

What is the most pressing issue of equity in Washougal and why?	Notes				
All Students need to feel accepted, safe and valued.	Mission/Vision/Outcome				
Support for marginalized individuals	Mission/Vision/Outcome				
Finding the best way to bring all people together for the common good.					
Rich vs poor! from housing to the public school system we as a community need to make things happen. Kids learn and are taught to be the way they are by watching us (adults). For example when Washougal school district put up the kindergarten start school sign on Washougal River Road.... Every kid on the sign was white... Why?					
Accepted or ignored social injustice, inequalities & racism					
Homelessness/economic inequality is most timely					
<p>UNDERSTANDING. To me, there doesn't seem to be a broad understanding among some teachers, staff and students that all students have a right to equitable treatment. I equate this primarily to civil rights afforded to People of Color, but also see disparities with students receiving special ed services. Do all students know that they have the federally protected right to an education free from discrimination and harassment, and that Civil Rights laws prohibit discrimination and discriminatory harassment in K-12 public schools? Is this information repeatedly and consistently communicated to ALL students, teachers support staff and parents on a regular basis?</p> <p>I feel this is a pressing issue because I witness and hear of instances of hostility and harassment fairly regularly. I feel that such instances are often just tolerated because people do not have a clear understanding of their rights so they don't report or complain. Also the individuals whose behavior is questionable either don't even realize that they are in violation, or they feel safe enough to continue with inappropriate behavior.</p>					
<p>TRAINING. There needs to be much more training for ALL WSD employees. Are values of equity, fairness, and inclusion modeled by ALL school staff? I do not think so. So much focus is on training and PD for the teaching staff, yet there are many other district employees who come in contact with and influence a student's experiences- bus drivers, secretaries, security staff, counselors, substitute support staff come to mind. I feel this is important because it just takes one untrained individual to mishandle a situation or say the wrong thing to a student, and that can cause much damage. More people need to understand what is acceptable and appropriate behavior in regards to racism, harassment, inequity, and creating a welcoming and nurturing environment for all students.</p>	Professional Development/Training				
<p>DIVERSITY OF WORKFORCE. When it comes to bias and racism, individual relationship building is a big part of the remedy. Attracting talent and hiring a more diverse staff that represents the larger world, rather than just the demographics of small town Washougal, is critical.</p>	Workforce Diversity				
The general population being more understanding and accepting of differences	Tolerance/Acceptance/Belonging				
Special education and children with special needs especially those with invisible disabilities.	Tolerance/Acceptance/Belonging				
Race					
<p>REPORTING, ACCOUNTABILITY & TRANSPARENCY. - Is there a simple and effective process for REPORTING violations of rights? If there is, it needs to be communicated well enough so that all students and staff know about it and understand how to report so they can feel empowered and protected. - There needs to be ACCOUNTABILITY: prompt and effective response to reports of racism, discriminatory actions, inappropriate lessons, and/or harassment. Steps must be taken swiftly to make sure that harassing conduct does not happen again. When staff members undergo evaluations, are competencies in educational equity an integral part of their performance? - Also, I feel that increased TRANSPARENCY, when appropriate, is of equal importance because it offers closure to those who have been hurt and sets an example to others as to what behaviors are not tolerated.</p>					
<p>MEDIA LITERACY - STUDENTS ARE SUSCEPTIBLE TO MISUSE OF ONLINE RESOURCES. They need to be taught how to be good consumers of information and how to assess the credibility of sources, so they can make informed choices.</p> <p>I feel this is very important because when looking up information for homework assignments, students often turn to google on their school-issued devices, which can easily lead to unproven or dangerous information that they believe is accurate. Also the threat of White Nationalist Organizations recruiting youth is real and Washougal's young uninformed students are easily susceptible.</p>					
Division on equity issues: Staff need equity training and students need equity incorporated in the curriculum.	Professional Development/Training				
People in poverty and homeless suffer in ways wealthy people don't.					
LGBTQ+ Issues					

