

Disparities in Educational Outcomes Timeline

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

For each of the Recommended Strategies/Action Steps that follow, end of year data from 2015-16 will serve as the baseline from which to measure future progress. Specific outcomes and milestones will be developed during initial implementation in fall 2016.

TIMELINE

In order to achieve the desired outcomes and ensure *Excellence for Every Child*, the DEO Task Force acknowledges the need for immediate action, as well as strategic implementation of these Recommended Strategies/Action Steps over a five-year period.

IMPLEMENTATION

To ensure that the recommended action steps are adopted and implemented, the DEO Task Force proposes the following implementation strategies:

Action Step #1

Craft a clear implementation plan for individual strategies/action steps, including timelines, outcomes, and milestones and implement the plan as prescribed.

Stakeholder(s) Responsible

Identified KCS personnel, law enforcement, and community partners.

Timeline

Fall 2016

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Some completed, some still in progress.

2019-20

- Some completed, some still in progress

2018-19

- Some completed, some still in progress.

2017-18

- Some completed, some still in progress

2016-17

- Some completed, some still in progress

Action Step #2

Transition the Disparities in Educational Outcomes Task Force into a Steering and Oversight Committee.

Stakeholder(s) Responsible

Superintendent

Timeline

- Summer / Fall 2016
- Steering / Oversight Committee to meet every other month during 2016-2017
- Quarterly meetings to occur in 2017-2021
- Subcommittee meetings as needed beginning in Fall 2016

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Committee meeting every other month

2019-20

- Committee meeting quarterly as outlined in May, 2016 report

2018-19

- Committee meeting quarterly as outlined in May, 2016 report.

2017-18

- Committee meeting bi-monthly.

2016-17

- Committee formed and is meeting bi-monthly.

Action Step #3

Create an Ombudsman role. The Ombudsman serves as a resource for families, students, employees, and community to resolve issues, concerns, and complaints through mediation and education. The Ombudsman office also identifies school system service improvements that impact various stakeholders.

The Ombudsman staff continues to build relationships, reflect, and revise support based on stakeholder needs.

Stakeholder(s) Responsible

Superintendent

Timeline

- Develop role and job description (Fall 2016)
- Advertise and hire (Spring 2017)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- More than 980 stakeholder inquiries handled to date.
- Inquiry Types / Themes: Transfers / Virtual Learning Appeals, Reopening concerns / internet access, Transportation, Parent / Administration communication, guidance on "How to Handle... / Who should I talk to...", staff concerns / Human Resources, School safety / security, Special education IEP / 504 support, Discipline outcomes / Suspension, Bullying, Harassment (Racial), Civility concerns and reporting practices, Access to KCS / community resources and social services for families related to school closure and reopening
- Ombudsman staff continues to build relationships, reflect, and revise support based on stakeholder needs.
- KCS Service Improvements: Transfer form revision (July / 2020), Transportation customer service responses, Curriculum enhancements to reflect diversity, Welcome Center – Resources and education for new-to-KCS, ELL and SPED families, Student Visit days for transition grades (5th, 8th), Spanish translations for KCS communications / website, Summer Scholars Guide for K-8, Revised kindergarten report card, Website design & ASPEN Family Portal - academic monitoring

2019-20

- More than 385 stakeholder inquiries handled to date.
- Inquiry Types/Themes: Discipline/Suspension, Discipline Appeals, Transfer requests, civility concerns, no trespass status, bullying- parent/student reporting, KCS investigating practices, Staff/HR concerns, restorative practices use for reentry/repair, IEP/504 implementation, perceived discrimination in reporting school/subgroup data to parents, selection criteria/ processes for students in school clubs/activities (ex. cheer, safety patrol) and support to access various KCS, community, and social services resources for families (ex., school supplies, clothing, holiday help, food, housing, KUB, etc.)
- Ombudsman staff continues to build relationships, reflect, and revise support based on stakeholder needs.
- KCS Service Improvements: use Ombudsman data to inform/improve efforts with school staff and district leadership related to investigations, discipline practices, security protocols, parent–school-district relationships, community liaison on issues, communication with ELL families, ASPEN –Family portal, and KCS customer service.
- Consulted with schools and KCS leadership on curriculum enhancements to reflect diverse cultures.
- Welcome Center has served over 100 families so far this year as a resource for those new to KCS, ELL and SPED.
- The 2019-2020 Family Advisory Council (FAC) consists of 75 reps from each of the nine school districts, including parents, PTA, Centro Hispano and SPED. They will

hold 8 monthly meetings from Sept through Apr

2018-19

- More than 240 stakeholder inquiries handled to date.
- Inquiry Types/Themes: Discipline Appeals, Harassment (Racial)/Civility concerns with student use and reporting practices, Bullying, Transfers, staff/HR concerns, IEP/504 implementation, Discipline/Suspension outcomes, and support to access various KCS, community, and social services resources for families (holiday help, food, clothing, housing, KUB, etc.) The Ombudsman staff continues to build relationships, reflect, and revise support based on stakeholder needs.
- KCS Service Improvements:
 - Transfer form revision
 - Transportation customer service responses
 - Curriculum enhancements to reflect diverse cultures
- Welcome Center opened 2018 - Resources and education for new to KCS, ELL and SPED families-
- Family Advisory Council (FAC) -65 members, including school parent reps, Knox County PTA, Centro Hispano and SPED, are 8 monthly meetings from Sept 2018 through Apr 2019. FAC reviews and gives input on KCS policies and practices for family engagement. Provides voice for concerns, strategies and recommendations for system improvements and the district's plan to improve family & community engagement strategies implemented.

2017-18

- More than 160 stakeholder inquiries handled to date.
- Inquiry Types / Themes: Transfers, Parent/Administration communication, KCS staff concerns, IEP/504 support, Discipline outcomes, guidance for complaints, discipline appeals, athletics, rezoning concerns, bullying, access to KCS/community resources and social services for families.
- Board of Education Policy B-171 Ombudsman was added and approved as a revision to policy Complaints and Appeals to the Board –April 2018
- Website/Email for Ombudsman Office available. Online access for inquiries and to submit "OMBUDSMAN Service Requests". Calls, in person, and online inquiries accepted.
- Will launch and lead Family Advisory Council in Fall 2017. The Family Advisory Council provides stakeholders opportunity to give feedback to improve engagement and student learning outcomes. Six meetings have been held this year from Sept through April. The 40 members represent all nine school districts.

