

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in The Curriculum Review Process 23-24

Respectfully submitted by Sally-Ann Stukuls, Director of Curriculum and Grants, Grades 6-12
School Committee Presentation 10/10/23

The Curriculum Review Process is a process that school districts have to ensure that our curriculum, which is defined as “a standards-based sequence of planned experiences where students practice and achieve proficiency in content and applied learning skills.” is up to date. The definition of the term “Curriculum” is often confused for the just the standards that the state puts forth or just the materials, resources, and text books associated with the standards however a better way to refer to it is as referring to the knowledge and skills that students will learn as they move through their courses and to be successful in whatever their post secondary pathway leads them to. Every three to five years, each department, (ELA, Social Studies, Math, Science, World Language, and Health/Wellness and Fine Arts) reviews their curriculum to ensure that it is aligned with the most current Massachusetts state standards and to also ensure that our textbooks, novels, and other resources and materials are also current and accurate. This task is also in alignment with our district’s equity statement that states:

Statement of Assurance for Equitable Access to Education (developed by the Berlin-Boylston Administrative Team and Staff Representatives, May 2022):

Ensuring that each member of our school community, including students and educators, understands, accepts and honors the uniqueness of each individual and their capacity to become the best version of themselves given the tools, resources, and conditions to do so.

Considering that we have students that are all unique individuals and that have differentiated needs, we align with DESE in our mission to provide equity in our curriculum review process to level the playing field for all our students so that they have equal access to education. Therefore, the concept of DEI, or Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, plays a role in the review process. As taken directly from the DESE website, DESE plays a pivotal role in ensuring access to high-quality education for all students in the Commonwealth. To support the goal of providing greater access and opportunities for students, DESE staff members are committed to developing and strengthening the knowledge, capacity, and skills necessary to understand and address how policies and practices can support more equitable student outcomes. Further, leadership within DESE is committed to cultivating the skills to foster a climate of trust throughout the agency that is built on diversity, equity, and inclusion. A DESE staff-based committee exists that discusses and recommends policies and practices to promote a more diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment at the agency. DESE is working with a partner organization to provide training to all staff members to further develop knowledge, skills, strategies, and resources to promote a more equitable K-12 education system. A DESE staff-based group working to promote communication and collaboration around agency initiatives and practices that are geared toward increasing educational equity for traditionally underserved students is also underway. Many grants offered through DESE emphasize DEI as a factor in the work they fund. Furthermore, DESE asks that * The district ensures that individual

teachers in the district review all educational materials for simplistic and demeaning generalizations, lacking intellectual merit, on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, and sexual orientation. Appropriate activities, discussions and/or supplementary materials are used to provide balance and context for any such stereotypes depicted in such materials.

*CR 24: M.G.L. c. 76, s. 5; 603 CMR 26.05(2) as amended by Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011.

This process is expected, reviewed, and monitored by DESE in their TFM process, (Tiered Focus Monitoring system) with all districts every three years. This review process emphasizes elements most tied to student outcomes, and alternates the focus of each review on either Group A Universal Standards or Group B Universal Standards.

Group A Universal Standards address:

- Student identification
- IEP development
- Programming and support services
- Equal opportunity

Group B Universal Standards address:

- Licensure and professional development
- Parent/student/community engagement
- Facilities and classroom observations
- Oversight
- Time and learning
- Equal access

Our presentation outlines the factors that are taken into consideration when choosing new materials, resources, and textbooks so that all of our students are represented and experience their education in an environment that is welcoming and inclusive of human differences. These differences are explained in our slide presentation as bullet points. Please click on the link below to access the slide presentation that will be presented on Tuesday, October 10, 2023.

 [DEI/Curriculum Review presentation](#)

The link below demonstrates the forms faculty fill out when evaluating new materials to prevent bias and stereotyping.

 [Bias/Stereotyping rubric BBRSD](#)

