

## Case Study:

# Partnering for Equity and Inclusion in Revere, MA

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## The Context:

Revere Public Schools' (RPS) equity journey progressed to the point of needing an external perspective to support strategic next steps. RPS serves about 7,000 students in Revere, Massachusetts, a racially/ethnically diverse community located northeast of Boston with a growing population of English learners, students with disabilities, and low-income students.

## Our Approach:

In partnership with RPS, Mi conducted a district equity audit with the objectives of:

- Gathering information about the district's current strengths and areas for growth relative to diversity, equity, and inclusive practices and policies;
- Prompting reflective conversations about the current status of diversity, equity, and inclusivity as compared to its desired state; and
- Identifying opportunities to improve equitable practices throughout the district by providing recommendations destined to focus attention and resources to fully support its diverse students, staff, and community.

## Our Partnership

RPS partnered with Mi in late 2020 to conduct a district equity audit, supported by funding from the Nellie Mae Foundation. Mi gathered and analyzed relevant district-, school-, and student-level data, artifacts, and policies to understand the district's status and approach toward ensuring equitable access, opportunities, and outcomes. Mi conducted interviews, focus groups, and surveys with students, families, school staff, central office staff, community partners, and other key stakeholders to understand the district's current strengths and areas for growth relative to equity. Mi supported the district with communication efforts and leveraged their multilingual staff support to ensure the inclusion of marginalized populations (such as immigrant families) throughout this process.

The RPS equity audit report provided Mi's findings by domain of our District Equity Framework, in addition to recommended short- and long-term next steps and a corresponding implementation guide. The district viewed the recommendations and the implementation guide as the key components of the audit that helped the district move forward to real actions, calling them "a roadmap for the success of implementing those findings." A school committee presentation and facilitated session with district and school leaders served as the hand-off of the equity audit report to RPS, setting them up for next steps in their equity journey.

## The Impact:

The equity audit created an avenue for the district to build a common understanding of district needs and the ways to further equity in the district. The equity audit process and report, as reported by the district leaders, allowed all key stakeholders to feel proud, concerned, and motivated to work toward providing equitable opportunities for all student populations in the district.

After six months, the equity audit led to a series of changes in practice, including holding professional development sessions on culturally responsive practices to build DEI awareness, developing an equity plan for each school, creating school equity teams and affinity groups, creating a bias incident reporting form, and changing family engagement policy and practices.

Assistant Superintendent of Equity and Inclusion, Dr. Lourenço Garcia, shares that almost two years after the completion of the equity audit, Revere Public Schools has been intentionally and consistently using the equity audit findings and recommendations to inform its District Improvement Plan and decision making in the areas of a) school climate, b) equity, inclusion, diversity, and belonging, c) curriculum planning and instruction, d) social and emotional learning and restorative justice practices, e) culturally responsive teaching, and f) family and community engagement.

Across the district, the eleven K-12 schools and their improvement committees have been deliberate in their strategic planning approach by prioritizing and incorporating key findings of the equity audit into school improvement and equity plans. Culturally responsive teaching rubrics and “look fors” have been developed and are being used to assess teaching and learning qualities and provide timely feedback to teachers to improve practice. In addition, the Equity Advisory Board consistently uses the equity audit report to drive systems change, especially related to district-wide education policies and practices.

Looking ahead, the district plans to conduct an equity pause in the foreseeable future to reflect on their learning journey together, remind themselves of their shared goals/practices, and name what they can do to continue to support equity and inclusion in their schools.

## Partner Insight:

“The equity audit report has become a “North Star” document that informs and guides our district vision, policies, and practices as we continue to build a more equitable, inclusive, and just school system for ALL students and families.”

Dr. Lourenço Garcia  
Revere Public Schools

## The Result:

At the completion of the audit process:

- On average, 81% of district and school leaders reported increased awareness of how systems, structures, policies, and practices impact the district's students, staff, and families, the ways and methods for creating greater equity in the district, and the experience and outcomes of marginalized populations in the district.
- On average, 82% of district and school leaders reported increased understanding of the district's strengths and areas for growth in the nine examined areas.
- On average, 79% of district and school leaders reported greater confidence in planning next steps, making decisions, building a stronger commitment, and communicating about equity topics and issues with stakeholders.

## Get in touch:



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## Partner Insight:

"They provided us with a roadmap for the success of implementing those findings... it shows that they really care about the work that they've done, and they want the district really to succeed."

District Administrator  
Revere Public Schools

