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#### Don't Just Say It, Live It

Dear Families,

When discussing Brighton Believes, BHS Principal Dr. Tom Hall often uses this simple expression as a reminder that it is not enough to talk about integrity, respect, responsibility, kindness, and self-control. We are called to live these values in what we say and how we act.

Words are important. Speaking out is necessary. In fact, I'd argue that silence is complicity. Although words can also be reassuring to a point, it is our actions that make a difference. These actions must be thoughtful, intentional, and visible. Performative gestures are disingenuous and hurtful. It is in this spirit of taking action and living our words that I write to you today.

You will notice today that a sign has been placed at the Twelve Corners expressing "Brighton Believes that Black Lives Matter ... Join Us." Simply put, systemized oppression, racial injustice, and institutionalized racism, among other factors, have resulted in a society where the lives of our African American friends, neighbors, and community members have not mattered. Those of us protected and promoted through our own innate privilege receive constant reinforcement that our lives matter. This is an important acknowledgement and a call for us to embrace the importance and significance of black lives, but it is again just words.

Over the coming year, we will be taking significant steps forward in our diversity, equity, and inclusion work. However, we believe that our actions need to progress faster and with a sense of urgency reflective of this important moment in the fight for true equality and inclusion.

To that end and beginning immediately, we will:

# "Don't Just Say it, Live it"

- Follow-up to the 2020 community letter



Status Check  
March 11, 2021

**He who wishes to reform the world must begin with himself,  
or else he loses his labor.**

**-St. Ignatius Loyola**





# Commitment #1: Implement a K-12 anti-racism, anti- bias curriculum.

## Status:

- We have updated several units of study in 6-12 (predominantly ELA and SS) to incorporate ABAR elements. Examples can be found here:
  - <https://www.bcsd.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=15942>
  - <https://www.bcsd.org/site/Default.aspx?PageID=15941>
- FRES has added several ABAR related lessons to their Second Steps curriculum. These are used with all students across grades.

## Next Steps:

- Curriculum Council is developing a tool for teachers to use to review their units of study for ABAR principles. This will be used moving forward for all unit development and/or modification.
- Three summer curriculum development institutes
- CRPS counselors will meet this summer to identify ABAR lessons to incorporate into their Second Steps curriculum.





## Commitment #2:

Conduct enhanced reviews of teaching materials being used at all levels to assess cultural responsiveness and appropriateness.

We will change materials as needed.

- **Status:**

- Literature: This was done last year during the ELA program evaluation. As a result, several new books/novels have been purchased for K-12 and incorporated in existing/updated units of study.
- Library collections: Collections in each of the libraries have been evaluated and additional titles have been purchased.
- Two years ago, the district updated its [textbook selection regulation](#) to incorporate specific review criteria for cultural references and bias. Since then, all textbooks that have been purchased have been vetted to ensure an accurate and broader representation of all types of diversity.

- **Next Steps:**

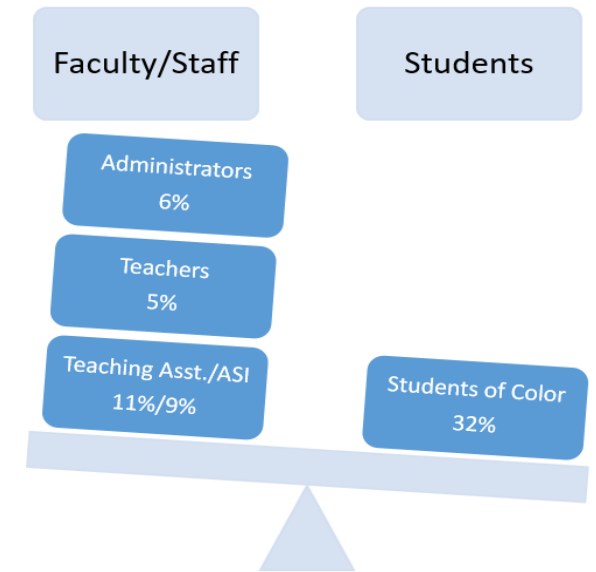
- Continue to enforce the use of the textbook selection regulation.
- Continue to earmark money in the district for the purchase of new titles for use in ELA classes.

### Commitment #3:

Continue to redevelop our hiring practices and be intentional about diversifying our staff through enhanced recruitment and retention practices and further incorporating anti-bias practices in our hiring process.

- Status: Set benchmark and goals:
- Execute strategies already identified recruitment "playbook"

**4 of the last 25 teachers hired in the past two years have been BIPOC.**



- Next Steps: Ongoing training and professional development in partnership with Brighton Teachers' Center:

### Topics Covered

- Identity Defined
- Identity Conflicts
- Being an Ally
- Creating an Inclusive Workplace
- Inclusion Strategies
- Intersectionality
- Stereotypes
- Dignity & Civility in the Workplace
- Invisible Disabilities
- Power & Inequality
- Political Correctness
- Language Diversity
- Tolerance & Acceptance



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## Commitment #4:

Require refresher and new training on implicit bias for all staff.



