

The Center for Equity & Social Justice welcomes you to

TEA

TALKING EQUITY ATLANTA



ATLANTA
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

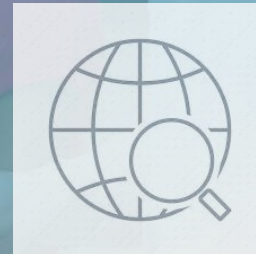


Center for Equity
+ Social Justice



INTERPRETATION SUPPORT

Click the globe
icon on the
lower right of
your screen.



A photograph of a classroom scene with a teacher and two students. The teacher, a woman with long dark hair, is leaning over a desk, holding a small glass beaker and a pipette. She is looking down at the beaker. To her left, a young boy with short dark hair is looking down at the desk. To her right, a young girl with long dark hair is also looking down at the desk. They are all focused on their work. The background shows a typical classroom setting with shelves and other students. The image has a blue tint and is overlaid with a dark blue rounded rectangle containing the title and a white rounded rectangle containing the text.

CLUSTER ROLL CALL

Shout out the school your family represents using the chat feature.



MEETING NORMS

- Throughout the presentation, please post your questions in the chat. We will share them with the speaker during the Q&A session.
- The breakouts will be 25 minutes & APS staff will listen.
- Please be courteous & respectful of all opinions.

A Word from our Superintendent

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District Context

92nd largest
school district in
the nation

6th largest school
district in the
state

51,600 students

87 schools: 40
elementary, 9
middle, 11 high
schools, 2
multi-grade
alternative, & 25
charters

72% African
American,
16% white, 8%
Latino, and
0.2% Native
American

5% English
Language Learners

White students
median income
\$167,074,
compared to
\$23,803 for African
American students

75% of APS students
live in poverty,
compared to only
35% of children in
the city

Child living in poverty
in Atlanta has only a
4.5% chance of
achieving upward
economic mobility



“There is a difference between charity and justice. Charity says, here let me help you. Justice says why is this happening, let me seek to change it.” -Marshall Ganz

Equity t The Forefront

*“Equity is the quality or ideal of being **just** and **fair**, regardless of economic, social, cultural, and human differences among and between persons. **Equity is different than equality**, which treats everyone the same without recognizing the reality that each child is different.*

We are committed to equity because leading for **equity is the ethical thing to do**. Looking at our most recent achievement data, 76% of our white students are performing on grade level by fourth grade, compared to 16% of African American students and 23% of Hispanic students. **At the current rate of growth, it will take us roughly 128 years to close these gaps.**

Many structural elements — including higher suspension rates for children of color, lack of access to high quality educators and curricula materials, and culturally and linguistically exclusive learning environments— **influence these racially disparate outcomes.**

Equity requires that we lean into the hard work of eliminating barriers, providing the right resources, and ensuring that all students, particularly African American and Hispanic students, have the supports that they need to reach their full potential. Equity also requires that our schools are places where every student is affirmed for who they are, while being challenged to excel.

The aim of equity is to provide students with additional and differentiated resources based on their educational needs, so that we may break the historical patterns of inequity that have resulted in far too few black, brown and low-income children succeeding at high levels. We can do this if we focus our resources, energy and talent on leveling the playing field for our most vulnerable students.

We invite our stakeholders (internal and external) into authentic conversations about how to achieve equity because **achieving equity requires the attention of every member of our staff, each of our families, and our entire community.**

