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Principal

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Director of Student
Services

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Superintendent of
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Meet Jenn Iannitti, UDSD School Board Member



Jenn is...

...an **active parent** of four Upper Dublin students.

...a **Board member** for over two years.

...a **champion of equity** for ALL students.

When Jenn appears on the slide, take note of the insights she shares!



A Look Back in Time at UDSD - That Was Then...

Teaching and Learning - The following subgroups of students were disproportionately placed in low level (track 3 classes):

- African American/Black
- Hispanic
- Economically Disadvantaged

+

Discipline - The following subgroups of students were disciplined more often and given harsher consequences than their peers:

- African American/Black
- Hispanic

The **purpose** of track 3 classes was to help meet the needs of struggling learners. **What actually transpired** was that African American/Black and Hispanic students were overrepresented in these classes. Students who are considered economically disadvantaged were also represented in these classes.

[Federal Discrimination Complaint](#)

[US Department of Education Investigating
Discrimination Complaint](#)



From a School Board Member's Perspective - Iannitti's Insights



“Bad outcomes are the result of bad policy not bad people.” - Ibram X Kendi

Step 1: Identify the problem - In Upper Dublin we had a Federal Discrimination complaint

Step 2: Identify policies that helped create or allowed the problem to exist - In Upper Dublin there was no policy against tracking nor was there a policy to support restorative practice



Then and Now - A Transformation

SY 2018-2019

Middle School - Three levels of math; students in low level math stayed together for other classes

High School - Three levels of math (AP/Honors, Level 2, Level 3); students in low level math were not able to enroll in upper-level science courses (chemistry, physics, etc)

Against Educational Advice (AEA) - Process enacted by parents/guardians when they did not agree with a student's course placement (i.e. student placed in Level 3 Grade 6 Math and the parents/guardians wanted the student placed in pre-algebra); AEA form prevented student from transferring out of challenging courses



SY 2021-2022

Middle School - Two levels of math in each grade; students are flexibly scheduled on their team so cohorts do not stay together all day



High School - Two levels of each math course (AP/Honors, Level 2); students are able to access upper-level science courses (chemistry, physics, etc)



Course Selection v. Course Placement - AEA ended; students now select their courses and are encouraged to stretch themselves



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- **Identify barriers** - In Upper Dublin track 3 math locked students schedules.
 - All track 3 math students had to follow the same schedule for all classes.
 - Students would never obtain the minimum math requirements to enroll in higher level science classes.
 - If students wanted to take higher level classes, they had to complete the AEA process.
 - **(Ask your Superintendent if this is happening in your district!)**
- **Remove Barriers** - In Upper Dublin track 3 math was removed by the Superintendent and supported by the Board.
 - The Board also approved policy to ensure that tracking ended.
 - Students now have more flexible schedules, and they can take higher level science classes.





Strategies and Action Steps

Strategy: Focus on culturally relevant and responsive teaching and learning.

Action Steps

- Provide staff with resources and professional learning to identify culturally relevant and responsive teaching strategies such as videos, podcasts, and other resources to see these strategies in action.
- Develop leaders' capacity in recognizing culturally relevant and responsive teaching and learning.
- Implement social-emotional programming that focuses on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Identify instructional resources that are reflective of the student body to ensure that students see themselves in the curriculum.

Strategy: Measure and monitor academic excellence for ALL learners.

Action Steps

- Eliminate all track 3/low-level courses at the secondary level and avoid tracking K-12; memorialize direction in policy - equitable instruction and equitable scheduling
- Leverage evidence-based instructional strategies to accelerate individual student's learning when and where needed to increase rigor for all learners.
- Continually examine best practices related to promoting academic excellence for ALL students.
- Focus on restorative practices rather than - or in conjunction with - disciplinary consequences.
- Monitor measures of academic growth for ALL students, including subgroups of students.
- Monitor disciplinary data for ALL students, with a focus on identifying root causes for behavior to prevent disproportionality.



Strategies and Action Steps

Strategy: Recruit and develop excellent, talented, and diverse staff for all positions.

Action Step

- Focus recruitment efforts to include multiple dimensions of diversity so that our staff is reflective of our student body.

Strategy: Develop and retain culturally competent staff with a deeper understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Action Steps

- Incorporate topics of equity, empowerment, diversity, and inclusion into District and school-based professional learning opportunities.
- Establish a Superintendent's Advisory Committee with students who are reflective of the larger student body to discuss issues of equity, empowerment, diversity, and inclusion.

