

Students

SUBJECT: EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Board of Education is committed to creating and maintaining a positive and inclusive learning environment where all students, especially those currently and historically marginalized, feel safe, included, welcomed and accepted, and experience a sense of belonging and academic success.

Generally Accepted Beliefs and Agreements

All children deserve to have equal access to opportunity regardless of their sex, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, age, socioeconomic status, the language they speak, religion or ethical values systems, physical ability or attributes, ability or disability status, political beliefs, and other human differences. This freedom is fundamental to our K-8 education program and is extended to everyone, including the district's high school students, without exception. However, the district also recognizes that students have been historically marginalized due to inequities associated with aspects of their identities and their contexts, including, but not limited to, sex, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, age, socioeconomic status, the language they speak, religion or ethical values systems, physical ability or attributes, ability or disability status, political beliefs, and other human differences. Racism, discrimination, and marginalization of any people or groups of people, whether intentional or not, have no place in our school, our district or our community. Such actions damage not only those individuals and groups at which they are directed, but also our community as a whole. We are committed to addressing these inequities and helping each and every student to equitably access learning opportunities in school to enable them all to thrive and to build a better society.

Goals

The goal of the school district is to provide equitable, inclusive and diverse opportunities for all students to reach their highest potential. To achieve educational equity and inclusive education, the district will acknowledge the presence of culturally diverse students and the need for students to find relevant connections among themselves and the subject matter and the tasks teachers ask them to perform. The district will develop the individual and organizational knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices to create culturally responsive learning and working environments that expect and support high academic achievement for students and employees from all groups.

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Differences will not just be seen as strengths, but they will be nourished, celebrated, and welcomed because they are what make students and families unique.

In order to realize this goal, it is imperative that the Board, its officers, and employees, be fully conversant in the historical injustices and inequalities that have shaped our society and to recognize and eliminate the institutional barriers, including racism and biases, that contribute to the pervasive, disparate educational outcomes within our schools. Equity and inclusive education aims to understand, identify, address, and eliminate the biases, barriers, and disparities that limit a student's chance to graduate high school prepared for college, for a career, and for life.

The Superintendent or designee(s) will ensure that curriculum and instructional materials reflect the Board's commitment to educational equity. Curriculum and instructional materials for all grades shall reflect diversity and include a range of perspectives and experiences, particularly those of historically underrepresented groups. All curriculum materials shall be examined for bias by the Superintendent or designee(s). Class instructional activities and extracurricular programs shall be designed to provide opportunities for cross-cultural and cross-racial interactions that foster respect for diversity.

Definitions

Providing equitable and inclusive education is an ongoing process that requires shared commitment and leadership if a district is to meet the ever-evolving and unique learning needs of all students, and diverse backgrounds of our communities and schools. The Board understands that equity and inclusive education are achieved when each adult collaborates and affirms each student by creating a respectful learning environment inclusive of actual or perceived personal characteristics.

Equity refers to the result achieved when you cannot predict advantage or disadvantage by identity, demographic or personal attribute. For example, *racial equity* refers to the result achieved when you cannot predict advantage or disadvantage by race.

Educational equity is based on the principles of fairness and ensuring that every student has access to the opportunities, resources and educational rigor they need at the right moment in their education, despite any individual's actual or perceived personal characteristics. This is not to be used interchangeably with principles of *equality*, treating all students the same.

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Equity lens refers to any program, practice, decision or action in which the impact on all students is addressed, with strategic focus on marginalized groups.

Inclusion is involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognized.

Inclusive education is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings and the broader environment, in which diversity is honored and all individuals are respected.

Diversity is the range of human differences, including, but not limited to, sex, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, age, socioeconomic status, the language they speak, religion or ethical values systems, physical ability or attributes, ability or disability status, political beliefs, and other human differences. Embracing these diversities and moving beyond tolerance and celebration to inclusivity and respect will help the district reach our goal of creating a community that ensures that each and every voice is heard and valued.

Diversity in education means students, staff, families and community are our greatest strength and diversity is viewed as an asset.

Accountability, Transparency and Review

The Board, its officers and employees, accept responsibility and will hold themselves and each other accountable for every student having full access to quality education, qualified teachers, challenging curriculum, full opportunity to learn, and sufficient, individually-tailored support for learning so they can achieve at excellent levels in academic and other student outcomes. The district also accepts its responsibility for moving forward on this journey and to committing time, energy and resources to develop a more equitable, inclusive, and diverse welcoming environment for all students, parents and staff. To this end, the Superintendent will establish a district-wide committee on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. The committee will include representation from staff, administration, students and community members. The Superintendent, or designee, will adopt goals and corresponding metrics related to this policy.

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The district will identify the multiple indicators necessary to monitor student outcomes, engagement, and school climate, and specific data that will be used to ensure accountability for student, school, and district-wide performance; to reduce variability in outcomes; and to ensure that academic outcomes will not be predictable by actual or perceived personal characteristics and can be assessed and reported transparently to the public. Reporting may include, but is not limited to, standardized test scores; referrals, suspension and expulsion reports; the percentage of students placed in Bilingual or English as a New Language (ENL), Advanced Placement and remedial classes; as well as employee, parent and student perceptions about school.

the Superintendent is directed to develop and implement a plan for ensuring that equitable educational opportunities are being provided to all students. In addition, the Board directs that training programs be established for students, and for employees, to raise awareness of the issues surrounding cultural responsiveness, equity and inclusion and to implement preventative measures to help counteract biases and practices that perpetuate achievement disparities and lead to disproportionate levels of student success. Age-appropriate, diverse, bias-free instructional materials will be incorporated into the curriculum to educate students so that they can learn from a diverse range of experiences and points of view. Curricular materials and staffing decisions will support these efforts.

The Board of Education and the Superintendent will monitor and review the district's metrics and equity activities to determine the extent the district is complying with this policy, the progress made toward attaining the goals of this policy, whether this policy is having a positive effect on improving academic opportunities for all students and increasing family engagement and reducing achievement gaps. The Superintendent, or designee(s), will regularly report progress on the equity, inclusivity, and diversity plan and outcomes. Based on those results, this policy, and the specific objectives set to meet its goals, may be revised as needed.

Equity Policy Communication

To be successful in this endeavor, it is imperative that all members of the school community are aware of this policy, its purpose, procedures and the district's commitment to equity and inclusion by fostering a positive learning environment that embraces all diverse, unique and individual differences. The Superintendent, or designee(s), is directed to ensure that this policy is communicated to students, staff, and the community.

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This policy will be posted on the district's website, and will also be published in student registration materials, student, parent and employee handbooks, and other appropriate school publications.

Policy Enforcement

The Board directs the Superintendent, or designee(s), to enforce this policy and create regulations and practices to implement this policy. The Board will annually review the district's implementation of this policy and take appropriate action to ensure compliance with and enforcement of this policy.

Cross-ref: 4000, Goals for Instructional Programs 4511, Textbook Selection and Adoption 5153, Student Assignment to Schools and Classes 9240, Recruiting and Hiring 9700, Professional Development 6213

Adopted: XX/XX/2021