2016-17

- Job posted on Dec. 9, 2016
- 57 candidates applied. Anticipated hire date by spring 2017.
- Ombudsman hired and started job on March 27.

Action Step #4

Establish a comprehensive communication plan.

Stakeholder(s) Responsible

DEO Steering Committee

Timeline

- Summer 2016 - ongoing

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Communication with public being done via public meetings and information on the KCS website

2019-20

- Communication with public being done via public meetings and information on the KCS website

2018-19

- Communication with public being done via public meetings and information on the KCS website

2017-18

- Initial plan will be developed prior to Fall 2017 Community Meetings were held in November 2017 and May 2018

2016-17

- Update DEO page on KCS website
- Post timeline
- Begin reports to Board of Education in February 2017.
- Plan continuing to unfold.

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES AND ACTION STEPS

STRATEGY 1: TRAINING

Training and staff development were key action steps identified by the Task Force in order to effectively change behavior and practices.

Action Step #1.1

Require ongoing Cultural Competency training for all KCS staff (certified and classified) and provide cultural supports in order to meet identified outcomes.

Person(s) Responsible

Executive Director of Student Support Services

Timeline

- Identify desired outcomes and content of training (Summer 2016)
- Identify vendor (Summer 2016)
- Initial training (2016-17)
- Ongoing training and support (2017-2021)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Hired KCS staff as Department of School Culture Facilitator
- Ongoing initial Cultural Responsiveness and Implicit Bias training for all staff
- Developed a multi-tiered level of professional development and support

2019-20

- 100% of KCS schools had access to Phase 1 CC training by the end of the 2018-2019 school year.
- Approval of the Phase II curriculum is currently being finalized.

2018-19

- Year one initial training will be completed for all KCS employees by May, 2019.

2017-18

- The RFP was released in August.
- A contract with UTK College of Theory and Practice was approved by the BOE on Dec 6.
- Training was completed at 6 schools on 2/19, 7 schools on 3/1.
- Remaining work scheduled for 2018-2019.

2016-17

- RFP process resulted in nine bids.

- Five person selection committee rating bidders.
- Anticipated selection by March 1.
- Vendor selected through Knox County RPF process.
- Vendor withdrew from consideration by BOE in early May

Action Step #1.2

Offer ongoing professional development on effective Classroom Management Strategies and cultural competency supports.

Person(s) Responsible

Director of Professional Learning

Timeline

- Develop program (Fall 2016)
- Implement (2016-ongoing)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Ongoing Restorative Practices training for additional schools and personnel
- 110 teachers are trained in culturally responsive classroom management
- Training on classroom management in the virtual classroom
- Foundational Implicit Bias training for all new teachers and other staff (963)
- All classroom staff provided Trauma-informed training.

2019-20

- Training in Restorative Practices has been completed and is currently being utilized in 64 schools.
- Additional training based on the 6 Pillars has been completed in 7 trauma-informed schools.

2018-19

- Restorative Practice training continues
- 7 schools were ID'd as Trauma-informed via a state grant
- Professional Development and support for 400+ educators with Beck Cultural Exchange –Aug 8th event and staff development.
- MLK-annual PD in- service training-cultural relevant topics (Sat-Jan19)-200+ educators participated

2017-18

- Continuing PBIS professional development
- Kagan training will begin this year due to late approval
- Kagan training is scheduled for January and February

- Kagan scheduled for June for 500+ teachers

2016-17

- Currently offering ongoing PBIS professional development.
- Additional PD depends on selected Cultural Competency vendor and support needed.
- iZone schools already trained in support strategies.
- Currently planning training for Summer '17 for 400+ teachers in Kagan Structures to increase student engagement in classroom instruction
- Summer KCS State standards rollout training to include trained special ed and ELL teacher/presenters to support inclusive practices in standards-aligned instruction

Action Step #1.3

Provide ongoing professional development to support high quality, differentiated, core instruction to meet the needs of all learners (ELL, SWD, advanced, struggling, etc.)

Person(s) Responsible

Chief Academic Officer and Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Timeline

- Continued focus for system-wide in-service in 2016-17
- Continued focus for collaborative planning and instructional coaching support (2016-ongoing)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Ongoing

2019-20

- Ongoing

2018-19

- Ongoing

2017-18

- Ongoing

2016-17

- Standards being finalized and aligned.

- Currently training all K-2 teachers in foundational reading and strategies for supporting all students in a comprehensive reading approach (10 ½ days of learning during the school day to stress importance and to support transfer)
- Plan focused and coordinated efforts with professional learning on differentiation
- Focus on aligned task and student work for discussion of differentiation of content, process, or product.
- EQUiP Protocol for Student Work Alignment and Context
- ELLevation to support English Learners with individualized goals and plans
- Monthly training with Principals and Coaches
- Bi-weekly training for Early Literacy coaches
- DLD Day with Teachers
- Coordinated plan for ongoing professional learning for differentiation

Action Step #1.4

Train school resource officers to effectively address situations involving students with social/emotional/mental health issues and access appropriate resources.

Person(s) Responsible

KCS Chief of Security

Timeline

- Initial training (2016-17)
- Follow-up and additional training (2017-ongoing)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- School Security Officers received 3.5 hours of training on working with special populations from the Office of School Culture in August of 2020
- School Security Officers received 8 hours of Mental Health First Aid, addressing how to respond to children in crisis, in August of 2020. This class is taught by Sgt. Jami Blair of the KCS Security Division
- The entire School Security Division received a 3.5-hour overview on Crisis Intervention Training
- Recruiting class of 10 officers received 40 hours of Crisis Intervention Training and became certified in CIT
- Both KPD and KCSO attend 40 hours of in-service each year, with much of it focused on serving our schools and our children

2019-20

- SRO's receive People in Crisis training in October

2018-19

- All SRO's will receive updates in August 2019

2017-18

- KPD training taking place in August and fall.
- SSO's training August, 2017
- In August 2018, SSO officers received training on the following subjects: State of TN Special Ed, Familiarization of Therapeutic Crisis Intervention and Cultural Diversity.

