado School Districts Partnered with their Students, Families, and Community Members to Create DEI Taskforces to Move from Talk... to Action

Aurora Institute Symposium, October 2021

Presentation Team

Academy School District 20

Keisha Hill
COVID Administrator

Jim Smith
Assistant Superintendent

Noopur Naik
Former AD20 Student

Boulder Valley School District

Amy Nelson
Coordinator of Equity and Partnerships

Lisa Sweeney-Miran
Board of Education Member

CEI

Landon Mascareñaz, Ed.LD.
Vice President, Community Partnership

Introductions

One word introduction…

In the chat, please share your name, organization, and one word you would use to describe your personal purpose for joining this session

Colorado Education Initiative

CEI is a state intermediary that acts as a statewide convener, innovation thought leader, and implementation expert

We believe all high performing systems must attend to the work across all of these Design Commitments

Whether we work in a small rural school or a large metro district, we believe these commitments are essential

Objectives for our time

- Understand and describe the recruitment and selection strategies CEI and districts used to get the “right people” on the taskforce
- Explore and consider several problems of practice CEI and the districts encountered and overcame during the formation and initial taskforce work
- Assess and apply the learning from experiences of the DEI taskforces in the Colorado school districts to their own circumstances

Agenda

Diversity, equity, and inclusion at CEI

Equity leadership in two unique district systems

Breakouts

Group Debrief

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This Moment

We can never fully see people if we refuse to acknowledge the systems that impact them.

We can never fully hear people if we refuse to honestly and openly listen to them.

We can never fully listen to people if we place our own status over their lived experiences.

We can never fully honor people if we choose our own comfort over their lives.

LISA OLIVERA

Share in the chat how this connects with you

Overview of CEI Equity Principles

- Community-Driven/Open Systems Builds Real Enabling Conditions
- Self-Site-Sector Links Fractal Change
- Equity Audit / Common Data Builds Shared Reality
- Progress Not Perfection
- Hyper-Local Context Matters
- Narrative Shifting

Self – Site – Sector

Self work *– the work of understanding, shifting towards and promoting anti-racism in your life*

Site work *– the work of understanding, shifting towards and promoting anti-racism and equity seeking behavior in your organization*

Sector work *– the work of understanding, shifting towards and promoting anti-racism and equity seeking behavior in the sector in which you work*