Strategy: Create a more equitable, empowered, inclusive, diverse, and culturally aware UDSD school community.

Action Steps

- Conduct a two-part equity audit with the assistance of the Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium.
- Reflect upon the results of the equity audit and action plan concrete steps to ensure that our learning environments, policies, and procedures promote equity, empowerment, diversity, and inclusion.
- Conduct climate surveys to assess the District's implementation of equitable practices.
- Promote a culture where diversity is celebrated.
- Review and revise policies and procedures, including professional learning plans and accommodations regarding discrimination, harassment, and bullying regularly.



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- **Request an Equity Audit** -UDSD is engaged with the Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium ([MAEC, Inc.](#)), a non-profit dedicated to equity. They are supporting us as we complete the audit.
- **Create an equity policy that** forces the elimination of low level courses.
- Ask for and provide funding for **quality professional learning focused on equity.**
- Ask for and support **social-emotional programming that focuses on diversity, equity, and inclusion.**
- Ask for and support **instructional resources that are reflective of the student body** to ensure that students **see themselves in the curriculum.**
- Ask for and support for **funding to training staff in restorative practices/discipline.**
- Support your Leadership Team's efforts to **diversify staff** at all levels - administration, professional staff, and support staff.

As a school board member you need to educate yourself, pass policies, support administrative regulations, and communicate everyone benefits from good practice!



Strategic Planning - Focus Areas that Empower Students

ALL (100%) students will read on or above grade level by the end of third grade AND will continue to read on or above grade level each year thereafter.

ALL (100%) students will graduate college and career ready as evidenced by the completion of their academic portfolio, which includes evidence of learning in rigorous courses, career readiness artifacts, reflections, etc.

ALL (100%) students will reach at least the proficient level of achievement in mathematics by the end of seventh grade AND will continue to reach at least the proficient level of achievement each year thereafter.

ALL (100%) students will reach at least the proficient level of achievement in writing across all domains by the end of eighth grade AND will continue to reach at least the proficient level of achievement each year thereafter.





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“This zero-sum thinking - that what’s good for one group has to come at the expense of another - is what has gotten us into this mess. Our fates are linked: an injury to one is an injury to all. - Heather C. McGhee author, *The Sum of Us*

- Always take an active role in your District’s Comprehensive and Strategic Planning.
- Work with your Board and your Superintendent to develop annual goals that focus on equity.





Instructional Equity to Empower Middle School Students

Sixth Grade

- Transition from Elementary
- Three Cores: ELA, Math, Science/Social Studies
- Encore Classes
- Academic Resource Period (ARP)

Seventh and Eighth Grades

- Four Cores: English, Math, Science, Social Studies
- Encore Classes
- Academic Resource Period (ARP)

	8					9					10					11					12					1					2					3								
	0	10	20	30	40	50	0	10	20	30	40	50	0	10	20	30	40	50	0	10	20	30	40	50	0	10	20	30	40	50	0	10	20	30	40	50	0	10	20	30	40	50	0	10
Eighth Grade	Homeroom 8:00-8:07	Students: Encore A 8:10-8:55 & Encore B 8:58-9:43 Staff: Prep 8:10-8:55 & Team Meetings 8:58-9:43										Core 1 9:46-10:46					Core 2 10:49-11:49					Lunch 11:52-12:20 & ARP 12:23-12:53					Core 3 12:56-1:56					Core 4 1:59-3:05					Dismissal							
Eighth Grade Support (Reading, Special Ed)	Student Check-Ins											Core 1 Support 9:46-10:46					Core 2 Support 10:49-11:49					Lunch 11:52-12:20 & ARP 12:23-12:53					Core 3 Support 12:56-1:56					Core 4 Support 1:59-3:05					Dismissal							
Seventh Grade	Homeroom 8:00-8:07	Core 1 8:10-9:10					Core 2 9:13-10:13					Students: Encore A 10:16-11:01 & Encore B 11:04-11:49 Staff: Team Meetings 10:16-11:01 & Prep 11:04-11:49										ARP 11:52-12:22 & Lunch 12:25-12:55					Core 3 12:58-1:58					Core 4 2:01-3:05					Dismissal							
Seventh Grade Support (Reading, Special Ed)	Student Check-Ins	Core 1 Support 8:10-9:10					Core 2 Support 9:13-10:13															ARP 11:52-12:22 & Lunch 12:25-12:55					Core 3 Support 12:58-1:58					Core 4 Support 2:01-3:05					Dismissal							
Sixth Grade	Homeroom 8:00-8:07	Core 1 8:10-9:30					Core 2 9:33-10:52					Lunch 10:55-11:25 & ARP 11:28-12:08					Core 3 12:11 - 1:31					Students: Encore A 1:34-2:19 & Encore B 2:22-3:05 Staff: Prep 1:34-2:19 Team Meetings 2:22-3:05										Dismissal												
Sixth Grade Support (Reading, Special Ed)	Student Check-Ins	Core 1 Support 8:10-9:30					Core 2 Support 9:33-10:52					Lunch 10:55-11:25 & ARP 11:28-12:08					Core 3 Support 12:11 - 1:31															Dismissal												
Encore	Duties	8th Grade 8:10-9:43					Coverage 9:46- 10:15	7th Grade 10:16-11:49					Lunch and Planning 11:49-1:34 Ensembles (as needed)					6th Grade 1:34-3:05					Duties																					

