Committee Members and Work Groups

**Institutional Structures**
- Jim Henderson*
- Dr. Eric Irizarry
- Pam Brown
- Sylvia Elder
- Dr. Bernard Hairston
- Joyce Ivory
- Toni Kim
- John Kronstain

*staff points of contact in italics

**Instructional/Prof. Learning**
- P. Culver-Dickinson
- Patrick Farrell
- James Bryant
- Christine Esposito
- Daniel Fairley
- Dr. Daphne Keiser
- Michelle Packer
- Rachel Rasnake
- Dr. Joseph Williams

**Community Engagement**
- Beth Cheuk
- Velvet Coleman
- Dr. Lehman Bates
- Pat Cuomo
- Charlene Green
- Sgt. Robert Haney
- Eric Johnson
- Jessica Taylor

**Policy/Metrics**
- Dr. Rosa Atkins
- Dr. Kendra King
- Melvin Grady
- Dr. Adam Hastings
- Denise Johnson
- Lisa Larson-Torres
- Becka Saxon
- Mayor Nikuyah Walker
Student Voice

Liaisons

CHS Principal Dr. Eric Irizarry and City of Charlottesville Youth Opportunity Coordinator Daniel Fairley have agreed to serve as points of connection to make sure student voice is heard.

Opportunities for Student Input to Date

- Black Student Union presentation at School Board in fall
- Participation (and leadership) in student focus groups at CHS and Buford
- “Priorities for equity” voting exercise at CHS (reflecting the BSU’s ideas presented at our fall School Board meeting)
- Student representatives on the School Board
- BSU statement from March 2019
- City Youth Council meeting with Dr. Atkins
- Emails and conversations with teachers, staff, administrators, and members of the School Board
- Students were present at many other public forums
The Work of the Committee

This advisory committee will help the schools review feedback and determine priorities to help shape the foundational underpinning and the execution of work toward equity in the schools. This committee works alongside others — staff, School Board, other advisory committees, PTOs, etc. — as one of many avenues for accomplishing these goals. We are not trying to make a new “equity” program; instead, we need to assure that equity is the lens through which we view all programs.
Four Foundational Ideas for Equity Committee

Embrace Discomfort
This may be messy and uncomfortable work. This is complex. Embrace discomfort and extend grace to one another.

Same Team
Metaphorically, this needs to be a round table where we’re all on the same side and prioritizing the children of our community.

Assume Good Intention
Let’s assume good intention and positivity from one another.

Clarifying Questions
If we hear something that sounds “off,” confusing, or uninformed, let’s clarify to move forward together.
Work So Far
Updates from February “News and Highlights”

- Continued listening to the community.
- Equity in budget request for 19-20, including a living wage provision.
- Approval of plan for school reconfiguration, including preschool center.
- Short-term changes to Quest/gifted program with additional changes forthcoming. [Update: Additional staff meeting with UVa experts in March.]
- Diversifying classrooms at Walker, Buford, and CHS through expansion of our “unleveled,” or “honors-option” classes.
- [Update: For 2019-20, African-American History Class designated as honors-option to encourage more participation.]
- The establishment of a division Equity Committee.
- Posting an opening for Supervisor of Equity and Inclusion.
- For details, read the February “News and Highlights” on our website.
Other Equity Updates/Commitments (A Sampling)

