



FAQ - *What questions do you have regarding the district's work in the Diversity and Equity area and what feedback in this area would you like to provide?*

How are you educating students on diversity/equity/acceptance? How can we empower students to have an open dialogue about diversity/equity? Not only do we want to heal in the present moment, we want to prevent further inequity & be a part of stopping the "hamster wheel."

3.9 (29) Ranked #11 of 143



A: This varies depending on grade level. At the primary and elementary level, teachers use literature to explore the breadth of diversities within our District with our students. In addition, this year we initiated the use of the Second Step program, a social skills program that helps students learn how to recognize and address bullying, understand conflict, and build empathy and understanding as well as other social skills.

At the middle school level, we have made some curriculum alterations in our Social Studies and English units to teach students about topics related to race and understanding and celebrating diversities.

At the high school level, there are specific classes that build knowledge and understanding of diverse populations (i.e. Race and Rhetoric, Comparative Religions, just to name a few) as well as curriculum modifications happening in a variety of classes that teach about and empower students to critically think about concepts related to equity. In addition, there have been extensive efforts at the high school this year to incorporate community building circles and other restorative practices into certain settings. Many teachers are initiating these practices and are anxious to learn more. Restorative circles have also been used widely in the counseling department and by administrators to address student specific needs.

This is just a start at addressing this important work. Plans are underway to review curriculum and instructional practices this summer to ensure alignment to the principles of cultural inclusivity.

Are we looking for ways to fund professional development for teachers? An ongoing process of baby steps is the only way to make progress. A one-off training doesn't accomplish much.

3.8 (45) Ranked #12 of 143



A: Each year we include funds in the general budget to support professional development. In addition, our federal Title IIA funds also provide monies. We use these funds to send staff to workshops and conferences, pay for curriculum development, and hire consultants to work with staff on topics related to our Brighton Blueprint, including topics related to diversity and equity. For example, this year we have sent teachers to several workshops specific to increasing capacity for providing culturally responsive teaching, we've hired a consultant from St. John Fisher who has been working with our 6-12 Humanities and Special Education staff in a yearlong series to design and deliver lessons specifically developing critical literacy practices, and we've supported four different book studies for teachers to explore topics related to diversity and equity. This summer, over 120 staff members will be engaged in curriculum development which will include the modification of units of study which are more culturally responsive. And finally, we've designed a single day of professional development for all K-12 teachers which will introduce many of the topics relevant to Culturally Responsive Teaching (i.e. implicit bias training, building community circles through restorative practices, teaching English as a New Language students, etc.) and then offer follow up sessions on these topics throughout the year to all teachers.



What work is being done at the primary and elementary levels to promote ideas of social justice and equity? By the time students reach middle school, they've inherited notions of entitlement and privilege that prevent their creating an inclusive environment.



A: Our teachers are all going through Culturally Responsive Teaching professional development this summer, on top of the Implicit Bias trainings that have already been conducted. We have examined our Social Studies units in order to create opportunities for students to bring their own backgrounds to the learning and open students up to the opportunities to learn about one another and the world around them. We have also looked to incorporate concepts about social justice throughout the K-5 Social Studies and ELA curriculum. In addition, teachers have taken part in book studies about teaching through a diverse lens and we have begun to look at harnessing the power of classroom libraries and books to engage students in meaningful discussions around equity and social justice.

How will primary, elementary, middle, and secondary-level teachers be trained to better understand implicit bias & what equity looks like in school? Teachers (and admin) will need training to help them understand how biases can affect the way they treat students and address their needs.



A: Two years ago, we offered a half-day training on implicit bias to all K-12 staff (teachers and administrators). Since then, we have sponsored and provided additional professional development in each building including implicit bias specific training, poverty simulations, and other related topics in an attempt to increase the knowledge and skill of Brighton staff to be culturally responsive. This summer we have hired a consultant to provide additional PD on implicit bias to all K-12 teachers and administrators. From there we will offer follow up PD throughout the year through the Brighton Teacher Center. The plan is to also incorporate PD on bias into our new teacher training. We are in the process of developing a plan to provide implicit bias training to remaining staff including clerical support, transportation, food service and maintenance personnel. We are working with an outside consultant to help create the materials for this training.

Aside from restorative justice, what steps is the district taking to reduce suspensions and intolerance of challenging behavior? It's important to understand the context of behavior and address the underlying needs driving the behavior versus responding with punishment.



A: BHS faculty, staff, and administration have undertaken several professional development opportunities over the past several years to better understand our students and their needs when challenging behaviors arise. A few years ago, BHS conducted professional development on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) along with case studies of students exhibiting challenging behaviors in the school setting. Staff also engaged in conversations about various diversity type situations/scenarios that could come up in the environment at BHS and collaborated on how to best address the scenarios. We pride ourselves on having regular individual proactive contact with students who exhibit concerning behaviors and hold subsequent conversations with their families to problem solve together. Our goal is to listen to concerns and follow up on concerns with immediacy. We hold individual teacher, student, and parent meetings to address behaviors proactively, refer students to our Brighton Support Team, make home visits, hold case conferences with a student's team, educate our faculty and staff on topics related to diversity, differences, and cultural understanding, and hold regular peer mediations and parent mediations with students before behaviors escalate. We hold regular DASA presentations for



students and present actual scenarios where students have to discuss how they would handle situations. DASA seminar presentations include information on the DASA law, bullying, cyberbullying, sexting, and sexual harassment.

