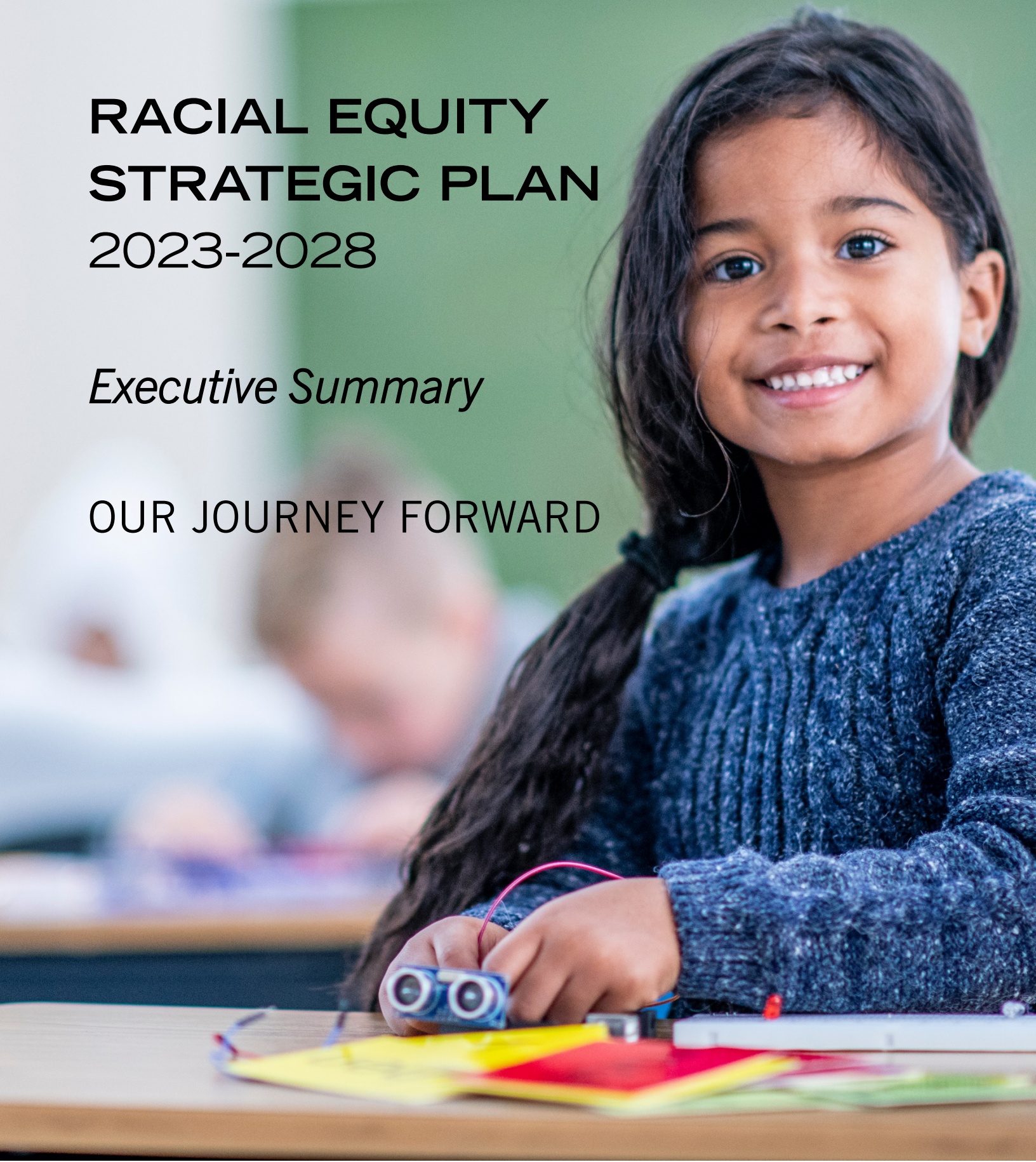


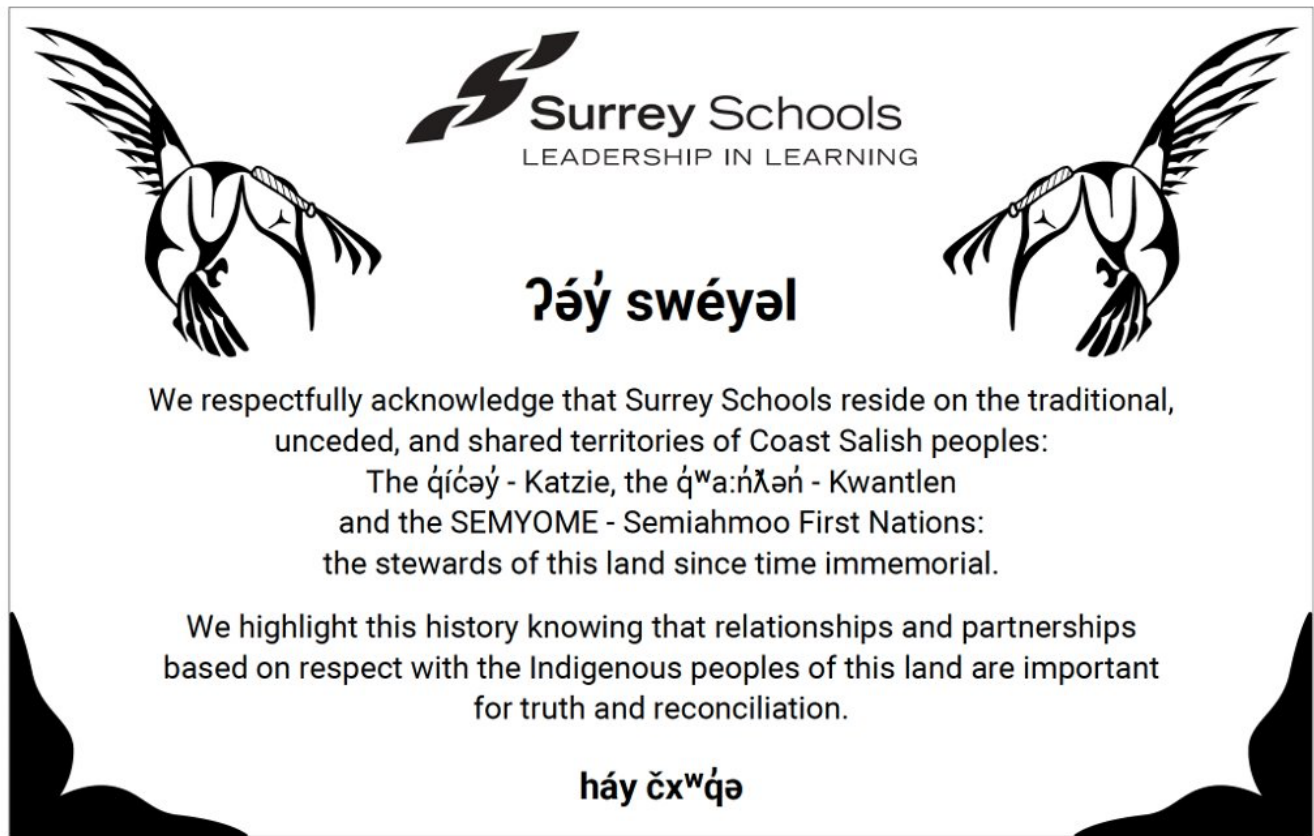
RACIAL EQUITY STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2028

