



# Boston Public Schools **Equitable Literacy**

---

June 2024

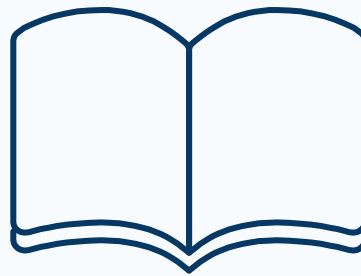
Lesley Ryan Miller

Dr. Yozmin Gay, Assistant Superintendent for the  
Office of Opportunity Gaps



# Overview

1. What is Equitable Literacy?
2. How are we using data and progress monitoring to measure implementation and student outcomes?
3. How are we supporting and training educators?





# Acronyms

Equitable literacy deeply intersects with closing the opportunity and achievement gaps, access to high quality instructional materials, differentiated learning using multi-tiered systems of support and materials that reflect racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of our students and world.

***Throughout this presentation we will use multiple acronyms to describe the work.***

**OAG:** Opportunity and Achievement Gaps

**REPT:** Racial Equity Planning Tool

**HQIM:** High Quality Instructional Materials

**EQL:** Equitable Literacy

**MTSS:** Multi Tiered Systems of Support

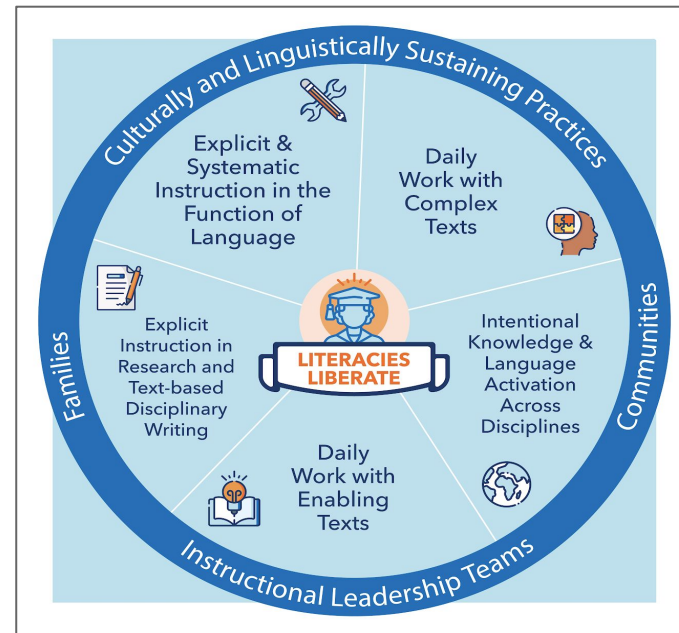
**CLSP:** Culturally Linguistic Sustaining Practices



# What is Equitable Literacy?

Equitable Literacy instruction is:

- a commitment to enacting 5 research & evidence based literacy practices
- standards-aligned instruction
- guided by the individual needs of students
- culturally affirming
- builds on student's existing schema and funds of knowledge
- delivered by teachers, who understand the science of teaching reading, language acquisition, and Culturally Linguistic Sustaining Practices (CLSP)





# Equitable Literacy & Opportunity & Achievement Gaps

The OAG policy has six goals. As we implement equitable literacy materials and practices must be in service to these goals.

1. **Accountability and Oversight**
2. **A Focus on Cultural Proficiency** as central to the work.
3. Increasing Teacher, District and School Leadership diversity
4. **Create a District that Marries Equity with Rigor**, viewing each child as capable of meeting and exceeding the highest standards of learning and achievement
5. **Dismantling Structural Barriers** and providing greater access to opportunities.
6. **Authentic Partnerships** with students, families and community.





# Racial Equity Planning Tool Equitable Literacy

Before implementing the materials & practices of Equitable Literacy we use the Racial Equity Planning Tool (REPT)

## Curriculum REPT Highlights

- The Teaching & Learning team developed a sharpness to their equity lens in spotting missing concepts, opportunities and strategies in the alternative curriculums REPTS that would need to be adjusted for our marginalized populations.
- Focus on the use of data to identify the problem of practice and where the gaps exists to justify the need for an alternative curriculum
- The engagement process for REPTs were not all reflective of our marginalized populations. In many there was only one point of engagement.

## Equitable Literacy REPT Highlights

- In the second iteration of the EQL REPT, a strong student data analysis was provided, especially in regards to MCAS, MAP, WIDA, and ACCESS data.
- There is a need for more data from families about their child's experiences in Literacy in BPS.
- REPT was strong in terms of implementation support of the initiative through the regional model, specifically the district's investment in EQL Coaches



# Culturally & Linguistically Sustaining Practices

## What is CLSP?

*Methods and practices that empower students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using racial, cultural, and linguistic referents to connect and access knowledge, skills, and attitudes within the world around them (Ladson-Billings, 1994)*

- Positions teachers as learners gaining insight from their students to craft cognitive connections between their funds of knowledge (cultural and linguistic assets) and the standard-based content in authentic and meaningful ways that makes learning sticky (Zaretta Hammond, 2014).
- Allows educators to address social barriers that cause disparities in student achievement; by tailoring instruction to be mindful of these barriers, educators can help students overcome obstacles and succeed (Rodriguez, Jones, Pang, & Park, 2004).
- Mitigates the effects of negative racial, cultural, and linguistic stereotypes on student performance (Cohen & Garcia, 2008).



