

Equity in Education

Strategic Plan
2022-2024

Hopewell Valley Regional School District

Prepared and presented by:



BACKGROUND

- The Hopewell Valley Regional School District (HVRSD) has demonstrated a long commitment to providing an equitable education for every student.
- Having met some Equity Goals and adopting some changes into policy, HVRSD is now interested in focusing on updating its strategic implementation points.
- In preparation for this strategic plan:
 - HVRSD convened its administrative leadership team and parents for a daylong retreat to discuss the needs of the District and its goals moving forward over the next three-year period.
 - Twelve interviews were conducted with District staff and parents to gain insights about what stakeholders wanted to see HVRSD do to advance equity in education. Interviews focused on the current challenges the District faces and a shared vision for the future.
- This strategic plan calls for investments in curriculum development, professional development, and community forums and communications.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

There are three strategic priority areas that the HVRSD will focus on over the next three years:

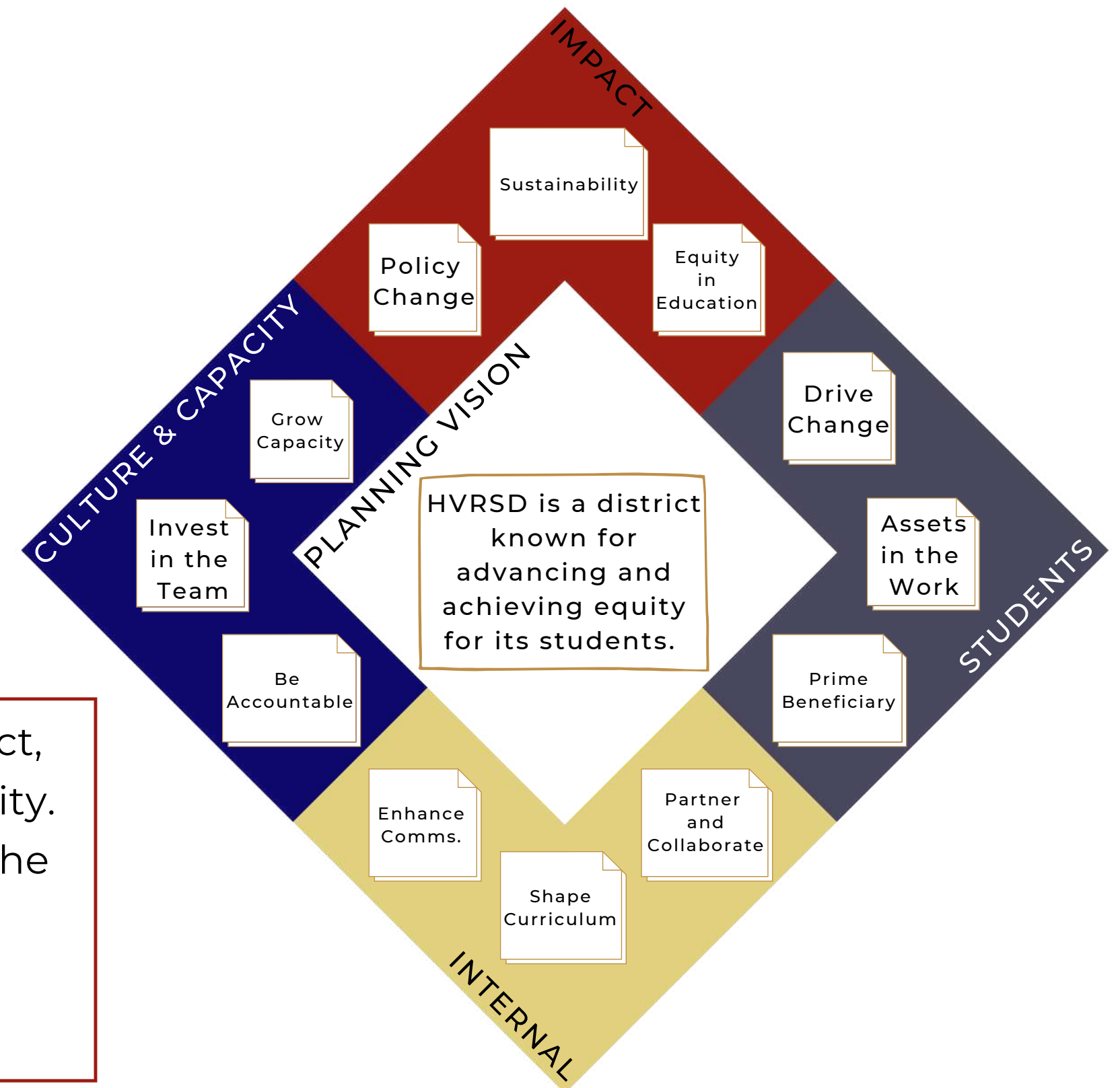
Curriculum Development

Professional Development

Community Forums and Communications

The planning vision can be achieved through intentionality and investments in four major areas:

It's important to note that for there to be a lasting impact, the groundwork must be laid around culture and capacity. As a part of that the student body must be included in the discussions that will advance this plan and more importantly equity in education districtwide. Two key components will be accountability and sustainability.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CONT'D.

Curriculum Development

All New Jersey school districts must adhere to the state guidelines, but they also have the flexibility and ability to exceed state mandates. The District can take on the challenge of making a deep and meaningful impact through its most powerful tool, curriculum.

- Evaluating data and resources for cultural responsiveness and representation across subject areas.
- Reflecting on the outcomes of the curriculum and student reactions.
- Integrating coalitions across the district (i.e., overlap between the cultural sensitivity coalition and the learning outcomes coalition).