Executive Summary

OUR JOURNEY FORWARD



Territorial Acknowledgement



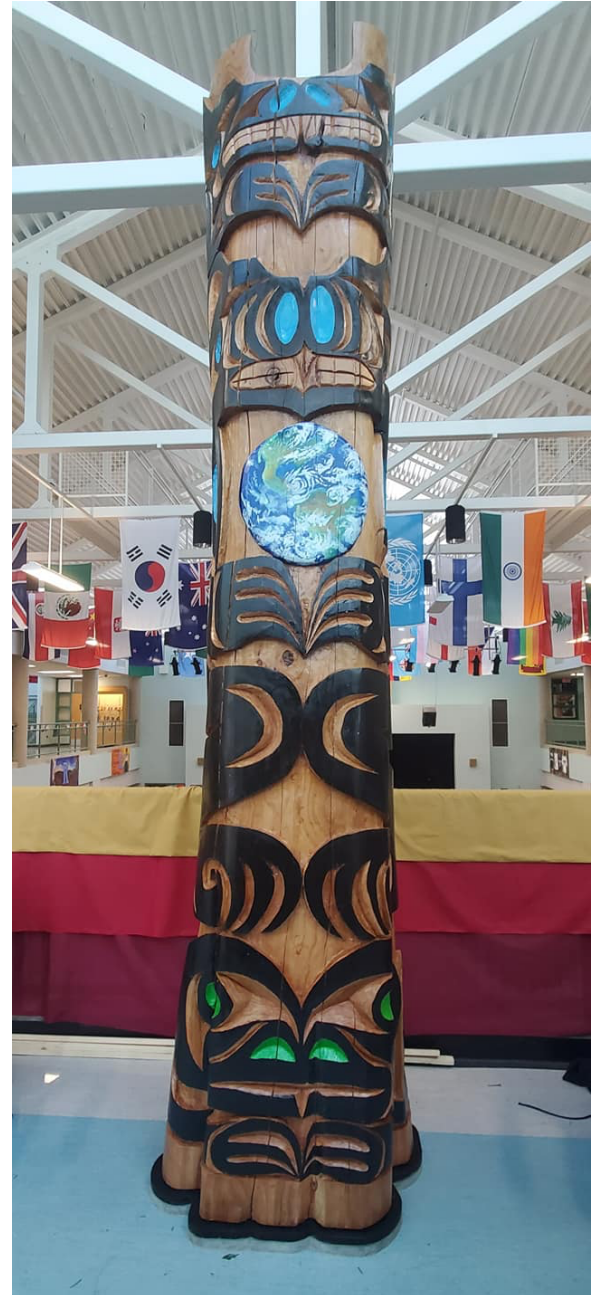
Anti-Indigenous Racism

Surrey Schools is committed to acknowledging historical and ongoing injustices to Indigenous Peoples across Canada and to honouring and acting on Truth and Reconciliation. Furthermore, we are committed to including and lifting up the wisdom of the local Indigenous cultures, languages and identities and making the First Peoples Principles of Learning evident and highlighted in classrooms, learning spaces and workspaces.

Cultural safety and Anti-Indigenous racism are a focus throughout this strategic plan. Various action items have been gathered from Indigenous students, Indigenous staff and leaders, and Indigenous community members. Our journey forward in the Racial Equity department, and throughout the district, will be a partnership with the district Indigenous Learning department to ensure Indigenous voices guide us in Anti-Indigenous racism principles and perspectives. Success for Indigenous learners and ensuring belonging for all Indigenous students, staff and families is a key district priority and a shared responsibility for all departments.

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Welcome Post – Fleetwood Park Secondary
Designed and carved by Kwantlen First Nation
artist Brandon Gabriel



Dear staff, students, parents and guardians,

On behalf of the Surrey School District, we are pleased to share our district's Racial Equity Strategic Plan.

This plan is an important step forward in our commitment to fostering more inclusive and equitable work and learning environments for all students and staff, particularly Indigenous, Black and other racialized groups. It outlines priority areas, strategies and actions we will be implementing over the next five years to address systemic disparities, promote cultural responsiveness, and empower every individual within our diverse school communities.

This work is a collective responsibility, shared by every department, program, school and staff member. And it encompasses many areas, including policies, procedures, communications, professional development, staffing, programs, services, and curriculum.

Education is not just about the teaching and learning of knowledge and skills but also about nurturing empathy, respect, and a deep understanding of the unique experiences and backgrounds of our students and staff. This is the foundation of our work and will guide us in creating a more positive and compassionate educational experience for each and every student we serve. As educators we strive to create compassionate and welcoming learning environments where all student's perspectives are welcome and encouraged.

Achieving racial equity is an ongoing process that requires collaboration, persistence, and a willingness to learn, breakdown barriers and grow together. We invite you to join us in embracing this strategy, as we know that only by working together can we create a learning environment that ensures belonging for everyone — one where every student can embrace their uniqueness, pursue their dreams, and make meaningful contributions to our society.

Thank you for your continued support.