# High Quality Instructional Materials

## HQIM provides students access to:

- Grade-level curriculum materials that are culturally and linguistically affirming.
- Opportunities to think, work, and speak collaboratively and critically with their peers
- Academic discourse
- Support Inclusive planning & instruction
- Opportunity to use complex/enabling text daily
- Opportunity to write about the subject-area content or text daily

## Research tells us use of HQIM results in:

- Student growth that is comparable to over half a year of additional learning (Kane et al., 2016)
- About 1.5 times the difference between an average teacher and one at the 75th percentile (Chingos & Whitehurst, 2012)
- Greater than the difference between a new teacher and one with three years of experience (Kane, 2016)

"Center for Instructional Support/Why Curriculum Matters." *Department of Elementary and Secondary Education*, 22 Jan. 2022, [www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/impd/curriculum-matters.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/impd/curriculum-matters.html). Accessed 22 Jan. 2022.





# Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

## **Multi-Tiered Systems of Support**

*is a multi-step process of providing core and differentiated instruction and support to promote the academic and behavioral success of all students.*

### **MTSS includes:**

- Schedule that provisions Tier 1, 2, & 3 instruction
- Strong Tier 1
- Opportunities for Acceleration
- Evidence -Based Practices & Interventions
- Data Systems
- Educator Collaboration

# Instructional Expectations SY21 - SY26

SY21-22

HQIM ELA

- **Equitable Literacy**

SY22-23

HQIM All  
Content

- **Equitable Literacy**

SY23-24

UDL/SDI/  
Language  
Access

- High Quality  
Instructional Materials  
(HQIM)

- **Equitable Literacy**

SY24-25

MTSS

- Tier 1: High Quality  
Instructional Materials  
Across All Content Areas

- **Equitable Literacy**

-Tier 1: High Quality  
Instructional Materials Across  
All Content Areas

SY25-26

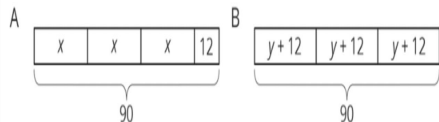
-Instructional Materials  
Across All Content, **with UDL,  
SDI and Language Access**

-Tier 2 and Tier 3  
interventions



# What does Equitable Literacy look like in the classroom?

## 6.3: Even More Situations, Diagrams, and Equations



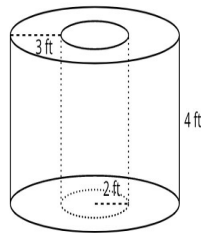
Story 1: Lin had 90 flyers to hang up around the school. She gave 12 flyers to each of three volunteers. Then she took the remaining flyers and divided them up equally between the three volunteers.

Story 2: Lin had 90 flyers to hang up around the school. After giving the same number of flyers to each of three volunteers, she had 12 left to hang up by herself.

1. Which diagram goes with which story? Be prepared to explain your reasoning.
2. In each diagram, what part of the story does the variable represent?
3. Write an equation corresponding to each story. If you get stuck, use the diagram.
4. Find the value of the variable in the story.

## 17.3: A Fishy Situation

An aquarium manager drew a blueprint for a cylindrical fish tank. The tank has a vertical tube in the middle in which visitors can stand and view the fish.



The best average density for the species of fish that will go in the tank is 16 fish per 100 gallons of water. This provides enough room for the fish to swim while making sure that there are plenty of fish for people to see.

The aquarium has 275 fish available to put in the tank. Is this the right number of fish for the tank? If not, how many fish should be added or removed? Explain your reasoning.

## Yousef at the Arboretum



By Heather Ferguson  
Illustrated by Meghan Shea



Yousef is with his class at the Arboretum in Boston.



He gets a map. The map has lots of paths.

# How are we measuring Success?

Progress Monitoring and Data Collection

# Universal Expectations

*All BPS Schools & Departments Must Make Continuous Improvement*

## Outcome evidence (QSP Metrics)

### Equitable Literacy (QSP Priority #1)

- MAP achievement and growth (Fluency, Reading, Math)
- MCAS data
- EL Proficiency (ACCESS for ELs)
- Course performance

### Culture and Climate (QSP Priority #2)

- Climate Survey Results
- Sense of belonging (student survey)
  - Rigorous expectations (teacher survey)
  - Professional learning (teacher survey)
  - Family-school partnerships (family survey)

### Attendance (QSP Priority #3)

- Chronic absenteeism
- Hiring (reflects the racial, ethnic, linguistic & cultural diversity of our schools) & Staff attendance

## Practice evidence (Instructional Expectations)

### Regional model support activities (Instructional Expectations #1-2)

- Progress monitor & update QSP implementation (min, 90 days)
- Participate in monthly PLC meetings
- Schedule & lead Instructional rounds (min, 3 x year)
- Complete self-assessment and participate in Progress Reviews

### Access to high-quality materials and opportunities (Instructional Expectation #3)

- Select and implement high-quality curricula and materials
- Ensure appropriately serving students with disabilities (license, grouping, minutes, ratio)
- Ensure appropriately serving multilingual learners (licensure, minutes, grouping)

### Aligned professional development (Instructional Expectation #4)

- Document SY23-24 professional development (PD) Plan
- Align SY23-24 PD Plan to instructional focus (includes contractual PD hours and established common planning times)

