

# Green Book Initiative

## Findings Report for Englewood Public Schools District

### Overview

The Green Book Initiative has formally reviewed the Englewood Public Schools District and has placed this district in a status of **Exodus Governance**. Our comprehensive review is based on several critical criteria essential to curating a psychologically safe educational environment. The findings are alarming and point to systemic issues that are causing significant harm to Black students, families, staff, and the broader community.

### Findings Report:

*Due to the Englewood Public Schools Board of Education opting to abstain from engaging in the Green Book Initiative process, this report does NOT include the recommendations from the Green Book Initiative Committee*

#### **Curriculum Inclusivity and Representation (Score: 2)**

- Findings: The curriculum in Englewood Public Schools is severely lacking in inclusivity and fails to adequately acknowledge or celebrate the contributions, history, and cultures of Black individuals. This lack of representation contributes to a learning environment where Black students do not see themselves reflected in their education, leading to feelings of exclusion and the perpetuance of historic systemic impact.
- Impact: The absence of a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum denies Black students the opportunity to connect with their heritage and history, which is crucial for their self-identity and self-worth. It perpetuates a biased educational narrative that overlooks the significant contributions of Black individuals and communities.

#### **Equity in Disciplinary Actions (Score: 3)**

- Findings: While there are some measures in place to ensure equity in disciplinary actions, significant disparities remain. The use of punitive measures over restorative practices is still prevalent, which disproportionately affects Black students.
- Impact: Disparities in disciplinary actions contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline, where Black students are unfairly targeted and punished more harshly than their peers. This creates a hostile school environment and undermines trust between Black students and school authorities.

#### **Staff and Leadership Representation (Score: 2)**

- Findings: The staff and leadership of Englewood Public Schools do not adequately reflect the diversity of the student body, particularly the Black community. There is a noticeable lack of Black individuals in positions of authority and influence.

# Green Book Initiative

- Impact: The underrepresentation of Black staff and leaders means that Black students lack role models and mentors who understand their experiences. This gap can hinder their academic and personal development and perpetuate a sense of alienation.

## **Engagement with Black Families and Communities (Score: 1)**

- Findings: There is minimal engagement with Black families and communities. Feedback mechanisms are either absent or ineffective, leading to the exclusion of Black voices in decision-making processes.
- Impact: The lack of engagement and partnership with Black families undermines the school's ability to address the unique needs of Black students. It creates a disconnect between the school and the community, further systemically impacting Black families and limiting their involvement in their children's education.

## **Treatment and Involvement of Black School Board Members (Score: 1)**

- Findings: Black school board members are not equitably represented in leadership roles, and their contributions are often overlooked or undervalued. There is a lack of meaningful inclusion in decision-making processes.
- Impact: This lack of representation and respect for Black school board members stifles diverse perspectives and hinders the development of policies that could address the needs of the Black community effectively.

## **Policies and Practices (Score: 1)**

- Findings: The district's policies and practices regarding anti-discrimination are inadequate. There are insufficient procedures for reporting and addressing incidents of racism, aggression, and bias.
- Impact: The failure to implement robust anti-discrimination policies leaves Black students, staff, and families vulnerable to ongoing harm. This creates an unsafe and unwelcoming environment that hinders the academic and personal growth of Black students and affects their overall well-being.

## **Support Systems (Score: 1)**

- Findings: The current support systems for Black students in Englewood Public Schools are inadequate, lacking specific academic, social, and emotional support.
- Impact: Black students are experiencing higher rates of academic difficulties due to lack of targeted support.

## **Physical Environment (Score: 3)**

- Findings: The physical environment is generally safe but lacks cultural relevance and inclusivity. Inadequate monitoring and maintenance in some areas raise safety concerns.
- Impact: Lack of cultural representation has led to feelings of alienation among Black students and cultural alienation.

# Green Book Initiative

## 2023-2024 Parent and Student Handbook Policy Review

After conducting our empathic listening series with students, staff, parents, families, and the community of the Englewood Public Schools District, we integrated these narratives into the review of the Parent and Student Handbook. ***Here are specific ways in which Black students can fall victim to bias, racism, and discrimination based on the content of the Englewood Schools Parent and Student Handbook for 2023-2024:***

*We immediately noticed that this handbook is only available in two languages, which excludes students, parents, and families who speak other languages from fully engaging with the content.*

### 1. Equal Education Opportunities (Board Policy JB)

- **Bias in Curriculum and Materials:** Although the policy mentions reviewing curriculum guides, textbooks, and supplemental materials for discriminatory bias, there may be instances where these materials still reflect stereotypes or exclude contributions of Black individuals, leading to a biased educational experience.
- **Inequitable Discipline Practices:** The handbook emphasizes the need to review discipline records to ensure equitable implementation. However, Black students are often disproportionately disciplined more harshly than their peers, which can perpetuate a cycle of bias and discrimination.

