



Lake Washington School District
Study Session of the Board of Directors

Date: November 7, 2016

Topic: Equity Efforts to Address Achievement and Opportunity Gaps

Background

National research and data shows that over the past several decades, there has been a persistent educational achievement gap across the United States between minority and low-income students and their more affluent and non-minority peers. This gap is particularly noticeable along racial lines and socioeconomic lines, with racial minorities and students from low-income households consistently underperforming relative to their White and/or more affluent counterparts. Not only does this achievement gap have detrimental impacts on students at the bottom of the achievement gap, but failure to address the underlying issues that cause the gap can also have long-term consequences for students and the economy. As the population of minority families in the United States continues to rise, it becomes increasingly important for school districts to seek ways to bolster the achievement of lower performing or otherwise “at risk” students. Because there are many different groups that traditionally comprise the bottom of the achievement gap (e.g., English language learners, minorities, and students from low-income households), educational interventions to reduce this discrepancy are numerous and highly varied. (Hanover Research, December 2015)

Washington State and Lake Washington School District data shows persistent student achievement and opportunity gaps.

Study Session Overview

This study session will provide the opportunity for the Board to:

- Review definitions: Achievement gap, Opportunity gap, Equity
- Review data that provides rationale for equity efforts
- Review district equity efforts to date
 - How equity is reflected in key district policies, frameworks, and plans
 - Work with District Leadership Team in August
- Review equity-focused work plan for 2016-17
 - 2016-17 goals and action steps
 - Board equity lens
 - Board equity-focused linkage
- Discuss future policy implications

Study Session Key Questions

- Why is the district focusing on equity?
- What is the specific action plan for 2016-17?
- How can the Board apply an equity lens in their work?
- Should administrative and/or governance policy focused on equity be developed?