



Culturally & Linguistically Responsive Initiatives
School Action Plan
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School:	HOUGHTON ACADEMY/PS 69
Date:	11/27/2019

<i>CLRI Team Members</i>	
Name	Title
Elaine Vandi-Kirkland	Administrator/Principal
Julia Benton	Teacher/Gr. 4
Ashley Best	School Psychologist
Jina Gentry	Literacy Coach
Deborah Hardwick	Teacher/Gr. 3
Lisa Johnson	Teacher Assistant
Nicholas Kiser	Teacher/Gr. 5
Angelita Roman	Parent
Nya Sosa	Teacher/CTE
Jennifer Strickland	Teacher/Gr. 6 (“Guardian of Equity”)



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Guiding Questions:

List the accomplishments your school has made in regards to culturally and linguistically responsive initiatives since attending the first set of District Disproportionality Trainings in the 2017-2018 school year

- Decreased suspensions; Increased parent conferences, in lieu of suspensions
- After school detention program, in lieu of suspensions
- Fewer behavioral incident reports
- Increased attendance
- Implementation of student-focused restorative circles; created ‘trusting’ environment for students’ expression of feelings and concerns
- Staff training, via grade level and faculty meetings (inclusive of “white privilege” exercise; “first impressions” survey; book study (*Black Maled*), and additional self-enlightening discussions)
- Black History displays throughout the building
- “Fathers In Education” program; addresses factors of low test scores, suspensions, attendance, disengagement, etc., through the positive influence of fathers, and father-figures. Men are motivated to become active participants in students’ lives, both in and out of school hours.
- “Black Speaker Series” (monthly) invites successful individuals of color to discuss their journeys to what they do, and who they’ve become, today. The role models lead interactive discussions and provide encouraging insight through sharing their keys to success.

Which accomplishments can you grow and/or build upon?

- Continue to decrease suspension through training and development, of staff, that encourages increased positive interactions between students and staff
- Continue to increase attendance, through decreased suspensions
- Provide rigorous instruction, including rich and factual lessons that enlighten, students of color, about their history, while meeting the standards, across the curriculum
- Provide staff support in identifying appropriate resources; assist in creating lesson plans, to support rigorous ‘inclusive’ instruction
- Increase school library’s availability of cultural literature and resources for staff use, and provision of resources for students for their monthly Black History focus person, place, or event
- Increase active males’ participation in Fathers In Education and contact with students of color
- Focused recruitment to increase staff diversity
- Continue to utilize district-provided CLRI materials, as provided, to support the successful outcome of our students

What are the barriers and obstacles your school and its CLRI team face in implementing culturally and linguistically responsive initiatives?



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- Denial that issues exist due to root causes; denial of personal biases; lack of empathy
- Lack of ‘buy-in’ from staff; expressed as due to minimal, if any, time allowances for staff development, planning, and preparation
- Lack of understanding and perspective of why they need to, and how to, implement the CLRI
- Lack of accessible resources
- Insufficient preparation training for teaching in urban environments
- Lack of cultural competency
- Lack of a/some committed parent liaison(s) to participate in and support CLRI, at the school building level
- Limited diversity among staff (ethnic and cultural backgrounds)
- Language barriers, between students and staff, that diminish effective teaching and learning; limited, or no support provided to diminish this deficit

***Review your school’s data by race/ethnicity and list observations about the data.
(Consider suspension, attendance, special education, academic, and graduation data.)***

- Attendance – Male/90%; Female/91.67%; Black/95.10; Hispanic/91.94%; White 88.28%; ESL/89.66; SPED/91.67% - Data depicts that, contrary to popular beliefs, the attendance of Black, Hispanic, and SPED students is 6.82%, 3.66%, and 3.39%, higher than the attendance of white students. These higher rates of success can be attributed to a decrease in suspension rates of Black, Hispanic, and SPED students, at the building level.
- Demographics – Hispanic students comprise 10.4% of the student population, compared to Black and White students at 42.8% and 33.5%, respectively, however, as of 10/31/19, the highest number of students having received short-term suspensions were Hispanic (12) and SPED (23). This may be attributed to limited, if any, Hispanic-awareness efforts (lessons, visual images, etc.) designed to acknowledge the rich heritage of their culture, and the lack of professional staff members who are adept with the skills to deescalate students-with-special-needs, before suspension becomes the necessary option.
- Suspensions – As of 10/31/19, 96.67% of reported student ‘incidences’ were resolved without suspension.

What supports can you put in place to reduce barriers with implementation and garner staff, student, and parent buy-in?

- PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support) that, collectively, build the capacity for forming an adaptive and inclusive school
- Establish a concentrated approach to expansive learning that enhances the quality of staff and students’ lives, by developing skills that increase power and control over personal situations that will guarantee positive outcomes
- Continuous education opportunities for school’s administrator(s), CLRI team, and other leadership; timely turnkey to additional staff
- Continue providing both academic and culturally-enriching activities during the after school program
- Provide guaranteed time allowances to fully implement “Character Counts”
- Use of Parents’ Room to provide CLRI workshops for parents
- Expand the book studies to the school community
- Implement Black History/People of Color focus for each month of the school year (i.e. Dec., 2019 – Harriet Tubman; Jan., 2020 – Dr. M.L. King; Feb., 2020 – Carter G. Woodson; Mar., 2020 - Black Female Scientists; Apr., 2020 - Hispanic/Latinx Music’s Influence on American Culture,



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- ...)
- Continue “Speaker Series”, with some including parents’ participation

What is the heart behind this work – why is this work important for the students in your school?

The heart behind this work is knowing that culturally responsive teaching empowers students through administrators’ and staff’s exemplification of respect and high expectations for all, and forces school personnel to examine their own belief systems, with the hopeful result of a student body that feels valued and takes ownership of their learning.

<i>Action Steps</i> <i>(For each action step, mark the District’s High-Leverage CLRI Strategies it aligns to and the timeframe it will occur.)</i>	<i>Create a Welcoming Environment</i>	<i>Rigorous Instruction & High Expectations for All</i>	<i>Culturally Inclusive Classroom</i>	<i>Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Training</i>	<i>Responsible Persons</i>	<i>September 2019 – January 2020</i>	<i>February 2020 – August 2020</i>	<i>September 2020 – January 2021</i>	<i>February 2021 – August 2021</i>



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase awareness and acceptance of school’s multi-cultural environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff members will be more receptive to the pronunciation of students’ names • Increase the number of visible images (photos, etc.) to representative the diversity of the student body • Increase visibility of identifying labels on general use items, that reflect languages of the student body (tables, boards, doors, bathrooms, telephones, etc.) 	X		X		Entire faculty and staff	X	X	X	X
Teacher training/professional development on use of language translation program, for use in school and at home, to guarantee success of our multi-lingual students		X		X	Teachers, Coaches, Administrators; all instructional staff		X		
Monthly cultural focus immersed into core studies		X	X		In house, CLRI team (“Guardians of Equity”)	X	X	X	X
School library’s increased availability of cultural resources, for staff’s use, in the school’s library				X	School librarian, CLRI team	X	X	X	X



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<p>Turnkey of District's CLRI instruction to school's staff</p>		<p align="center">X</p>		<p align="center">X</p>	<p align="center">CLRI (school's team)</p>				
<p>Quarterly assessment of implementation and application of the action steps</p>				<p align="center">X</p>	<p align="center">CLRI (school's team)</p>				



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