

Calhoun County School District



# Calhoun County School District Equity Plan

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School Board Approved – July 12, 2022

Dr. Debbie Williams

2022 - 2023

**Calhoun County School District Equity Plan**

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## Forward

Calhoun County School District is committed to the success of every student, to ensuring equity and excellence for all students, and to closing the achievement gap. All students are entitled to a high quality educational experience that will prepare them to achieve their post-secondary goals.

While the district consistently receives a high rating from the Florida Department of Education, it continues to have the state's widest achievement gap between race/ethnicity and subgroups. The overall district grade in 2022 for the Calhoun County School District was a B. According to [edudata.fldoe.org](http://edudata.fldoe.org), the district grades for race/ethnicity are:

American Indian/Native American – N/A  
Asian – N/A  
Black/African American – D  
Hispanic – C  
Multiracial – C  
Native Hawaiian/Island Pacifier – N/A  
White – B

The district grades for subgroups are:

Economically Disadvantaged – C  
English Language Learners – N/A  
Foster – N/A  
Homeless – B  
Migrant – N/A  
Military Family Student – N/A  
Students with Disabilities – D

The district grades for gender are:

Female – B  
Male - B

This document represents the first step of a long-term plan to reduce the achievement gap across the district and in each school through a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, which includes a diverse workforce.

# Equity Belief Statement

It is our belief that all students can meet and exceed high performance (proficiency) standards, regardless of where they live, their family's income, their race, gender, disability or any other factor. All students should be provided with excellent teachers who are culturally responsive and set high expectations, a high-quality learning environment, and equitable resources to ensure that they are reaching their full potential.

## **Educational Equity Definition**

Education Equity: Providing equitable access to opportunities, support, and resources for every child by intentionally recognizing and eliminating past and present barriers, as well as the predictability of academic success based on race, economics, disabilities, limited English, and or any other circumstances.

Calhoun County School District' Equity Plan will be reviewed and revised on a regular basis to ensure it is meeting the needs of the students it is designed to support.

## **Foundational Statements**

The following statements serve as a scaffolding/rationale for determining the equity plan's short and long-term strategies, its measureable goals and outcomes, and its accountability timelines.

- 'Equal' is not 'equitable';
- Race must not be a predictor of success;
- Closing the achievement gap between the highest- and lowest-performing students is an achievable and essential goal; and
- Calhoun County School District accepts the responsibility of addressing inequities and ensuring that all students are provided with the opportunity to succeed in school and reach their full potential

# Calhoun County Profile

Calhoun County is a rural county in Northwest Florida bordered by the Apalachicola River on the east. Calhoun has four schools serving students in grades PreK - 12: Altha Public School, Blountstown Elementary School, Blountstown High School, and Carr Elementary and Middle School. The students of Calhoun County are residents of a rural community with a population of 14,324. The racial composition of the community is predominantly Caucasian (82.1%) with approximately (12.8%) African American, 1.5% Native American, .9% Asian, .2% Native Hawaiian, 6.3 % Hispanic, and 2.5% persons reporting two or more races.

## **Calhoun County Quick Facts (As of 2018)**

- 20.0% of the population of Calhoun County is under the age of 18.
- 20.3% of the population of Calhoun County is below the poverty level.
- 77.9% of the population of Calhoun County has a high school degree.
- 9.1% of the population of Calhoun County has a bachelor's degree
- 6.2% of the population of Calhoun County speaks a language other than English.
- The median household income in 2021 was \$38,037.

## **History of Calhoun County School District**

The Calhoun County School District has a long history beginning in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Calhoun Countians believed in public education. Prior to 1927 Calhoun County, as it is known now was much larger, going all the way to the Gulf of Mexico at Port St. Joe. Before 1920 as many as thirty district schools accommodated the pupils in small communities. According to early school board records some of the county's schools were Ocheesee, County Line, Iola, Sunshine, Chipola, Popular Head, Early, Oak grove, Cypress Creek, Hansfords Mill, Poley Bridge, Port St. Joe, Camphead, Buckhorn, Macedonia, Frink, Seaview, Mt. Zion, Lockey Lake, Altha, Scott's Ferry, Carr, Piney Pond, Wewahitchka, Traylor's Creek, Shiloh, Wetappo, Pitts, Farmdale, Kinard, Chason, Pleasant Grove, New Hope, Magnolia, Clarksville, Caldonia, Marysville, Melvin, and Barfield. No school in the county went beyond the ninth grade until about 1912. By the early 1920's four high schools were built in the county, Port St. Joe, Wewahitchka, Blountstown and Altha and later Frink and Kinard built brick buildings in their particular area.