2016-17

- SRO's have been instructed in 40-hour specialized training course.
- Chief Rausch and Sheriff Jones will educate DEO as to SRO training.
- Helen Ross McNabb Crisis Intervention Training
- Follow-up with crisis support training
- Training related to crisis intervention for law enforcement partners (KPD) is scheduled for early August and in the fall. KCSO participated in similar training in 2016.

Action Step #1.5

Utilize monthly arrest / discipline reports to identify areas of need for ongoing training.

Person(s) Responsible

KCS Chief of Security

Timeline

- Establish quarterly reviews (2016-17)
- Implement training as needed (2016-ongoing)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- In the past, data has been sent to Missy Massie. Currently, KCS is working with KPD and KCSO to obtain arrest data that can be shared publicly. KPD will share school-related arrest data that can be made public. KCS is continuing to discuss this matter with KCSO officials.
- Both KPD and KCSO have representatives on the DEO steering committee.

2019-20

- Arrest reports continue to be analyzed and used
- The MOU was approved by the Board of Education on July 17, 2019

2018-19

- Still receiving arrest reports, analyzing and using data
- MOU currently in the hands of the newly appointed KPD Chief and newly elected Knox County Sheriff for review and reaction

2017-18

- Monthly reports continue to be sent to all KCS principals
- Several recommendations suggested by the DEO Steering Committee have been incorporated into the MOU. These will be vetted by all signatories, then reviewed by the Board of Education
- Additional feedback from the community has been incorporated. BOE action is anticipated for February.
- Ongoing as of 4/13

2016-17

- Currently reviewing data (arrests about same # as same time last year)
- Review of data in proposed SRO / Police / Sheriff Memorandum of Understanding.
- KCS and administration meet in January to discuss training
- MOU has been reviewed by Judge Teske and any recommendations from him have been incorporated into the document. It is currently being reviewed by Superintendent Bob Thomas
- Data is being collected from KCSO and Juvenile Court on arrests. Information is sent to Missy Massie.

STRATEGY 2: PROGRAMS

The Task Force identified a number of specific programs that are aligned to goals.

Action Step #2.1

Implement Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in all KCS schools

Person(s) Responsible

Executive Director of Student Support Services teachers

Timeline

- Expand from 18 schools to 30 schools in 2016-17
- Expand to 50 schools in 2017-18
- Expand to all elementary schools in 2018-19
- Expand to all middle and high schools by 2019-20

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Developed virtual PBIS program
- Trained QuEST elementary staff
- Ongoing fidelity monitoring

2019-20

- All schools have staff that have attended a Tier 1 training in PBIS
- 3 special day schools have completed Tier 2 PBIS training
- 20 middle and high schools have completed Tier 2 PBIS training
- 34 elementary schools have completed Tier 2 PBIS training

2018-19

- All schools have received core Tier 1 training in PBIS
- Targeted training continues as coaching support for behavior liaisons

2017-18

- 39 elementary schools, 9 middle schools, 10 high schools and 3 special day schools trained
- All schools should complete training by Summer 2018

2016-17

- 34 schools in 2016-2017 (in various stages of implementation)
- Ongoing training and support provided

Action Step #2.2

Expand the Community Schools initiative and develop other community partnerships.

Person(s) Responsible

Executive Director of Student Support Services

Timeline

- Expand from 12 schools to 14 schools (2016-17)
- Double the number (24) of Community Schools by 2020-21
- Expand partnerships to non-Community Schools (2016 – ongoing)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Establish a renewed vision with Knoxville Educational Leadership Foundation

2019-20

- Partnerships with current community schools continue to be added and enhanced

2018-19

- No additions this year

2017-18

- Maynard Elementary added as community school in August, 2017
- New Total Community Schools = 15.

2016-17

- New Hopewell and West View added as new community schools in 2016-2017.
- Total Community Schools = 14.

Action Step #2.3

Implement "Handle with Care" program.

Person(s) Responsible

Executive Director Student Support Services

Timeline

- Communicate program to principals (Fall 2016)
- Implement Fall 2016

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Implemented and active

2019-20

- Implemented and active

2018-19

- Implemented and active

2017-18

- Implemented and active

2016-17

- Implemented and active
- KPD has implemented Handle With Care program

Action Step #2.4

Develop and implement a Student Advisory Council.

Person(s) Responsible

Director of Community Relations

Timeline

- Work with school board student representative to develop goals and objectives of Council (Fall 2016)
- Identify school representatives (Fall 2016)
- Implement (Spring 2017)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- SAC provided feedback and input to Superintendent Thomas during the reopening planning process
- First meeting of the fall semester is Sept. 10, and will meet monthly

2019-20

- The SAC, with a membership of 30 students, is meeting monthly during the 2019-2020 school year. Areas of focus this year so far are on kindness efforts to improve school cultures and addressing vaping issues

2018-19

- Oversight has been reassigned to ProjectU staff

2017-18

- Will continue to obtain student input in variety of ways, including participation on DEO Steering Committee
- Continue to expand and enhance ProjectU student leadership teams
- Will continue to research and potentially develop district-wide Student Advisory Council
- ProjectU student leadership teams were established in all high schools in September (middle school teams already exist)
- From those teams, a district-wide Student Advisory Council was formed in October
- The SAC, representing all KCS high schools, held its first meeting on Nov 1. Monthly meetings are planned through April.
- This year's SAC will hold its final meeting on 4/23. Plans for next year's SAC will begin in May.