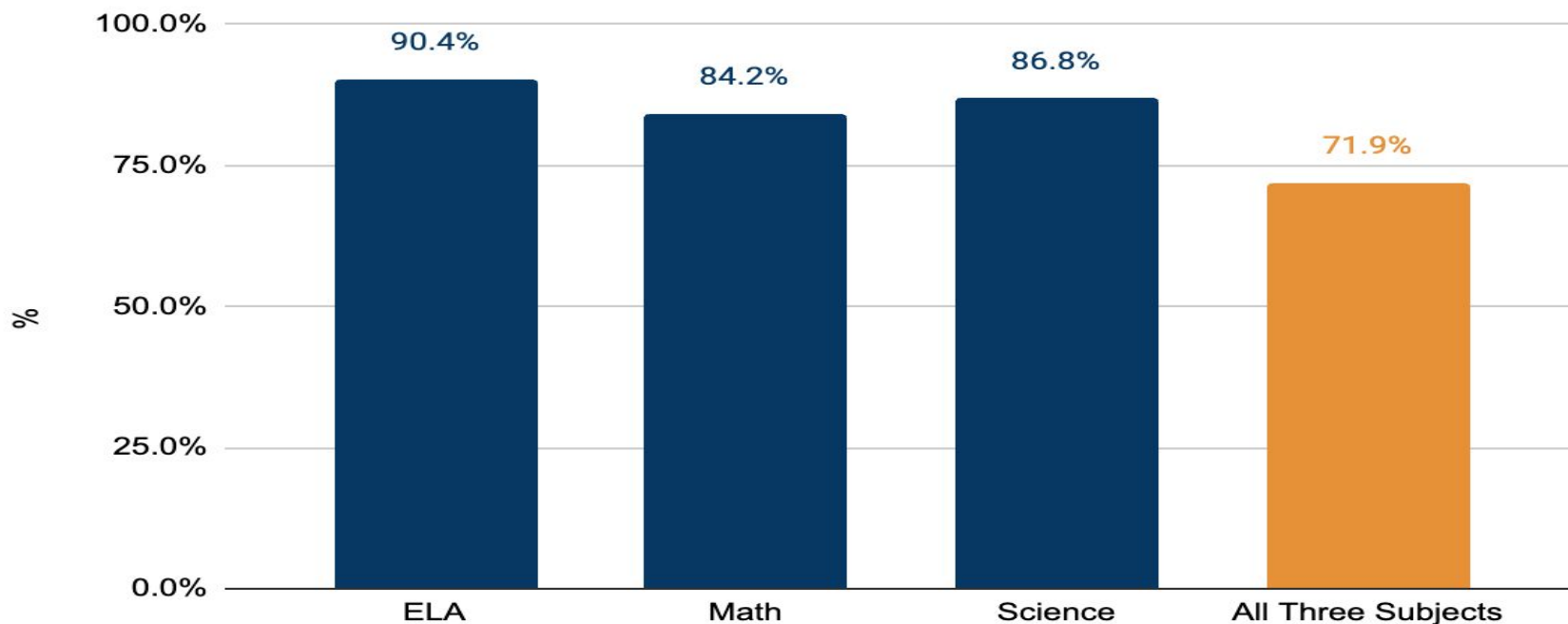
### Critical teaming structures and processes (Instructional Expectation #5)

- Lead, facilitate and/or support teams: Instructional leadership teams (ILTs); Inclusion Planning Teams (IPTs); Student Success Teams (SSTs)/Student Attendance Teams); School-based Equity Round Tables (SBERTs); School Site Council (SSCs)/Governing Boards
- Engage in inquiry processes to examine evidence & practices connected to QSP Priorities
- Examine spending data in relation to QSP priorities



# SY 23-24 High Quality Instructional Materials

Percent of Schools using HQIM by Subject



# EQ L Walkthrough Tool



## SY23-24 Equitable Literacy Instructional Rounds: Summary

This page summarizes observational data from the SY23-24 Equitable Literacy Instructional Rounds, which were focused on collecting data related to Equitable Literacy practices and the SY23-24 universal instructional expectations. The indicators below are research-based and aligned to the BPS Equitable Literacy Look-Fors (March 2022), the WIDA 2020 Standards Framework, and the Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol (CRIOP).  
**Please allow 30 min from the time the Google Form is submitted for an observation to show up on this page.**

Please use the dropdown menus below to navigate to the observations you are most interested in learning about. If you do not make any selections from the dropdown menus, the dashboard will show aggregate data for all observations in the district in SY23-24.