With gratitude,



Laurie Larsen
Chairperson
Surrey Board of Education



Mark Pearmain
Superintendent | CEO
Surrey School District

LEADERSHIP IN LEARNING

Surrey Schools – Superintendent's Department 14033 92nd Avenue, Surrey, B.C. V3V 0B7
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VISION

TO COLLECTIVELY STRENGTHEN WORK AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS THAT ARE CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE, CELEBRATE DIVERSITY OF COMMUNITY, AND STRIVE TO ENSURE BELONGING FOR EVERYONE.

COMMITMENT

SURREY SCHOOLS IS COMMITTED TO RACIAL EQUITY AND PROVIDING A RESPECTFUL AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT THAT IS FREE OF RACISM, DISCRIMINATION, AND OPPRESSION FOR ALL STUDENTS AND EMPLOYEES.

Introduction

In the spring of 2021, the Surrey Board of Education commenced a racial equity environmental assessment, with the Racing to Equity (R2E) group to better understand the lived experiences of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and other Persons of Colour) students, staff and families with racism in Surrey Schools.

Over 500 participants, which included students, families, district staff, educators, members of our school community and the broader Surrey and White Rock communities, provided their experiences in 39 listening circles. After close to a year of listening and learning, the Racing to Equity (R2E) group created a report, which provided a pathway forward for the school district.

In the fall of 2022, in support of the various recommendations of the Racing to Equity (R2E) report, the Surrey Board of Education cast a clear and strong commitment to racial equity and anti-racism by creating a new Racial Equity Department. Following this announcement, the Board of Education hired a new Director of Instruction for Racial Equity to lead and guide the department and to develop a strategic plan for the district.

Over the past six months, the Director has engaged with students, staff, all departments in our organization, as well as families, community partners and school districts throughout the province to develop priorities, strategies, and actions to anchor our strategic plan.

The Director has hired two curriculum helping teachers to provide support and guidance to teachers on infusing culturally responsive pedagogy in classroom instruction and assessment practices. The Racial Equity helping teachers will collaborate with the Priority Practices helping teachers to provide an integrated approach to curriculum development support and resources. Furthermore, the department continues to grow to build capacity and support students and staff. Recently, the

department added a Manager of Racial Equity to support various aspects of the strategic plan, including community and schools programs and partnerships.

In addition, to Anti-Indigenous Racism outlined at the beginning of the strategic plan, Anti-Black Racism is also a focus in this strategic plan and will be guided by the Racial Equity department and Black voices and perspectives throughout our school district and other partner groups. Affinity groups will play an integral part of student and staff voice, as they provide for a safe, trauma-informed method, of connection, support, and networking for racialized groups.

In our journey forward it is important students, staff and community members are aware racial equity definitions and principles are rooted and defined in human rights legislation. This is ongoing work and various terms continue to be added to various commissions. Racial equity is defined as, “The systemic fair treatment of all people. It results in equitable opportunities and outcomes for everyone. Racial equity is a process (engaging with BIPOC persons/groups) and an outcome (equitable treatment of BIPOC persons/groups.)”¹

The term BIPOC is widely used across the United States of America, whereas in Canada, the common term is IBPOC, or Indigenous, Black, and other racialized groups. As a result, the phrase Indigenous, Black and other racialized groups, will be used throughout the Strategic Plan.



***Student Leadership Club Meeting – Green Timbers Elementary
Agenda - Importance of identity and learning about other cultures.***

¹ Ontario Human Rights Commission - <https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/teaching-human-rights-ontario-guide-ontario-schools/appendix-1-glossary-human-rights-terms>