Equity At The Forefront

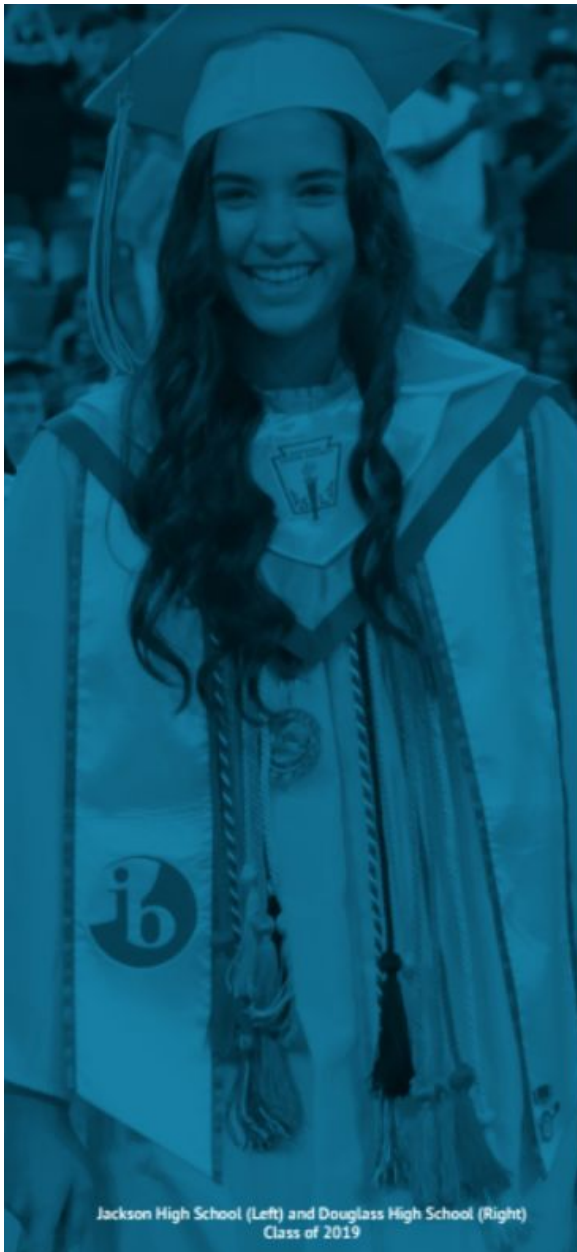
The Atlanta Board of Education recognizes that **equity** means the quality or ideal of being **just** and **fair**, regardless of economic, social, cultural, and human differences among and between persons.

We believe that achieving equity requires **strategic decision-making** to remedy opportunity and learning gaps and **create a barrier-free environment**, which enables all students to graduate ready for college and career.

The aim of equity is to provide students with **additional** and **differentiated resources** based on their educational needs.

We must **be bold** and **intentional** if we are to **design systems which are free from bias and favoritism and which truly affirm all the gifts and needs that make each of our students' unique individuals**.

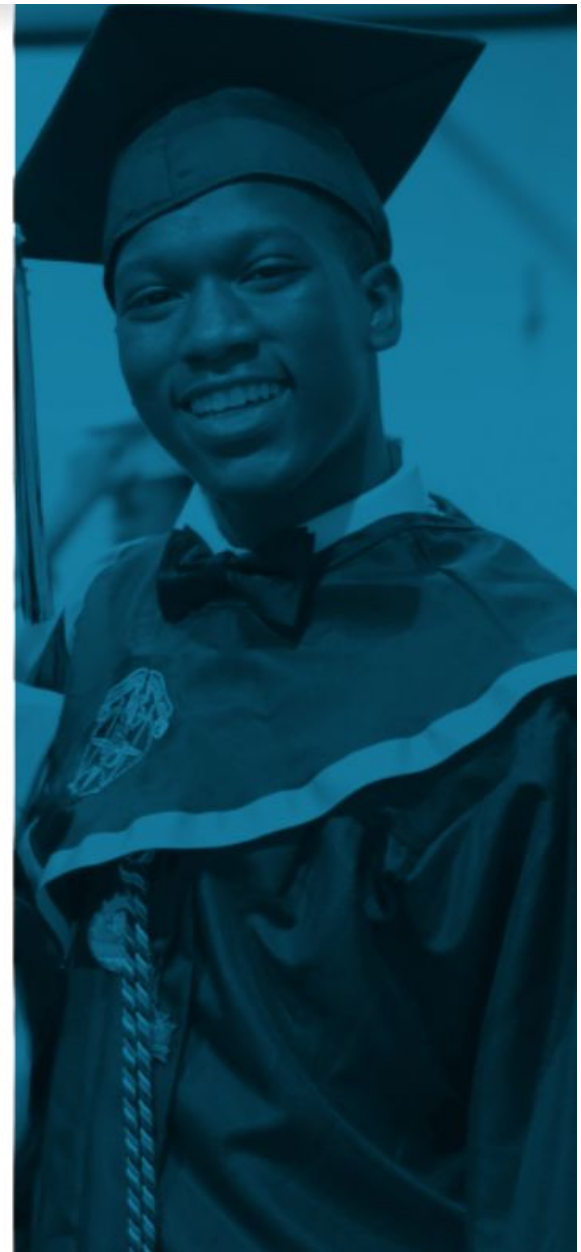
The Board directs the Superintendent to factor equity into **all** the district does.



