



LITCHFIELD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Connect, Educate, Empower our LESD Family and Community

Litchfield Elementary School District #79 Equity Statement

At the Litchfield Elementary School District, we believe equitable policies, programs and practices support our mission to Connect, Educate and Empower our LESD Family and Community and result in favorable outcomes and increased achievement for all students.

We model equity by treating all people with dignity and respect and by seeking to understand, value and accept all members of our LESD Family and Community with consideration and appreciation for race, culture, gender, ability, religion, sexual orientation and other aspects of identity.

We commit to act deliberately to create and sustain a diverse community that values equity and inclusion while building a culture that fosters understanding, acceptance and respect for differences. We denounce discrimination, harassment, or retaliation toward any member of our LESD Family. We give definition to this commitment, as it relates to each of our four **Strategic Pillars**, by actively supporting:

Student Success - *Empower all students to reach their highest potential.*

Equitable access: We implement policies, programs and practices that provide equal access and enable all students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Equitable culture: We commit to developing school environments where all children feel safe and valued as critical members of their school family and can learn at the highest levels.

Inclusive instruction: We examine and revise our curriculum and teaching practices as necessary to ensure that we are effective in reaching every student. We train our teachers to recognize and understand the range of needs and learning styles among our students, and to hone their skills in building and sustaining an inclusive learning environment.

Just discipline: We review our discipline practices, policies, and outcomes to ensure we are treating students justly. We take steps to increase our awareness of inequity and revise practices in the best interest of our students.

Representative leadership: We strive to ensure that students of all identities can find representative role models among our teachers, staff, and other adults who work and volunteer in our schools.

People - *Provide a work environment where all employees feel connected and valued so they can perform at the highest levels.*

Hiring practices: We are committed to building a diverse staff at all levels and will post every position to both internal and external candidates.

Staff retention: We recognize the unique strengths that each LESD family member has and the challenges they face in the workplace. We will provide support through mentoring, professional development, and opportunities to be heard.

Continued training: We offer educational opportunities to all district and school personnel as part of the ongoing development of a diverse and equitable community.

Service - *Provide quality service to internal and external stakeholders.*

Meaningful interaction: We challenge every individual to interact meaningfully with the entire school community and to learn from one another, honoring our differences while embracing shared values. We encourage curiosity and inquiry as a way to learn from the diverse range of experiences and points of view of others.

Increased involvement: We encourage, and provide, appropriate opportunities for leadership and participation in decision making to all members of the LESD Family and Community.

Finances/Resources - *Optimize student success by evaluating and continually improving the effectiveness and efficiency of all resources.*

Resource distribution: We advocate for equitable resource distribution that will prioritize access to education and services to meet the varied needs of all students and teachers in our schools.

Resource allocation: We allocate resources to programs that support continuing progress toward equity, including staff professional development, student diversity education, and representative curriculum.

We recognize that our work toward equity is an ever-evolving process that requires empathy, an open mind and heart, and a willingness to engage in critical and sometimes uncomfortable conversations. We will continue to strive for a district and school environment where all members of our LESD Family and Community are not only safe but included and celebrated.

Definitions: We want to be clear about our language to support and build shared understanding.

Diversity means cultivating a wide representation of people, ideas, processes, and experiences.

Equity recognizes that we are born into unequal and unjust circumstances. These factors should not predict our ability to fail or succeed.

Inclusion means creating the conditions that foster belonging to enhance what makes us unique and strengthen our community.

Anti-racist means taking an explicit stand against racism. We subscribe to author Ibram X. Kendi's definition: "One either allows racial inequities to persevere, as racist, or confronts racial inequities, as an antiracist. There is no in-between safe space of "not racist".

This document will be updated periodically and expanded as needed.