- Redefining what success is and what it looks like for each individual student.
- Identifying gaps and the resources needed to fill them; then allocating resources appropriately.
- Integrating curriculum across subject areas (i.e., wellness teachers supporting English teachers with literature that discusses mental health).

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CONT'D.

Professional Development

The District has provided substantial professional development opportunities to advance its equity in education work over the last 5-7 years. Still, not everyone is comfortable having difficult conversations, differentiating resource allocation, and utilizing data for change.

- Evaluating current practices with an equity lens.
- Ensuring professional training opportunities are reflective of the equity in education goals.
- Engaging in authentic conversations about the realities faced in the classroom by teachers and how to equip them for success.
- Identifying benchmarks for progress after training has been provided. Exploring incentivization strategies for successful implementation.
- Increasing engagement with student groups to better understand how training transfers to the daily student experience. Ensure different student voices are heard over time to broaden students that are participating and providing feedback.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES CONT'D.

Community Forums and Communications

The other two strategic priority areas (curriculum and professional development) strengthen the District's capacity for implementation. It will also be critical to convey the work and its outcomes to all the District's stakeholder groups, both for transparency and accountability.

- Identifying creative ways to ensure that communications efforts are prioritized (the District cannot hire a public relations person). Leaning in on existing stakeholders committed to the work among teachers, students, parents, and the broader community.
- Improving the District website and digital and print correspondence to include the diversity-equity initiative (DEI) tracker, DEI mission and goals, and current events, etc.
- Curating posts, content, and media that are tangential to benchmark goals for transparency and accountability.
- Providing students with the opportunity to curate social media.
- Increase community engagement in equity in education efforts.