Racial Equity Strategic Plan

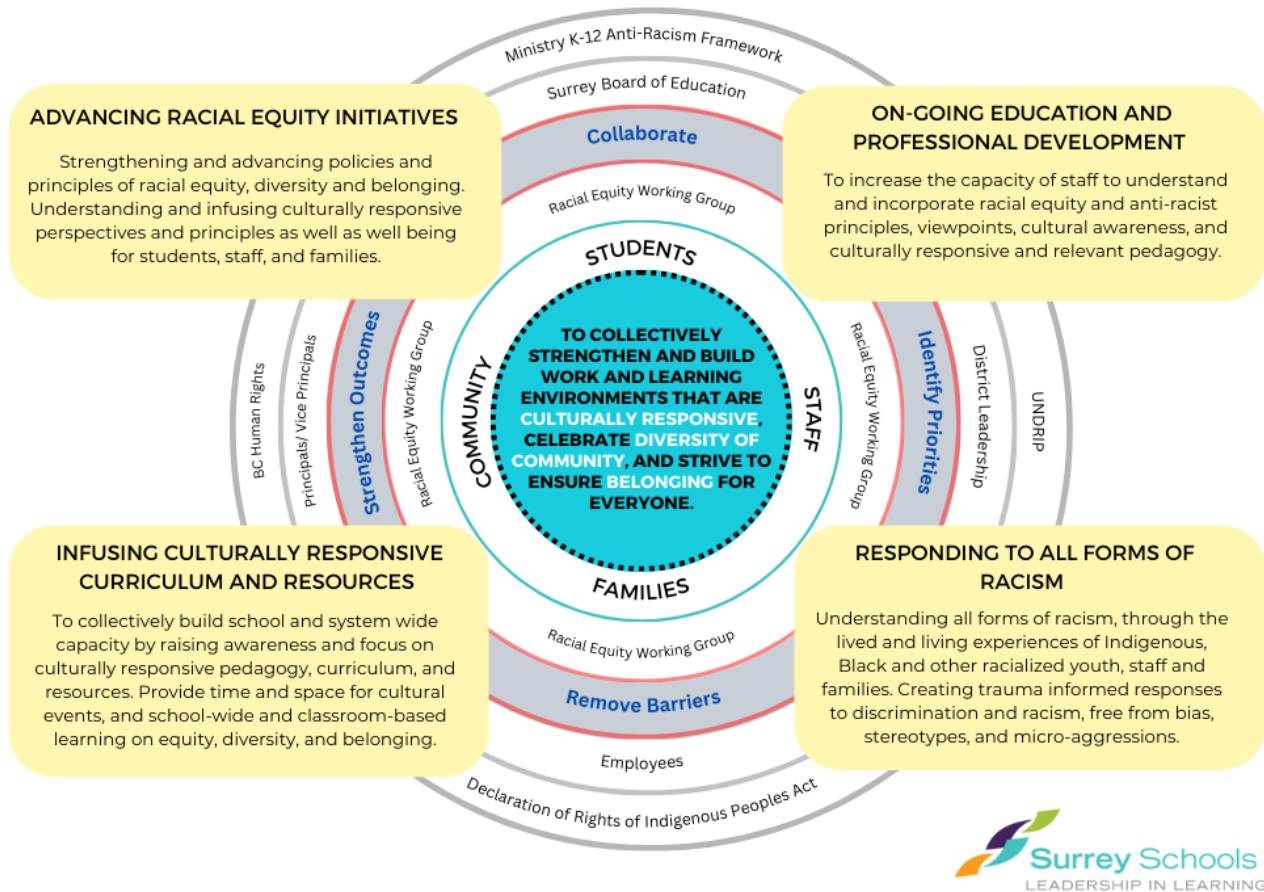
The mandate of the Racial Equity Department is to create and lead a 5-year District Racial Equity Strategic Plan, which is shared responsibility of our entire organization. A variety of actions contained in the plan have already been initiated for some time but require greater support, depth, and collaboration. For example, the Priority Practices department and Building Professional Capacity department have both offered an array of workshops on equity and belonging in the classroom and to leadership teams. The Strategic Plan builds on this early work, and the work in Indigenous Learning, and looks to make meaningful connections to all departments and schools in advancing racial equity and anti-racism.

The Racial Equity Strategic Plan:

- ⇒ Is necessary to provide a vision, priorities, process and outcomes for how to address various forms of racism, such as: interpersonal, internalized, systemic and structural racism, and to promote and instill racial equity principles and foundations in our schools and school district sites.
- ⇒ Is evidence-based and built on guiding foundational principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (BC), B.C. Human Rights and other Canadian Human Rights legislation, the B.C. K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan, and the B.C. Anti-Racism Data Act.
- ⇒ Is a commitment from the Board of Education, district leadership, principals and vice-principals, teachers, and all staff in our organization to strengthen work and learning environments and provide for racial equity, diversity, and belonging in all schools and district sites. This includes developing a racial equity policy in Surrey Schools.
- ⇒ Connects and builds upon the guiding principles and framework of the British Columbia Ministry of Education and Child Care K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan.