- See list from “February Update” on previous slide
- Continued roll-out of social-emotional learning, mental wellness initiatives
- Continued build-out of multi-tiered supports in the areas of academics, behavior, mental health, and attendance
- 2018-19: New math, writing curricula
- 2019-20: New reading curriculum
- Professional learning (PL) to support unleveled classes at CHS, Buford, Walker
- Continued PL around cultural responsiveness
- Continued PL around restorative justice
- Security upgrades at Walker, Buford, and CHS
- Re-evaluation of communications (including info about available supports)
- Creation of equity policy to guide the schools’ work
- Exploring community impacts, partnerships, shared goals
- Overview of past equity initiatives in the schools: charlottesvilleschools.org/equity
With all this effort, when will we see improvements?
## Sobering Realities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No “magic wand.”</th>
<th>No “quick fixes.”</th>
<th>Change is hard.</th>
<th>Mistakes happen.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As we review models and practices from peer divisions and national organizations, we see signs of hope but we do not find a community where these challenges have been “fixed.”</td>
<td>Equity work is complex and can often appear slow-moving. Critical foundational work may not be easily visible. Progress will be measured in years, not months.</td>
<td>Schools across the state and nation that are committed to equity find themselves criticized BOTH for “doing too much” and “doing too little.”</td>
<td>Our schools have made mistakes in the past, and despite our efforts, we will make more in the future. We need to plan now to respond appropriately and to use mistakes as learning opportunities.</td>
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Continued listening, prioritizing, evaluating, recommending next action steps
## Community Priorities

### Process
CCS held 15+ input meetings with staff, community members, and students at schools, community centers, and houses of worship. The equity committee is now reviewing this and other feedback.

### Top Five Priorities
- Hiring and supporting teachers of color
- Equip teachers to meet the needs of all students.
- Make supports (like tutoring) easily available.
- Promote student diversity within classrooms.
- Support/retain effective teachers and principals.

These are the “top 5” as identified by predominantly African-American participants. There is much commonality among all participants and sub-groups. To see the charts, visit: [charlottesvilleschools.org/equity-forum/priorities](http://charlottesvilleschools.org/equity-forum/priorities)
Other community input from groups such as the CHS Black Student Union
Denounce and call out RACISM against Black and Brown students.

African American History class to hold the same weight as an honors history course, not an elective.

Hire more Black teachers, especially in CORE CLASSES.

Equitable and effective discipline.

Extended resources, in addition to AVID, for future Black and Brown first generation college students.

Ideas from Black Student Union (1/2). Click item to see what we’re doing in this area.
Test EVERY student for Quest (gifted program)

Apply Mental Health practices that are culturally relevant and racially aware.

A high standard for programming associated with Black History.

Racial bias and cultural sensitivity training for all School Resource Officers.

Enhanced building security at Walker, Buford, and CHS.

Ideas from Black Student Union (2/2). Click item to see what we’re doing in this area.
Ideas from Black Student Union

For full letter from Dr. Atkins and the School Board, visit:
http://charlottesvilleschools.org/letter-to-black-student-union/

Proud to be a school district that values students' voices and leadership. We're glad to hear you and work with you, Black Student Union and Latinx Student Union.
# Three Big Ideas

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<tr>
<th>Common Goals</th>
<th>Persistent Challenges</th>
<th>Equity Lens</th>
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<td>The BSU statement is an example of how our community feedback has been reflective of the Board and staff’s goals. In many ways, the community’s input has affirmed the schools’ past and current work.</td>
<td>The similarities between the community’s and schools’ values/actions raise the question, “Why aren’t we consistently seeing better results?” As we answer this question together, let’s remember that these are persistent and systemic challenges.</td>
<td>While new approaches may arise and some changes are already being rolled out, the intent is NOT to create a new “equity program” or “one more thing.” Instead, let’s use equity as the lens for evaluating and refining programs.</td>
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Questions?
Feedback?
Want to co-host a discussion?

Contacts

1. Regarding Equity Committee or division questions: contact Beth Cheuk or specific committee member (see slide 2) cheub1@charlottesvilleschools.org
2. For school-specific questions, contact your school principal
3. For overarching concerns, contact School Board members or central office staff
Why is equity so important? Some of us will speak of righting wrongs. Some of us will speak of the beauty and value of diversity. As a black woman and a human, I am invested in justice and I am inspired by diversity. I also focus on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s reminder that we are all interrelated and “tied in a single garment of destiny.” The future health and prosperity of Charlottesville depends on all of the members of our community. I’m struck by the words that Australian artist Lilla Watson expressed on behalf of the Aboriginal community: “If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.” Charlottesville, let us work together.

-- Dr. Rosa Atkins, Superintendent, October 16, 2018