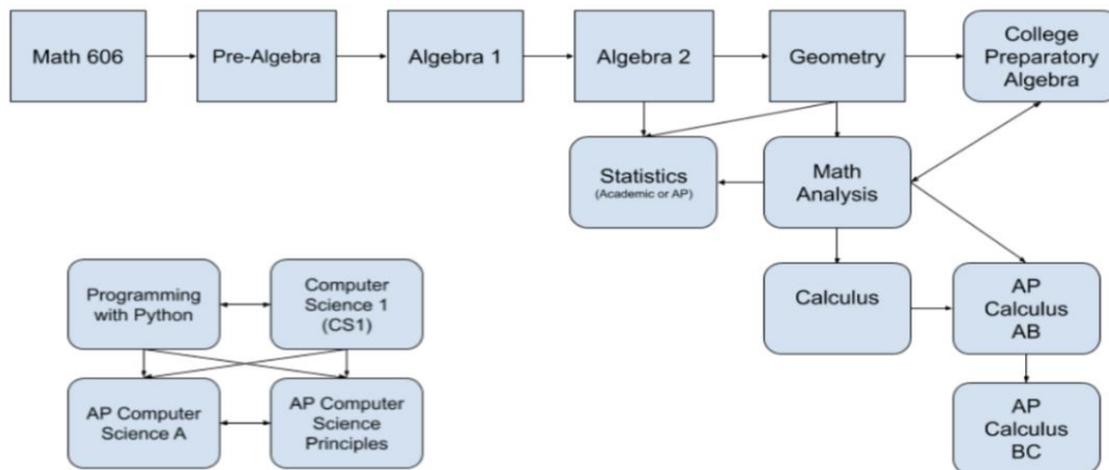


Eliminating Low-Level Tracks to Empower Students

The unintended consequence of students being placed in low-level (track 3) math classes was that it prevented them from taking some science courses, namely physics and chemistry, because they did not have the requisite math skills. Our work to eliminate low-level (track 3) classes rectified this problem as well.

UDSD Math Sequence

6-12 Math Flow Chart:





Instructional Equity to Empower High School Students

Creating Best Practice Secondary Schedules

The following are the key benefits of secondary schedules that employ best practices:

- Align the schedule to school and district priorities
- Provide greater, equitable access to rigorous courses across subjects
- Ensure time for effective academic intervention for students in need
- Offer courses that allow students to realize success in school and beyond our K-12 walls
- Maximize instructional time
- Establish and employ cost-effective staffing based on course and enrollment and existing class size targets

A Brief Overview of the Schedule Development Process

Developing a new UDHS master schedule has been a process. The following information that briefly outlines the steps in the schedule development process are illustrative, not exhaustive, in nature:

- The UDHS staff defined their shared values about scheduling and its impact on teaching and learning.
- Using the shared values, the staff articulated a vision for their new schedule by reflecting on what they want as a result of a new schedule.
- The staff established a process to move from the current reality to their desired state (i.e. a new master schedule).
- Both qualitative and quantitative data was analyzed in light of the vision. Course enrollments, staffing levels, graduation requirements, and the balance of core and non-core courses were all important to review.
- Finally, the new schedule will emerge for implementation and will be refined as needed.