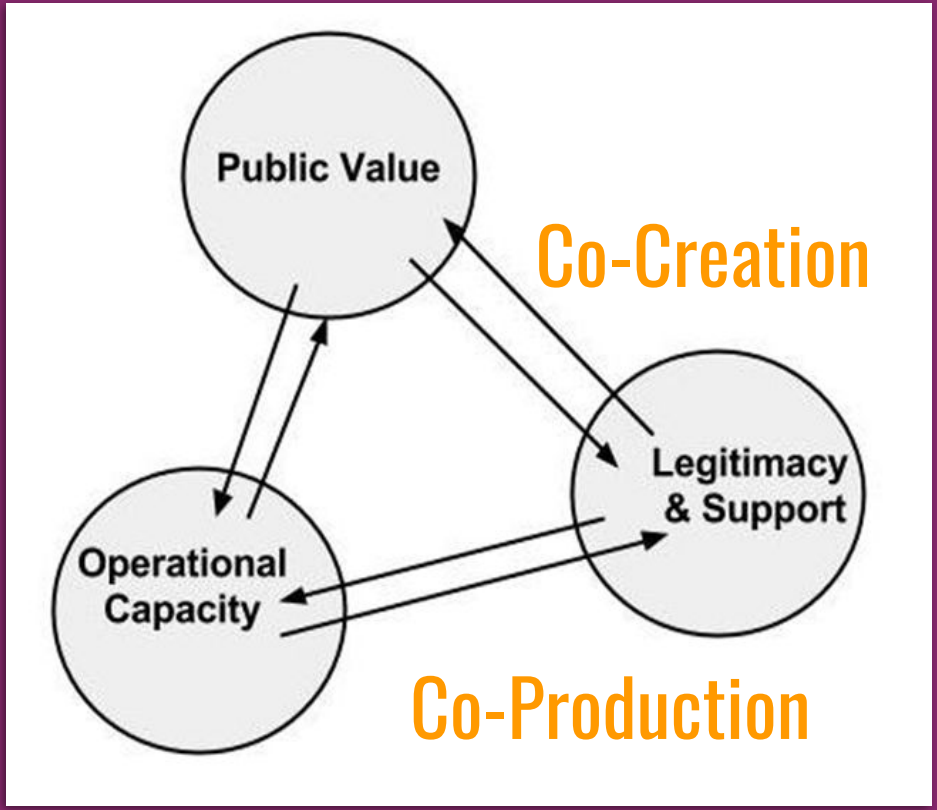
Equity Task Force & Council Purpose

- Equity Task Forces are charged with reviewing data, practices and policies related to their local school district
- Equity Councils constitute long-term efforts to bring the community, families, and students of local school districts into discussion around large decisions related to equity within the district
- Topics have focused on dealing with the issue of School Resource Officers transitioning to look at other issues that are in front of the district; providing high-level district recommendations, and long-term recommendations for equity discussions
- These are powerful open system opportunities to co-create and co-produce decisions with an equity lens

Open System Building

How to bring openness to public systems

- Education
- Policing
- Health Care
- Transportation



Learn more at:
theopensystem.org

Open System Principles

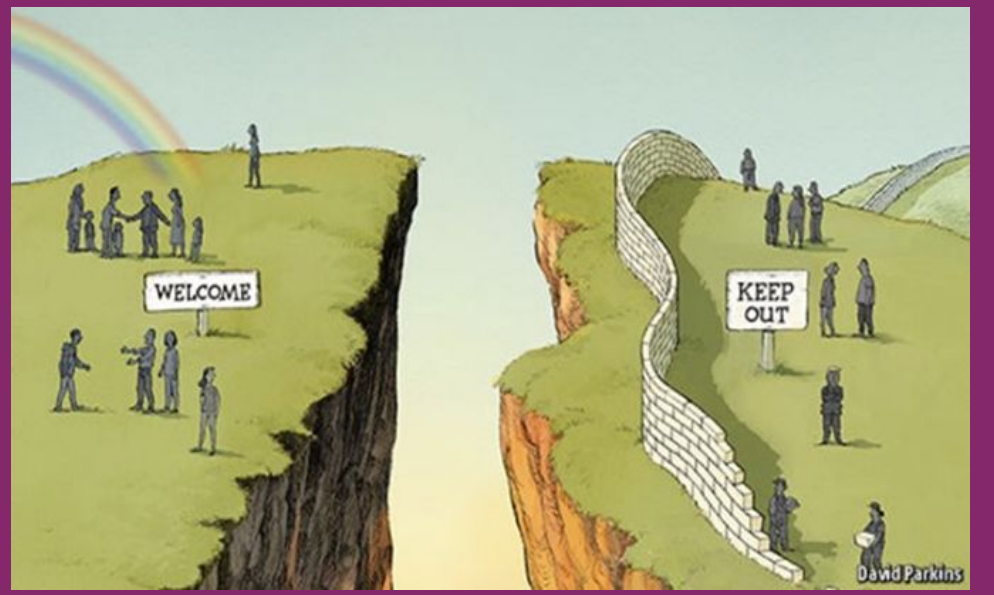
Co-Creation &
Co-Production in All Things