2016-17

- Met with Board student representative, February 2017
- Focus groups will be scheduled to get input regarding the composition of the student council
- Will identify students to build the Student Advisory Councils (will probably be school-based)

- Student input will be included in updated Student Bill of Rights
- ProjectU identifies student leaders across the county
- Building culture in the schools: student day-long training in part by Leadership Knoxville and Urban League

Action Step #2.5

Develop and implement student mentoring program in middle and high school

Person(s) Responsible

Director of Community Relations

Timeline

- Develop program goals and objectives (Fall 2016)
- Recruit and train mentors (Spring 2017)
- Implement program (Fall 2017)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Currently being done on a school-by-school basis
- Student Advisory Council will also be making plans to evaluate school programs and make recommendations for improvements

2019-20

- Currently being done on a school-by-school basis

2018-19

- Currently assessing existing secondary student mentoring programs

2017-18

- Still to be built
- Prior – research current mentoring programs and determine where gaps exist

2016-17

- Student Advisory Councils will help build the mentoring programs.

STRATEGY 3: POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The Task Force identified a number of policies and practices that either need to be reviewed and changed or developed and implemented.

Action Step #3.1

Review all KCS Discipline Policies and Procedures and propose revisions that reflect Restorative Practices and alternatives to suspension.

Person(s) Responsible

Executive Director of Student Support Services

Timeline

- Establish a working group (Summer 2016)
- Bring proposed recommendations for school board approval (Spring 2017)
- Staff training and communication (Spring / Summer 2017)
- Implementation (2017-18)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Revisions complete

2019-20

- Revisions complete

2018-19

- The Board of Education approved discipline policy revisions in June 2018

2017-18

- BOE members requested more time to get input from teachers and administrators regarding the Policy and Procedures revisions. They will finalize that and consider again in February, 2018.
- Multiple teacher and student feedback sessions have been conducted and additional administrator feedback sessions are planned
- The Discipline Committee will meet in December
- Awaiting BOE vote

2016-17

- Discipline Committee formed of administrators, teachers, parents and community members. Meeting monthly.
- Three sub-committees also meeting monthly: Bill of Rights, Guidelines and Policies.
- Recommendations will be finalized and presented to Board of Education in June 2017.

Action Step #3.2

Restructure in school suspension (ISS) to reflect Restorative Practices and provide intervention support

Person(s) Responsible

Executive Director of Student Support Services

Timeline

- Include this strategy with 3.1

Progress / Status

2020-21

- This continues to be in place in middle and high schools

2019-20

- This continues to be in place in middle and high schools

2018-19

- This has been completed for middle and high schools

2017-18

- Restorative intervention classrooms established for 2017-2018 year

2016-17

- Restorative Practice pilot in three schools (ISS).

Action Step #3.3

Eliminate "conduct prejudicial to good order" as a reason for school suspension

Person(s) Responsible

Executive Director of Student Support Services

Timeline

- Integrate this work with the discipline policy and procedure work

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Eliminated

2019-20

- Eliminated

2018-19

- Eliminated

2017-18

- On hold until February, 2018

2016-17

- Part of discipline committee outcomes. See 3.1.

Action Step #3.4

Implement Restorative Practices in all KCS schools

Person(s) Responsible

Executive Director of Student Support Services

Timeline

- Pilot Restorative Practices at three (3) high schools (2016-17)
- Full implementation at all high schools (2017-18)
- Full implementation in all middle and elementary schools (2018-19)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Six schools have staffed multi-tiered restorative programs
- Each middle and high school has a restorative intervention classroom

2019-20

- Each KCS school has staff that have completed the 2-day Restorative Practices training
- Staff will continue to be trained through the 2-day RP trainings throughout the school year and summer

2018-19

- Awaiting updated information from Jeffrey Wright – will update ASAP
- Some staff members at every school have attended two-day Restorative Practice training sessions. Goal is to train all KCS staff.

2017-18

- Elementary (42), Middle (8), High (10)
- Others in the process of being scheduled

2016-17

- Restorative Practices pilots in three schools

Action Step #3.5

Define method of disaggregating, tracking and reporting discipline and academic data in grades K-12 for all schools

Person(s) Responsible

Office of Research, Evaluation, and Accountability

Timeline

- Develop methods for tracking and reporting (2016-17)
- Implement process (2017-18)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Monthly reports continue

2019-20

- Monthly reports continue

2018-19

- Monthly reports continue

2017-18

- Monthly reports continue

2016-17

- Monthly reports sent to middle and high schools
- ePlan
- Developed and implementation begun in 2016-2017

Action Step #3.6

Create and communicate a Stakeholder Bill of Rights (inclusive of students, parents, teachers, and administrators)

Person(s) Responsible

Chief Academic Officer and Executive Director of Student Support Services

Timeline

- Develop (Fall 2016)
- Implement (Spring 2017)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- No updates

2019-20

- No updates

2018-19

- No updates

2017-18

- On hold until Feb., 2018

2016-17

- Bill of Rights sub-committee formed of administrators, teachers, parents and community members.
- Meeting monthly.
- Recommendations will be finalized and presented to Board of Education in June 2017.

Action Step #3.7

Partner with law enforcement to reduce juvenile arrests at school (other than criminal activity such as drugs, weapons, etc.)

Person(s) Responsible

KCS Chief of Security

Timeline

- Fall 2016 - ongoing

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Ongoing. The current MOU mandates open communication between principals, law enforcement and school security.

2019-20

- Ongoing

2018-19

- Increase in arrests
- Are coordinating with law enforcement to discuss

2017-18

- Decrease in arrests continues

2016-17

- Partnership with law enforcement has resulted in decrease in arrests from 2015-16 to same period in 2016-17.

Action Step #3.8

Utilize "disorderly conduct" consistently in all zip codes as a last resort for student arrest.

Person(s) Responsible

Knoxville Police Department and Knox County Sheriff's Office

Timeline

- Fall 2016

Progress / Status

2020-21

- No updates

2019-20

- No updates

2018-19

- No updates

2017-18

- Arrests are mostly adults

2016-17

- Arrests are mostly adults

Action Step #3.9

Develop consistent tracking and monthly reporting of data by KCSO and KPD (on-campus student arrests by race, ethnicity, gender, offense, location, time of day).

Person(s) Responsible

Knoxville Police Department and Knox County Sheriff's Office

Timeline

- Develop plan (Summer 2016)
- Implement (Fall 2016)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- KCS is working to obtain data directly from KPD and KCSO that can be shared with the public. KPD has agreed to provide this data, and discussions are ongoing with KCSO.

