



## Hoboken Public School District

Recognized as a Lighthouse Awardee during the 2021-2023 term for increased equity in disciplinary outcomes.

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) Lighthouse District Initiative recognizes districts that have demonstrated measurable progress for equitable outcomes. The NJDOE is proud to welcome the Hoboken Public School District to the third cohort of Lighthouse Districts.

### Hoboken Public School District Demographics

- 3,067 Total Students
- PK–12 Grades Offered
- 28.4% Economically Disadvantaged
- 11.7% Students with Disabilities
- 1.3% English Learners
- 14:1 Student to Teacher Ratio

**Want to learn more? Contact us.**

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### Hoboken Public School District Equity Story

Below, you will find a narrative describing the ways that Hoboken Public School District has increased equity in disciplinary outcomes.

#### Engaging Diverse Stakeholder Groups to Increase Equity in Disciplinary Outcomes

In the spring of 2017, the Hoboken Public School District analyzed attendance, student achievement and suspension data from September 2015 through June 2017. All student groups were discussed, but focus was placed on Hispanic and Black students district-wide. Data revealed that Black and Brown students were suspended at higher rates than their White and Asian peers. During the summer of 2017, the Administrative Team participated in a leadership retreat to reflect upon instructional practices and to develop frameworks to increase equity in disciplinary outcomes. At the conclusion of the retreat, a strategic and focused plan was developed. This plan included data presentations to stakeholders, restorative justice/practices professional development for Administrators, Deans and Teachers, and policies & regulations updates. Approximately three weeks were dedicated to developing new Codes of Conduct and all schools' Deans were trained in restorative justice/practices. By September 2017, the Hoboken Public School District kicked off the 2016- 2017 school year with newly updated Codes of Conduct rooted in modified policies & regulations. These new Codes of Conduct from Kindergarten through twelfth grade were reviewed by all stakeholders. The Codes of Conduct specified the definition of and rationale for restorative justice/practices and the ways in which the approach would be employed within our schools. Scenarios were developed to best orient students and parents to this new approach to disciplinary infractions.

#### Collaboration Between Faculty and Staff Leadership to Increase Equity in Disciplinary Outcomes

Teacher leaders from each school in the district were invited to the Hoboken Public School District's Administrative Team Retreat. While there, teachers sat side by side with administrators as the strategic and focused plan was developed. They shared in the analysis, planning and implementation phases. As Deans and Guidance Counselors were being trained in restorative justice/practices, along with School Based Youth Services Staff, groups of teachers worked with the Assistant Superintendent and Principals to develop new Codes of Conduct that clearly reflected how restorative justice/practices would guide our approach to social decision-making on the part of all students. During the opening of

school preparation days, those teaching staff members that participated in the Leadership Retreat and in the development of new codes of conduct, turn-keyed analysis of data, and the correlation of classroom management practices and the power of restorative justice/practices to their colleagues. Throughout the school year, each school's team of teacher leaders and administrators met at the end of each marking period to evaluate progress. In addition, a yearlong series of professional development was offered to all staff.

### **Providing Teachers with Professional Learning and Mentoring to Increase Equity in Disciplinary Outcomes**

The Hoboken Public School District used the professional development/professional learning platform to include staff in a district-wide Diversity and Equity Committee and to participate in meaningful learning opportunities to increase equity in disciplinary outcomes. Since the Summer of 2017, the Hoboken Public School District has been an active member of the North Jersey Consortium for Excellence. Groups of teachers are rotated through workshops, seminars, learning series, and summer conferences to learn as much as possible to increase equity in disciplinary outcomes, promote self-efficacy and resilience, and to promote appropriate decision-making on the part of all students. The entire Administrative Team Retreat in 2019 revolved around the Consortium's Annual Summer Conference.

### **Stakeholder Engagement for Structural and Policy Changes that Increase Equity in Disciplinary Outcomes**

From the start, all stakeholders were involved in a dedicated process to ensure equity in disciplinary outcomes. Once the data revealed a problem, the Hoboken Public School District determined changes were not only needed, but non-negotiable. Families were asked to participate in climate and culture surveys, with questions designed specifically about disciplinary outcomes. The Board of Education committed to guiding policy and supporting all work necessary to ensure equity in disciplinary outcomes. In addition to the Administrative Leadership Retreats and the Code of Conduct Planning Teams, teacher leaders and administrators worked together with the Superintendent of Schools and the Board of Education to implement the new Code of Conduct and to educate other staff, parents and guardians, and students.

### **Integration of Quantitative Sources for Improvement in Equity of Disciplinary Outcomes**

In addition to beginning with suspension data, the Hoboken Public School District studies the rate and frequency of after-school and Saturday detentions, along with the correlation between out-of-district suspensions (absences) and end-of-marking-period grades. Suspension data by program was also analyzed. All data was and continues to be collected, analyzed and dis-aggregated by student groups. In the Summer of 2019 knowing that our disciplinary outcomes data was moving in the direction we set out to achieve, the Hoboken Public School District created and staffed a new Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and hired a Director. In 2020, the Board of Education passed a comprehensive resolution, committing their work and that of the district to social justice and educational equity.