Office of Equity
Viola Burgess, Executive Director

Education Committee Meeting
April 5, 2016
And How Are the Children?
The Children Are Well
Office of Equity Structure

**Viola Burgess** – Executive Director

**Branden Ballard** – Project Manager, We Promise

**Susan Loskoch** – Racial Equity Support Liaison

**Shana Nelson** – Instructional Equity Leadership Specialist

**Jason Rivers** – Project Manager, We Promise

**I’Asia Thomas** – Project Manager, Equity
We Promise Goal

Goal:
To increase the percentage of young men graduating college and career ready and eligible to receive the Pittsburgh Promise.

- Academic
- Social
- Emotional
- Racial Identity Development
We Promise Structure

Structure:

Structured group mentoring with black males from the community that allows our scholars to see greatness in a reflection of self.

- Weekly Group Mentoring Sessions
- We Promise Summits
- Community Events
- Senior Recognition Luncheon
- Individual Relationship Building
- Leveraging We Promise Alumni
We Promise Participation

Participation:

Program is offered to Black male students in grades 9-12.

- All 6-12, 9-12, and special schools receive support

- 9th & 10th graders must have a cumulative GPA of 1.50-2.49

- 11th & 12th graders must have a cumulative GPA of 1.75-2.49

- Currently servicing over 300 scholars in grades 10-12
We Promise Timeline

18% of Black males graduated Promise Ready

Founded 2012

1st We Promise Summit occurred for seniors with Heinz Foundation providing financial support

January 2013

Expanded programming to include juniors and seniors

September 2013

39% of Black males graduated Promise Ready

September 2014

Expanded programming to include 9th through 12th grade students

June 2015
We Promise Support

Support:

The We Promise Program is able to impact the lives of our students based on the support of the following:

- Superintendent Linda Lane
- School Board Members
- Heinz Foundation
- Community-Based Mentors and Organizations
- School Principals, Counselors, Teachers
- Central Office Support
- Local Colleges and Universities
- Parents and Guardians
- Local Politicians
Next Steps:

- Research and respond to the need for a female-based program to complement We Promise... ‘She Promise’?
- Utilize success of We Promise intervention to inform instructional delivery within schools
- Moving from initiative to institution
- Continue to elevate student voice in program design and implementation
“It is not enough to simply listen to student voice. Educators have an ethical imperative to do something with students and that is why meaningful student involvement is vital to school improvement. “