

INTRODUCTION

The Introduction provides context for RTC's Be The Place Strategic Equity Plan.

Where We Started

In 1941, Renton Technical College began as a war production school, marking a pivotal moment for the city of Renton, reflecting not just a response to the necessities of World War II but also a proactive step in shaping the region's future. The college's role in workforce development significantly contributed to the diversification of the local demographic composition, particularly with the growth of the African-American/Black community who moved in from the American East and the South. The area's population quadrupled in size, driven by the demands of a booming wartime economy.

Following the war, the college's mission evolved to support the transition from a wartime to a peacetime economy, reflecting its commitment to respond to immediate needs and anticipate future economic shifts. This foresight continued into the 1960s and beyond, as the college expanded its campus and diversified its offerings to include advanced training in burgeoning sectors like health care, information technology, and service industries, further aligning with the evolving industrial landscape of the Puget Sound area.

Renton Technical College separated from the Renton School District in 1991 as part of a statewide initiative to convert vocational-technical institutes to technical colleges. This transition aimed to enhance the college's ability to grant degrees and certificates, thus meeting the increasing demand for skilled technical labor in various industries.

Establishing RTC as an independent technical college was a step toward providing more focused and specialized training programs that could better serve the community's diverse needs. These programs would offer pathways to higher education and career advancement for all students, including those from marginalized backgrounds.

Plan Development Process

In 2022, the Board of Trustees named Dr. Yoshiko Harden as RTC president. Dr. Harden is the first person of color and woman to serve as president in the college's 80-year history.

Under previous leadership, the college created a 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. When the former president announced his impending retirement, the college extended a two-year bridge plan through 2024. With support from the Board of Trustees, Dr. Harden led the process to integrate equity into the college Strategic Plan. Rather than two separate plans, she engaged the college

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RTC Strategic Equity Plan

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community to develop an overarching Strategic Equity Plan (SEP) centered on equity, community, closing opportunity gaps, supporting student success, and building opportunities for students to enter and advance their educational and career goals.

Strategic Equity planning launched in the fall of 2023 at Fall Kick-Off, with the guidance of James and Kristen Whitfield of Be Culture. A Strategic Equity Planning committee comprised of faculty, staff, and students was created. The college engaged with faculty, staff, students, and community members in a variety of ways, including: monthly feedback questions, a number of listening sessions around campus climate, outreach to community stakeholders, all-campus meetings, and frequent meetings with the Board of Trustees. This comprehensive feedback from a diverse group of stakeholders informed the goals and objectives of the Strategic Equity Plan.

Where We Are Going

Today, as Renton Technical College looks to its future, it remains a proactive agent of change in Renton and across the college's expansive service area. The college's strategic vision is focused on transforming itself, the community, and the broader regional economy by diversifying and enhancing career and technical education as well as skilled trades. Over the next five years, RTC will ensure it is aligned and equipped to deliver on this vision, designed to meet the ever-changing needs of our world. Together, we can ensure that Renton Technical College continues to drive forward as an educational institution and also as a foundational element of the region's growth and transformation.

PLAN PURPOSE

The Plan Purpose outlines the central aims of the Be The Place Strategic Equity Plan.

The primary purpose of the Strategic Equity Plan is to align and equip the college to carry out its unique position as the region's center for workforce development and career training that is transforming students, the college, and communities by diversifying the workforce and skilled trades, meeting the needs of the changing world.

To achieve this overall purpose, the plan must meet several supporting aims, including to:

- Provide an institution-wide, integrated framework to fulfill the mission and provide alignment for the implementation of learning activities, programs, and organizational culture.
 - Ensure that all of the college's efforts center the needs of students and address the needs of the changing world.
 - Position the college successfully for continued accreditation.

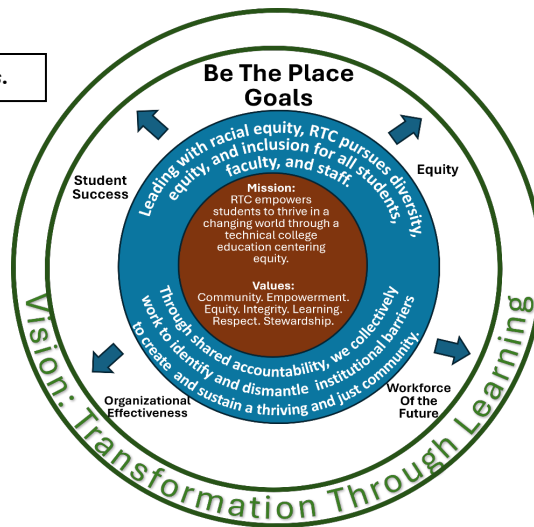
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- Maintain alignment with legislative requirements and direction from the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges.
- Provide clarity about the expectations and aspirations of RTC’s commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and the role that DEI plays in learning activities, programs, and organizational culture.
- Reinforce access to resources the college needs for sustainable mission fulfillment, including incoming and returning students, relationships with industry, and engaged, effective faculty and staff.
- Be responsive to RTC’s specific internal challenges and opportunities and the current and future needs of the region’s community and workforce.