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<p>CURRICULUM & CONTENT, METHODS OF INSTRUCTION & INTERACTION.</p> <p>I can't speak about every single class at the high school, but based on my time supporting students in various social studies classes, I see the need for a major overhaul of what we are teaching and how. It seems that the curriculum is outdated, incomplete, and emphasized a whitewashed version of history. Students' time is spent watching old documentaries and looking up worksheet answers in textbooks, and there is very little dynamic discussion about how the history lessons relate to current events. Students need these valuable discussions in order to develop critical thinking skills. Teachers don't appear to be using classroom lessons to increase awareness and counter the past effects of bias and discrimination.</p> <p>Some teachers seem to avoid certain topics because they may bring about delicate discussions or disagreement among the students. Other teachers are known to address sensitive subjects with disrespect and ignorance, which shows up as blatant racism. I have been in US History classes that failed to teach beyond World War Two because the year ended and they ran out of time. The result: many, many lost opportunities to teach about the incredibly important events of the Civil Rights era and the recent history necessary to understand our world.</p>					
<p>ASSESSMENTS. Does the district give assessments in an equitable manner, for students of all abilities and learning styles? In my work as a para, I have noticed that, while there's been some improvement in the last year, more can be done to make multiple forms of assessment available. This is important in order to accommodate English language learners and students with disabilities. Has there been a thorough analysis of assessment data to identify disparities?</p>					
<p>A willingness in the community to change and adapt in ways that are supportive, understanding, and accepting</p> <p>Healthy housing ALL people need not only housing we need healthy housing. Landlords need to know that when they neglect there properties it hurts EVERYONE... The tenant pays for a safe healthy home and that's what they should get. But even more so we need AFFORDABLE HOUSING. That is more then a Washougal thing but why cant we set an example for the rest of Washington.</p>					
<p>CLIMATE/ENVIRONMENT IS NOT NURTURING TO PEOPLE OF COLOR. Based on my experience previously as a parent and now as a para at the high school, it feels like more should be done to create a comfortable and nurturing educational environment for people of color. I think this is critically important because, as the President of the NEA put it, "It's our responsibility, as educators, to ensure that every student feels welcome in school." I see two main issues here: the lack of visual inspiration, and the hostile messages that students occasionally experience in school.</p> <p>With few exceptions, WHS does not provide an INCLUSIVE VISUAL ENVIRONMENT. The halls, displays and classrooms don't exhibit pictures and information about diverse people and cultures. Only in the last year has it begun to add more colorful, inspiring messages to its physical environment. In my opinion, there is much room for improvement. Such displays help to give students a broader world view, foster curiosity and understanding about diversity of ideas.</p> <p>Some displays or gestures unintentionally give off the vibe of a HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT in school. I feel that strong and immediate considerations should be given to this issue, to determine how pervasive such aggressive messages are throughout the district, discover the emotional/psychological effects they have on students (and staff), and determine the proper steps to take. A couple of examples that come to mind are the "thin blue line" sticker displayed front and center at the ASB window, and authentic slave chains on display in one of the history classrooms.</p>					
<p>WASHOUGAL NEEDS A LONG TERM COMMITMENT TO EQUITY. I see the need for a long term commitment of resources to address ongoing equity issues- not just a line on the budget for the next year or two. The kind of change we need will not come quickly, and any work we do now will be futile if it's not part of a continuing and durable effort. Self discovery and reflection at each individual schools could be a good first step. Here's an example of an equity audit that I found: https://maec.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Criteria-for-an-Equitable-School-2020-accessible.pdf Also, (and please don't take this personally, Mr. Hansen) I believe that the equity work will be ineffective if it is done while the leader is still in the process of learning about the issues. Equity work must be done with diligence, sensitivity and respect, and be informed by experience rather than just "book smarts." I feel it would help in the long term if the district were to hire an impartial facilitator—an independent staff member who could dedicate their full attention to this effort</p>					
<p>Teachers/Administrators need to learn how to deal with hateful language (esp. around race)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - education community around racial and equity issues - better history education & civics education - communication across levels for special education, i.e. consistency of IEP - need trauma -informed practices (for real) - teachers need PD that reflects contemporary society - we need diversity in our teachers - of age, race, etc. and teachers need to adapt - need of ethic of care 	<p>Professional Development/Training</p>				