Jackson High School (Left) and Douglass High School (Right)
Class of 2019

WE ARE APS BUILDING ON OUR LEGACY

Strategic Plan
 ATLANTA
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS
2020-2025



APS Equity Commitments



Leveraging School Improvement to Advance Equity



Ensuring Equitable Funding



Increasing Access to Effective Leaders & Teachers



Partnering with Families & Communities



Supporting Special Populations



Increasing Access to Advanced Coursework



Addressing Disproportionate Discipline Practices



Integrating Social, Emotional, & Academic Practices



Improving Access to High-Quality Instructional Programming & Materials



Expanding Access to Co-Curricular & Extra-Curricular Activities



Ensuring Equitable Learning Environments



Center for Equity + Social Justice



CESJ Mission

To positively impact the lives of our learners and learning communities so that every single one of our students thrives — not by accident, but by design.

CESJ Vision

Inspire a diverse, inclusive and responsive organizational culture that serves as a national model for intentionally, explicitly, and sustainably addressing challenges of equity in education.



Diversity is the representation. Diversity can be measured through numbers and is usually tracked by race, gender, sexual identity, age, ability level, cognitive learning differences, education, economic background.

Belonging is the ongoing culture created to have all people feel welcome across difference. Manifested in the relationships, in conversations, physical space and written word.

Inclusion is the participation. Inclusion is usually achieved when diverse populations are involved in decision-making that impacts the policies and practices of the organization.

Equity requires changing structures so disparities of historically under- represented groups are eliminated and therefore outcomes cannot be predicted by that grouping.

You've been asked to the party.

You feel welcomed and comfortable going to the party.

You've been asked to help plan the party.

Redefines the nature of the party, what the party entails, who is a part of the planning process, and/or if there should even be a party.

Systemic

Ideology

Institutional

Beliefs

Practices

Internalized

Intrapersonal

People

Common Myths About Equity

Myth: Racism used to be a problem, but the past is the past.

Fact: While many explicitly racist laws have now been overturned in the United States, their effects have cascaded into current outcome. Structural racism is still a pervasive force, driving profound outcome gaps and harming entire communities.

OUR RESPONSE:

Yes, racism used to be widespread, official policy of the US government. In many ways our country has made incredible progress in the last 75 years, as state and federal laws have been amended. However, we cannot overlook that in addition to the formal ways that racism drove our culture, economy, and communities, explicit racism was also an unquestioned norm for most of our history. And, once some of those explicit laws were overturned, new policies were put into place that still drove racialized outcomes — even those that claimed to be race-neutral.

While many explicitly racist laws have been overturned, the impact of those explicit laws and policies is profound. Consider the wealth and power lost over generations because of slavery and displacement of Native Americans. Consider how different U.S. democracy might look today if people of color had always had voting rights. Consider how our achievement data might look different if people of color were not denied access to quality education, or even education in general, for so long.

While we may wish that ending racism were as simple as changing explicitly racist laws, that's not nearly enough. It's our job as community leaders, parents, and citizens to ensure that laws, policies **and** practices explicitly advance equity — that they intentionally drive equitable outcomes for people of color and finally begin to repair the impact of our long history of structural racism.