Racial Equity - Our Journey Forward



To collectively strengthen and build work and learning environments that are **culturally responsive**, celebrate **diversity of community**, and strive to ensure **belonging** for everyone.

It is through this vision, we will see the educational benefits of racial equity, diversity, and belonging, which include:

- ◆ Exposure to more varied viewpoints and positions,
- ◆ Enhanced cognitive complexity,
- ◆ Increased cultural awareness, knowledge and understanding,
- ◆ Enhanced self-confidence, motivation, and educational aspirations,
- ◆ Greater degree of cross-racial interaction,
- ◆ Diminished racial stereotypes,
- ◆ Enhanced ability to adapt successfully to change, and
- ◆ Development of values and ethical standards through reflection.²

² Clayton-Pedersen, Alma R., Nancy O'Neill, and Caryn McTighe Musil. Making Excellence Inclusive: A Framework for Including Diversity and Inclusion into Colleges and Universities Academic Excellence Mission. American Association of Colleges and Universities, 2013.

Our Journey Forward

Beginning in September 2023, our school district, led by the Racial Equity Department, will begin to implement the Racial Equity Strategic Plan in collaboration with all stakeholders in our organization. This work will use a change process to connect and examine our processes and actions and work to build capacity and strengthen outcomes for all students, staff and families throughout the organization using existing departmental structures as a beginning point.

Throughout this process, and over the length of the plan, increasing training and workshops for all staff will be an important part of our journey forward and the priority of on-going education and professional development. In addition, the change process will be used to embed equity, diversity, and belonging principles in all human resources practices along with all district departments and schools. This work has already commenced and will continue throughout the duration of the strategic plan.

◆ Collaborate

- Spaces are created for departments, staff, and students to come together to reflect, learn and have conversations about racial equity and anti-racism.

◆ Identify Priorities

- Identify intersections in racial equity and anti-racism principles and current priorities and goals in schools and departments.

◆ Remove Barriers

- Identify barriers and challenges that exist based on marginalized and racialized perspectives and look to identify areas for improvement and growth.

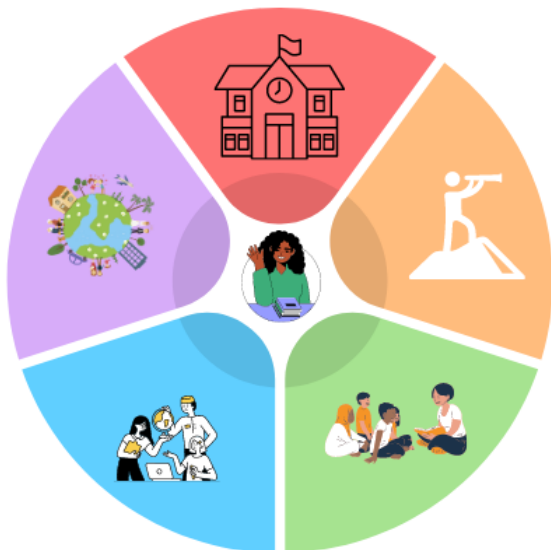
◆ Strengthen Outcomes

- Implement new strategies, objectives, and goals to strengthen racial equity outcomes for all.



Racial Equity Working Group

The working group is a partnership between staff and departments in Surrey Schools and community partners and will network to guide and provide feedback on the Strategic Plan Priorities. Student Voice will also play an important role in our working group.



District Leadership

Members of our Superintendent's department as well as Director's, District Principals, and Managers will bring key perspectives to the working group.



Principals and Vice Principals

Principals and vice principals are key members of our school communities and their vision for learning and leadership are essential to advancing racial equity in schools.



Support Staff

All members of our school and district sites play an important role in supporting students and families. Their perspectives are valued in our journey forward on this working group.



Teachers

The role of a teacher is critical to supporting student growth and well-being. Teachers will provide valuable guidance and feedback of racial equity priorities and strategies in this group.



Community Partners

Community partners provide a high degree of support and resources to families and students and we value their partnerships and feedback in our shared journey forward.



Students

Student participation will be a central voice in our working group and will help provide valuable feedback.

