

## EQUITY, INCLUSIVITY, AND DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION

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 the color of their skin, their gender, their sexual orientation, the language they speak or their background. This freedom is fundamental to our K-12 education program and is extended to everyone without exception. However, the district also recognizes that students in this country have been historically marginalized due to inequities associated with aspects of their identities and their contexts, including, but not limited to, race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sex; sexual orientation, or gender (including gender identity and expression). Racism, discrimination, and marginalization of any people or groups of people, whether intentional or not, have no place in our schools, 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 historic 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 acknowledges 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 racial groups. 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 truly 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. 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 to be productive contributors to society.

The Superintendent or designee(s) will strive to ensure that curriculum and instructional materials reflect the Board's commitment to educational equity. Newly adopted curriculum and

instructional materials for all grades shall reflect diversity and include a range of perspectives and experiences, particularly those of historically underrepresented groups.

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

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

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 in education means students, staff, families and community are our greatest strength and diversity is viewed as an asset. Diversity means the condition of being different or having differences, including, but not limited to, sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, socioeconomic class, religion, and ability, 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 where each and every voice is heard and valued.

#### *Accountability, Transparency and Review*

The Board, its officers and employees, accepts responsibility and will hold themselves and each other accountable for every student having full access to quality education, qualified teachers, challenging curriculum, and full opportunity to learn 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.

The Board recognizes that this is a multi-step, complex process that begins with learning together about equity, inclusivity, and diversity.

#### *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, 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. 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.

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

Effective Date: March 2, 2021