

Module 1: Discussion Forum

I work for a large charter network in Denver (we have 16 schools; 8 middle & 8 high) & so our mission/vision is for all of the schools in the network. We serve 7500 students in the Denver metro area, so our population of quite diverse. Our mission is to "transform urban public education by eliminating educational inequity and preparing all students for success in college and the 21st century" (Denver Schools of Science and Technology [DSST], 2025). This mission statement is then followed with a commitment to equity which reads: "Ensuring that outcomes of DSST students are high-achieving and do not correlate with any predictable social or cultural factors. This is achieved through interrupting inequitable practices, examining biases and other root causes of inequities, and actively valuing diversity and inclusion" (DSST, 2025). The mission statement is very clearly aligned to DEI language and principals focusing on the commitment to "eliminating educational inequity" and that students' paths in life do not correlate with "predictable social or cultural factors." This is language that we return to often in conversation as leaders and use as a driving force in strategic planning. Because each school community is so different, this doesn't always look the same in each place. Most often, I have seen this look like everything from no opt out in class to restorative justice conversations before punitive discipline to an insistence of high-rigor instruction no matter what.

At the network level, and in my team, this looks like a lot of data-analysis including disaggregated differentials to ensure that we are discussing the students who have been historically impacted by educational inequities the most first. However, I do not see this language as clearly in our instructional vision. This vision reads: "We believe all students can learn and achieve and that it is our collective responsibility to ensure that they do. Achieving our mission to ensure all students are prepared for success in college and the 21st century depends

upon our commitment to: (1) our Graduate Profile, (2) Equitable, Rigorous Instruction, and (3) Student Centered Learning." (Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum, 2025). When I dive further into the vision itself, it is clear that the "equitable, rigorous instruction" is meant to align with eliminating educational inequity as we work to incorporate new high-quality instructional materials/curricula across all grade-levels and contents. Additionally, "student centered learning" stems from trauma informed teaching practices.

References:

DSST. (2025, June). *About Us*. DSST Public Schools.
<https://www.dsstpublicschools.org/about-us>

Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum. (2025, May). DSST instructional vision. Denver [Internal Report]. DSST Public Schools