### Content Alignment

**Definitions**  
**Content Alignment:** The task was aligned to grade-level content standards.

No Response   No   Partially   Yes

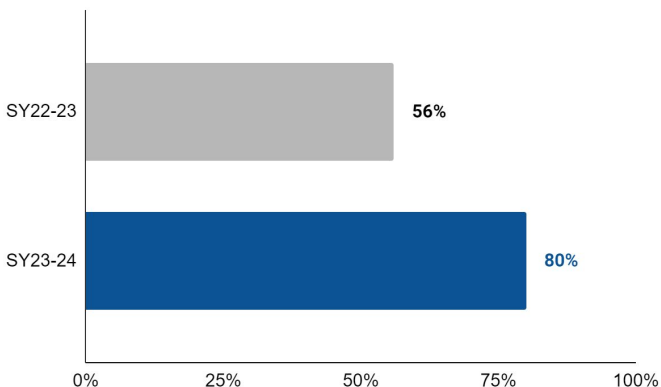




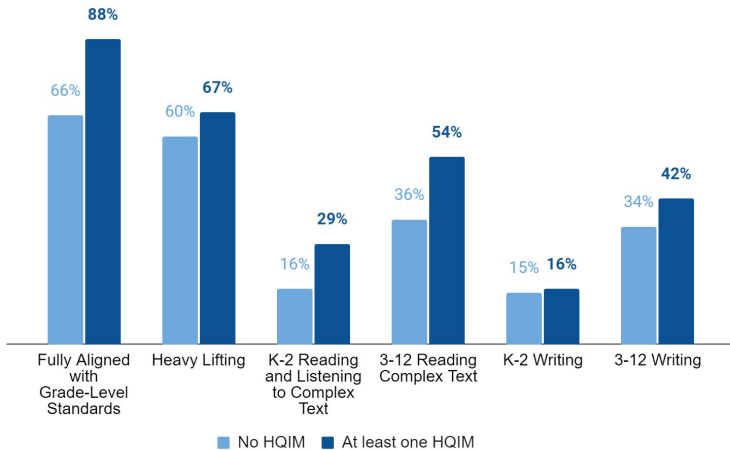
# Progress Towards Increasing Access to Grade Level Learning

Over the past two years BPS has seen an increase in **access to grade level materials** and content with an increase in evidence of reading, writing and talking from **complex, culturally affirming texts**.

## Alignment to grade level standards increased over time



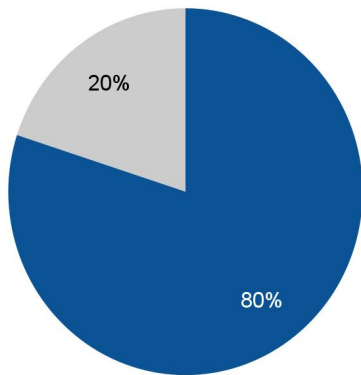
## EQL framework evidence is higher with use of High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM)



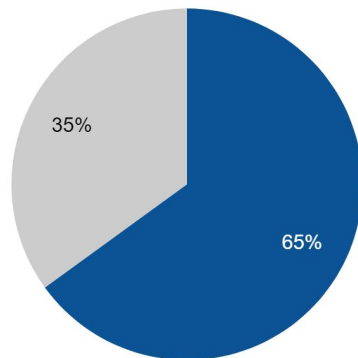


Though more schools are using high quality instructional materials (HQIM), classroom observations show that students are less engaged in the rigorous curriculum and are not yet doing the “heavy lifting” required to truly learn the content.

**SY23–24 EQL walkthrough observations, as of April 4, 2024**



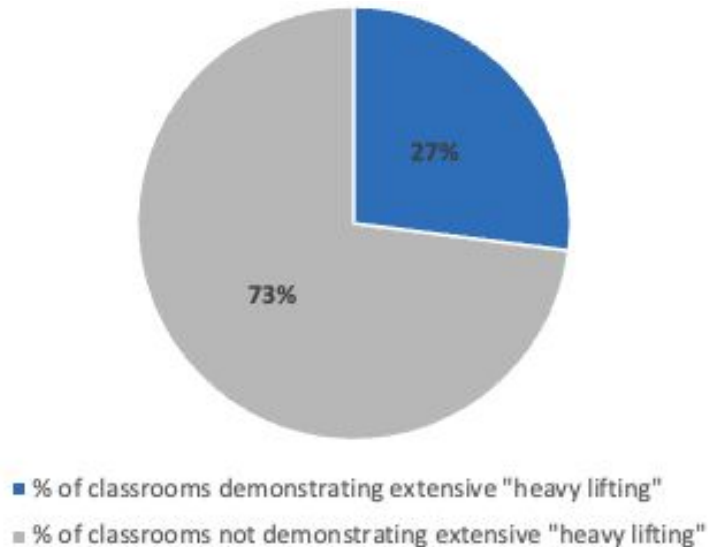
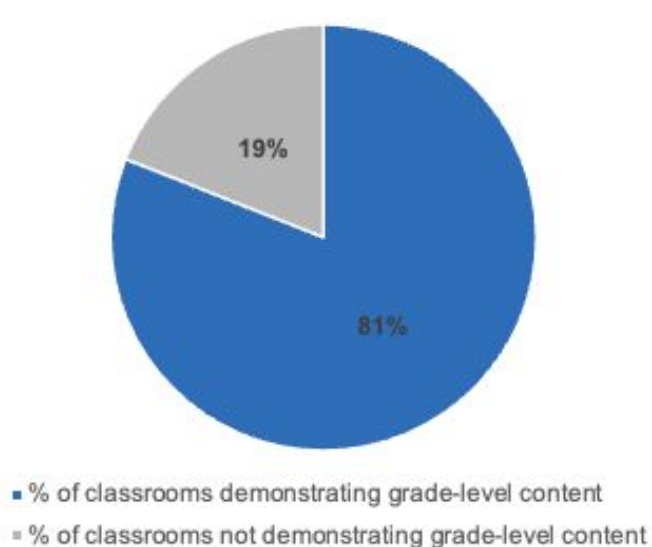
- Observations that were fully aligned with grade-level standards
- Observations that were partially or not aligned with grade-level standards



- Observations that showed extensive/partial evidence of “heavy lifting”
- Observations that showed minimal or no evidence of “heavy lifting”

Though more schools are using high quality instructional materials (HQIM), classroom observations show that students are less engaged in the rigorous curriculum and are not yet doing the “heavy lifting” required to truly learn the content.