BE THE PLACE STRATEGIC EQUITY PLAN INFOGRAPHIC

The purpose of the Be The Place Infographic is to illustrate the ways that the elements of the Strategic Equity Plan fit together to accomplish the Plan Objectives. The infographic center represents RTC’s core purpose to fulfill its Mission by applying its Core Values. Surrounding the Mission and Core Values is the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion statement, indicating that it applies to all activities related to the institution’s core purpose. Arrows point the way from the center to the vision, which describes RTC’s ongoing aspiration. The Goal Areas prioritize and align the activities that move the institution toward its Vision over the course of the plan timeframe. More information about each element’s role is located in their respective sections.

Image will be updated as planning continues.



RTC VISION STATEMENT

The vision statement outlines our long-term aspirations for both our institution and our community. It serves as a guiding beacon, ensuring that our daily actions, driven by our mission, consistently aim toward achieving shared, long-term goals.

Transformation through learning.

RTC MISSION STATEMENT

The mission statement directs our daily activities and decisions toward shared, near-term objectives. We ensure that every action we take reflects our mission.

RTC empowers students to thrive in a changing world through a technical college education that centers equity.

RTC DEI STATEMENT

The DEI Statement defines how Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) contribute to fulfilling our mission and vision. By adopting a Strategic Equity Plan, RTC deliberately acknowledges that DEI is integral to the institution's core purpose and all functions.

RTC leads with racial equity specifically because American history and literature analysis indicate that when equity interventions are designed and implemented to address barriers faced by Black people, other marginalized groups benefit. Also, racism in American education has played a specific role in establishing and maintaining structural barriers for Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color. Addressing these historical and structural barriers is central to RTC's efforts to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion for all members of the college community and the broader region.

Leading with racial equity, RTC pursues diversity, equity, and inclusion for all students, faculty, and staff. Through shared accountability, we collectively work to identify and dismantle institutional barriers to create and sustain a thriving and just community.

RTC's CORE VALUES

The Core Values set the behavioral standards crucial for achieving our mission, vision, and commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Collectively, these values distinguish RTC's unique approach among community and technical colleges. All RTC students, faculty, staff, and

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partners are expected to apply the Core Values as an everyday framework to guide our interactions, align decision-making, and prepare students for success both during their education and in their future careers.

As the Be The Place plan is implemented, it will be crucial to ensure the RTC Community takes steps to deepen understanding and application of the Core Values. To assist in that process, the Core Values remain the same, except for the definitions for Community and Empowerment, which have been updated to better reflect the DEI Statement in the context of education and career training.

- **Community** – We collaborate to build trust-based relationships for a welcoming culture reflective of our values.
- **Empowerment** – We promote strength and confidence to embrace challenge, creativity, and intellectual risk.
- **Equity** – We engage one another with shared accountability by removing systemic and institutional barriers.
- **Integrity** – We foster an ethical environment of trust and honesty.
- **Learning** – We pursue excellence by engaging in critical thinking, problem-solving, and technical expertise.
- **Respect** – We value humanity and the diversity of people, perspectives, and ideas.
- **Stewardship** – We build a stronger, accountable institution for future generations.

BE THE PLACE STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Goals and Objectives are headings for the institution-wide priorities necessary for achieving the Plan Purpose. Each area includes:

- **STRATEGIC GOALS:** What we intend to achieve during the life of the plan.
- **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:** Measurable outcomes we expect to accomplish.

The Be The Place Goals build on efforts begun under prior strategic plans, with enhanced emphasis on integrating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion throughout. The implementation process will include an evaluation and update to the existing strategic indicators to ensure continued, effective monitoring and evaluation throughout the plan's timeline.

Plan implementation will also include each Department determining any necessary operational changes to ensure their major activities align with the Goals and Objectives.

Goal 1: Be The Place to Transform Student Success

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Align and equip the college to strengthen collaboration with students to reach their goals in the workforce and the community.

Objective 1.1: Enhance student progression and achievement by dismantling barriers

Objective 1.2: Provide and/or establish partnerships for comprehensive and inclusive student support services

Objective 1.3: Promote ongoing professional development and trainings centered on equity and anti-racism

Objective 1.4: Strengthen assessment strategies to support equitable student learning

Goal 2: Be The Place for Transformative Equity

Align and equip the college to center racial equity and operationalize DEI across the functions of the institution.

OBJECTIVE 2.1: Close equity gaps for underrepresented, low-income, and first-generation college students

Objective 2.2: Cultivate a diverse and transformative college workforce

Objective 2.3: Increase competency in diversity, equity, and inclusion and equip members of the RTC community to dismantle systemic racism

Objective 2.4: Refine institutional policies to support equity and justice

Goal 3: Be The Place to Transform the Workforce of the Future

Align and equip the college to deepen industry and community partnerships through collaboration between employers and students, resource development, workforce diversification, and relevant instruction.

Objective 3.1: Equip students with skills for current and future industry needs, with a focus on equity

Objective 3.2: Establish the college as a central community and economic development hub

Objective 3.3: Customize outreach and communication strategies for engaging the diverse constituencies we serve

Objective 3.4: Advocate for policies that support educational and workforce development with an equity focus

Goal 4: Be The Place for Organizational Effectiveness

Strengthen the college's processes, procedures, and resources to enhance accountability, increase consistency, and ensure sustainability.

Objective 4.1: Improve the integration of a planning, evaluation, and resource allocation system aligned to the mission, vision, and accreditation standards

Objective 4.2: Secure and diversify funding to support institutional priorities, including advancing equity

Objective 4.3: Foster a culture of accountability, transparency, and anti-racism

Objective 4.4: Upgrade and modernize infrastructure to support equitable access