



## Meeting Needs of All Students

As La Grande School District (LGSD) continues its vision of “Preparing all La Grande students for their brightest future!” We recognize that various students and student groups benefit disproportionately from our district programs. In public education, students and parents regularly experience barriers to learning because of medical conditions, language barriers, connections to positive adults, mental health, and a variety of other factors that impact who a student is and who they are becoming. To meet these needs, La Grande School District has worked hard to develop a variety of programs and services to help students and families achieve “their brightest future!” However, even with our best efforts we recognize that barriers and learning gaps still remain individually and within the student groups we serve including students from minority, racial or ethnic background.

### *How is La Grande School District Supporting Student Needs?*

La Grande School District has developed a wide-variety of student programs and services to meet the disparate needs of our students and close learning gaps or outcomes. The below listed programs are examples of these attempts to serve students and close learning gaps.

- Special Education Services
- 504 Plan Program
- English Learner Services
- Talented and Gifted (TAG) Services
- Long-Term Care and Treatment Services
- Culture of Care Program
- Title I Program
- Elementary Reading Support Program
- Mental Health Services
- Occupational and Physical Therapy Services
- Afterschool Intervention Programs
- JumpStart and Freshman Academy
- GED and Alternative Education Programs

### *What is Critical Race Theory?*

Scholars who study critical race theory in education look at how policies and practices in K-12 education contribute to persistent racial inequalities in education, and advocate for ways to change them. (Sawchik, 2021). Critical race theory (CRT) has been around since the 1970s and refers to a broad collection of legal and academic topics that seek to understand and address inequality and racism in the United States. It is a tool primarily used at the university level to help students think critically about the impact of historical and present-day racism. CRT submits that bias is embedded within the American culture and is systemic in our institutions, laws and public policy. CRT posits this systemic bias is primarily responsible for the unequal outcomes evident in systems such as health care, education, employment and the justice system. CRT seeks to explain why racial inequities exist in our systems and how these disparities might be eliminated. CRT does not define racism in the traditional manner as solely the consequence of discrete irrational bad acts perpetrated by individuals but is usually the unintended (but often foreseeable) consequence of choices. . . CRT transcends a Black/white racial binary and recognizes that racism has impacted the experiences of various people of color, including Latinx, Native Americans, and Asian Americans. (Janel George, 2021)

#### Sources:

“A Lesson on Critical Race Theory.” *Human Rights Magazine* (American Bar Association). 2021. [https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human\\_rights\\_magazine\\_home/civil-rights-reimagining-policing/a-lesson-on-critical-race-theory/](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human_rights_magazine_home/civil-rights-reimagining-policing/a-lesson-on-critical-race-theory/). Accessed 13 July 2021.

“What is Critical Race Theory, and Why Is It Under Attack?” *Education Week*. 2021. <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/what-is-critical-race-theory-and-why-is-it-under-attack/2021/05>. Accessed 13 July 2021.

## Is Critical Race Theory taught in La Grande School District?

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is not a state mandated curriculum, professional development, or educational lens that La Grande School District is required or has elected to provide as it serves our students and supports our staff. La Grande School District policy does not have any reference to Critical Race Theory (CRT) or make any requirement of the board, district administration, staff, or students.

Currently, Oregon Department of Education has two sets of adopted social studies standards: the [2018 version](#) and the [2021 version](#). The adopted 2021 standards integrate ethnic studies into each of the social science domains and removed the co-identified multi-cultural standards. School districts may implement the 2021 Social Science Standards beginning in March 2021. School districts are not required to implement the new standards until the 2026-2027 school year. There is no specific mention of CRT in the 2021 Social Studies Standards, but, to summarize, require teachers to have students look at historical events from multiple vantage points and lived life experiences. This is not new to social studies instruction as teachers strive to building civility and understanding in the democratic process. La Grande School District will continue to use the 2018 Social Studies Standards until the next curriculum adoption cycle in the 2026/27 school year when the new standards become required by Oregon Department of Education.

## Our Focus

In an effort to meet the needs of all learners and remove barriers to achievement and learning, La Grande School District developed an equity lens during the 2019/20 school year. A committee of stakeholders, including parents, worked together to create our equity lens in connection to our mission, statement, vision statement, core values, and district tag line. Additionally, we have focused significant resources on developing our Culture of Care that provides multi-tiered social emotional supports to students. We will continue to use the Equity Lens and our Culture of Care as we aspire to fully support the needs of all learners. Our equity lens and Culture of Care are reflective of our local context and community, and will continue to help us consider all students as we allocate resources, develop programs, and “Prepare[e] all La Grande students for their brightest future!”



### La Grande EQUITY LENS SCHOOL DISTRICT

The La Grande School District is committed to “preparing all La Grande students for their brightest future!” This commitment means student success will not be predicted nor predetermined by race, ethnicity, family economics, mobility, language, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or initial proficiencies.



**Mission/Vision**

1. Is the decision aligned with our district mission, vision, and strategic plan?

**Engagement**

2. How are all stakeholders considered or engaged in the decision-making process?

**Barriers**

3. What are the barriers that prevent more equitable outcomes?  
How does this decision increase or decrease identified barriers?

**Impact**

4. What groups or individuals does the decision affect both positively and negatively?
5. Does the decision increase or decrease existing disparities or produce other unintended consequences?

**Sustainability**

6. Is the decision sustainable?

Recognizing each student has a unique identity is central to our work in education. District, school and classroom decisions, policies, and practices affect each student differently depending on the components of a student's identity. Our commitment to equity supports fostering an inclusive and barrier-free environment in which all students will fully benefit. To that end, the La Grande School District Equity Lens was developed to assist district staff and leaders when making decisions.

