



## GOAL THREE: RACIAL EQUITY IN OUR COMMUNITY

**The Race and Social Justice Initiative is making a real difference in the lives of Seattle residents, businesses and City government.**

The City of Seattle cannot achieve racial equity on its own. It requires a true community-wide effort.

Race and racism play a huge role in determining the quality of life for Seattle residents. Deep and pervasive racial disparities in Seattle cut across all indicators of success – including health, education, economics, the environment, and the criminal justice system.

To advance these efforts, Seattle City government has begun to include racial equity as a key baseline component of important citywide initiatives like the Seattle Youth and Family Initiative and the Seattle Jobs Plan. City departments are finding ways to incorporate racial equity wherever their own work impacts community health, education, economics, environment, and criminal justice.

The City also has joined with community members, organizations and public and private institutions as the Race and Social Justice Community Roundtable.

### THE RSJ COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE

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The Race and Social Justice Community Roundtable is a partnership of twenty-five community organizations and public institutions working together to achieve racial equity in Seattle.

Roundtable members are committed to achieving racial equity throughout Seattle via coordinated actions. Members also are working to address institutional racism within their own organizations.

The Roundtable has made education its primary focus as a step to achieve its overall goal. Graduation rates, rates of discipline, test scores and other measures illustrate a clear racial divide in education.

Typical explanations usually focus on the capacity of individual teachers, students, the curriculum, etc. Yet systemic race-based inequities sort and shape students in ways that are obvious to families of color, but often invisible to white families. Without referencing race, we can “explain” everything that happens in our schools. Yet those explanations fail to account for the undeniable racial fault line that runs through our education system. Unless we begin to address institutional racism as part of education reform, our educational outcomes will remain the same.

Besides focusing on education, the City and other Roundtable members are analyzing the connections between education and criminal justice, economics, environmental justice and health.

# TOGETHER, WE CAN ACHIEVE RACIAL JUSTICE IN SEATTLE.

## SOME OF RSJI'S ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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- Racial equity has been built into the planning and implementation structure of City initiatives, including the Seattle Youth and Family Initiative, the Seattle Jobs Plan, Engage Seattle and Walk-Bike-Ride.
- City departments have incorporated a racial equity analysis so that their work is better able to impact community indicators of success.
- The RSJ Community Roundtable is developing strategies to end racial disparities in high school graduation and school discipline rates.
- Roundtable members have worked with state legislators to promote a statewide agenda on racial equity in education.
- Roundtable members also have used the Racial Equity Toolkit to review their own organizations' programs and policies.

### LEARN MORE ABOUT RSJI

Visit [www.seattle.gov/rsji](http://www.seattle.gov/rsji) or call the Seattle Office for Civil Rights at 206.684.4500