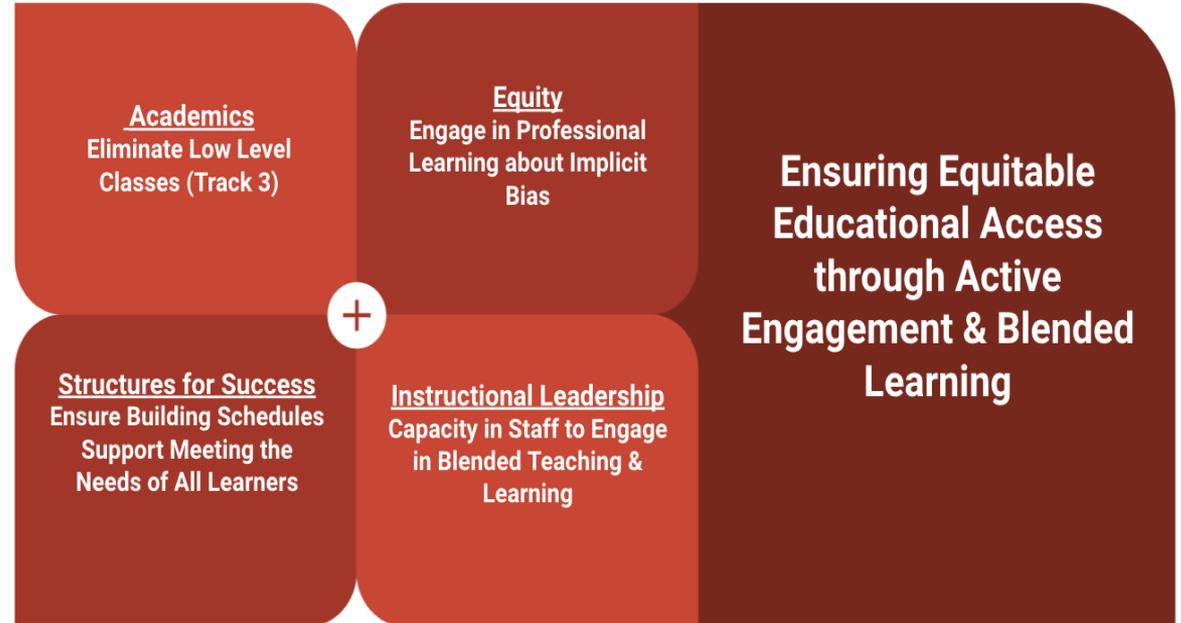
Upper Dublin School District's Keys to Success

Equity work takes the commitment of individuals at all levels of the organization.

For equity work to have a chance of being successful, there must be Board support for it.

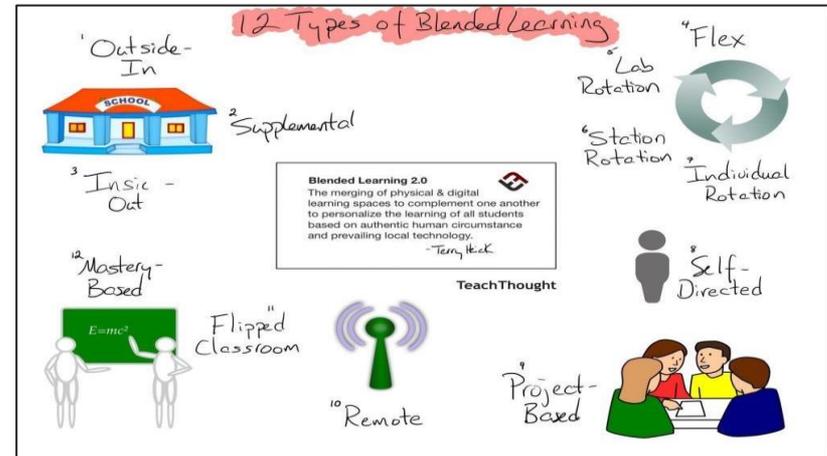
For equity work to take root, it must include students.

We are now at the point to bring our equity work to the student level.





Instructional Tools and Pedagogy that Empower Students



Programming to deliver curriculum must be rigor, relevant, and...

- Reflective of the student body
- Accessible by all students
- Promote social-emotional growth as well as academic growth

Incorporating blended learning into the Upper Dublin Instructional Model (UDIM) provided opportunities for increased student engagement because they became co-designers of learning, choosing instructional pathways and the pace of their learning in many instances.

