



Race, Advocacy, and Education

Moderated by: A'Jamal Byndon

April 7, 2022

7:00pm CST

Circle of Trust Touchstones

Circle of Trust® Touchstones

developed by Parker J. Palmer and the Center for Courage & Renewal
www.couragerenewal.org

Give and receive welcome.

People learn best in hospitable spaces. In this circle we support each other's learning by giving and receiving hospitality.

Be present as fully as possible.

Be here with your doubts, fears and failings as well as your convictions, joys and successes, your listening as well as your speaking.

What is offered in the circle is by invitation, not demand.

This is not a "share or die" event! Do whatever your soul calls for, and know that you do it with our support. Your soul knows your needs better than we do.

Speak your truth in ways that respect other people's truth.

Our views of reality may differ, but speaking one's truth in a Circle of Trust does not mean interpreting, correcting or debating what others say. Speak from your center to the center of the circle, using "I" statements, trusting people to do their own sifting and winnowing.

No fixing, saving, advising or correcting.

This is one of the hardest guidelines for those of us who like to "help." But it is vital to welcoming the soul, to making space for the inner teacher.

Learn to respond to others with honest, open questions...

instead of counsel or corrections. With such questions, we help "hear each other into deeper speech."

Learn more about Circles of Trust® at www.couragerenewal.org/approach

When the going gets rough, turn to wonder.

If you feel judgmental, or defensive, ask yourself, "I wonder what brought them to this belief?" "I wonder what they're feeling right now?" "I wonder what my reaction teaches me about myself?" Set aside judgment to listen to others—and to yourself—more deeply.

Attend to your own inner teacher.

We learn from others, of course. But as we explore poems, stories, questions and silence in a Circle of Trust, we have a special opportunity to learn from within. So pay close attention to your own reactions and responses, to your most important teacher.

Trust and learn from the silence.

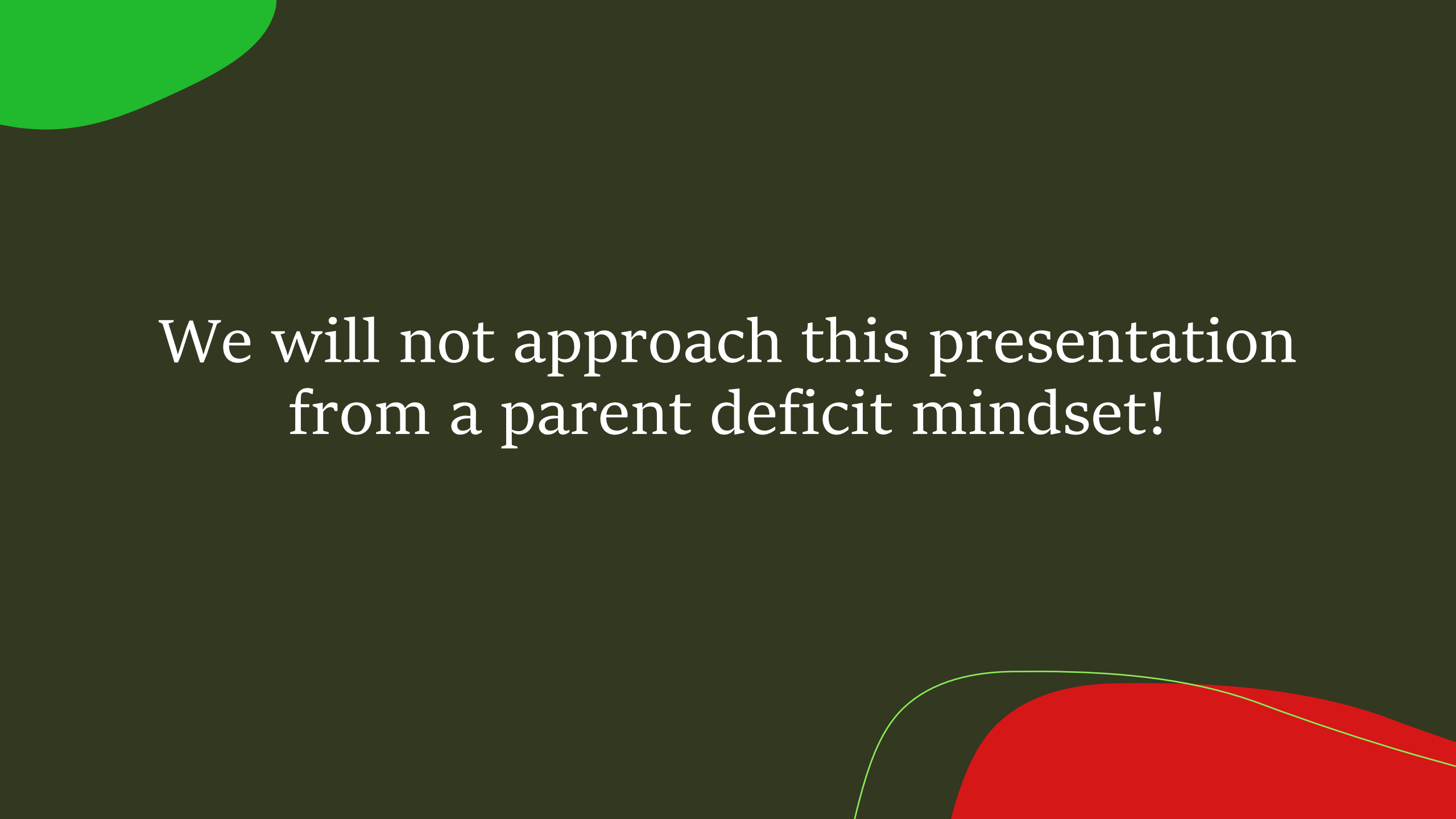
Silence is a gift in our noisy world, and a way of knowing in itself. Treat silence as a member of the group. After someone has spoken, take time to reflect without immediately filling the space with words.

Observe deep confidentiality.

A Circle of Trust depends on knowing that whatever we say will remain with the people to whom we choose to say it — whether in small groups or in the large circle — and will never be passed on to others without our explicit permission.