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Protect young black men and woman.					
Media has taught preconceived ideas of what people of color are "known for"					
Education & awareness in the school system as it relates to discipline. And look at restorative practice vs punitive actions	Professional Development/Training				
Buy in by the important people. The staff who are going to implement initiatives of equity. How do we measure staff buy-in. It's a wonder that without that buy-in, whatever the issue is, it won't go far. What is the strategy and process of garnering real staff support and buy in.	Theory of Change				
We need more activities for our students in their communities. They need more opportunities to belong: after school programs, safe places where caring adult relationships and mentoring can occur.	Partnerships				
Resources for our Homeless students especially when families begin the eviction process later this month.	Family Resource				
Shelter, technology, internet access. Meeting the basics for the students who are struggling with poverty and homelessness.	Family Resource				
Assess, and understanding the Covid-learning gaps impacting students, and identify strategies to mitigate the damage caused by distance learning on our most marginalized students.					
use school uniforms to help with equity and social class differences.					
Short attention spans due to social media and apps.					
Equity discussions need to focus on race, also on factors such as socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, family background, disability, mental health and religious beliefs. They all bring different experiences to the educational setting, This is best done through learning conversations within the community. When we look at making systemic change in our community the personal narrative is powerful.					
The most pressing issue of equity in Washougal is ending racism and White Supremacy Culture in our schools. Racism, WSC and microaggressions cause trauma to students. Experiencing this kind of trauma in the classroom activates flight, fight or freeze responses. Students cannot learn in a psychologically hostile environment. We must not allow those hostile environments to exist in our school buildings. For example, we still have far too many employees that can't bring themselves to say "Black Lives Matter" and reply by saying "all lives matter" or "blue lives matter." This is an unacceptable response and allowing employees to continue saying it perpetuates WSC. All lives can't matter UNTIL black lives matter and blue lives is not a race of people. Blue lives is an occupation, an occupation that is freely chosen. The color of one's skin is not a choice. Another example would be allowing an employee with a replica Dukes of Hazard car with the confederate flag painted on top to have the car on school/district property. This is a trigger for students of color and shouldn't be allowed.					
"Living in Vancouver most of my life I felt a huge shift in culture when I moved to Washougal. When I think of Washougal and go about my everyday life I feel like I have gone back in time, regressed 20 years from the rest of the county. I have witnessed teachers who have been teaching for 20-30+ years teach the same concepts in the same way they taught it 30 years ago. Teaching, like a lot of things is progressive. As the newest technology and teaching techniques come out, no matter how long you have been teaching you need to adapt your teaching styles to what's new. What's new in the teaching world, is what the current generation of students are going to relate to and understand. If a teacher is teaching the exact same way they taught in 1980 they are not being progressive and we are failing our students. We are not preparing them for the real world, and some of these students stay in Washougal, build a family of their own and the cycle continues. I feel that Washougal likes the way it has been since they can remember and they don't want it to change. If community members, especially our teachers directly imbedded in our community aren't willing to do the work to make change then the community will be stuck. The work starts with the community."					
Student Safety. Our students of color, LGBTQ students and other minority groups do not feel safe in our buildings. Likewise, their parents do not feel their students are safe. They also do not feel safe communicating their feelings and fears or reporting incidents of racism/harassment. In order for students to be able to learn, they have to feel safe, respected and supported.	Student and Staff Safety				
Inclusive and culturally responsive curriculum/instruction. When presenting curriculum, teachers need to provide multiple and diverse examples that engage the full range of our students, their identities and interests. We need to stop teaching through the lens of the normal/majority and start teaching through the lens of diversity, a lens that encompasses all.	Curriculum and Instruction				
Hiring staff from diverse backgrounds. Students need to see themselves represented in the adult populations (teachers, paras, admin, bus drivers, cooks, custodians, etc.) in our buildings.	Workforce Diversity				
All lives matter vs Black Lives Matter. One of the most pressing issues is the "All Lives Matter" attitude that some teachers/staff display. What kind of policy can be enacted, or what action can be taken, to address staff who claim "all lives matter"? More Professional Development is needed to teach why saying "all lives matter" is racist.					
The WHS equity team feels this is important because we come up against this problem regularly at the high school.					

Inequality
Social Justice
Social Injustice
Race
Restorative Practices
Cultural Competence
Culturally Responsive Classroom Management
White Supremecy
Racism
Racial Justice
Trauma-Informed Practices

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