LEARN MORE:

- <https://www.thenation.com/article/the-average-black-family-would-need-228-years-to-build-the-wealth-of-a-white-family-today/>
- <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/color-wealth-nations-capital>
- https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/hendren/files/mobility_geo.pdf

Common Myths About Equity

Myth: Equity in the classroom means focusing on entertaining students through songs, handshakes, etc. There is little academic rigor (and lower expectations).

Fact: Achievement is at the center of equity in the classroom. Classroom practices that are equitable center student experience and use that which is familiar to them as a lever to teach academic concepts. It is a both/and approach, not an either/or tactic. It is not about entertainment, but instead focuses on engagement.

OUR RESPONSE:

Equity in the classroom centers the students' prior-knowledge, experiences, and learning needs. It is a bridge builder from where the students are to where new learning happens. Equitable instruction is learning that is standards-based, content and strategy aligned, engaging, culturally and linguistically affirming, and grade level appropriate. When done well, equitable learning experiences accelerates learning for all students.

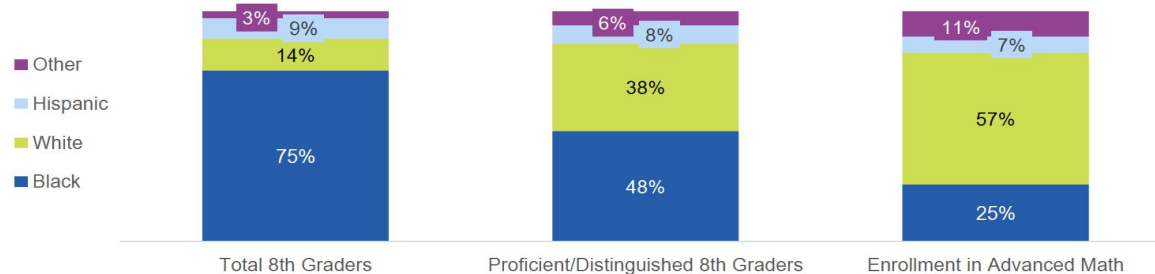
Common Myths About Equity

Myth: Equity is a zero-sum game.

Fact: Equity is not a zero-sum game. It is not about taking from, or diminishing one group, to give to, and exalt, another. In fact, that would be inequity. True equity is about ensuring that ALL of our students are affirmed for who they are, while being challenged to excel. This most certainly can be done without taking from one group to give to another, or diminishing the very important role and contributions of others to our community and society.

Black 8th grade students testing at a “proficient” or “distinguished” level are less likely to be enrolled in advanced math than their other proficient peers.

Proficiency and Enrollment Rates for 8th Grade Students by Race/Ethnicity (2019-20)