DASHBOARDS

These dashboards provide some milestones for the District to assess its progress and impact across the various strategic areas. In moving this plan forward, the District will find a timeline useful for implementation, as well as accountability.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

COMMUNITY FORUMS AND COMMUNICATIONS

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES DASHBOARD

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT	
Year	Milestone
SY 2021-22	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1.Survey parents, teachers, students, and staff to determine what additional equity topics/issue areas they would like to see covered in school.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a.Emphasis on culture and history.2.Assessing existing literature/books to identify opportunities to adopt new mentor texts from diverse authors and more contemporary offerings that can be paired with "classical" literary works.3.Assess existing frameworks within the curriculum that could be reinforcing white supremacy or systems of oppression.4.Utilize the HVRSD Scorecard to review and revise curriculum.5.Examine access equity districtwide for extracurriculars, AP and honors courses, clubs, etc.6.Explore eliminating weighting as part of the district's grading system.7.Implement cross collaboration/pollination opportunities for committees that are engaged in equity in education work.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a.Intra and inter school.
SY 2022-23	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1.Curate a list of age-appropriate reading lists for families to explore at home regarding equity and inclusion.2.Evaluate experience and success for all students in high rigor courses, like AP and honors. Disaggregate data by race/ethnicity, national origin, language, special education, gender, socioeconomic status, and mobility.3.Implement curriculum changes after assessment of equitable improvements in literature, content, and discussion facilitation.4.Ensure all materials for students are accessible and implement and utilize accessibility tools as needed.5.Identify key performance indicators that can be utilized as a method of evaluating success.6.Reassemble DEAC to select and adopt Culturally Responsive Teaching criteria as part of the district's teacher, paraprofessional, and administrator evaluation tools.
SY 2023-24	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1.Evaluate progress utilizing the key performance indicators as adopted by the DEAC for sustaining equity in education districtwide.2.Prioritize subgroups that have not yet shown the desired indicators of success based on the key performance indicators previously identified.3.Reevaluate prior curriculum changes to ensure that it remains inclusive and that all communities are reflected equitably.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MILESTONES DASHBOARD

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Year	Milestone
SY 2021-22	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop an ongoing and routine training calendar for equity in education related topics. 2. Continue providing teachers with guides for difficult discussions that are age appropriate. 3. Provide training for all teachers across areas of equity (i.e., LGBTQIA+, mental health, race, gender, neurodiversity, etc.). 4. Include and evaluate equity and inclusion metrics as part of annual staff and teacher evaluations. 5. Provide training during administrative meetings. 6. Identify resources for and provide mentorship and coaching opportunities for teachers in need of additional support. 7. Develop teacher competencies for inclusion in annual evaluation metrics. 8. Through HV Leads identify teacher leader cohort(s) for additional future training.
SY 2022-23	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin the development of teacher leaders utilizing a “train the trainer” model. 2. Ensure that the NJ State Amistad Commission, LGBTQ and People with Disabilities, Asian American Pacific Islander Commission and LatinX/Hispanic American histories and representation is integrated across all curricula subject areas (i.e., histories, career exploration, and representation). 3. Training/mentoring will be consistent for all teachers. By the end of year 2, all new teachers will have met the same competencies as assessed by the annual metrics included in evaluation. 4. Equip staff with digital literature and media resources for difficult conversations that are curated externally. 5. Begin cross pollination between schools in the District for teacher training and support. 6. Provide a comprehensive outlook for the year of ways to discuss equity sensitive topics in age-appropriate ways.
SY 2023-24	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess teacher and staff training success based on key performance indicators. 2. Implement targeted training approach for teachers and staff that have disaggregated data groupings that are not achieving equity. 3. Continue ongoing and routine training with the goal of developing an additional cohort of teacher leaders.