**SY23–24 EQL walkthrough observations, as of December 12, 2023**





# School Example: Higginson Data

## Content Alignment

### Definitions

**Content Alignment:** The task was aligned to grade-level content standards.

■ No Response ■ No ■ Partially ■ Yes

Content Alignment

Content Alignment

12.5%

87.5%

Explicit Instruction in  
the Function of  
Language

Grade K0-2 Phonics

33.33%

66.67%

Grade K0-2 Vocab

33.33%

33.33%

16.67%

16.67%



# Regional Example: Impact of CLSP

- Sense of Belonging Climate Survey Data increased in 12 out of 13 schools in grades 3-5
- Sense of Belonging Climate Survey Data increase in 2 out of 3 schools in grades 6-8
- Greenwood and Ellis Schools received the Cultural Competency District Wellness award for for strengthening sense of belonging honoring the identity of students and families





# Equitable Literacy Benchmarks

1. By the end of SY24-25, finalize a plan for full implementation of HQIM across every school in four academic content areas to be fully implemented no later than fall 2025.
2. By the end of SY24-25, cross functional teams will have designed and implemented 12-hour courses for BPS educators. In these content-specific courses, participants will routinely internalize lesson plans to better understand competencies around universal design for learning (UDL), specially designed instruction (SDI) and academic language.
3. See significant progress through observational practices, including:
  - Evidence of student assignments and tasks aligned to grade level standards and expectations will move from 80% in SY 23-24 to 92% in SY 24-25.
  - Evidence of reading, talking and writing from grade level complex text(s) will increase to at least 65% in all grade bands, across all content areas by the end of SY24-25.
  - Evidence of student-driven active engagement with challenging tasks will increase from 28% in SY 23-24 to 55% in SY 24-25.

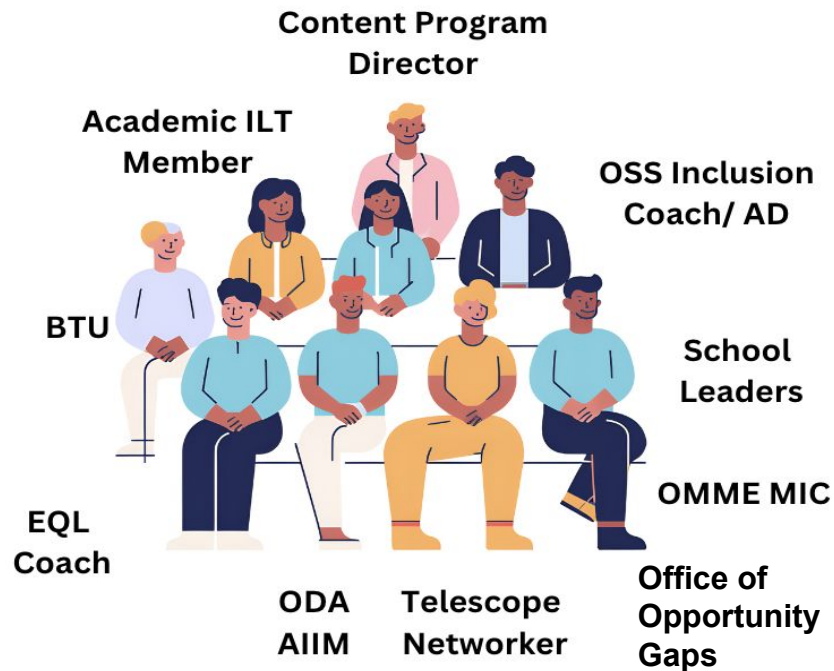
# **How are we supporting our educators with implementation?**

Professional Learning and Support

- 8 Professional Learning Design Teams
- Development period March–June
- Weekly deliverables and feedback from Academic ILT members
- Developing arcs of learning for each course, facilitator agendas, slides and materials for each session.
- Feedback sessions with BTU members and school leaders