2019-20

- The monthly report continues

2018-19

- The monthly report continues

2017-18

- The monthly report continues

2016-17

- Monthly report from Juvenile Court

Action Step #3.10

Conduct a bi-monthly meeting between SRO and principal to review arrest data and develop proactive strategies to eliminate such events

Person(s) Responsible

KCS Chief of Security

Timeline

- Develop reporting and meeting protocol (Fall 2016)
- Implement process (Spring 2017)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- MOU mandates regular meetings between principals, law enforcement and school security, and the sharing of appropriate information with all entities to include discussion of strategies and the District and school-based safety plans. Law enforcement notifies school administration of arrests on campus either directly or indirectly through School Security Officers based at the school. Bi-monthly meetings are not documented, but Security Division feels confident the meetings occur more frequently in most schools.

2019-20

- MOU approved by the Board of Education on July 17, 2019

2018-19

- MOU currently in the hands of the newly appointed KPD Chief and newly elected Knox County Sheriff for review and reaction
- Meetings are currently taking place

2017-18

- Several recommendations suggested by the DEO Steering Committee have been incorporated into the MOU. These will be vetted by all signatories, then reviewed by the Board of Education
- Additional feedback from the community has been incorporated
- February BOE action is anticipated
- Postponed to Summer 2018

2016-17

- SRO MOU: will be principal's responsibility to hold monthly meeting with SRO, personnel from law enforcement
- MOU has been reviewed by Judge Teske and any recommendations have been incorporated into the document. It is currently being reviewed by Superintendent Bob Thomas
- Meetings are occurring with SRO's and school leadership. Documentation and tracking of the meetings is being handled by individual agencies.

Action Step #3.11

Ensure culturally responsive classroom instruction

Person(s) Responsible

Chief Academic Officer

Timeline

- Review KCS curriculum and instructional materials to ensure that it reflects diversity in culture and perspective (2016-17)
- Refine understanding of “Teacher Knowledge of Students” in the TEAM rubric (2016-17)
- Model and embed culturally responsive pedagogy in PD activities (2016 – ongoing)
- Collaborate with higher education partners to ensure that preservice teachers develop effective culturally responsive instructional practices (2016- ongoing)
- Review policies related to adoption of textbook and instructional materials and ensure compliance (Fall 2016 – ongoing)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Wit and Wisdom continues in four pilot schools
- Individualized collaboration and supports for schools
- Ongoing material review

2019-20

- 100% of KCS schools and departments had access to Phase I CC training in 2018-2019
- Phase II curriculum currently being developed for approval
- Phase I will be held annually for new teachers

2018-19

- Year one cultural competency training will be completed for all KCS employees by May 2019
- New Middle School Honors Academy will look at underserved population. 54 teachers are meeting periodically re equity and roles
- Recently piloted Wit and Wisdom program to raise rigor in classrooms around culture diversity, e.g. what do I know and what do I need to know?

2017-18

- Part of Cultural Competency Training

2016-17

- Identify teams of teachers to review the curriculum through the lens of the Cultural Competency Training.
- Orient to new resources
- Laying the foundation for the Standards Alignment
- Planning to align with the language and the process of the Cultural Competency Training

- Training a group of core content coaches and ELL teachers in SIOP, so they can train other teachers.
- Researching site-based curriculum materials selection with state law and textbook adoption laws
- Ombudsman for Students with Disabilities hired.

Action Step #3.12

Provide appropriate academic opportunities (including access to AP and honors curriculum) and instructional supports (including tutoring) for all students based on individual need

Person(s) Responsible

Chief Academic Officer

Timeline

- Fall 2016 - ongoing

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Issued an RFP to contract with the advanced academic programs beyond what is currently in place. Contracts should be on the Board agenda in October.
- Pre-AP is being implemented at four schools in Grades 9-10 (Bearden, Karns, Farragut, and L&N). Once the contracts are in place, other schools are preparing to join for the 2021-22 school year. Next year, Pre-AP will expand to 8th Grade.
- IB – Middle Years Program is being implemented in Grades 6-12 at West High School and Bearden Middle School.
- Once contracts are in place, Carter High and South-Doyle High will open their Cambridge programs for 9th and 10th Grades with plans to expand to EPSO grades the following year.
- Four schools are implementing the Freshman Seminar to explore their career interests and connect high-school coursework to career aspirations. It is available to all schools when they are ready to implement.

2019-20

- The Middle School Honors Academy morphed into the Middle School Honors Steering Team, with one person from each school to train and develop a system-wide plan of supports aligned to AP, IB, and Cambridge. Dual Enrollment and Career Pathways were part of the training as well.
- YouScience in Grades 7 & 8 and Pre-ACT in 8th grade became part of the process for helping students make course-selection decisions with more information about themselves.

2018-19

- New Middle School Honors Academy will look at underserved population. 54 teachers are meeting periodically re equity and roles
- Federal Title 4 dollars offset costs for AP or IB exams for students at need

2017-18

- Vertical Team Summer Kickoff with Science and Social Studies (grades 6-12)

- Proposed PSAT Grade 8 to identify underserved students
- Pilot CTE Honors Course (Office of Innovation)

2016-17

- Competency Based Education Pilot at Vine and AE
- Vertical Team Summer Kickoff with Math and ELA (grades 6-12)
- Menu of Vertical Team services with Secondary Principals in February Principal Meeting
- ELL GT groups based on nonverbal screeners

Action Step #3.13

Match each student with at least one caring adult in school

Person(s) Responsible

Executive Director of Secondary Schools

Timeline

- Communicate expectations to middle and high school principals (Summer 2016)
- Incorporate this as a strategy in STAR Plan / ePlan (Fall 2017)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- KCS developed a "1-2-3 Connect" plan to re-introduce students to the educational setting in August. The "1" of the plan is to ensure that each student is connected with a caring adult.
- Throughout the school year, staff will conduct routine wellness checks on their assigned students and refer for supports as needed.