COMM. FORUMS AND COMMS. MILESTONES DASHBOARD

COMMUNITY FORUMS AND COMMUNICATIONS	
Year	Milestone
SY 2021-22	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Communicate with the broader community the work that lies ahead.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Secure feedback. Have various input methods available for families and community members.b. Develop new vision and mission statements for equity in education work districtwide.2. Develop a communications strategy for not only equity in education work, but the District more broadly.3. Identify individual(s) responsible for communications, curation, and dissemination via all the appropriate mediums.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Engage students and provide some autonomy for content creation ideas and sharing, when appropriate.4. Engage in cross district conversations for mutual benefit regarding exposure, resource sharing, and best practices utilizing the Equity Council.5. With a commitment to transparency, provide public access of all curriculum guides for the District to the general public. Distribution will begin with a phased release on the District website.
SY 2022-23	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Develop a cadre of families that can serve as stewards and ambassadors for the District regarding communications.2. Develop and implement an equity series that provides educational information to the broader community about the topic and how it emerges in education.3. Update the District website to include a segment dedicated to the equity in education work.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Include a dashboard that shows works to date and future work. Both for transparency and accountability.4. Continue the phased release of curriculum guides on the District website.
SY 2023-24	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ensure that the desired levels of communications are being sustained.2. Share successes from the plan implementation period in a culminating report or dashboard on the District website.3. Increase the District presence statewide in matters pertaining to equity in education, elevating the District's visibility in this work.4. Finalize the release of curriculum guides by ensuring that all guides are publicly available on the District website by the end of the SY.

RISK ANALYSIS

As a result of current crises in this country, many districts are finding themselves assessing their equity in education work. HVRSD has the advantage of the resources, time, and capacity they have already built and invested. The goals and objectives outlined within this plan are articulated in the pursuit of advancement in this work.

It will be critical moving forward towards implementation that the District acknowledge and prioritize the sources required to advance the work. It is also important to note that many of these goals and objectives bear repeating year after year. Although some of the goals build upon each other, others once implemented require ongoing attention and enhancement. Year after year the District will need to identify its priority areas to ensure that the work does not become stagnant or complacent. With that, it is also important to note that modifications to this plan are not failures, rather they are adjustments to meet the realities faced by the District at that time.

RISK ANALYSIS CONT'D.

Additional risk factors to keep in mind during the implementation of this plan:

- We live in an evolving world and landscape where inequities and fissures in society are becoming more prevalent every day.
- External partnership will be critical to the success of some goals. Nurturing relationships takes time and energy that don't always culminate in the results we anticipated or desired.
- Data management and analysis is critical, yet time consuming work. Elevating its importance for progress marking and level setting will be necessary.
- Staff turnover requires us to continue training at levels that provide nascent educators and administrators in mind as well as those that have remained in the district and can benefit from advanced tools for implementation.
- The District cannot sacrifice the few for the sake of the many. Every community served by the District is critical and must be paid attention to. Meet students and families where they are. Ensure that resources are tailored for work at the individual level, as well as in groups.

APPENDIX A: SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- Students - they are knowledgeable and teach parents, administrators, and teachers everyday about DEI.
- From superintendents to supervisors, leadership has embraced the uniqueness of each student and sees them and works with each student as an individual with their own experiences.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Messaging to the broader community.
- Curriculum- a space to include social justice subject areas.
- Our families - their input, their perception, and their expectations.
- Highlighting all types of diversity.
- Goals that exceed the state mandates.