Know that it's possible...

to leave the circle with whatever it was that you needed when you arrived, and that the seeds planted here can keep growing in the days ahead.



We will not approach this presentation
from a parent deficit mindset!

Objectives:

- Discuss the history of Nebraska and Omaha and how it has contributed to the current educational climate in Omaha.
- Highlight the current education gaps and identify opportunities for parent and community advocacy.

History of Education in Nebraska and Omaha

The House passed a bill this p. m., striking the word *white* out of the election laws. The House bill, making no distinction on account of **race** or **color** in the **School** laws will pass the Council to-day.

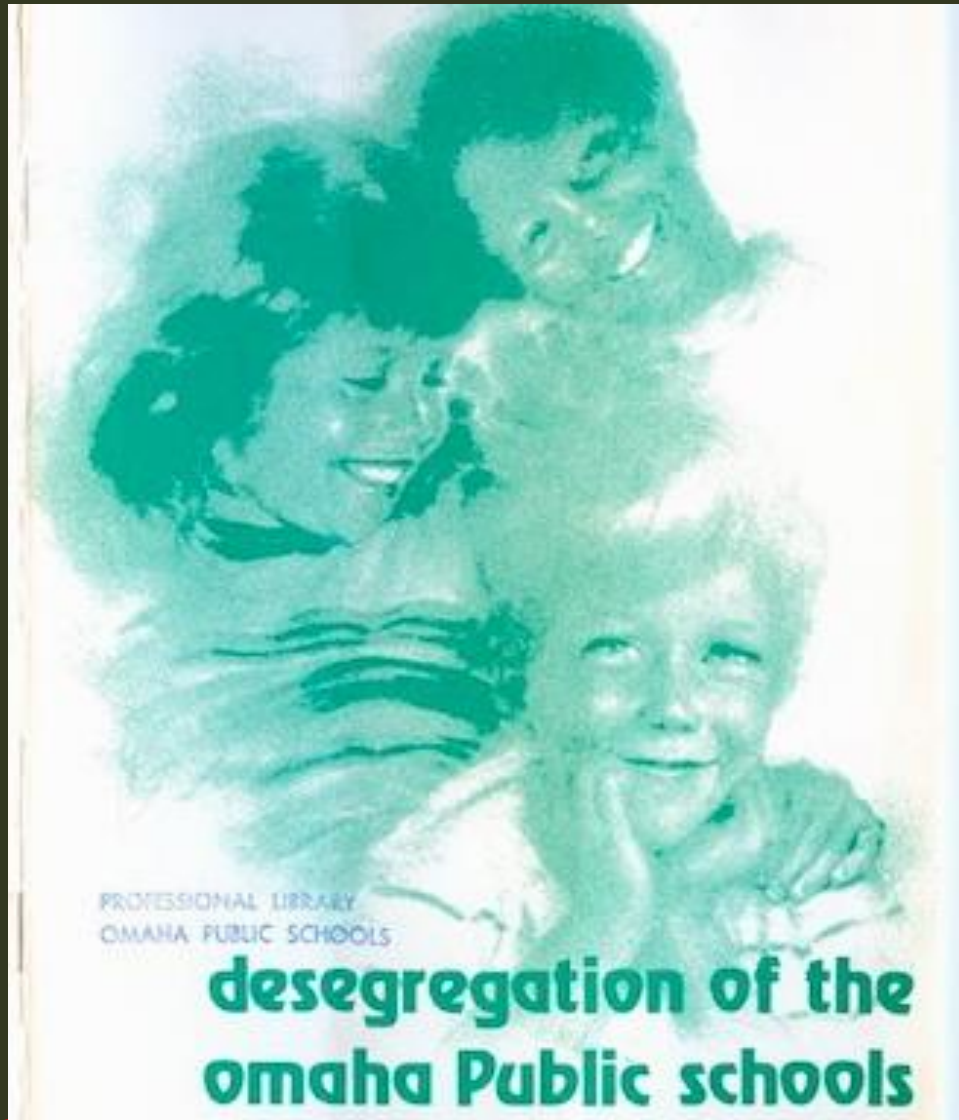
- Education in Nebraska can be traced back to immediately following the end of the Civil War.
- Two cities in Nebraska maintained schools segregated based on race following the end of the Civil War.
 - Omaha
 - In operation from 1865 to 1872 was the Omaha Colored School.
 - Nebraska City
- On February 6, 1867, the House in the Nebraska Legislature passed a bill to strike the word "white" from certain laws, making school segregation illegal.
- This was an economic decision.

OPS SUPERINTENDENT

“Dr. Harry A. Burke employed racist tactics to run Omaha Public Schools from 1946 to 1962,” Herb Rhodes, North Omaha civil rights leader in the 50s and 60s, said in an interview with David Bristow, an official with the Nebraska State Historical Society. Burke “proclaimed that as long as he was superintendent, there would not be a black educator in the school system, other than the two schools that served the black community,” Rhodes said. Burke believed in not having any black teachers and was opposed to any situation “where white children would see a black person in a role of prominence or authority.”