2019-20

- Helen Ross McNabb onsite case managers in KCS high schools continues
- Contract for Helen Ross McNabb onsite case managers in KCS middle schools was approved in September 2019

2018-19

- Training around mental health and new social/emotional learning standards continues for school counselors, social workers and psychologists
- Hired Helen Ross McNabb onsite case managers for high schools. Some started in November, the rest in January. Working to do the same in middle schools

2017-18

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2016-17

- Competency-based pilot at Vine Middle and Austin-East High
- Staff will know students and standards and allow time for students to master curriculum at own pace.
- Identify students' preferences / careers to explore

Action Step #3.14

Ensure strong family and community engagement and parent / student advocacy centered on mutual responsibility and support

Person(s) Responsible

Director of Community Relations and Director of Public Affairs

Timeline

- Fall 2016 - ongoing

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Family Advisory Council provided Superintendent Bob Thomas and district leadership feedback on the reopening plan through a focus group
- Reopening Task Force provided Superintendent Thomas and district leadership feedback and recommendations on the reopening plan through two public meetings
- FAC will continue to provide feedback and strategies to improve family engagement
- FAC will continue to collaborate with community partners and after-school and childcare providers to strengthen supports and communications for students and families
- Community partners and after-school and childcare providers provided feedback on the reopening plan through a focus group
- Special Education Parent Advisory Council will provide feedback and strategies specific to the needs of special education students
- Special Education Parent Liaison provided explanations / clarifications of mask and other health and safety procedures
- Newsletter (English and Spanish) provided SPED PAC resources and information for summer months and the beginning of the school year
- Provided "Parenting a Virtual Learner" (English and Spanish) reference for technology assistance - Will follow up with issues such as "online etiquette", Development of Learning Coach skills, and other relevant subjects
- Provided SPED PAC information, including web page, community calendar, trainings and supports

2019-20

- 75-member Family Advisory Council, consisting of parents, PTA, Centro Hispano and SPED, is meeting monthly from September through April

2018-19

- 65-member Family Advisory Council meeting monthly from Sept '18 through Apr '19

2017-18

- Ombudsman will launch and lead Family Advisory Council in Fall, 2017
- The Family Advisory council met 6 times this year between September and April. (See "3")
- KCS Policy I-270 Family and Community Engagement was revised and approved on August 17.
- Ombudsman and FAC reviewed and provided recommendations for the district's improvement plan for family / community engagement

2016-17

- Part of Ombudsman's role
- Director of Community Relations and Ombudsman will develop plan for strengthening family and community engagement by Summer 2017

Action Step #3.15

Provide classroom, school and district information and services in multiple languages for non-English speaking families

Person(s) Responsible

Director of Public Relations and Supervisor of ELL / World Languages

Timeline

- Summer 2016 - ongoing

Progress / Status

2020-21

- KCS's multilingual Facebook pages are live and posting current information. In addition, Family Community Liaisons and many ELL teachers are utilizing Talking Points and WhatsApp to facilitate communication.
- Construction on the Newcomer Academy Classroom has been completed.
- Welcome Center partnered with the KCHD to facilitate Saturday Immunization Days (June 20 and August 15) for non-English-speaking families.
- Welcome Center held a joint parent orientation meeting for Spanish-speaking families wanting to explore virtual learning.
- Welcome Center translated and posted information about the virtual learning program and reopening plan in Spanish, Chinese, Arabic, Swahili and Kirundi.

2019-20

- The Welcome Center serves students and families of non-English speaking families
- Working specifically with students 16 and older to ensure optimization of high school graduation
- Working toward designing a newcomer academy
- Working to create Facebook and Twitter pages for KCS in Spanish, Arabic, Kirundi and Swahili that could be used for inclement weather, school calendar, reminders to apply for free lunch, announcing when grade cards are available, etc.
- The KCS website is undergoing a re-design that should be easier for all users to navigate to find information

2018-19

- Welcome Center serves students and families of non-English speaking families

- Working specifically with students 16 and older to ensure optimization of high school graduation

2017-18

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2016-17

- KCS website has capability to provide information in different languages but “computer translation” is not always correct translation.
- Will become more diligent in using more languages to communicate to non-English speaking families at meetings and through parent messaging system.
- Financial investment for translators; High school online courses (Edgenuity) available in 12 languages to read or be read to.

Action Step #3.16

Develop classroom resources for teachers who teach and support ELL students

Person(s) Responsible

Supervisor of ELL / World Languages

Timeline

- Fall 2016 - ongoing

Progress / Status

2020-21

- ELL teachers partnered with content teachers during the lockdown to suggest appropriate accommodations for virtual learners.
- K-6 ELL students had access to online English Language supports through the summer in Imagine Learning English and Imagine Math.
- ELL teachers attended Canvas courses over the summer to develop online instruction specific to ELL needs.
- ELL teachers will be receiving "see-through" masks to improve instruction with ELL students.
- During school closure, the ELL Department partnered with KIN (Knoxville International Networks) to provide over 200 hours of ELL tutoring. Spanish-speaking students also had access to support lessons from Centro Hispano during the closure.

2019-20

- Expanded the use of SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol)
- Provided additional supports through ELlevation to support English learners with individual goals and plans and correspondence in different languages to families

2018-19

- It is Curriculum and Instruction’s focus to ensure that every teacher has a basic understanding of how to make content comprehensible to ELL students

2017-18

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2016-17

- SIOp (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol)
- ELlevation to support English learners with individual goals and plans and correspondence in different languages to families.

STRATEGY 4: PERSONNEL

The Task Force recognizes the need to increase the diversity of faculty and staff in Knox County Schools.

Action Step #4.1

Enhance minority recruiting efforts

Person(s) Responsible

Executive Director of Human Resources

Timeline

- Identify current % of minority candidates in applicant pool (Summer 2016)
- Develop user friendly methods to identify minority candidates (2016-17)
- Establish diversity targets for district and schools (Winter 2016)

Progress / Status

2020-21

- HR entered into a three-phase "Grow Your Own" partnership with the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK). Phase 1 is providing interns a livable wage with benefits for their year-long internship while serving in difficult-to-staff Educational Assistant vacancies. Phase 2 is recruiting and developing current Educational Assistants with undergraduate degrees into the teaching field. Superintendent Thomas has signed a letter of support for UTK to fund the required coursework in this program with an emphasis and preference given to minority candidates. Phase 3 is building a robust "Teaching as a Profession" program at Austin-East and Fulton. This will leverage the Flagship scholarship through UTK to propel these graduates into the teaching field for KCS.
- Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of 7 recruitment fairs the district was scheduled to attend. (Tennessee Tech, Southwest Ohio / Northern Kentucky, University of Kentucky, UTC, North Carolina A&T, Appalachian State, and ETSU.) We were able to attend Middle Tennessee State, Mercer University, Kennesaw State, Tennessee Tech, UTK, and Lee University.
- Continued partnering with local colleges and universities to develop formal minority student recruitment plans
- Continued Developing PD for principals focused on cultivating school cultures focused on inclusion
- The district created a Minority Advisory Council of Educators of Color. This group will assist in setting the strategic recruiting priorities for the upcoming school year.