This past year, we added more mental health supports at TCMS and BHS to address behavioral challenges proactively, working with Genesee Mental Health and Delphi drug and alcohol services right at the school. We have created behavioral plans and made behavioral contracts with specific students exhibiting repeated behaviors. We have increased the number of student counseling groups we run to proactively address behaviors, student conflict, and teen peer pressures.

We have created a Culture Climate Student Leadership Team where students created a new “if you see something say something” form along with a school wide culture climate survey developed to address student concerns in the building. Brighton has conducted poverty simulations K-12 to better understand the needs of our students and families having financial difficulties. We also held a student panel discussion with our faculty where diverse groups of students presented to staff about their backgrounds, personal stories, struggles while attending school, and offered up the opportunity for faculty to ask the students questions.

We have regular reviews of discipline data and developed alternative disciplinary options for behavioral offenses that would have traditionally ended with suspensions. We have increased educational opportunities for students exhibiting challenging behaviors and have narrowed down the offenses that may result in suspension.

How are you creating more diversity in hiring staff? A diverse student body needs a diverse staff in order to for students to have positive role models.



A: We agree 100%. The District’s Hiring Practices subcommittee has developed action plans related to recruitment, environmental attributes that celebrate diversity, equity, and inclusion, and retention strategies. The subcommittee is comprised of representatives across various industries that are researching and documenting best practices. These action plans will be published with the final Diversity, Equity and Inclusion report in June.

How can the community be involved? This will only work with broad support.



A: First and foremost, be an “upstander.” It is important for everyone to call out racism, bias and bigotry and stand up against hateful language and behaviors. Second, please consider attending events to provide feedback and volunteering for district and building committees. We will solicit the community for volunteers again in the coming months and plan to open up even more opportunities for participation. Please jump in, we need your perspectives!

Will anti-bias training or proactive anti-racist training for staff be mandatory? I'd like to think all staff will be open to this.



A: See answer above. Yes, we are in the process of developing training materials which will be used with all staff, regardless of position in the District.

What is the district doing to diversify curriculum? If we are going to preach diversity it has to be evident in literature that is chosen, musicals and music that shows diversity.



During the 2018-2019 school year, the District's Curriculum Council studied the topic and subsequently developed tools to assist teachers in reviewing their curriculum and the resources that were being purchased. These tools will be used during the summer curriculum development work that will be done by teachers from various departments/grade levels.

What steps are being taken, what is happening to make sure a diversity of voices are being heard? It's important the community is represented.



A: Great point. We need to do more in this area. We have met with many community members, solicited volunteers, reached out to many in the community and opened up opportunities like "Be the Healing" in order to provide for more diversity in voices being heard. Our Diversity and Equity Committee was expanded to improve in this area as well. We're looking forward to increasing these opportunities in the coming year.

What are the future plans to engage and educate ALL faculty/staff members on CRE? Teachers and administrators aren't the only people interacting with students each day, ALL staff members need awareness training/education.



A: As mentioned previously, the District is in the process of developing a plan to provide all staff with implicit bias training and related topics. This will be carried out starting in the summer of 2019 and throughout the 2019-2020 school year.

Will the district share narratives or summaries of feedback and perceptions offered by minority students and families? It would benefit non-minority community members to read first-person accounts of what it's like to be a minority member of the Brighton community.



A: At this point, the narratives shared have been done in face-to-face meetings with faculty and the Curriculum Council. Powerful stories were told and important discussions followed. These were thoughtful and personal conversations but weren't developed for publication. This is something that could be considered in future work.

What is TCMS in particular doing to build students understanding of diversity, acceptance of others?

3.6 ★★★★★ (16 👤)
Ranked #39 of 143



A: To build students' understanding of diversity and acceptance at TCMS we:

- Study civil rights, the holocaust, immigration, refugees, altruism and injustice units in the English curriculum, 6th through 8th grade.
- Display the flags that represent the birth country of each student who attends our school with over 70 flags to date. We present the flags to the student and their family on our morning show.
- Organize a “Day-of-Caring” where students meet representatives from community service organizations to create understanding and empathy for others.
- Have signs that welcome and provide information to students and their families in eleven different languages throughout the entrance and office area.
- Provide places for students who observe Ramadan to pray, have alternate locations to relax during lunch time when fasting and complete alternatives for PE.
- Celebrate a multi-cultural thanksgiving dinner for students in our ELL program as well other students and staff in school.
- Sponsor clubs that represent a diverse student population including a Black Student Union, Mosaic Club, Chinese Club, Gay Straight Alliance, International Club and Best Buddies International.
- Participate in World Hijab Day where students and teachers of all faiths may wear a hijab or ribbon and learn about Islamic culture.
- Had our staff participate in a poverty simulation, which help us work with students from lower income groups.
- Purchased t-shirts for students and staff that say “Hello” in the students’ home language.
- Develop 8th grade mentors in the TCMStrong program to build community as they welcome new students to our school.
- Have students with disabilities participate in the Monroe County Special Olympics.
- Help students build empathy, understanding, compassion, and respect for differences in counseling groups.