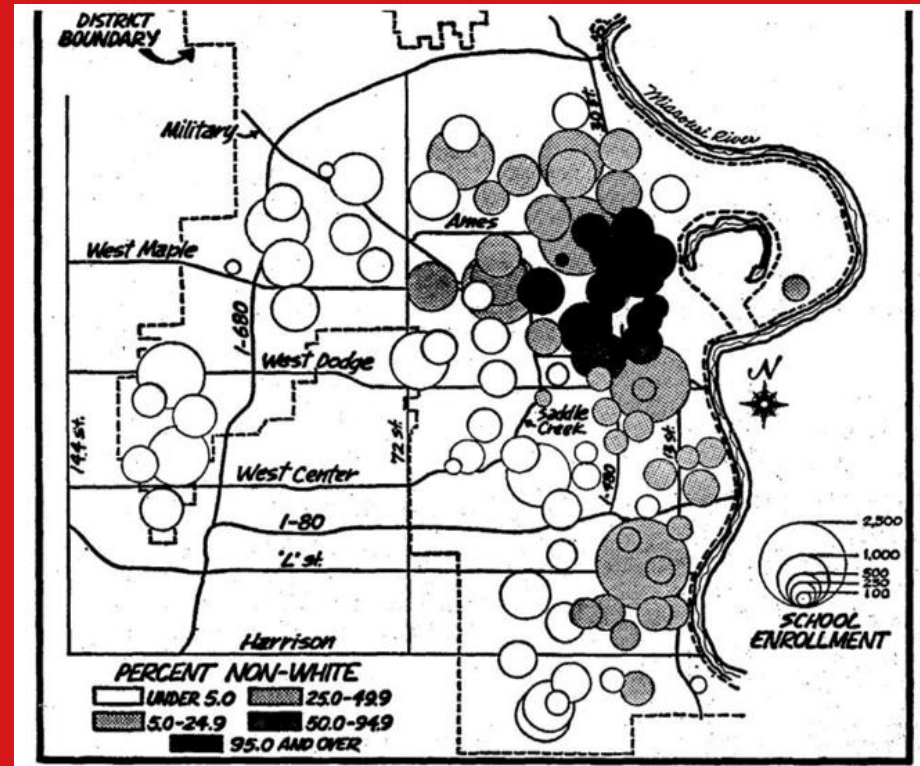
United States vs. School District Omaha



- On August 10, 1973, a case was filed against Omaha Public Schools for intentional discrimination against minority students.
- After hearings and appeals, it was decided that OPS would develop a remedial desegregation plan to take effect during the 1976-1977 school year.
- The plan included reorganization of neighborhood boundaries, adjustment of feeder schools, modifications to the enrollment process, the development of magnet schools, and busing.
- The initial results were heralded as a success.

Annexation of Millard and Ralston Public Schools

- 1967 is the first attempt of several by Omaha Public School District to annex Millard and Ralston. The last occurred in 2005.
- Due to the courts ruling in 1975 on desegregation, white families began to move from Omaha and into Millard and Ralston.
- Not only did white flight contribute to the resegregation of schools within the Omaha Public School District, but policies to base school funding on property value favored Millard and Ralston and led to severe consequences for OPS.



Legacy of Historical Factors?

Resegregation / Lack of
Diversity

Student Performance /
Achievement Gaps

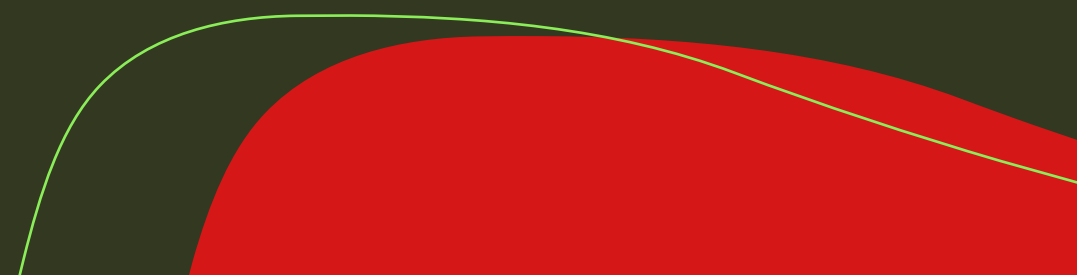
Curriculum and
Instructional Materials

Digital Divide



Advocacy

Examining district, school,
community, and stakeholder
responsibilities.



The image features a dark green background. On the left side, there is a large, solid red shape that is roughly circular but cut off on the right side. A thin, light green line curves from the top left towards the bottom right, passing through the red shape. The text "Resegregation / Lack of Diversity" is written in white, serif font, centered within the red area.

Resegregation /
Lack of Diversity

Data Points

- Marginalized/underrepresented students in Omaha Public Schools make up about 72% of the total number of students.
- Marginalized/underrepresented teachers account for 12% of the total number of educators.



Resegregation / Lack of Diversity

According to recent data (2018), there are several schools in Omaha Public Schools today that are predominantly African American, despite the current desegregation policies still in place in Omaha. Those schools include:

- North High School, 4410 North 36th Street
- Blackburn High School, 2606 Hamilton Street
- Northwest High School, 8204 Crown Point Avenue
- Hale Middle School, 6143 Whitmore Street
- Monroe Middle School, 5105 Bedford Avenue
- McMillan Magnet Center, 3802 Redick Avenue
- Transitions Program, 2504 Meredith Avenue
- Career Center, 3230 Burt Street
- Parrish Program, 4315 Cuming Street
- Belvedere Elementary School, 3775 Curtis Avenue
- Central Park Elementary School, 4904 N 42nd Street
- Conestoga Elementary School, 2115 Burdette Street
- King Elementary School, 3706 Maple Street
- Miller Park Elementary School, 5625 N 28th Avenue
- Mountain View Elementary School, 5322 N 52nd Street
- Skinner Elementary School, 4304 N 33rd Street
- Wakonda Elementary School, 4845 Curtis Avenue

Little Rock?
NO
Omaha!