- Exit interviews are sent electronically to all employees that resign.

2019-20

- Will attend recruitment fairs again this year at the following HBCU's: Spelman, Morehouse, Clark Atlanta and North Carolina A&T
- Will also attend recruitment fairs in urban metropolitan areas with larger concentrations of minority educators: Kennesaw State, Mercer University and Xavier of Ohio
- Partnering with local colleges and universities to develop formal minority student recruitment plans
- Developing PD for principals focused on cultivating school cultures focused on inclusion
- Facilitated preliminary conversation about the development of an alternative pathway program to licensure for educators in East TN
- Currently exploring alternative pathway programs with regional EPP Partner focused on attracting educators of color to the field

2018-19

- Developed online system for tracking all student teaching and clinical placements – demographic data is collected on students, which better equips us to target specific student populations for recruitment (i.e. educators of color)
- Will attend recruitment fairs again this year at the following HBCUs: Spelman, Morehouse & Clark Atlanta University. Will also attend recruitment fairs at several new universities this year: Ole Miss and Xavier of Ohio
- Recommended a new funding model that restructures our signing bonuses as stipends in an effort to payout more to teachers in high need instructional areas – also proposed looking at use of the stipend structure to compensate teachers at priority schools

2017-18

- Designed and implemented online exit interview process to better understand the gaps, barriers, challenges and opportunity areas causing teachers and employees to voluntarily terminate employment with KCS (Spring 2017)
- Submitted grant proposal for TDOE Diversity Innovation Planning grant focused on better understanding the experiences, challenges and barriers faced by minority educators in our community. If secured, Phase II of the grant will include funding to support the implementation of short-, mid- and long-term goals and priorities identified during the planning phase (Summer 2017)
- Designed recruitment fair travel schedule for Fall 2017 to include visits to more HBCUs and EPPs with a demonstrated commitment to minority student enrollment (Summer 2017)
- Started work on developing a comprehensive payscale analysis in hopes of constructing a compelling case on how the district's current salary schedule is a significant barrier to recruitment and retention efforts.
- Was awarded the TDOE grant (see above)

2016-17

- Talent Acquisition and Retention Liaison to start job in March 2017.
- Teacher pipeline through Project GRAD, UTK
- Identified and hired Talent Acquisition and Retention Liaison in February 2017.
- Have begun preliminary work to expand and revamp local teacher pipeline via strategic partnerships with local universities.
- Attended regional recruitment fairs and increased online job advertisements to reach a broader community of teacher candidates (Spring 2017)
- A principal focus group is being scheduled for Summer 2017 to gather input on how to streamline and integrate the applicant tracking process.

Action Step #4.2

Develop community promotion activities to attract / retain minority teachers

Person(s) Responsible

Executive Director of Human Resources

Timeline

- Fall 2016 - ongoing

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Minority Advisory Council was established to provide insight and support for our minority educators.
- The MAC will also set the priorities for the 2021-22 school year.
- Continuing partnerships with local community organizations focused on providing support for minority educators in our region
- A partnership with Knox Education Foundation will provide a feasibility study into a residency program to establish a pipeline of educators into the first district.
- Superintendent and Executive Director of Human Resources have begun monthly informal meetings with minority administrators to obtain feedback, strengths, and weaknesses

2019-20

- Continuing partnerships with local community organizations focused on providing support for minority educators in our region
- Attended Villamaria Symposium at Maryville College
- Attended TN Education Research Alliance (TERA) regional session focused on minority educator recruitment and retention

2018-19

- Attended National Urban League Convening on Issues in Education – best practices around retention efforts were highlighted, as were emergent trends in the recruitment and retention efforts for educators of color. This information will inform our district's efforts going forward.
- Partnered with Knoxville Chamber to develop "Welcome 865" – programming focused on helping "New to Knox" minority professionals get connected and plugged into our communities.
- Conducted a focus group with educators of color in collaboration with the Tennessee Educators of Color Alliance (TECA) statewide report: Sharing Our Stories – Perspectives from Teachers of Color in Tennessee

2017-18

- Secured board and committee representation with a variety of local organizations focused on issues of diversity, inclusion and minority retention in Knoxville: UT Commission for Blacks, Knoxville Chamber: Diversity Champions and Connect Knox (Summer 2017)
- Attended the NOYCE Conference with UTK and attended sessions with district leaders and EPP representatives in the SE Region to discuss strategies, partnerships and best practices around encouraging minority students to explore careers in math and science education (Summer 2017)

- Partnered with UTK to visit The Lowery Institute in Atlanta, GA. Met “change agents” attending HBCUs in the Atlanta University Center to discuss opportunities to engage and lead social justice efforts by pursuing careers in public education (Summer 2017)
- Attended recruitment fairs at two new HBCU’s at NC A&T Univ and Spelman College
- Held 2018 Districtwide Recruitment Fair: leveraged a variety of diversity-focused community partners to promote to communities and potential applicants of color
- Prioritized the inclusion of principals and APs of color in recruitment efforts
- Began preliminary programmatic brainstorming around development of a Minority Educators’ Advisory Council

2016-17

- Recruiting Fairs
- Advertisement in EdWeek, etc.
- Recruiter position posted.
- Collaborated with the Knoxville Chamber and Visit Knoxville to secure marketing collateral for out-of-state teacher recruitment initiatives (Spring 2017)
- Partnered with UTK’s Graduate School of Education to spearhead a targeted HBCU recruitment initiative (Spring 2017)
- Will identify additional constituents and strategic partnerships for Fall 2017 recruitment initiatives during Spring and Summer 2017