### 2. Student Absences & Excuses (Board Policy JH)

- **Chronic Absenteeism:** The handbook outlines penalties for unexcused absences, but it does not address potential underlying issues such as racial trauma, discrimination, or unsafe school environments that might disproportionately affect Black students' attendance.

### 3. Bullying Prevention & Education (Board Policy JICDE)

- **Inadequate Support for Racial Bullying:** While the policy covers bullying prevention, it does not specifically address racial bullying or provide detailed procedures for supporting Black students who experience racism, which can lead to inadequate responses and support.

### 4. Non-Discrimination/Equal Opportunity (Board Policy AC)

- **Implementation Gaps:** Despite the commitment to non-discrimination, Black students may still face subtle and overt forms of racism and bias from staff and peers. The effectiveness of training programs and monitoring mechanisms for bias is crucial but not detailed.

### 5. Student Use of Technology and Electronic Communications (Board Policy JS)\*

- **Digital Discrimination:** The policy outlines acceptable use of technology but does not address potential cyberbullying or discrimination that Black students might face online, including racial slurs or targeted harassment.

### 6. Student Discipline (Board Policy JK)

- **Disproportionate Punishments:** The general guidelines for student discipline might lead to disproportionate punishments for Black students due to implicit biases among staff, leading to higher rates of suspensions or expulsions.

# Green Book Initiative

## 7. English Language Learner (ELL) Program (Board Policy IHBEA)

- Lack of Cultural Competence: The policy focuses on English language proficiency but may lack cultural competence training for staff, which can affect Black students who are also English language learners, leading to misunderstandings and bias.

## 8. Special Education Programs for Students with Disabilities (Board Policy IHBA)

- Overrepresentation in Special Education: Black students are often overrepresented in special education due to biased assessment practices. The policy should ensure unbiased evaluations and culturally responsive practices.

## 9. Conduct and Discipline

- Disproportionate Impact: Policies on student conduct and discipline, such as those addressing violent and aggressive behavior, often disproportionately impact Black students due to biases in interpreting behavior and enforcing rules.

## 10. Visitors to Schools (Board Policy KI)

- Unwelcoming Environment: The strict limitations on visitors might discourage Black parents and community members from engaging with the school, especially if they feel unwelcome or scrutinized more than others.

## 11. Sexual Harassment (Board Policy JBB)

- **Intersectionality Overlooked:** The policy might not fully address the unique experiences of Black students who face harassment that intersects with race and gender, leading to inadequate support and resolution.

## Conclusion

The Englewood Public Schools District is inflicting significant harm on its Black students, families, staff, and community through its inadequate and inequitable practices. The current state of affairs demands immediate attention and corrective action to ensure that Black individuals feel valued, respected, and included. It is imperative for the district to engage in meaningful dialogue with the Black community, implement comprehensive reforms, and commit to implementing an environment of true equity and inclusion.

Green Book Initiative		Your Status: Exodus Governance
Name of Institution	Englewood Public Schools	
Criteria	Score	
Curriculum Inclusivity and Representation	2	
Equity in Disciplinary Actions	3	
Staff and Leadership Representation	2	
Engagement with Black Families and Communities	1	
Treatment and Involvement of Black School Board Members	1	
**Use for Governance ONLY**	1	
Policies and Practices	1	
Support Systems	1	
Physical Environment	3	
<b>Score</b>	<b>1.8</b>	

  

Instructions	
Enter the score for each category based on the detailed assessments in the respective sheets. The overall score and recommendation will be manually calculated based on the total score.	
Scoring Key	
5	Exemplary
4	Above Average
3	Average
2	Below Average
1	Poor

  

*In our comprehensive assessment process, each category will be meticulously evaluated using a scale ranging from 1 to 5, where a rating of 1 signifies inadequate support for the thriving of Black students, while a rating of 5 represents exceptional support. Through this methodical approach, we aim to provide a nuanced understanding of the school's safety and inclusivity for Black students. By averaging the scores across all categories, we will generate total scores, offering a comprehensive overview of the school's performance in fostering an environment conducive to the success of Black students.*

**Green Book Schools/Governance will be expected to achieve a minimum score of 4.5, indicating exemplary support and commitment to inclusivity.**

**Schools/Governance On Notice will be held to a minimum score of 3.0, ensuring that even institutions requiring improvement maintain a baseline level of support.**

**Exodus Schools/Governance will be capped at a maximum score of 3.0, reflecting the need for significant enhancements to better support the thriving of Black students. This scoring system enables us to identify strengths, areas for improvement, and opportunities for targeted interventions, ultimately fostering continuous progress towards equity and excellence.**