**In The Omaha Public School System,
No Negro Teachers In High Schools**

**Negro Teachers Segregated To
Near North Side**

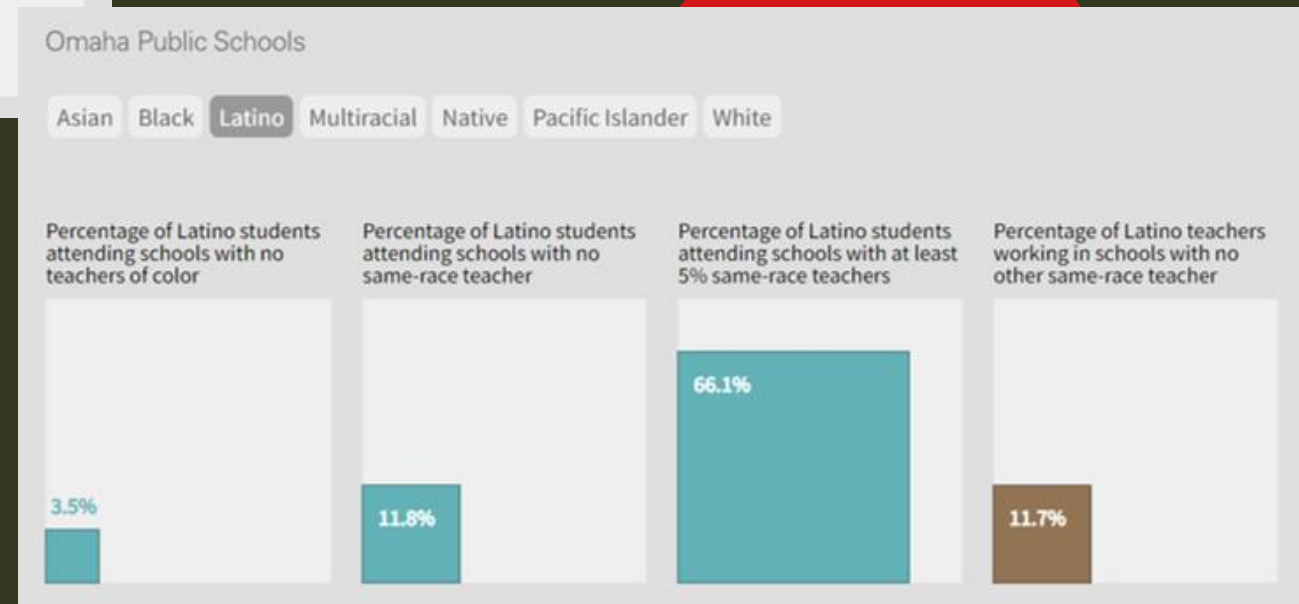
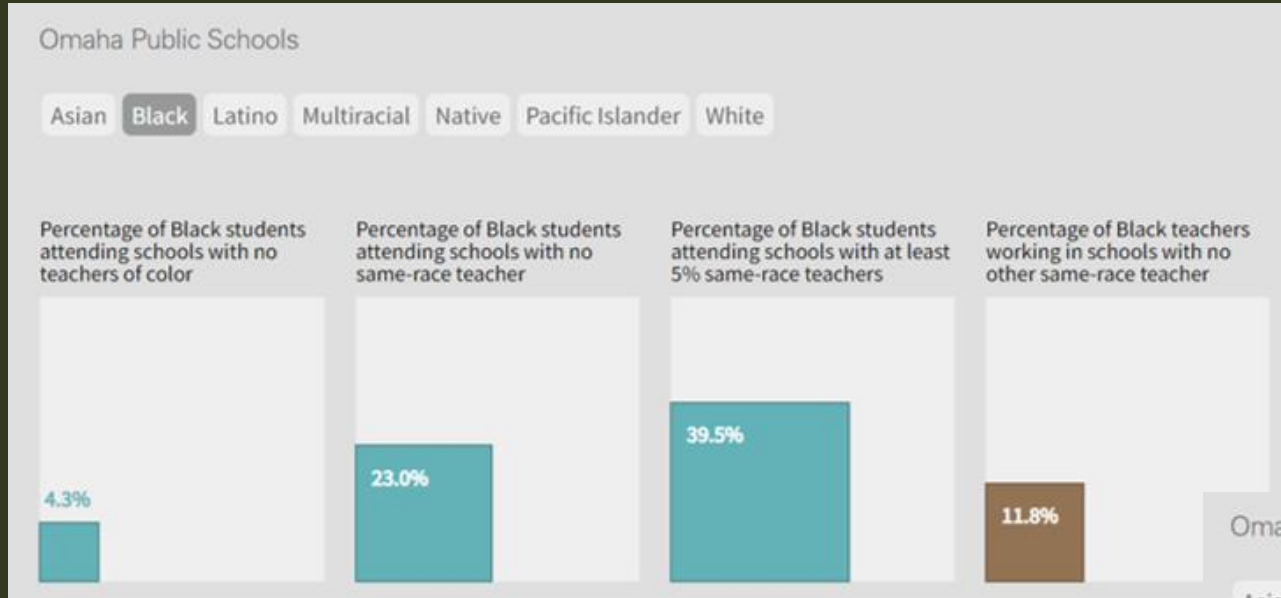
Of 79 Clerks, Not One Is A Negro

CORRECT THIS

**LET'S MAKE OMAHA
REAL?
THE [✓] ALL AMERICAN CITY**

Distributed by THE OMAHA DE PORRES CLUB

Resegregation / Lack of Diversity



Neighborhood School	Zone 1			Zone 2			Zone 3		
	Burke	North	South	Central	Benson	Westview	Northwest	Bryan	Buena Vista
College & Career Academies and Pathways	Freshman Academy (All Schools)			Freshman Academy (All Schools)			Freshman Academy (All Schools)		
	Air and Space Academy (Burke)			STEM (Central)			Public and Community Service (Northwest)		
	Business, Marketing and Analytics Academy (Burke)			Leadership and Global Studies (Central)			Emergency Response (Northwest)		
	Communications Academy (Burke)			Global Arts (Central)			Legal Studies (Northwest)		
	AP Capstone Diploma Project (Burke)			International Baccalaureate (Central)			Early College Program (Northwest)		
	Engineering and Design Academy (North)			Design and Construction Academy (Benson)			Design and Construction Academy (Bryan)		
	Science and Research Academy (North)			Business and Entrepreneurship Academy (Benson)			Transportation, Distribution and Logistics Academy (Bryan)		
	Computer Science and Technology Academy (North)			Health Professions Academy (Benson)			Education Academy (Bryan)		
	AP Capstone Diploma Project (North)			Advanced International Certificate of Education (Benson)			Urban Agriculture Academy (Bryan)		
	Dual Language (South)			Teaching as a Profession (Westview)			Advanced International Certificate of Education (Bryan)		
	Performing and Fine Arts (South)			Health Science (Westview)			SMART Technology (Buena Vista)		
	Technology and Data (South)			Sustainability (Westview)			Health and Education (Buena Vista)		
	Media Arts (South)			Business (Westview)			Teaching as a Profession (Buena Vista)		
	Advanced International Certificate of Education (South)			AP Capstone Diploma Program (Westview)			Advanced International Certificate of Education (Buena Vista)		
		+ Northwest	+ Westview	+ Bryan	+ Buena Vista	+ Burke	+ North	+ Benson	+ South
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Public and Community Service + Emergency Response + Legal Studies + Early College Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Teaching as a Profession + Health Science + Sustainability + Business + AP Capstone Diploma Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Design and Construction Academy + Transportation, Distribution and Logistics Academy + Education Academy + Urban Agriculture Academy + Advanced International Certificate of Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + SMART Technology + Health and Education + Teaching as a Profession + Advanced International Certificate of Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Air and Space Academy + Business, Marketing and Analytics Academy + Communications Academy + AP Capstone Diploma Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Engineering and Design Academy + Science and Technology Academy + AP Capstone Diploma Project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Design and Construction Academy + Business and Entrepreneurship Academy + Health Professions Academy + Advanced International Certificate of Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Dual Language + Performing and Fine Arts + Technology and Data Academy + Media Arts + Advanced International Certificate of Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + STEM + Leadership and Global Studies + Global Arts + International Baccalaureate