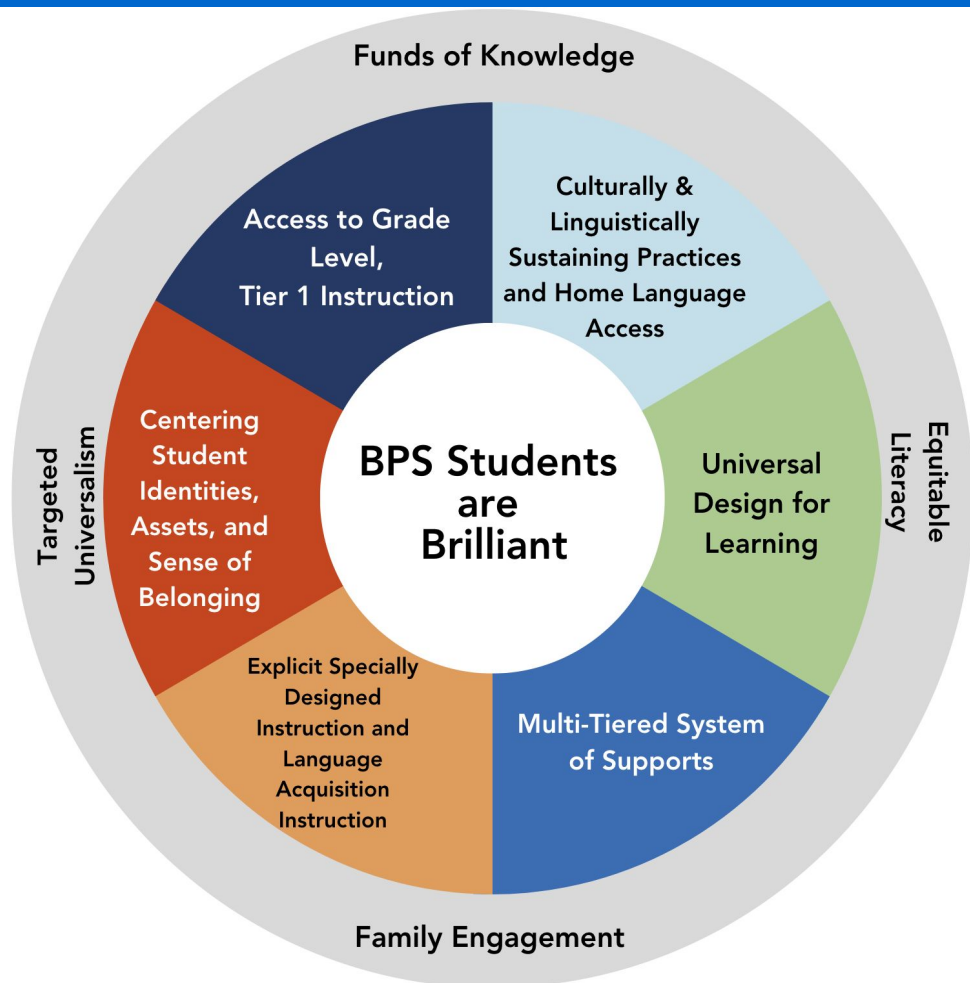
Collaborating in new ways to contribute to collective capacity building

## Who is building this professional learning?



## 12-Hour Professional Learning for BPS Educators

- Courses are competency-based
- Educators or teams select the course they will take
- Most courses are grounded in a specific curriculum
- Foundational and Advancing levels for each will be available
- All courses will include collaborative teaching content woven through
- Facilitated by content experts
- Schools can have the option of self-facilitation and facilitator training will be available.
- In-person and hybrid options available in August, before and after school hours during the school year







# Types of School Supports

<b>Support Type</b>	<b>Regional Liaisons</b>	<b>Differentiated Supports</b>	<b>Centralized Supports</b>
<b>Focus of Support</b>	Supports 1-2 regions (25-30 schools)	Supports a differentiated group of schools potentially not aligned to a region	Supports all BPS schools
<b>Description of Support</b>	<p>Provide support services aligned to schools' QSPs</p> <p>Work to build the capacity of school based teams and/or school-based staff within their regions</p>	<p>Provide more specialized supports for schools</p> <p>Work to build the capacity of school based teams and/or school-based staff</p>	<p>A centralized point of contact provides support when needed</p> <p>Work to remove barriers solve challenges that are impacting schools</p>



# Types of Regional Supports

Support	Primary QSP Priority Support	Critical Teaming Structure
<a href="#">Accelerate Improvement &amp; Inquiry Managers</a>	Equitable Literacy	ILT, CPT
<a href="#">Equitable Literacy Coaches</a>	Equitable Literacy	ILT, CPT, All Staff PD
<a href="#">Inclusive Education Coaches</a>	Equitable Literacy	IPT, CPT, All Staff PD
<a href="#">Multilingual Instructional Coaches</a>	Equitable Literacy	ILT, CPT, All Staff PD
<a href="#">Telescope Networkers</a>	Equitable Literacy	ILT
<a href="#">Content Program Directors</a>	Equitable Literacy	All Staff PD, CPT
<a href="#">OMME Equity &amp; Accountability Program Managers</a>	Equitable Literacy, Culture & Climate	LAT-F Meetings
<a href="#">Special Education Assistant Directors</a>	Equitable Literacy, Culture & Climate	IEP Meetings
<a href="#">SEAD (SEL) Coaches</a>	Equitable Literacy, Culture & Climate	CPT, All Staff PD
<a href="#">Manager of Equity &amp; Strategy</a>	Equitable Literacy, Culture & Climate	ILT, CPT, All Staff PD

# Appendix

# What is Equitable Literacy in BPS?

*A commitment to enacting research-based literacy practices that provide students who have been historically marginalized access to powerful literacy experiences.*

This commitment requires adults to...



Center the needs of students who are often underserved.

**Cultural Competence**



Uncover, name, and address biases that limit student access to grade level content.



Utilize five research-based practices that advances achievement for every learner.