Blended learning became extremely important during the pandemic. Blended learning allowed us to provide equity in instruction for all students whether students were learning in school or at home. Blended learning will transcend the pandemic and will become a cornerstone of the UDIM.



Upper Dublin School District - This We Believe

Systemic Change: What Was, What Is, What Will Be

- System change takes time and an understanding of how to affect change in the organization.
- Commitment from all stakeholders, internal and external, must be garnered, fostered, and appreciated.
- Continuous improvement plans must be aligned to the work that has been completed. It is easy to revert back to “what was” because it is comfortable.
- Celebrate all steps taken on the path toward the vision.
- Failure is simply additional opportunities to learn and to grow.

FIVE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT TEACHING & LEARNING IN UDSD

The District has shared our **Pillars of Practice** in various communications, in multiple presentations, and during several meetings. They are included in the chart below as a reminder for our community.

Meeting the Demands of UDSD Health & Safety Plan	Ensuring High-Quality Teaching & Learning
Promoting Equitable Practices for All Students	Maintaining a Positive and Productive Culture & Community

We believe it is important to share how these Pillars of Practice are put into action in our District! For each of the five important things to know about teaching and learning in UDSD, we have included the pillar(s) addressed by our actions.

5	<p>The previous course placement process at the secondary level has been replaced with a student-centered course selection process. Students' course selections were the result of each student's analysis of their own habits of learning, aimed at allowing students to stretch themselves academically.</p> <p>Pillar Addressed: Ensuring High-Quality Teaching & Learning; Promoting Equitable Practices for All Students</p>
4	<p>The schedules at both Sandy Run Middle School and Upper Dublin High School will continue to provide opportunities for students to access their teachers for extra assistance during the school day. By providing these opportunities during the school day, the District has made the process of accessing academic assistance equitable.</p> <p>Pillars Addressed: Ensuring High-Quality Teaching & Learning; Promoting Equitable Practices for All Students</p>
3	<p>The District continues to remove barriers to students accessing rigorous courses. Removing barriers does not mean that the District is “watering down” our curriculum. Removing barriers aligns with the District's core belief that ALL students can achieve at high levels when they are given the opportunity to do so!</p> <p>Pillars Addressed: Ensuring High-Quality Teaching & Learning; Promoting Equitable Practices for All Students; Maintaining a Positive and Productive Culture & Community</p>
2	<p>The District is engaged in an Equity Audit that focuses on all facets of the District - from policies to classroom practices and from curriculum to student and staff interactions. We hope to have the first part of the audit completed by the end of the school year. We will update the community at the June Education Committee meeting.</p> <p>Pillars Addressed: Ensuring High-Quality Teaching & Learning; Promoting Equitable Practices for All Students; Maintaining a Positive and Productive Culture & Community</p>
1	<p>The District was on a path toward Blended Learning prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Concurrent teaching (teachers instructing students in-person and virtually at the same time) is NOT synonymous with Blended Learning. During the pandemic, we have engaged in concurrent teaching at the secondary level across all courses/classes in order to not disrupt class rosters or course offerings for students. While the District will offer virtual options in the future, widespread concurrent teaching will not be part of the Upper Dublin teaching and learning model moving forward. This week's Virtual Town Hall will address what we have learned and what the future holds for our students.</p> <p>Pillars Addressed: Meeting the Demands of the UDSD Health & Safety Plan; Ensuring High-Quality Teaching & Learning; Promoting Equitable Practices for All Students; Maintaining a Positive and Productive Culture & Community</p>



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- Discuss how to involve all stakeholders in the conversation about the need for equity work. Think about how you will get everyone to believe in the need for equity!
- Discuss your District's vision of scheduling (particularly secondary scheduling) and how to best support students in school. Think about how you can leverage time during school hours to help ALL students be successful.
- Discuss how to make the curriculum reflective of your student body. Think about the power of students seeing themselves in the curriculum. Ask your leadership team to view all instructional resources through an equity lens. Challenge them to be mindful of equity at all times.
- As your leadership team how to make all decisions through an equity lens.
- Share with other Board members how to view decision making through an equity lens.



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This work is a journey - not a destination. To make the most of your journey, remember these things:

- Support Equity work
- Adopt an equity policy
- Financially support equity initiatives
- Request an equity audit
- View all board actions through an equity lens
- Thank your superintendent, leadership team, teachers, and staff for doing all the heavy lifting!



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Resources for You to Consider As You Develop Your Equity Lens