OPS Responsibilities

Strategic Priority 2:

Staff

Recruiting and maintaining a highly qualified, developed staff is the most essential component of a successful school district. Omaha Public Schools has highly qualified and effective staff in every division.

Goals

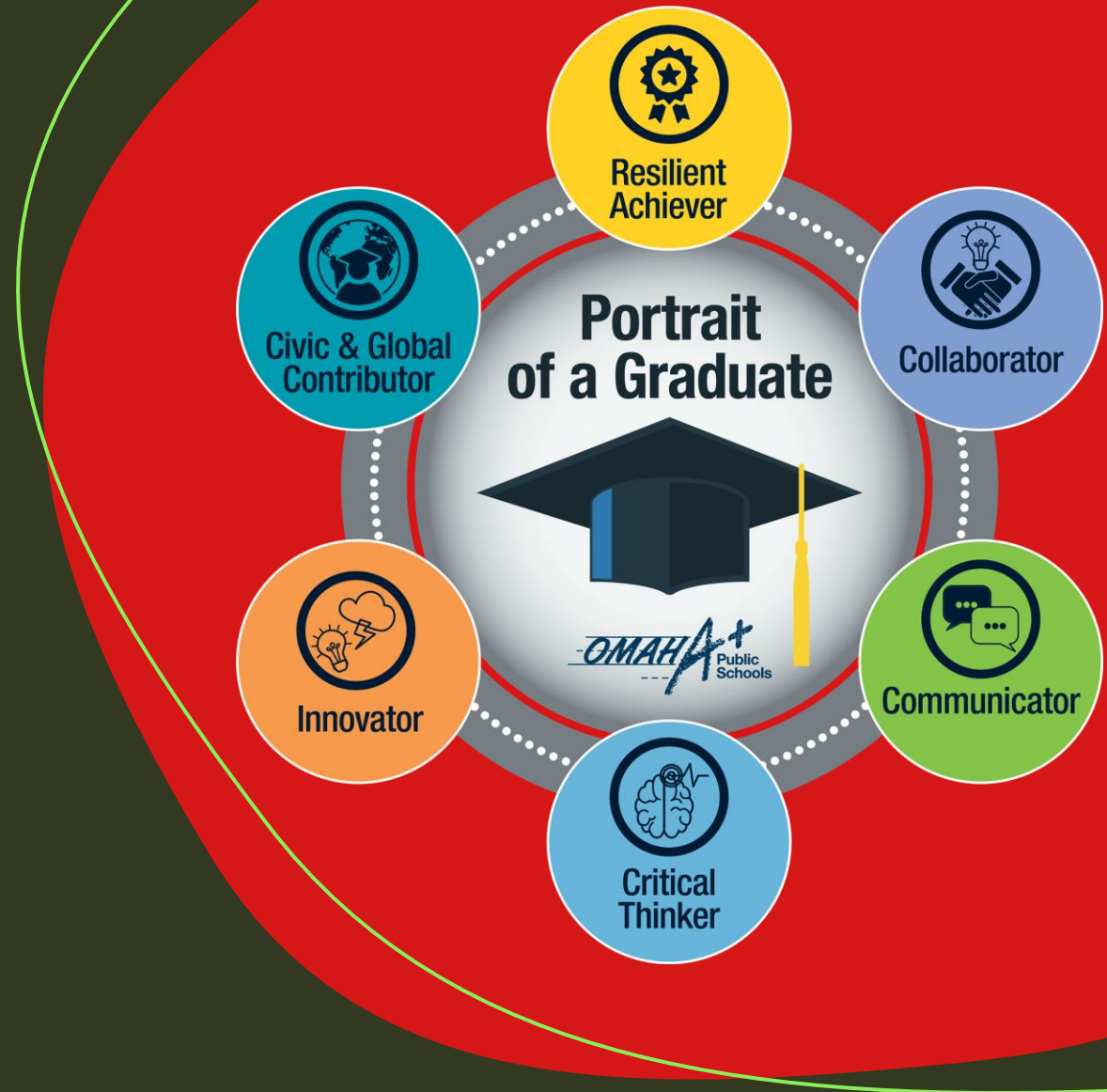
- » By June of 2025, a pipeline of teachers will be developed so that 95% of teaching positions are filled in each school by August 1 of each year with highly qualified candidates.
- » By June of 2025, a pipeline of employees will be developed to assume leadership roles so that 98% of administration positions in each school and 95% of district leadership positions are filled prior to the start of the school year.
- » By June of 2025, create employee development programs including grow your own programs for each department to support succession planning and employee retention.

OPS and State Responsibilities

- OPS - Now paying student teachers.
- LB960 - Eliminate certain basic skill and content test requirements for eligibility for teaching certificates.
- LB690 - Redefine basic skills competency for purposes of teachers' and administrators' certificates or permits.
- LB1218 - Change provisions relating to certification of school employees and student loan forgiveness.
- LB1128 - Adopt the Student Loan Repayment Assistance for Teachers Act.
- LB945 - Adopt the Teach in Nebraska Today Act, provide for student loan repayment assistance, and appropriate General Funds.
- LB1169 - Adopt the Teach in Nebraska Today Act, provide for student loan repayment assistance, and appropriate General Funds.

