

Northshore School District Equity Framework

Northshore School District is committed to addressing and combating the educational barriers in our district. The Northshore School District Equity Framework is supported by the [Equity and Diversity Policy 0001](#) and the district's [Strategic Plan: Acceleration 2022](#) which states that, "We are committed to equity, to safety and supports for students and adults, and to building on the strengths and addressing the needs of the whole child." The framework is designed to create an infrastructure for equity in the Northshore School District. It comprises the equity mission, beliefs, objectives, and strategic initiatives that will guide and transform our work as a school community that is committed to equity and excellence for all students. It is a living document that will grow and change as we continually build our knowledge and capacity to effectively teach all children.

Purpose:

This document is a conceptual framework. Its purpose is to:

- Assist the school system in its ongoing efforts to create and maintain learning and working environments that are responsive to the diverse social and cultural needs of the communities it serves

This framework includes important implications for policies, strategies, and initiatives in the school system related to:

- Honoring diversity and promoting human rights
- Advancing equal opportunity and reducing barriers to access
- Recognizing, respecting, and valuing difference
- Understanding that diversity is a strength
- Fostering a shared sense of inclusion and belonging
- Challenging prejudice and stereotypes
- Knowing why discrimination is unacceptable and how to challenge it
- Understanding the importance of celebrating diversity and promoting equality

It is designed to assist in:

- Enhancing existing policies and practices to ensure that they address diversity
- Promoting and providing equitable distribution of resources, opportunities, facilities and supports, even when this means differentiating resource allocation on the basis of student needs
- Developing or implementing new policies and practices to directly address the diverse needs of the people served by the school system
- Advancing optimum participation in, contribution to, benefit from, and enjoyment of learning and work experiences by diverse students, parents, staff, and community members

Mission:

The Northshore School District is committed to ensuring all students are provided equitable opportunities to learn in an environment where they are nurtured and supported to succeed at high levels throughout their P-12 experiences and beyond. We believe every student has the capacity to achieve academic success and make a positive contribution to society. We value the diversity of our community and recognize the importance of celebrating this diversity within the learning environment.

To fully realize our mission to educate all students, it is imperative that we recognize the institutional barriers, including racism and bias, that contribute to the pervasive, disparate educational outcomes within our school system. We will take action to eliminate barriers as we strive for educational equity for all student groups. For the purpose of this document, a focus on educational equity means raising the success of all students while (1) narrowing the gaps between the lowest and highest performing students, (2) eliminating disproportionality among student groups represented across academic programs and (3) ensuring that each student receives the appropriate supports and opportunities to achieve their full potential.

Objectives:

1. All Northshore students and staff will develop and consistently demonstrate racial literacy and cultural competence.
2. Each member of the Northshore School District will develop and demonstrate the will and skill to lead systemic change that results in equitable schools, as demonstrated by high levels of success for all Northshore students.
3. Students of all racial groups will realize their potential for personal, social, and academic success in Northshore schools.
4. All learning experiences in the Northshore School District will be racially integrated, culturally relevant, and personally challenging.

Core Beliefs:

The Core Beliefs That Guide Our Equity work are founded on the philosophies inherent in the 4 Pillars of our Strategic Plan:

1. Equitable Access to Personalized and Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning
2. Safe Climate and Strong Relationships with Families and Community
3. Results-focused Professional Learning and Supports for Staff
4. Data-informed, Needs-based Resource Allocation

The NSD Equity Framework:

Domain One: Governance, Policy, Practice, and Self Reflection

- Educators stay informed about current school policies and procedures that impact the delivery of services to students from culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Schools and departments ensure that all policies and procedures are explained to students and families in languages that they can communicate in.
- New policies and procedures are implemented with sensitivity toward the diverse learning needs of students from culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Schools and departments adhere to the district's equity policy.
- Educators evaluate and equitably improve their own discipline policies and practices.
- Educators follow a strength-based model in thinking about, assessing, instructing, and interacting with diverse students.
- Educators continuously self-reflect while they learn more about equity related issues.

