



California
Center for
School Climate



AUDIO GALLERY

Hayward Unified School District

HAYWARD, CA

This audio gallery is a product of the California Center for School Climate (CCSC), a California Department of Education initiative operated by WestEd that provides free support and trainings on school climate and data use to local education agencies in California.

Learn more about this work and listen to all the audiocasts in this series at ccsc-gallery.wested.org.



WestEd 
WestEd.org



LISTEN TO THIS AUDIOCAST // ccsc-gallery.wested.org

GROWING A DISTRICT ROOTED IN ANTI-BIAS, ANTI-RACIST ACTION

Developing equity-centered practices and policies can help school campuses support student success for increasingly diverse student populations. School leaders that build cultures of belonging and well-being can also support higher levels of student engagement, student achievement and mental wellness.¹ As educator biases and beliefs impact the quality and fairness of students learning experiences, uncovering and addressing bias in teaching practices are important opportunities for identifying professional development needs.² In Hayward Unified School District (HUSD) in California, district leadership and community members have partnered together to prioritize anti-bias and anti-racist decision-making and policies to promote belongingness, well-being, and positive learning environments.

Located between Oakland and Fremont in the East Bay, the Hayward community represents diverse backgrounds, races, cultures, ethnicities, and languages. HUSD is comprised of 27 schools and 3 educational facilities serving over 19,000 students in pre-kindergarten to twelfth grade. Led by a diverse team of mostly women of color who are from the community and/or have children in HUSD schools, HUSD emphasizes community voice, making sure that students and families feel welcomed, seen, supported, and heard.

How do we make sure that we take advantage of all this great diversity to make our community the best for everyone? ... we want to make sure it's a community that is welcoming of everyone, including the adults and the families and our guardians and all our community members.

DR. CANDACE COFIELD

Administrator on Special Assignment for Equity and Anti-Racism

In listening to community members and examining student data, HUSD identified gaps in the types of educational opportunities students were experiencing across racial and ethnic groups. As a response, the HUSD Board of Education adopted the [Anti-Bias/Anti-Racism district policy \(AB/AR\)](#) on July 22, 2020. With this policy, the district made a clear stance establishing equity as a core value and are now in their third year of implementation. The policy establishes HUSD's commitment to fostering quality educational environments for all students through key anti-racist policies and practices that bolster culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and community engagement, reduce disparities in discipline outcomes, improve equitable resource allocation, and create mechanisms for district accountability.

The first step that the district took to move policy into action was providing districtwide staff training to build common language and practice around anti-bias and anti-racist concepts and frameworks, including unconscious bias, white supremacy culture, culturally responsive teaching, and cultural competence. Once this shared understanding was in place, HUSD Administrators on Special Assignment, Dr. Candace Cofield and Michelle Root, embedded opportunities for continued community input and to support educators to be more culturally responsive in their practice.

A focal point in their work is to develop teachers' ability to integrate AB/AR into their instruction through lessons that emphasize *criticality*.

Criticality is ... having your students take what they learned in the classroom and do some action orient[ed] activities around it of their choosing.

MICHELLE ROOT

Administrator on Special Assignment

Their work has included:

- Co-developing with the Teaching for Black Lives Book Study Group a [resource hub](#) that centers Black narratives and history
- Regularly [communicating practices and commitments](#) from the study group to center students' identities in classroom instruction
- Creating opportunities for students to explicitly discuss and answer questions around justice, oppression, and inclusion and to ultimately feel empowered to lead change efforts, such as the launch of the [HUSD Student Leaders of Equity and Antiracism group](#)

Another key component of the AB/AR work in HUSD is student leadership and amplifying student feedback and experiences, practices that are supported by research that demonstrates the positive impact that student voice has on overall engagement and educational achievement.³ A core part of the equity and anti-racism program is ensuring that students can understand and apply the AB/AR commitments in their own lives and contribute their own experiences to inform and improve teacher-facing professional development. As a result of this concerted focus on anti-racism, examining bias, and encouraging criticality as a part of learning, students in Hayward routinely question who is telling the "story" of history and are encouraged to offer counter narratives that build their sense of inclusion and social justice.

LISTEN TO THIS AUDIOCAST // ccsc-gallery.wested.org

Consider while you listen . . .

- How does your school or district currently analyze data on access to educational opportunity across racial and ethnic groups?
- How are professional development opportunities informed by student assets and needs that surface through instructional and classroom practices?
- How might your school or district utilize existing resource and affinity groups to more effectively support students at the intersection of multiple oppressions (e.g., LGBTQ+ students of color)?

District Information

Number of students	18,075
Geographic setting	Urban
Grades served	P–12
School model	Traditional

Student Demographics

Latinx	65.8%
Asian or Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	18.8%
Black	7.6%
White	3.4%
Multiracial	4.0%
Filipino	0.3%
Students with disabilities	12.6%
English language learners	30.6%
Socioeconomically disadvantaged	60.2%

References

- ¹ Goodenow, C. (1993). The psychological sense of school membership among adolescents: Scale development and educational correlates. *Psychology in the Schools, 30*(1), 79–90.
- Wang, M. T., & Degol, J.L. (2016). School climate: A review of the construct, measurement, and impact on student outcomes. *Educational Psychology Review, 28*(2), 315–352.
- ² Warikoo, N., Sinclair, S., Fei, J., & Jacoby-Senghor, D. (2016). Examining Racial Bias in Education: A New Approach. *Educational Researcher 45*(9). Retrieved from <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:34785397>
- ³ Goodenow, C., & Grady, K. E. (1993). The relationship of school belonging and friends' values to academic motivation among urban adolescent students. *Journal of Experimental Education, 62*(1), 60–71. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220973.1993.9943831>
- Osterman, K. F. (2000). Students' Need for Belonging in the School Community. *Review of Educational Research, 70*(3), 323–367. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543070003323>