Radical Inclusion

Abundance Partnerships

Liberation

Open Leadership

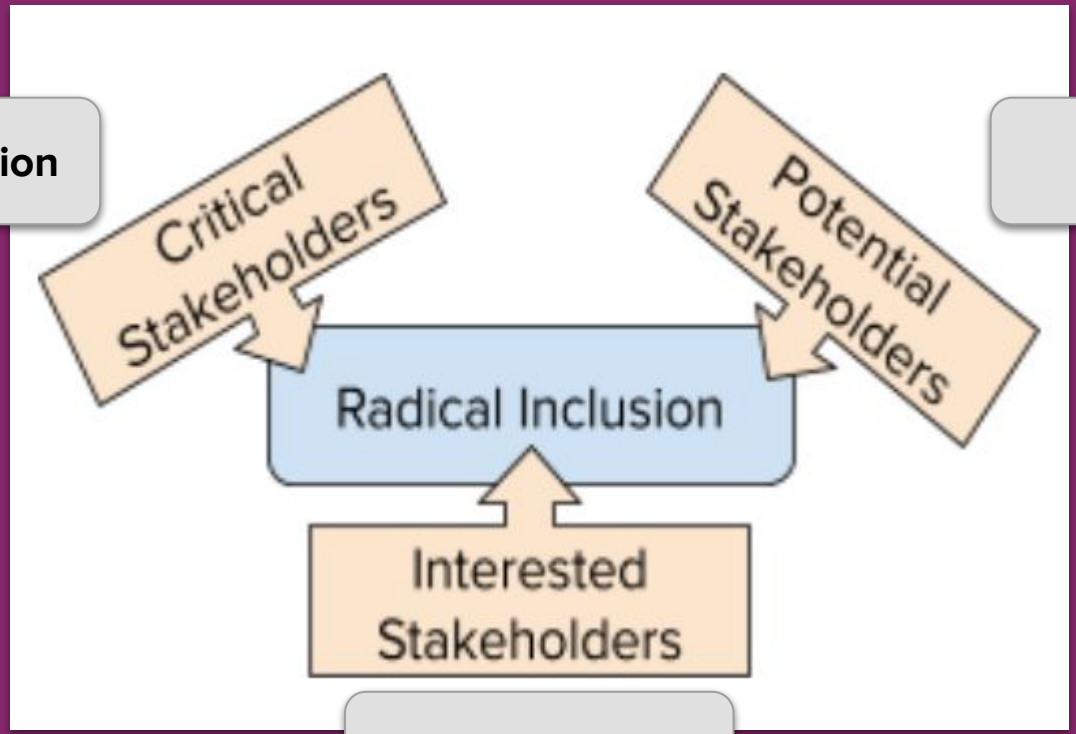


Source: Economist

Learn more at:
theopensystem.org

How do we build it?

Radical Inclusion or *Inclusive Democracy*



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Equity leadership in Academy 20 and Boulder Valley school districts

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Boulder Equity Opportunity

EDUCATION

Boulder Valley School District will end its school resource officer program. But that doesn't mean cutting ties with police altogether.

The school board voted Tuesday night to develop a new plan for the district's relationship with police by May and to fully end the SRO program by January 2022

Boulder Equity Council Process

Equity Council Scope & Sequence

Date	Topic	Session Agenda	Presenters
9/16	Meeting 1: Overview, Welcome, Norms and Schedule	• Welcome • Purpose • Norms • Equity at the Center • Timeline • Personal Stories • Shared Vision of Success	Rob Anderson | Welcome Mike Gradoz | Why EC Board Members | Charge
9/23	Meeting 2: Learning Session with District & Security Staff	• Review Norms, Shared Vision • All about SROs • Closing Reflections & Further Questions	SRO Overview External Partners
9/30	Meeting 3: Reflection and Discussion (Small Group and Whole Group)	• Review Norms, Shared Vision • Panels & Presenters • Whole Group Reflections – create framework for recommendations	Student Panelists Principal Panelists Public Defender CASA
10/7	Meeting 4: Designing initial recommendations	• Review Norms, Shared Vision • Impacted Students & Family Panel • Creating initial recommendation set • Presenting back out to the whole group	Students & Families DAC Subcommittee Rep
10/14	Meeting 5: Finalizing Recommendations	• Review Norms, Shared Vision • Construct and finalize whole group recommendations	
10/21	Meeting 6: Transition to Next Stage OR Additional Information	Depending on final recommendation status either transition to the next stage of the process OR additional information and time to revise process	

Reminder: What is a recommendation?

The task of the Equity Council is to provide a recommendation on the issue of School Resource Officers (SROs).

A recommendation is then presented to the Board and the Superintendent for consideration.

We are not solving the problem completely, but rather building a north star signal for the Superintendent and the Board.

Phased Approach

Phase 1:
DEI Audit Preparation & Data Collection

3 months

Phase 2:
Launch & Facilitate District-Wide DEI Task Force

3 months

Phase 3:
Reporting & Recommendations

2 months

Phase 4: DEI Strategies in Action!