Domain Two: Climate, Culture, and Self Reflection

- Educators have the ability to meaningfully and respectfully interact with students, peers, and families from diverse backgrounds.
- Students and families from diverse backgrounds are listened to and their opinions are valued.
- Students from diverse cultural, language, and ethnic backgrounds are given equitable opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities.
- Educators modify and differentiate instruction practices so that students from diverse ethnic, racial, cultural, language, and socioeconomic groups will have an equal opportunity to learn.
- Educators relate instructional content and strategies to the cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds of their students.
- Educators utilize, present, include, and display materials around schools and departments that reflect images and perspectives from diverse groups.
- Educators help students and each other appreciate, honor, and respect historical and current events from multiple perspectives.
- Educators work from the premise that “all children can learn” and continue to attempt different instructional approaches until each child is reached.
- Educators have high expectations for all students regardless of their background or differences.
- Educators continuously self-reflect while they learn more about equity related issues.

Domain Three: Teaching, Learning, and Self Reflection

- Educators are well informed about the influence of race, culture, language, and ethnicity on school and department data reports.
- Educators are well informed of the racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds of students and families.
- Educators schedule and engage in school- and district-wide professional development meetings on topics related to equity and diversity.
- Students and families have the opportunity to be experts in the classroom, school, and district.
- Educators understand the ways in which race, ethnicity, culture, language, and social class interact to influence student behaviors/behavioral norms.
- Educators are knowledgeable about the histories of diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural groups.
- Educators are knowledgeable about creative, innovative, and equitable instructional approaches.
- Educators facilitate professional development, discussions, and/or lessons with students and each other about diversity and equity related issues.
- Educators continuously self-reflect while they learn more about equity related issues.

Domain Four: Family and Community Engagement and Self Reflection

- Schools and departments involve families and students in the development of new procedures.
- Schools and departments have developed an effective ongoing communication system with families and the community.
- Schools and departments provide families with equitable opportunities to be involved in their children's education.
- Families and community members from diverse backgrounds are listened to and their opinions are valued.
- Schools and departments obtains membership in or affiliation with organizations and programs that promote equitable education, access, and opportunity.
- Families and community members have the opportunity to be leaders in schools and departments.
- Educators mobilize liaisons to help families navigate the school system.
- Educators continuously self-reflect while they learn more about equity related issues.

2019-2023 Initiatives:

Racial and Cultural Literacy: We will develop the individual and organizational knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices to interrupt the ways that racism and oppression impact our education system, district, schools, and classrooms.

Culturally Relevant Leadership: We will lead by generating and upholding philosophies, practices, and policies that create equitable pathways, safety, and belonging for all students from racially and culturally diverse backgrounds.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: We will endorse a teaching and learning philosophy that prioritizes instructional practices that include racially and culturally diverse perspectives, are informed and supplemented by student backgrounds and experiences, and elevate student success.

Culturally Relevant Climate: We will consciously and deliberately act to foster school and classroom environments that reflect and honor the diverse backgrounds, cultures, and identities of all students.

Student Agency: We will create opportunities for students to be teachers and experts, have a say in decision-making processes, and take ownership over their learning.

Culturally Relevant Curriculum: We will identify, develop, and implement curriculum for all students that: elevates the voices, stories, and histories of their own cultures and communities; and is embedded in a liberating, empowering, and healing framework.

Family and Community Engagement: We will welcome and engage families and communities as essential partners to ensure that all students thrive; succeed; and get their social, emotional, behavioral, and academic needs met.

Community Collaboration and Integration: We will partner with community members, organizations, programs, and institutions to establish, promote, and build equitable pathways and opportunities for all students.

We acknowledge that this framework is ever evolving to support continuous improvement. We know that transformational change will not take place unless we have the commitment and participation of the NSD community. Together, we can work to overcome persistent barriers to social and educational justice and create an equitable education system.