HVRSD SWOT Analysis

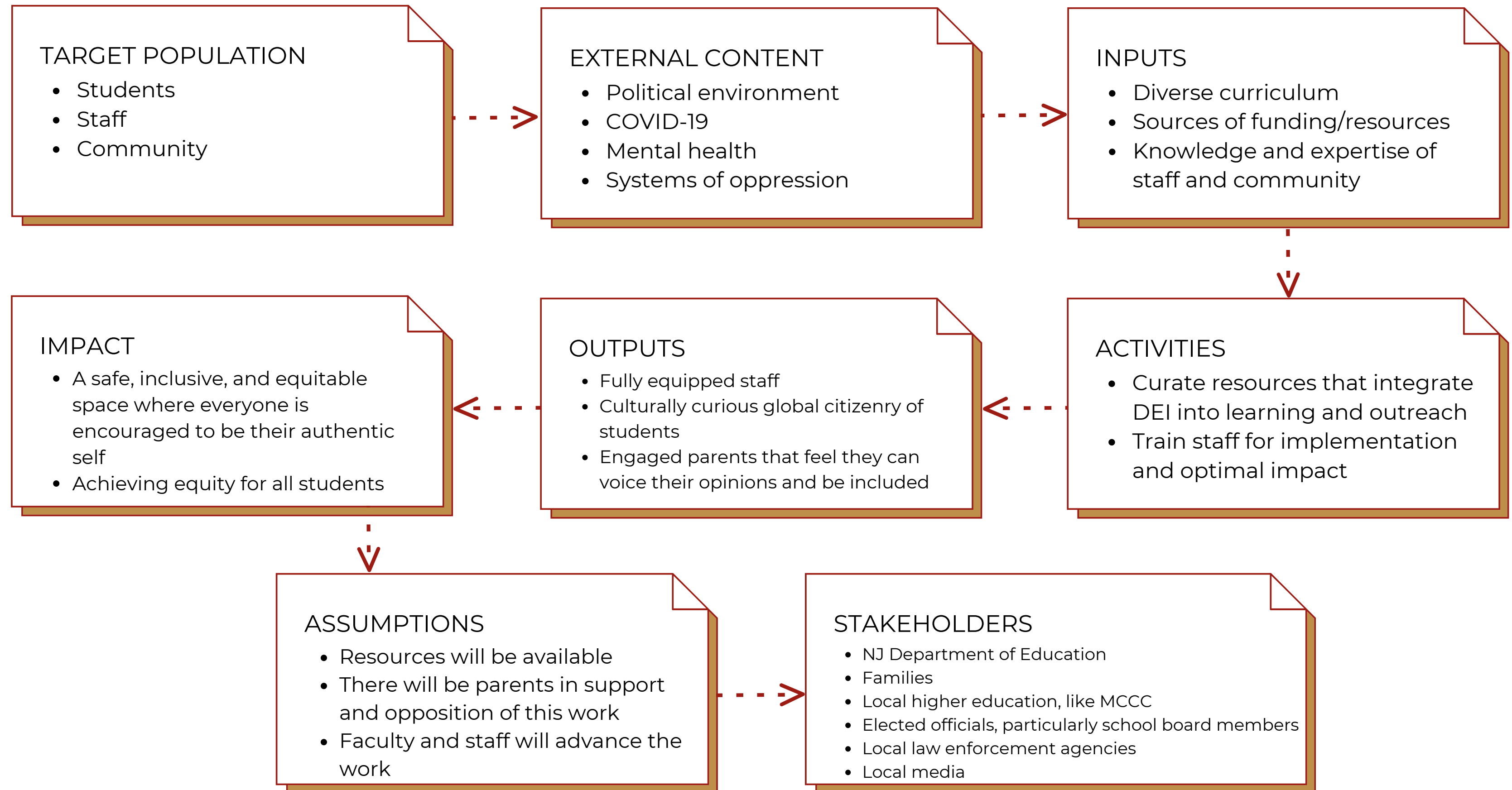
WEAKNESSES

- Lack of general diversity- the “bubble”.
- Afraid of “getting it wrong”.
- Putting our goals into action.
- Having to look for DEI goals and efforts to know what is going on. It should be clear to everyone what the district is doing.

THREATS

- Political divisiveness.
- Lack of diversity within the community.
- Lack of diversity in AP and honors classes.
- Pushback from parents, at times.
- Sustainability of these efforts.

APPENDIX B: THEORY OF CHANGE



LIVING DOCUMENT

HVRSD has a proven track record of making strides in these efforts and is well equipped to take on the work that this plan outlines. It is important to note that this equity in education strategic plan will not only be measured by meeting individual goals but also by the broader achievements that each individual goal produces towards long-term equity in education at the District level.

This plan is a living document that can be modified and adjusted if priorities and timelines change.

EQUITY IN EDUCATION

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