Parent Advocacy

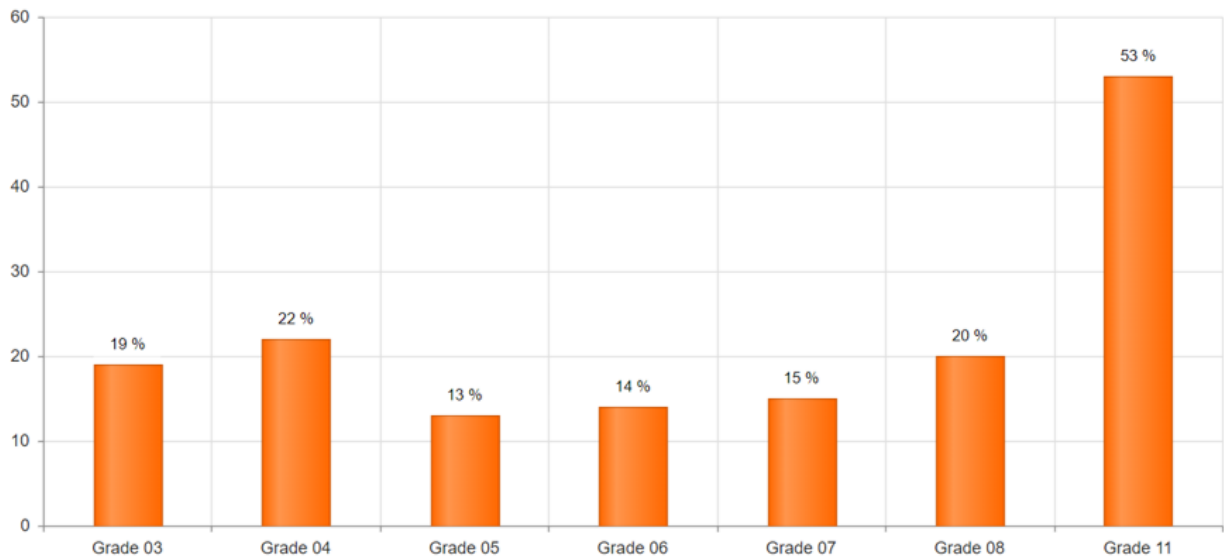
Be informed! Contact OPS representatives for understanding and explanation of the pathways, programming, and academies.



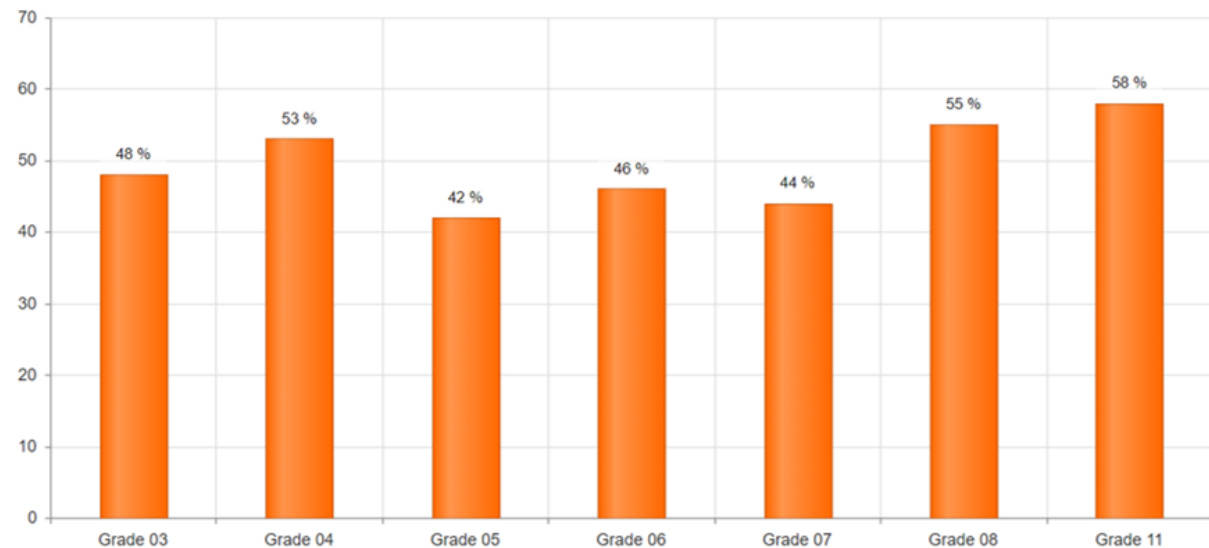
The image features a dark green background with a large, vibrant red abstract shape on the left side. The red shape is roughly circular but has a curved, irregular edge on its right side. A thin, light green line follows the inner curve of this red shape. Centered within the red area is the text "Student Performance and Achievement Gaps" in a white, serif font, arranged in three lines.

Student Performance and Achievement Gaps

Percent Proficient By Grade



Percent Proficient By Grade



2020-2021 NSCAS ELA Data for OPS

Percent Proficient

Data Years	All Grades
2020-2021	10%

Percent Proficient By Grade

Data Years	Grade 03	Grade 04	Grade 05	Grade 06	Grade 07	Grade 08	Alternate 3rd-Year Cohort
2020-2021	12%	9%	8%	8%	11%	10%	33%

Percent Proficient

Data Years	All Grades
2020-2021	37%

Percent Proficient By Grade

Data Years	Grade 03	Grade 04	Grade 05	Grade 06	Grade 07	Grade 08	Alternate 3rd-Year Cohort
2020-2021	41%	38%	35%	35%	36%	38%	50%

2020-2021 NSCAS Science Data for OPS

LAUNCH NEBRASKA

Toggle Contrast

ENSURING EQUITABLE INSTRUCTION

Ensure equitable learning environments for all students by assessing district and schoolwide systems and structures, approaches to teaching and learning, and community partnerships and supports, using an equity framework such as the [SEL Framework](#).