Action Step #4.3

Establish minority professional mentoring and networking activities

Person(s) Responsible

Executive Director of Human Resources

Timeline

- Fall 2016 - ongoing

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly hindered our ability to host social events.
- Minority Advisory Council established to promote networking and mentoring.
- Re-establish relationship with Knoxville Chamber after COVID-19

2019-20

- Working with new Knoxville Chamber president to explore opportunities focused on minority young professionals
- Leveraging and supporting the work of the Knoxville Area Urban League Young Professional Group by sharing their programmatic information with teacher candidates and existing educators of color

2018-19

- Partnered with Knoxville Chamber to develop “Welcome to 865” – programming focused on helping “New to Knox” minority professionals get connected and plugged into our communities.
- Recommended the development of a Minority Educators Advisory Council to provide the district with feedback and insights around the unique issues and challenges faced by educators of color

2017-18

- Partnered with Knoxville Young Professionals to host a welcome / networking event for new teachers (Summer 2017)
- Partnering with organizations like New2Knox and the Chamber to develop programming focused on helping teachers new to the Knoxville area get plugged in and connected to our community in an effort to bolster retention efforts (Summer 2017)

2016-17

- Scheduled several “Get to Know Knox County” visits for interested out-of-state teacher candidates (Spring 2017)
- Started identifying principal partners to support this work (Spring 2017)

Action Step #4.4

Increase the number of male teachers, particularly in elementary school

Person(s) Responsible

Executive Director of Human Resources

Timeline

- Fall 2016 - ongoing

Progress / Status

2020-21

- The “Grow your Own” initiative through the UTK partnership will provide an opportunity to attract male teachers into our schools.
- The exploration of a potential residency program will also provide a pipeline.

2019-20

- Continuing to leverage data that allow us to best target our recruitment efforts at EPPs with the largest concentrations of male educators
- Exploring alternative pathway programs as a means to attract more male educators of color to the region

2018-19

- Developed online system for tracking all student teaching and clinical placements – demographic data is collected on students, which better equips us to target specific student populations for recruitment (i.e. male educators)
- Conducted recruitment visits to colleges and / or universities known for producing a large number of male educators (based on state EPP data)

- Prioritized the inclusion of male principals and AP's in recruitment and outreach efforts
- Partnering with regional universities to conduct individualized presentations with their students on navigating the recruitment and hiring process in Knox County – these presentations provide early access to minority students

2017-18

- Continued outreach to local and regional universities regarding opportunities to partner around enhancing the robustness and demographics of the existing teacher pipelines (Ongoing)
- Developed and designed a recruitment video strategically focused on highlighting the cultural, ethnic and gender diversity of KCS for use during recruitment initiatives and efforts (Spring and Summer 2017)
- Designed and updated marketing and promotional banners to be more representative and inclusive of male educators
- Conducted recruitment visits to colleges and / or universities known for producing a large number of male educators (based on state EPP data)
- Prioritized the inclusion of male principals and APs in recruitment and outreach efforts

2016-17

- Teacher pipeline through Project GRAD, UTK
- Ongoing outreach to local and regional universities regarding opportunities to partner around enhancing the robustness and demographics of the existing teacher pipelines (ongoing)

Action Step #4.5

Ensure that struggling students (students performing below grade level standards) have access to highly effective teachers

Person(s) Responsible

Executive Director of Secondary Schools, Executive Director of Elementary Schools and Executive Director of Innovation and School Improvement

Timeline

- Fall 2016 - ongoing

Progress / Status

2020-21

- As part of KCS@home, K-5 ELA worked with ELL and SPED teachers as they developed resources to support ELL students. They are continuing that work as they support teachers with the curriculum in the 2020-21 school year. We are focusing on K-5 ELA to target resources to the area of greatest impact on other subjects.

2019-20

- As part of KCS@home, K-5 ELA worked with ELL and SPED teachers on their team as they developed resources to support ELL students.

2018-19

- It is always Curriculum and Instruction's focus to support teachers and ensure high effectiveness

2017-18

- Continuing in 2017-18 via principals

2016-17

- Principals utilize data to assign students to teachers.
- Emphasize placement of more effective teachers with struggling students.

Action Step #4.6

Budget permitting, explore opportunities to increase the number of school counselors, social workers, behavior liaisons and other support personnel at all school levels

Person(s) Responsible

Director of Finance

Timeline

- Fall 2016 - ongoing

Progress / Status

2020-21

- Due to budgetary constraints for FY21, we were unable to add additional school counselors and social workers
- Working with our Federal Programs Department, continued the additional 16 days for priority / cusp schools
- Funds allocated for cultural competency training provided by an outside organization were repurposed to fund a School Culture Facilitator to develop ongoing training for staff
- Three ELL Teachers were added during the 2019-20 school year to meet state-mandated ratios. These are now part of the district's recurring General Purpose budget. Additionally, an ELL Instructional Coach was added due to a state mandate.
- Two new School Nurses were added in the 2019-20 school year, and are now part of the General Purpose budget. To date for the 2020-21 school year, 3.5 additional new school nurses are approved to meet medical needs at various schools.

2019-20

- Budget meetings are currently underway

2018-19

- Addition of 16 extra contract days for teachers, counselors, librarians, and instructional support positions at six cusp / priority schools
- Net addition of 18.6 FTE across the district in the following position categories: ELL teachers, SPED teachers, nurses, assistive technologists and restorative interventionists
- Net increase to the budget of \$1.48m for positions focused on reading instruction and assistance to struggling schools

2017-18

- 30 Restorative Interventionists hired and deployed to all middle and high schools Fall 2017
- The International Welcome Center is slated to open in November at Lincoln Park
- The Welcome Center is open

2016-17

- Initiatives in near future: International Welcome Center
- Must prioritize future initiatives for budget projections
- Currently need additional funds for Community Schools (custodians, security, etc.) and ELL (training, teachers, etc.)
- Three additional Behavior Liaison positions were added for the 2016-17 school year.