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Equity Audit Framework

Equity in student outcomes

Equity in student access

Equity in resources and supports

Equity in students' school experiences

Equity in families' school experiences

Equity in staff members' school experiences

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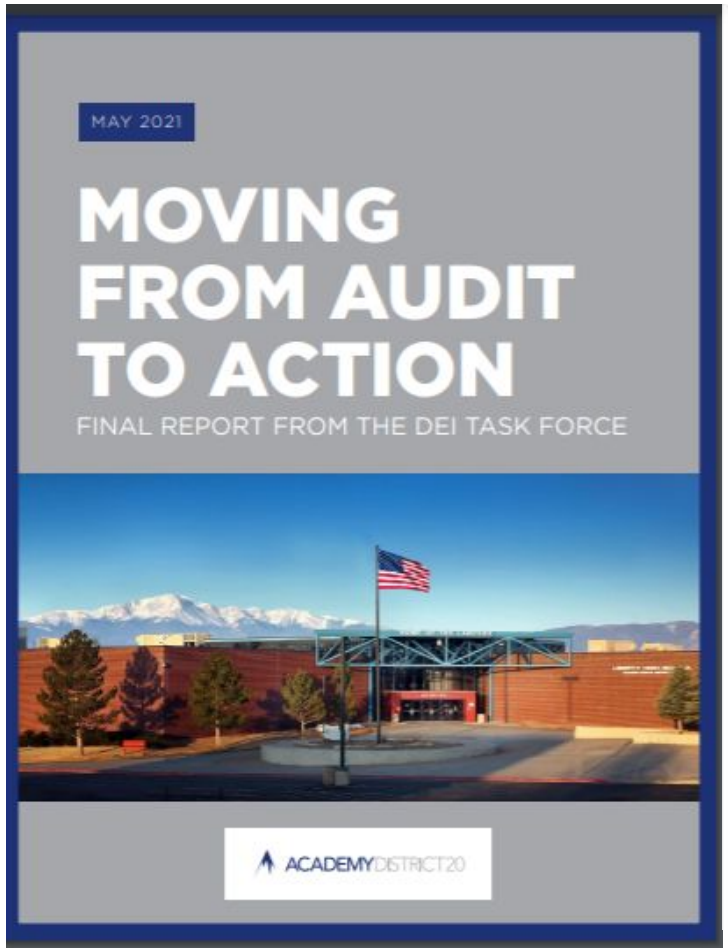
Academy 20 Impact



20 ACADEMY DISTRICT 20

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR

DISTRICT ACTION

At the end of the Equity Audit process, the task force used a consensus model to suggest a set of recommendations for district action for the district to consider. The task force was asked to propose and come to consensus (90%+ agreement) about the language, structure and ideas. The task force was also asked to weigh perspectives on each of these ideas. These completed recommendations were then presented to the entire group and to district leadership.

These recommendations are presented below:

1. Every Academy District 20 school includes policies related to individual dignity, equal educational opportunity, anti-bullying, and non-discrimination in their student handbooks and/or establish a baseline of standard district policies to which schools can then add on.
2. Academy District 20 should consider a pilot program for academic tutoring from the community for schools that have academically at-risk students.
3. Academy District 20 should provide additional intervention staffing based on identified student needs.
4. To close academic gaps, the district should identify a menu of best practices, use data to identify schools that have more/larger gaps, guide schools in selecting from those best practices, support them with training to implement, and provide follow-up/ accountability to do so.
5. Within the first quarter of the 2021-22 school year, all Academy District 20 schools will hold meetings with staff, parent, and student stakeholders to determine the justification and facilitate buy-in for ongoing equity work in the district.
6. Create a district discipline overview committee to review discipline data and ensure alignment between school policies and practices and flag any disparities among student groups. The district then follows up with schools that are flagged by the discipline overview committee.
7. Academy District 20 establishes a Director of Equity and Diversity position to hold the district accountable to a set of district-wide policies.
8. Centralize building rental dollars so that all money raised goes into one pot, and then share funds across the district based on pupil count. Use facilities rental dollars to offset student activities' costs. (Resources and Supports Group)
9. Have a marketing advisory board or panel that works with the schools to establish programs they might not think about to raise dollars, and create some mechanisms for principals to share facilities usage ideas with one another.

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Boulder Valley Perspective

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Academy District 20 Perspective

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Breakout Room Selection

Please choose your breakout room:

A: Academy District 20

B: Boulder Valley School District

If you cannot enter a breakout room, please use the chat to identify which room you would like to be placed in.

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Breakout A

Jim Smith
Academy District 20

Keisha Hill
Administrator

Noopur Naik
Former AD20 Student/Current CU Boulder Student

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Breakout B

Amy Nelson
Coordinator of Equity & Community Engagement

Lisa Sweeney-Miran
Board Member

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Implications and Discussion

What were your reflections on equity work in these diverse contexts?

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Symposium

OCTOBER 25-27, 2021 | VIRTUAL

"Leading Competency-Based Education Redesign"

Thank you for joining us!

Share Your Thoughts.

Participate in our one-minute poll (link in chat box).