## HQIM- Key Messages for All

- All of the curriculum that T&L is endorsing is designed to Support Student-Centered instruction aligned to MA Standards
  - Has instructional strategies/routines in place to:
    - Provide opportunities to think, work, and speak collaboratively with their peers
    - Support academic discourse
    - Provide students curriculum materials that are culturally and linguistically affirming.
    - Support Inclusive planning & instruction
    - Provide students with the opportunity to use complex/enabling text daily
    - Provide students with the opportunity to write about the content or text daily



PreK (K0/K1)

Kindergarten (K2)

First Grade

Second Grade

Vocabulary  
& Language

Storytelling & Story Acting

embedded; Grow a Definition lessons

Weekly Words, Language lessons

Read Aloud

multiple reads, discussion

multiple reads, discussion, writing

Foundational  
Literacy

Whole group  
lessons with  
*Heggerty* +  
& Small Groups

Whole group *Foundations* & *Heggerty* lessons; Literacy Stations

Strategic small group instruction, including decodables

Shared Reading

Guided Independent  
Reading

Play &  
Projects

Centers

Studios

Thinking & Feedback

Writing

informed by SFL; with increasing depth of instruction

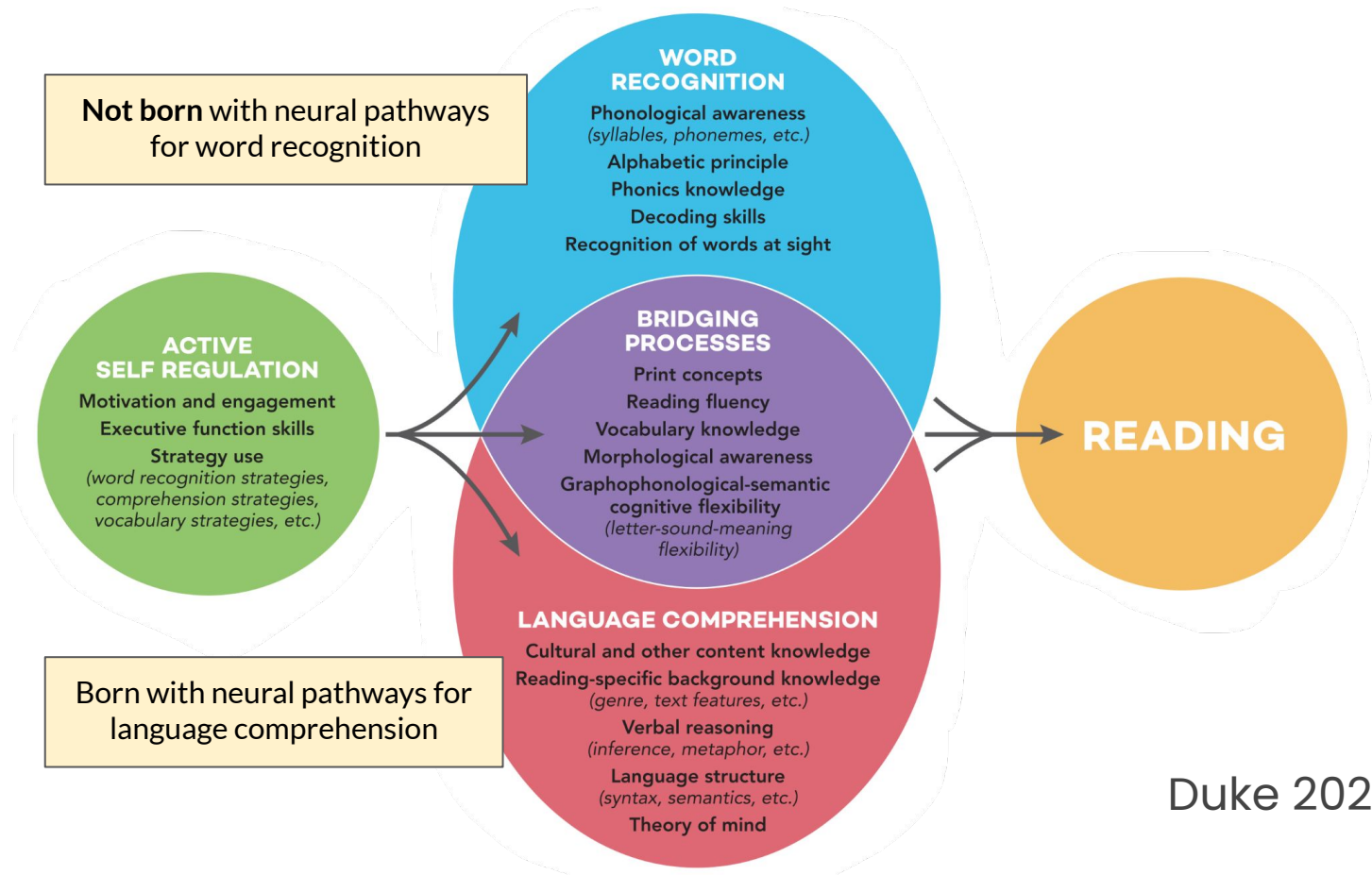
Science &  
Engineering

Investigations during Centers

lessons, Studios, science literacy station

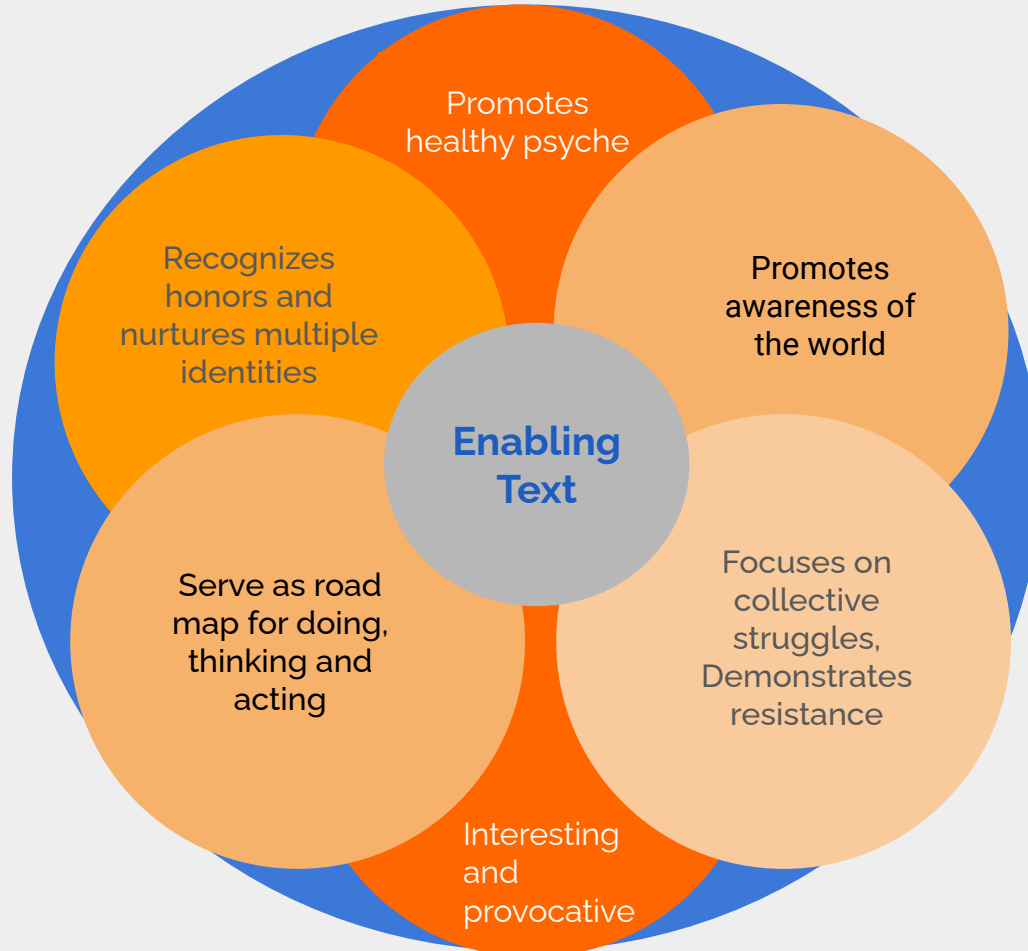
Outdoor learning, whole group experiences, sensemaking discussions

# Equitable Literacy and the Active View of Reading



Duke 2021

# Alfred Tatum's "Enabling Texts"



(Tatum 2009)



ILT Decision:  
How will our school  
engage in SY24-25  
Professional  
Learning?

## Professional Learning Logistical Update

**Path 1:** Educators will join a 12-hour course facilitated by a cross-functional central office team

**Path 2A:** School will facilitate with school-based staff using materials that have been centrally developed.

**Path 2B:** Some educators will be in Path 1 and some educators will be in Path 2a

**Path 3:** We will develop a professional learning plan that meets the S24-25 competencies

# SY24-25 Professional Learning - Educator Competencies (Foundational)

## Curriculum Implementation

-I can unpack curriculum units to identify the knowledge and skills students will develop and how and when they will be assessed.

- I can implement the key instructional practices in the curriculum.

-I know how to internalize curriculum and plan differentiated instruction that maintains grade level expectations and avoids equity detours by using the lesson internalization protocol.