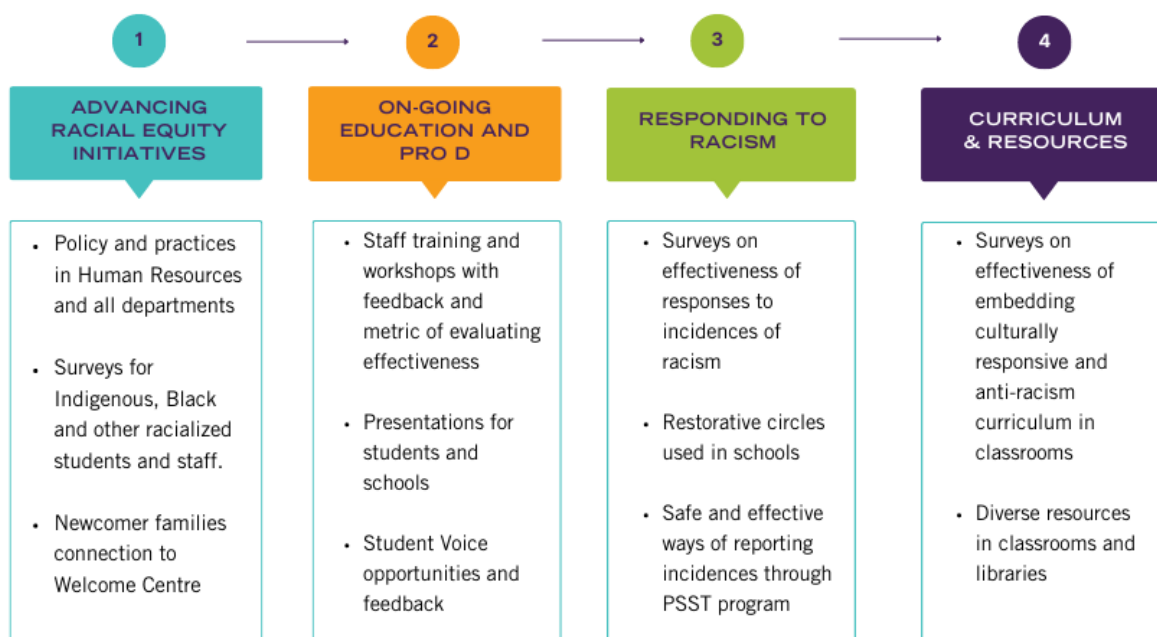
The Racial Equity Department will lead a Surrey Schools **Racial Equity Working Group** with representation from district leadership, principals and vice principals, teachers, support staff, students, parents, and community partners in Surrey Schools. Student Voice programs will also play a key role in providing feedback on racial equity priorities. This working group is a partnership and will be asked to provide guidance and feedback on the Strategic Plan priorities, strategies and actions. The District Working Group will meet regularly over the course of the school year.

In addition, the Racial Equity Department will provide **Annual Racial Equity Updates** in relation to the Racial Strategic Plan, to the Board of Education. This will provide regular and consistent accountability and transparency in our commitment to racial equity and anti-racism in our schools and workplaces.

The Racial Equity Strategic Plan is a multi-year journey forward and driven by student success and student and staff well-being. The work ahead is a shared responsibility of all staff and will require on-going feedback and various points of reflection and engagement. Through this engagement and student and staff voice, we will gain greater understanding in how success is defined and achieved. As a school district we will work together across departments and schools to gather information on various outcomes to guide our journey forward.

As priorities, strategies and actions evolve over time, we will look to broaden our outcomes and work together to understand how we can continue to improve and strengthen our work. Below are some examples of outcomes we will examine in order to measure our success in meeting our vision.

Key Outcomes - What We Will See



Everyone can play a role in identifying and advancing racial equity for all students in Surrey Schools. The Racial Equity Strategic Plan provides a foundation with 4 Priorities, 13 Strategies and numerous initial Actions, over the next 5 years. The Strategic Plan is in alignment with the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care's K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan.

Finally, a glossary of terms is provided as Appendix A for ease of reference for students, staff, and families. These terms are referenced from the B.C. Human Rights Commission, Ontario Human Rights Commission, and the Government of Canada.