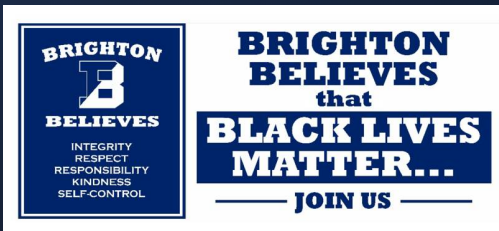
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- Status:
  - Sponsored several PD sessions during summer of 2020
  - October Superintendent's Conference Day: All K-12 Staff participate in PD: [Activating the Anti-bias, Anti-racist lens](#)
  - Ongoing faculty meetings: [Structural Racism in Rochester](#)
  - Board of Education Retreat: March 2021
- Next Steps:
  - Dedicate April Superintendent's conference day to continue PD w/staff
  - Summer PD offerings
  - Continue to work with NYU Metro Center to offer PD to stakeholder groups including:
    - Administrative Team
    - Instructional Leaders
    - Board of Education
    - Team leaders, coordinators, instructional leaders



## Commitment #5:

Continue to focus on providing training to our staff on culturally responsive teaching practices.

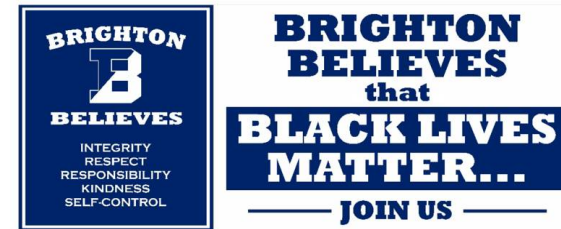


- Status:
  - Offered myriad opportunities for professional development and curriculum design, including....
    - [Diversity and Cultural Competence in the Workplace](#) - Whole staff PD offered during each building's faculty meetings during the Winter/Spring 2021
    - Everfi Self-Paced Courseware
    - Inspiring, Engaging, and Empowering Our Youth: Culturally Relevant Instruction through Critical Inquiry Projects
    - Understanding by Design
    - Creating Cultures of Thinking (Teacher Induction program)
    - Project-Based Learning (PBL) 101
- Next Steps:
  - Continue to allocate resources for professional development in this area
  - Renew contract with NYU Metro Center

## *Commitment #6:*

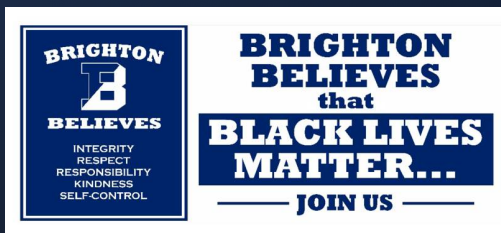
*Continue to shift our discipline practices to a more therapeutic, supportive approach as opposed to punitive measures that disproportionately impact students of color. This includes the continued implementation of Restorative Practices K-12 and a redesign of the in-school suspension program.*

- Status:
  - To date, all staff have been trained to use community building circles in order to build and maintain relationships
  - Counseling staff facilitates therapeutic circles when needed
- Next Steps:
  - Summer refresher course for building level teams
  - Summer training for counselors and administrators on how to use restorative practices for Tier 2 & 3 interventions



## Commitment #7:

Conduct an audit of all visual and performing arts, athletics, and extracurricular club and activity programs to assess the engagement levels of all students, determine barriers to participation, and develop an action plan to address obstacles.



- Status:
  - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Student Engagement sub-committee developed a survey to identify potential barriers to full student engagement in afterschool, evening, extracurricular and cocurricular activities.
  - 3 surveys were created
    - Parents of students grades 3-5
    - Students grades 6-12
    - Students grades 3-5
  - Student surveys completed within the school day for all students grades 3-12 to better ensure access and participation.
- Next Steps:
  - March 18 begin review of survey data
  - Share findings to full DEI committee, BOE, and community
  - Consider next step implementation plan to reduce barriers



## Commitment #8:

Assess our family engagement subcommittee work done to date and work to connect with every family of color to better assess our practices related to full inclusion and opportunities for equitable participation.

- Status: Surveys have or will be completed. This doesn't tell the whole story and we're struggling with finding the best/right way to connect with every family.
- Next Steps: Help! Suggestions, ideas, thoughts?





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## Commitment #9: Mascot

### Status:

We are no longer the Barons. We engaged in an inclusive process to rebrand and move away from an image and name that was elitist and a symbol of structural racism, and historical oppression.

- Community ideas submitted
- Stakeholder group convened to narrow the choices. All volunteers included.
- Artwork solicited
- K-12(13) vote conducted.
- Bruins announced and branding package developed.

### Next Steps:

Continue implementing the branding of a new logo. It is important to note that Barons was not being actively used on our uniforms and the name/logo has been changed in all locations where it appeared.





# Questions, Comments, Feedback, Suggestions?