## Demographics

Calhoun County School District serves approximately 2176 students and employs an instructional staff of 310 as of June 2020. The district operates four schools.

- Altha Public School (Pre-K – 12)
- Blountstown Elementary School (Pre-K – 5)
- Blountstown High School (6 – 12)
- Carr Elementary and Middle School (Pre-K – 8)

Approximately 77.1% of its students are white, 10.7% are African American, 5.5% are Hispanic, and 6.2% are Multiracial, and .5% are identified by the state of Florida as 'Other.' 52% of the students are males and 48% of the students are females. 90.1% of Calhoun County's students qualify for free or reduced priced meals. Students with disabilities made up 22.5% of the student population, with 3% of the population being homeless.

# Critical Needs

## Academic

The academic achievement of African-American, English Language Learners, and Students with Disabilities is consistently below other race/ethnicities and subgroups.

Test Subject Area 2019	White %	African American %	White/African American Achievement Gap 2021
ELA	57%	24%	23%
Math	54%	25%	29%
Science	59%	24%	35%
Social Studies	71%	39%	32%

Test Subject Area 2019	Students without Disabilities	Students with Disabilities	Students without Disabilities/Students with Disabilities Achievement Gap 2021
ELA	63%	18%	45%
Math	57%	22%	35%
Science	60%	31%	29%
Social Studies	73%	36%	37%

Three out of the four schools in the district were identified for Targeted Support and Improvement (TS&I) because one subgroup that missed the target of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Federal Index. The students with disabilities subgroup, Black/African American sub group and multiracial subgroup were below the ESSA target of 41% in the 2021 – 2022 school year.

Student with Disabilities	
School	Subgroup Federal Index
Altha Public School	N/A
Blountstown Elementary School	30%
Blountstown High School	40%
Carr Elementary and Middle School	18%

Black/African American	
School	Subgroup Federal Index
Altha Public School	N/A
Blountstown Elementary School	30%
Blountstown High School	36%
Carr Elementary and Middle School	N/A

Multiracial	
School	Subgroup Federal Index
Altha Public School	N/A
Blountstown Elementary School	36%
Blountstown High School	N/A
Carr Elementary and Middle School	N/A

African-American students are underrepresented in Advanced Placement (AP), Dual enrollment and other academically-rigorous courses and programs.

#### **Diversity of Work Force**

During the 2021 – 2022 school year, 92% of Calhoun County School District teachers identify as white, 3% identify as African American, 1% identify as Hispanic, and 4% identify with other. The racial demographics of the district’s teachers do not reflect the racial demographics of students within the district, or in the community, which may lead to a lack of cultural understanding between students, their families and teachers. 84% of the Calhoun County School District teachers identify as female and 16% identify as male.



# Parent and Community Engagement

Educational equity is critical to improving the quality of life for students, their families, and all citizens. Recognizing that educators cannot and should not operate in isolation, the district is committed to ongoing communication and collaboration with stakeholders throughout the community to achieve educational equity. Parents are encouraged to be an active participant in their child's education. Someone of the activities that parents invite to participate in are:

- Open House
- Parent Conferences
- Muffins for Mom
- Dads take you student to school day
- Donuts for Dad
- School Advisory Councils
- STEM Open House
- Course Schedule Selection Meetings
- FASFA Workshops
- Senior Parent Night
- Freshman Parent Night
- Soaring Into Kindergarten
- Kindergarten Acceleration Open House

# Strategies

Student Achievement – Goal 1	Advanced Coursework – Goal 2	Diverse Workforce – Goal 3
Provide an instructional model that ensures rigor and culturally relevant instruction for all students.	Ensure that all black students demonstrating the potential to succeed in an AP or dual enrollment course are scheduled into the appropriate level course with support provided.	Implement Florida Future Educators of America clubs at high school level and identify future educators among enrolled black high school students.
Provide additional strategically focused academic interventions and flexible instructional delivery in schools with high minority enrollments.	Provide training to all school counselors in the use of data from district and state assessments to select appropriate accelerated course options for students.	Establish strong relationships with historically black colleges and universities. The district recruiter will attend the annual Florida Fund for Minority Teachers (FFMT) Annual Teacher Recruitment and Professional Development Symposium
Provide parent workshops at schools to focus on engaging families in their child’s education through understanding student data, available resources, and personalized learning plans	Identify and recruit students beginning in 7th grade to promote diversity and ensure access to higher-level courses at the high school level.	Attend annual job fairs, including virtual job fairs. Continue early recruitment fairs for high need schools targeting instructional hires of color and male gender. Interview committees should be as diverse as possible.
Ensure teachers have access to real-time data specific to students with personalized plans in order to have effective data chats that would guide instruction.		