For more information and updates on our Racial Equity Strategic Plan follow us at @racialEQ36 on Instagram and Twitter or go to www.surreyschools.ca.

Racial Equity – Our Journey Forward

Priorities & Strategies

Priority: Advancing Racial Equity Initiatives

Strategy:

1. Strengthening Culturally Responsive Policies

- To strengthen and centre policy and governance with principles of anti-discrimination, anti-oppression, racial equity, anti-racism, and human rights by creating a new Racial Equity District Policy and by reviewing existing policies and procedures in collaboration with the Policy Review Committee to identify gaps and other areas for improvement.

2. Strengthening Racial Equity, Diversity, and Belonging in Schools and Workplaces

- To ensure and promote school communities and workplaces that are culturally informed, responsive and relevant, respectful of all people, and create belonging for all with special regard for the lived and living experiences of Indigenous, Black and other racialized groups.

3. Strengthening Culturally Affirming Initiatives in Schools and Workplaces

- To acknowledge and learn about culture, equity, and health related events and celebrations in schools and workplaces to highlight the importance of our shared values of caring and compassionate learning and working environments.

4. Strengthening Communication to our Diverse School Communities

- To provide clear, accessible and timely communication and information from schools and the school district to all members of our school communities. Recognizing the diversity of Surrey Schools students, staff and families, it is important communication, print and digital information, and resources are available in multiple languages to assist with understanding and with creating belonging for everyone.

5. Understanding our Students and Staff through Data and Research

- To create and strengthen demographic data stewardship initiatives in order to better understand and analyze the ethnicity and cultural diversity of our students and staff. This will allow us to better understand various gaps across our organization and encourage greater diversity and support the cultural milieu of our schools, school district and community.

6. Building Culturally Affirming Community Voice and Partnerships

- To strengthen opportunities for students and staff voice and further relationships with community partners, organizations, and post-secondary institutions to support Indigenous, Black, and other racialized students.

7. Improving Culturally Responsive Student and Staff Well-being and Mental Health

- To provide students and staff consistent, clear, and easily accessible, mental health and well-being supports and resources in alignment with the Ministry of Education and Child Care Mental Health in Schools Strategy and the K-12 Anti-Racism Action Plan.

Priority: Responding to All Forms of Racism

Strategy:

1. Understanding and Responding to Racism in Schools

- To build capacity and understanding of past and current responses to racism through the lived and living experiences of Indigenous, Black and other racialized students. By understanding these experiences, we will create administrative processes and responses that are trauma informed, inclusive of families, free from bias and stereotypes, and responsive to all types of racism in schools.

2. Understanding and Responding to Racism in Workplaces

- Working with staff, district wide, to provide knowledge and understanding of culturally affirming and responsive language and behaviours in the workplace. To create clear, bias free pathways and instructions to confront and report discrimination to supervisors and managers as well as to Human Resources. In addition, provide knowledge and understanding on generational shifts in cultural awareness and how the principles of diversity and belonging are reflected in work environments.

Priority: On-Going Education and Professional Development

Strategy:

1. Cultivating Culturally Responsive Education and Professional Development Opportunities

- To increase the capacity of staff to understand and incorporate racial equity and anti-racism principles, viewpoints, cultural awareness, and culturally responsive and affirming pedagogy in schools and all district sites. Further, to increase the capacity of staff to apply racial equity policies and practices in their daily work while increasing access, opportunities, and outcomes for Indigenous, Black and other racialized students, staff, and families.

Priority: Infusing Culturally Responsive Curriculum and Resources

Strategy:

1. Infusing Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Core Competencies

- To increase awareness of how core competencies curriculum promotes and affirms cultural identity and understandings. Provide time and space for events, school-wide, and classroom-based learning and reflection on equity, diversity and belonging, as well all cultural events and their connection to core competencies.

2. Infusing Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Curricular Competencies

- To increase awareness and focus on culturally responsive pedagogy and curricular competencies in instructional design, assessment, and social emotional learning. Further, continue to strengthen focus areas on educational equity, evidence-informed practice, collaborative inquiry, inter-disciplinary learning, and quality learning resources.

3. Diverse Resources for Learning

- To increase culturally responsive, affirming and diverse resources for learning, both digital and print, to support educators and students.