CLASS OF 2022

- Ensuring the Class of 2022 is on track to graduate is an important priority. Districts should review the status of each senior as soon as possible to determine progress towards meeting district graduation requirements. Successful transitions programs along with intentional planning for the Class of 2022 will ensure students achieve their postsecondary goals.
 - Set an ambitious goal to maximize the percentage of the Class of 2022 that enrolls in a strong postsecondary pathway by Labor Day.
 - Articulate clear priorities for all faculty members and district/school leaders, who are working with 12th graders, to create the conditions to achieve the targets.
 - Coordinate and collaborate with administrators of local two and four-year colleges to ensure alignment.
 - Create a district or school-level team and designate a person who ultimately is responsible for reaching the set goals. The PRT should include:
 - Anyone who must agree with the recommendations of the leader (e.g. a lead counselor or a budget director)
 - Key stakeholders who can offer unique insights and input (e.g. an educator or head of PTO)
 - Leaders who are critical to moving the work forward (e.g. the leader who owns district or school data systems)
 - Organize a case management team that is responsible for working directly with the Class of 2022 and local college admissions officers to:
 - Determine which data matters most.
 - Train case managers to initiate new advising relationships.
 - Conduct the first wave of student outreach.
 - Analyze data and articulate priorities to understand, from both the student perspective and the case manager perspective, the projected enrollment rate and the EPSC rate based on institutional outcomes.
 - Identify a manageable list of priority risks that could diminish postsecondary enrollment and affect large percentages of the student population.
- Considerations for Postsecondary and Career Readiness


State, District, and School Responsibilities

- Statewide approach
- District approach is lacking specific information.
- School-level approach is dependent on each individual school.
 - School-Parent Compact
 - Title 1 Schoolwide Plan

Parent Advocacy

- School-level approach is dependent on each individual school.
 - School-Parent Compact
 - Title 1 Schoolwide Plan



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Curriculum and Instructional Materials

State and District Responsibilities

LB888

LB1158

OPS Social Studies Curriculum Guides

Parent Advocacy

- You have the right as a parent/guardian to review and ask questions about curriculum:
 - Standards and indicators
 - Textbooks and the textbook selection process
 - Syllabi
 - Scope and Sequence



The image features a dark green background with a large, vibrant red abstract shape on the left side. The red shape is roughly circular but has a curved edge that tapers towards the right, creating a sense of depth and movement. The text "Digital Divide" is centered within the red area in a white, serif font. A thin, light green line follows the upper and right contours of the red shape, adding a subtle detail to the composition.

Digital Divide

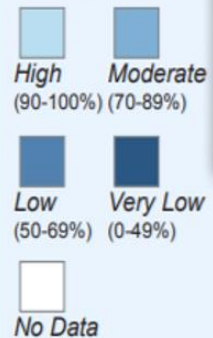
An Infographic From Regional Educational Laboratory Central at IES

To stop the spread of COVID-19, schools across the country have had to rely on remote learning instead of in-person classes. The shift to remote learning continues to shed further light on the digital divide for students who lack reliable access to the Internet and learning resources.

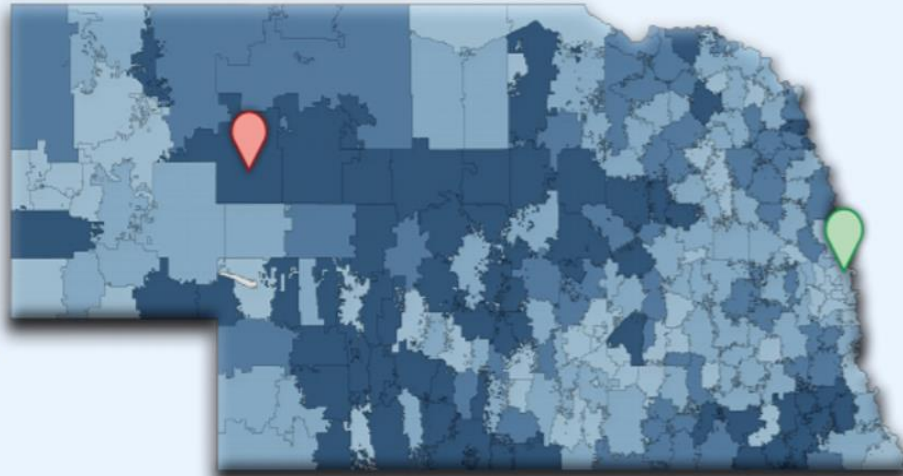
Residential Internet Connectivity Profile: Nebraska

Level of Broadband Internet Connectivity

Percentage of individuals age 5–19 with broadband Internet within a school district boundary



Across the state of Nebraska, 10% of the 393,720 individuals age 5–19, or approximately 39,290 individuals, don't have broadband Internet at home.



Comparison of Select Districts

Hyannis Area Schools

19.8% of the 232 individuals age 5–19 within the school district boundary have broadband Internet.

Omaha Public Schools

98.1% of the 74,400 individuals age 5–19 within the school district boundary have broadband Internet.