# Goal 1: Student Achievement

Goal 1a: Student Achievement – Raise achievement for all students with an emphasis on increasing the achievement level of African American students by 3 percentage points each year.

Student Achievement	Goal Manager: Tracie Taylor, Director Curriculum & School Improvement	Goal 1a: Raise the achievement of African American learners in reading (ELA) and math by 3 percentage points each year.
Current Conditions	Calhoun County School District has a current achievement gap of reading in 21% and math in 15% between the number of white students scoring Level 3 or above and the number of African American students scoring Level 3 or above on the Florida Standards Assessment. According to 2019 data results, 43% of African American learners score a level 3 or above in ELA and 52% score a level 3 or above in math on FSA.	
Short-Range Target	Raise the achievement in ELA-Reading and Math proficiency for African American students by 3 percentage points each year on state assessments while increasing the proficiency level for all students in ELA and Math through the instruction strategies in every school.	
Long-Range Target	Increase the proficiency for African American students and decrease the gap on state assessments by 3 percentage points each year with the long-range target of high proficiency (level 3 or higher) for all students.	
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	
Academic Rigor/Standards-Based Instruction	Conduct individual parent data chats twice a year for grades PreK – 10	
	Conduct individual parent data chat for Career Technical Education students.	
	Provide small group interventions during the school day, using experienced instructional personnel, through a pullout model (Spire) at the elementary level. (Title 1 funding).	
	<u>To introduce students to the workforce dual enrollment programs and academic dual enrollment programs at Chipola College at an early age 5th and 7th graders will be taken on a trip to Gulf Coast State College.</u>	

	<u>10th and 11th grade students will be taken by bus to Chipola College to visit the 6 workforce dual enrollment programs and to the Florida Panhandle Technical College.</u>
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>
Early Warning Systems/Effective Monitoring Systems	Develop a learner profile and personalized learning plan for all students who are not on track to graduate or at risk of retention.
	Provide each school’s leadership team with a monthly data report which includes academic, discipline and attendance information specific to students who are not on track for promotion or graduation for development or revision of the student’s individual profile and personalized plan.
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>
Learning Programs/Interventions	Provide students who are not on track to graduate access to a rigorous and engaging credit recovery program during school hours.
	Expand and monitor new methods of differentiated instruction including computer-based programs that assess student progress toward benchmarks and provide teachers with information, activities, and lesson plans targeting students’ specific areas of weakness.
	Administer College Board PSAT (correlates to FSA and SAT) to all grade students in the district. Use resulting data reports as formative assessments to guide classroom instruction, create individualized college and career learning plans for every student.

Goal 1b: Student Achievement – Raise achievement for all students with an emphasis on increasing the achievement level of Students with Disabilities by 3 percentage points each year.

Student Achievement	Goal Manager: Tracie Taylor, Director Curriculum & School Improvement and Staci Williams, Director of Exceptional Student Education	Goal 1b: Raise the achievement of Student With Disabilities learners in reading (ELA) and math by 3 percentage points each year.
Current Conditions	Calhoun County School District has a current achievement gap of reading in 44% and math in 44% between the number of white students scoring Level 3 or above and the number of Students with Disabilities scoring Level 3 or above on the Florida Standards Assessment. According to 2019 data results, 29% of Students with Disabilities learners score a level 3 or above in ELA and 33% score a level 3 or above in math on FSA.	
Short-Range Target	Raise the achievement in ELA-Reading and Math proficiency for Students with Disabilities by 3 percentage points each year on state assessments while increasing the proficiency level for all students in ELA and Math through the instruction strategies in every school.	
Long-Range Target	Increase the proficiency for Students with Disabilities and decrease the gap on state assessments by 3 percentage points each year with the long-range target of high proficiency (level 3 or higher) for all students.	
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	
Academic Rigor/Standards-Based Instruction	Conduct individual parent data chats twice a year for grades PreK – 10	
	Conduct individual parent data chat for Career Technical Education students.	
	Provide small group interventions during the school day, using experienced instructional personnel, through a pullout model (Spire) at the elementary level. (Title 1 funding).	
	<u>To introduce students to the workforce dual enrollment programs and academic dual enrollment programs at Chipola College at an</u>	

