



The Denver Plan 2020 is the Denver Public Schools' five-year strategic plan. With the vision of Every Child Succeeds, we are committed to five goals designed to close academic achievement gaps and prepare all students for success in college and careers. Among these goals is Close the Opportunity Gap.

What is the goal?

All of our students deserve access to educational opportunities that allow them to achieve at the highest levels. This means raising the bar for all students while acknowledging that there is a persistent gap between the performance of our white students and our African-American and Latino students. We believe it is critical to shine a light on the issue of race and the achievement gap that persists for our students of color, even when poverty is not a factor. For these reasons, we feel it critical to put in place a goal that focuses on the opportunity gap:

- By 2020, the graduation rate for African-American and Latino students will increase by 25 percentage points (from 64% to 89%).
- Reading and writing proficiency for third-grade African-American and Latino students will increase by 25 percentage points (from 50% to 75%).

DPS is a diverse district. Seventy-three percent of our students are students of color and more than one-third of our students are English Learners. We are driving initiatives and supports to ensure that every student has the same opportunity to succeed.

What areas are we focused on to achieve these increases?

We are identifying high-potential, research-based levers for improving academic achievement for African-American and Latino students. We are committed to listening to the experiences of our diverse students, parents and educators — and engaging in the difficult conversations that will be necessary to understand and address the reasons why the opportunity gap persists.



What specific things are we doing to make progress this year?

Providing Quality Instruction and Support for All Students

- DPS now provides English Language Development support in every school to increase reading and writing proficiency rates for our students whose first language is not English.
- Spanish-speaking students who receive bilingual instruction while building English proficiency are more likely to remain on track to graduate, so we are directing resources and supports to strengthen our bilingual programs throughout DPS.
- We launched Inclusive Practices cohorts, which help school leaders use their school's data to design practices that remove barriers to access for African-American and Latino students with disabilities.

Building an Inclusive School Culture

- We commissioned a research study examining the experiences of African-American students and educators in DPS, and formed the African-American Equity Task Force to research and recommend actions and resources to address the factors contributing to the Opportunity Gap.
- The School Performance Framework's new Equity indicator ensures that all schools are accountable for eliminating barriers to success for African-American and Latino students.

Sharing Successful Practices

- We are developing an Equity Resource Bank to collect examples of what is working to close the Opportunity Gap at individual schools and share them throughout the district.

Investing Resources Early

- We are working to ensure that all children have access to the benefits of Early Childhood Education by increasing the number of bilingual teachers in ECE programs and collaborating with the Birth-to-8 Roadmap Initiative to improve screenings and supports for students with disabilities.

For More Information:

Visit opportunitygap.dpsk12.org to learn more about how we are working to achieve this goal. For communications assistance in support of this Denver Plan goal, contact Communications Specialist Aaron Langton at aaron_langton@dpsk12.org.