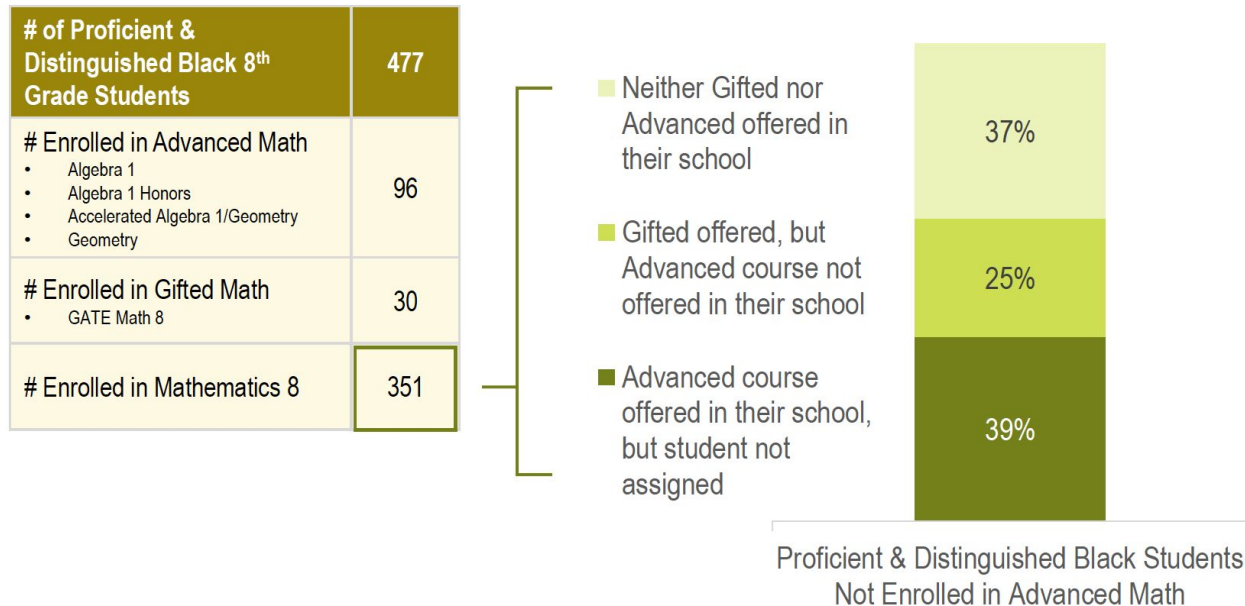
Rates of Enrollment in Advanced Math for Proficient/Distinguished 8th Graders (2019-20)

	District Overall	Black	White	Hispanic	Other
# of Prof/Distinguished Students	1,000	477	377	83	63
# Enrolled in Advanced Math	387	96	221	28	42
% Enrolled in Advanced Math	39%	20%	59%	34%	67%

Sources: APS Course Schedule Data, APS Student Proficiency Data

Of the 351 proficient and distinguished Black students not enrolled in advanced or gifted 8th grade math, 62% attend schools that do not offer an advanced math course.

Course Opportunities for Proficient & Distinguished Black 8th Grade Students (2019-20)



Sources: APS Course Schedule Data, APS Student Proficiency Data

Our Response: In the Atlanta Public Schools, All Means All

The Center for Equity and Social Justice will support the school district in taking a Targeted Universalist approach to its equity work and efforts to ensure that every one of our students are provided with the resources and supports they need to reach their fullest potential.

Equity is not a zero-sum game. When all of our students are seen, valued, and supported, our entire city will succeed.

Inequality

Unequal access to opportunities



Equality?

Evenly distributed tools and assistance



Equity

Custom tools that identify and address inequality



Justice

Fixing the system to offer equal access to both tools and opportunities



Common Myths About Equity

Myth: Equity work is about blaming, shaming and guilting white people.

Fact: *This work calls us to lean into becoming our better selves and a better nation, and true equity work requires that we illuminate our beauty and blind spots in both of these areas. Acknowledging and discussing the blind spots can be uncomfortable, difficult, and even controversial. However, equity work requires that we have these discussions, so that we can truly live out our values as a people and as a nation.*

OUR RESPONSE:

Our equity work is not about baiting, guilting, cancelling or shaming. Anyone engaged in work that centered in these things is not engaging in true equity work. The work of equity is human-centered work. We are dealing with human beings. Human beings are not disposable and as humans we are imperfectly perfect. Furthermore, we inherited this collective history and these current systems. None of us created them, and we were good students of learning the ideology behind them created. The issue comes in when this ideology doesn't align with our values.

The key when this happens is to give ourselves the grace to grow because we are indeed good people. This is also where accountability comes in because although we did not create our inherited systems and history, we owe it to our children to do our part to ensure that they inherit a world more perfect than our own.

Example from Toomer ES

Classroom instruction that affirms every student for who they are, allows us to create students who:

- Value the diverse tapestry that has shaped our nation.
- Become critical thinkers who can constructively engage with difference and who can empathize with the experiences of people who are different from themselves,
- Able to compete in the global society and interconnected world, as individuals who are knowledgeable about the experiences and cultures of others, and
- Challenge personal biases as they navigate their place in the world.
- Participate constructively in, and practice, civil discourse with people who hold opposing views. The ability to engage in civil discourse is the hallmark of democracy.
- Actively respond to and engage with racism and other issues that challenge our democracy.