	<p><u>early age 5th and 7th graders will be taken on a trip to Gulf Coast State College.</u></p> <p><u>10th and 11th grade students will be taken by bus to Chipola College to visit the 6 workforce dual enrollment programs and to the Florida Panhandle Technical College.</u></p>
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>
Early Warning Systems/Effective Monitoring Systems	<p>Develop a learner profile and personalized learning plan for all students who are not on track to graduate or at risk of retention.</p> <p>Provide each school's leadership team with a monthly data report which includes academic, discipline and attendance information specific to students who are not on track for promotion or graduation for development or revision of the student's individual profile and personalized plan.</p>

Goal 1c: Student Achievement – Raise achievement for all students with an emphasis on increasing the achievement level of English Language Learner by 3 percentage points each year.

Student Achievement	Goal Manager: Tracie Taylor, Director Curriculum & School Improvement	Goal 1c: Raise the achievement of English Language Learners in reading (ELA) and math by 3 percentage points each year.
Current Conditions	Calhoun County School District English Language Learner sub group count is too low to make a comparison. According to 2019 data results, 20% of English Language Learners score a level 3 or above in ELA and 50% score a level 3 or above in math on FSA.	
Short-Range Target	Raise the achievement in ELA-Reading and Math proficiency for English Language Learners by 3 percentage points each year on state assessments while increasing the proficiency level for all students in ELA and Math through the instruction strategies in every school.	
Long-Range Target	Increase the proficiency for English Language Learners and decrease the gap on state assessments by 3 percentage points each year with the long-range target of high proficiency (level 3 or higher) for all students.	
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	
Academic Rigor/Standards-Based Instruction	Conduct individual parent data chats twice a year for grades PreK – 10	
	Conduct individual parent data chat for Career Technical Education students.	
	Provide small group interventions during the school day, using experienced instructional personnel, through a pullout model (Spire) at the elementary level. (Title 1 funding).	
	<u>To introduce students to the workforce dual enrollment programs and academic dual enrollment programs at Chipola College at an early age 5th and 7th graders will be taken on a trip to Gulf Coast State College.</u>	
	<u>10th and 11th grade students will be taken by bus to Chipola College to visit the 6 workforce dual enrollment programs and to the Florida Panhandle Technical College.</u>	
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	

Early Warning Systems/Effective Monitoring Systems	Develop a learner profile and personalized learning plan for all students who are not on track to graduate or at risk of retention.
	Provide each school's leadership team with a monthly data report which includes academic, discipline and attendance information specific to students who are not on track for promotion or graduation for development or revision of the student's individual profile and personalized plan.

## Goal 2: Advance Coursework

Goal 2a: Advanced Coursework – Increase participation of African American students in advanced and accelerated courses and programs by 2 percentage points each year.

Advanced Coursework	Goal Manager: Dr, Debbie Williams, Assistant Superintendent/Equity Officer	Goal 2a: Increase participation of African American students in advanced and accelerated courses and programs by 2 percentage points each year.
Current Conditions	In the 2020-21 school year, 55% of students in Calhoun County academic programs were African American. In accelerated high school courses, the number of African American students represented 0% in Advanced Placement (AP), and 15% in Dual Enrollment.	
Short-Range Target	Increase the participation rate for African American students by 2 percentage points in Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment Courses.	
Long-Range Target	Calhoun County Schools will increase the percentage of African American students enrolled in dual enrollment courses, by 2 percentage points.	
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	
Academic Rigor/Standards-Based Instruction	Ensure that all African American students demonstrating the potential to succeed in an AP or dual enrollment course are scheduled into the appropriate level course.	
	Provide training to all school counselors in the use of data from district, state, and informal	



	assessments to select appropriate accelerated course options for students.
	<u>To introduce students to the workforce dual enrollment programs and academic dual enrollment programs at Chipola College at an early age 5th and 7th graders will be taken on a trip to Gulf Coast State College.</u>
	<u>10th and 11th grade students will be taken by bus to Chipola College to visit the 6 workforce dual enrollment programs and to the Florida Panhandle Technical College.</u>
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>
Learning Programs/Interventions	Identify and recruit potential dual enrollment students beginning in 7th grade to promote diversity and ensure access to higher level / rigorous courses at the high school level.
	Actively engage parents in class/course selection.
	Implement a mentoring program.

Goal 2b: Advanced Coursework – Increase participation of Hispanic students in advanced and accelerated courses and programs by 2 percentage points each year.