Nebraska's Digital Divide

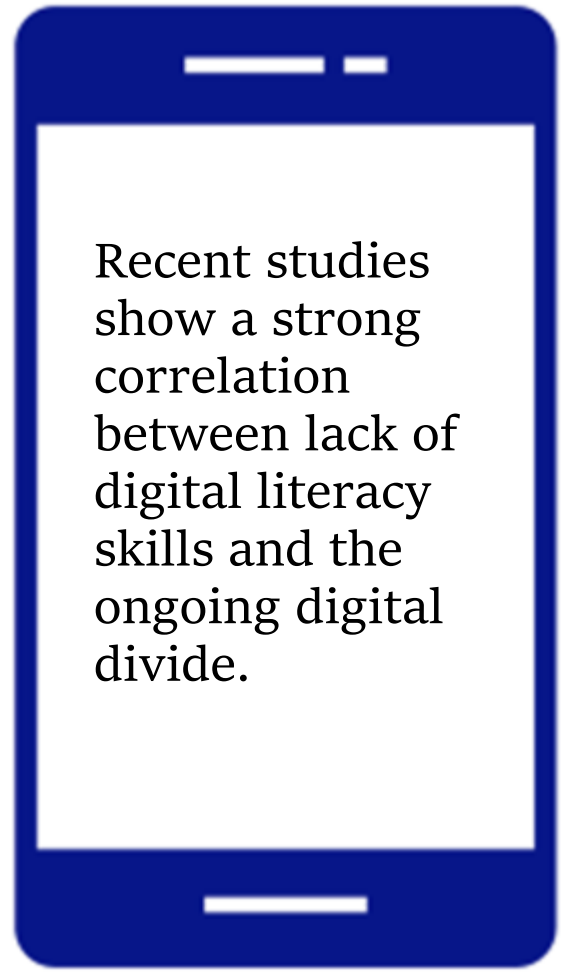
Digital Divide

- Within urban areas, such as Omaha, the digital divide still exists.
 - There is a 30% gap in broadband access between homes in the zip codes with the highest income earnings and those with the lowest. The zip codes with the lowest income earnings all fall within North Omaha.
- “Principal Dr. Genevieve Core said remote learning has been a bit of a challenge: "By the time they get the sentence through the connection, we're on to something else. Or there's a lot of freezing going on with the internet connection.”

Digital Literacy Preparedness

Digital Literacy

“The ability to find, evaluate, utilize, share, and create content using information technologies and the Internet.”

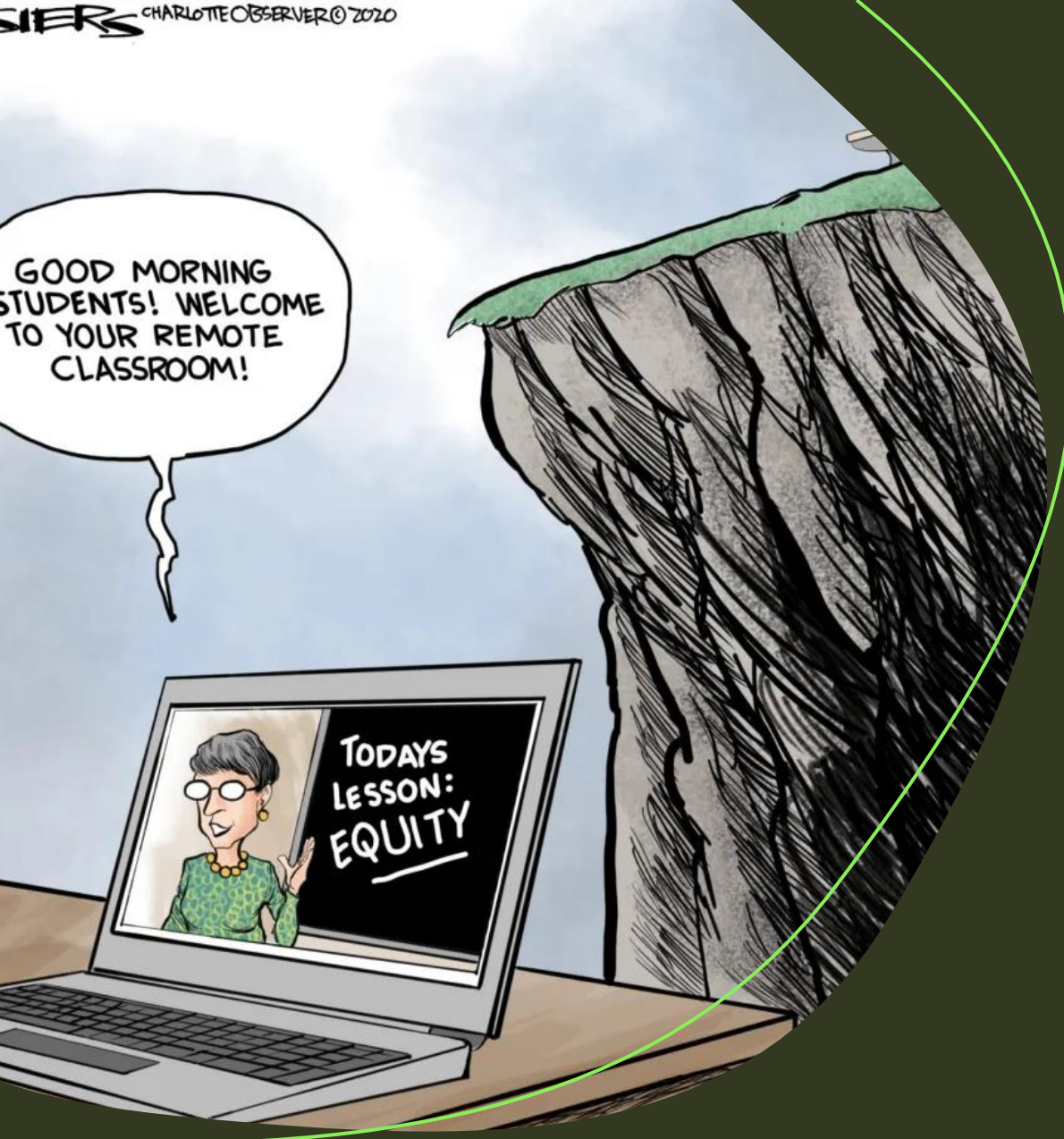


Recent studies show a strong correlation between lack of digital literacy skills and the ongoing digital divide.



Digital Divide

Digital Literacy



State and District Responsibilities

- The Future Ready Nebraska Digital Learning and Ed Tech plan: Goals, action steps, and progress listed under Robust Infrastructure.
- Professional development and learning communities that highlight and seek opportunities to adjust for the digital divide.
- By January of 2025, upgrade digital platforms to reflect prevailing technology to provide two-way communication and promotion of Omaha Public Schools with stakeholders.

Additional Opportunities for Advocacy

- Office of Family and Community Relations
 - OPS Board Policy 2140 provides the superintendent the ability to create Advisory Committees.
 - Community Partnership Review Committee
 - Social Media
 - Involvement on hiring committees





Thank you!

Ebony McKiver

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