### UNIVERSAL DESIGN for LEARNING & CLSP

- I can describe the principles of **UDL** and **CLSP** and locate them in my existing curricular resources.
- I can strategically apply principles of **UDL** and **CLSP** to an upcoming lesson (engagement, representation, action and expression).

### SPECIALLY DESIGNED INSTRUCTION

- I know how to identify and implement high leverage methodologies in order to effectively differentiate for diverse learners
- I know how to adapt and/or modify a lesson based on a student's IEP learning goal to ensure appropriate planning and implementation of accommodations and/or modifications).

### ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

- I know how to write focused Language Objectives that are aligned to WIDA Framework Tools.
- I know how to differentiate for student language proficiency using a student's ACCESS data and the Proficiency Level Descriptors.

# SY24-25 Professional Learning Proposal- Educator Competencies (Advancing)

## Curriculum Implementation

-I can understand the instructional strategies and routines embedded in the curriculum, including strategies that the curriculum provides to differentiate the content

-I can leverage supplemental materials and curricula to further differentiate instruction for students.

-I know how to look at student work by engaging in the Weekly Data Meeting in order to understand the impact of instruction on every student, and plan responsive instruction that disrupts inequitable outcomes

### UNIVERSAL DESIGN for LEARNING & CLSP

-I can determine and explain how the **UDL** principles, guidelines and specific checkpoints advance student access to rigorous standards and high quality instructional tasks.

-I can identify and apply the intersections between **CLSP** and each of the **UDL** principles within lesson planning

-I can Identify firm goals and determine barriers to learning in order to apply UDL principles to the planning for content, process and product within a lesson.

### SPECIALLY DESIGNED INSTRUCTION

-I know how to use ongoing data analysis and assess fidelity of implementation to make adjustments to future instruction

-I know how to adapt and/or modify a lesson based on a student's IEP learning goal to ensure appropriate planning and implementation of accommodations and/or modifications.

### ACADEMIC LANGUAGE

- I know how to build academic language expectations that are aligned to content standards using the 2020 WIDA Framework.

- I know how to use the Proficiency Level Descriptors and WIDA Rubrics to linguistically modify tasks and assessments for students at ELD 1-2.