Advanced Coursework	Goal Manager: Dr, Debbie Williams, Assistant Superintendent/Equity Officer	Goal 2b: Increase participation of Hispanic students in advanced and accelerated courses and programs by 2 percentage points each year.
Current Conditions	In the 2020-21 school year, 78% of students in Calhoun County academic programs were Hispanic. In accelerated high school courses, the number of Hispanic represented 0% in Advanced Placement (AP), and 27% in Dual Enrollment.	
Short-Range Target	Increase the participation rate for Hispanic students by 2 percentage points in Advanced Placement and Dual Enrollment courses.	
Long-Range Target	Calhoun County Schools will increase the percentage of Hispanic students enrolled in dual enrollment courses, by 2 percentage points.	
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	
Academic Rigor/Standards-Based Instruction	Ensure that all Hispanic students demonstrating the potential to succeed in an AP or dual	

	enrollment course are scheduled into the appropriate level course.
	Provide training to all school counselors in the use of data from district, state, and informal assessments to select appropriate accelerated course options for students.
	<u>To introduce students to the workforce dual enrollment programs and academic dual enrollment programs at Chipola College at an early age 5th and 7th graders will be taken on a trip to Gulf Coast State College.</u>
	<u>10th and 11th grade students will be taken by bus to Chipola College to visit the 6 workforce dual enrollment programs and to the Florida Panhandle Technical College.</u>
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>
Learning Programs/Interventions	Identify and recruit potential dual enrollment students beginning in 7th grade to promote diversity and ensure access to higher level / rigorous courses at the high school level.
	Actively engage parents in class/course selection.
	Implement a mentoring program.

## Goal 3: Diversity of Work Force

Goal 3: Diversity of Work Force – Increase the number of newly hired instructional staff members and administrators of color and male gender by 2% each year until the number closely mirrors the district’s population by race/ethnicity and gender.

Diversity of Work Force	Goal Manager: Dr. Debbie Williams, Assistant Superintendent/Human Resources	Goal 3: Increase the number of instructional staff members and administrators of color and male gender to closely mirror that of county’s population by race/ethnicity.
Current Conditions	Calhoun County School District’s employs teachers, district level administrators, principals, and assistant principals. 3% of the teachers, 14% of the district-level administrators, 25% of the principals, and 0% of the assistant principals are African American.	
Short-Term Target	Increase the number of instructional staff and administrators of color and male gender by 2% points a year.	
Long-Term Target	Increase the number of newly hired instructional staff members and administrators of color and male gender by 2%.	
<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	
Hiring/Recruitment	Establish strong relationships with historically black colleges and universities. Human Resources Department will expand engagement level with local college/university internship programs.	
	Attend annual job fairs, including virtual job fairs. Continue early recruitment fairs for high need schools targeting instructional hires of color and male gender. Interview committees should be as diverse as possible.	
	As part of Calhoun County School District’s Grow Your Own program, establish Florida Future Educators of America clubs at each high school. District Participation in the Florida Fund for Minority Teachers (FFMT) Annual Teacher Recruitment and Professional Development Symposium.	
	Development of ongoing broadcast public service announcements aimed at recruiting teachers to the district.	

<b>Focus Area</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>
Retention/Support	Continue mentoring program for new teachers. Provide targeted professional development to support teacher needs and to build their confidence as educators.

## **Educational Measure of Success of Goals**

1. Equitable comparable high academic proficiency (level 3 or above on FSA) and other positive trends of student outcomes within all subgroups of students.
2. Equitable inclusion and access for advanced programs and coursework.
3. Equitable Opportunity to higher order learning (black and Hispanic student enrollment with targeted increases in rigorous classes and programs)
4. Equitable access to career technical education (explore and expand options resulting in increased accessibility opportunities for underrepresented groups of students)

## Conclusion

In conclusion, Calhoun County School District recognizes and embraces our responsibility for the academic and career success of ALL students and we must take this level of responsibility and accountability as a critical call to action. District programs and strategies must be reviewed through an equity lens and monitored to ensure positive impact for each and every student. Rising to the challenge results in the creation of bright futures for all.

The Board approved version of the Calhoun County School District Equity Plan will be reviewed and adjusted as needed. The plan will serve as a guidance tool to direct our current and future equity efforts. A continuous model of improvement will assist our district efforts in capturing progress as well as identifying the need for redirection of programs, resources, and human capital efforts contained in the plan. The district recognizes that the level of equity effort needed will require commitment, acceptance of change, and growth from all stakeholders. We must stay deliberate in our actions to ensure success for every student.