BREAKOUTS!

In each small group, we will:

- **Facilitate**
- **Take Notes**
- **Listen!**



Share

We Are In This Together: Equity Work is a Collective Responsibility

Achieving equity across the district requires attention from every member of our staff, schools, and communities, and there are opportunities for each stakeholder group to lean into, and move, the work forward:

My commitment to you

- **Be an Equity Champion:** Ensure that we create engaged citizens, who have the courage to actively respond to and engage with any ism, or other issues, that challenge our democracy.
- **Be a Change Agent:** Cultivate a generation of model citizens who are prepared to take on the responsibility of creating a more perfect union-where our pluralistic and democratic ideals are actualized, our value of justice for all is aligned with our reality, and our founder's vision and creed of E. Pluribus Unum (*Out of Many-One*) is realized.

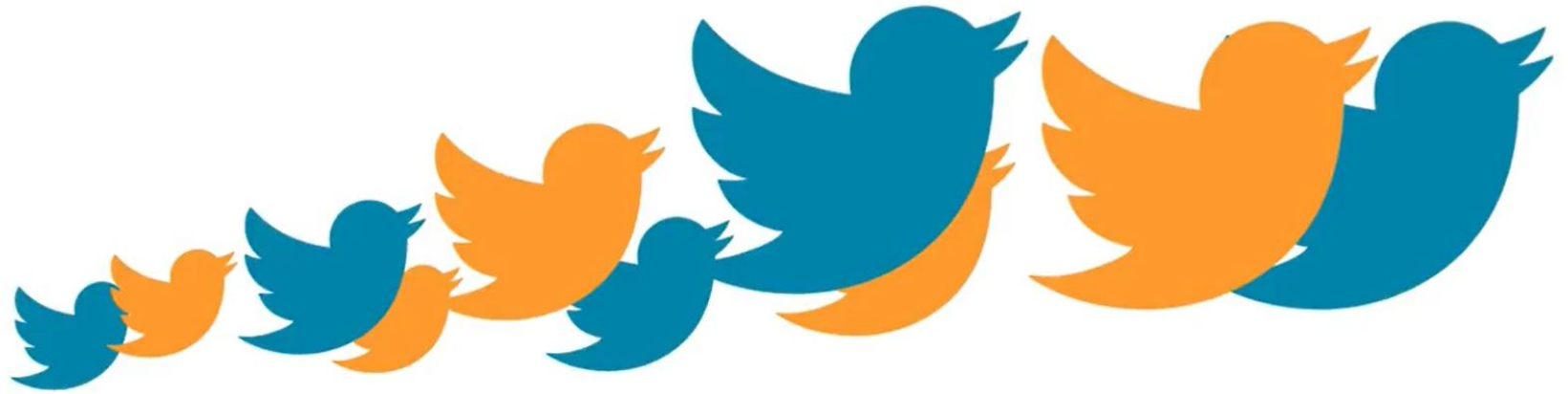
What I ask of you

- **Be an Equity Champion:** Trust the process and realize that this work takes time. Engage in collective advocacy for why equity work is important and elevate that when all our children thrive, our communities become vibrant centers of commerce and our quality of life is improved.
- **Be a Change Agent:** Partner with us in the work because equity can only be achieved collectively. Hold the district accountable for the equity impacts of their decisions and equity considerations in their deliberations.

What we should expect of each other

- **Be a Change Agent:** Recognize that failure to accept our collective responsibilities threaten our democracy.
- **Be a Change Agent:** Give ourselves and others the Grace to Grow





**Center for Equity
+ Social Justice**

**Stay connected.
Follow us on Twitter:
[@aps_equity](https://twitter.com/aps_equity)**



**THANK YOU FOR
PARTICIPATING**