

**Policy Statement #1015 (Administration) of the Board of Education
Regarding Equity**

I. Purpose

- A. To codify the Strategic Plan priority to promote a culture of equity and responsibility for all students.
- B. To create and maintain environments that are equitable, fair, safe, diverse, and inclusive.
- C. Educational equity should be a lens through which all policies, procedures, and practices are viewed and decided.
- D. To ensure that an equity lens be used in all staff recruiting, hiring, retention, and promotion processes in order to build a culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse workforce to reflect the student body.
- E. To ensure that each child is provided social emotional supports in order to receive an education that honors their race, culture, gender, orientation, or economic status, and maximizes their potential to achieve college and career readiness.
- F. To raise achievement for each child by eliminating achievement and opportunity gaps among student subgroups.
- G. To identify and address structural, institutional barriers, and social identifiers that could prevent students from equitably accessing educational opportunities in all schools.

II. Definitions

- A. Achievement Gap - Significant and persistent disparities in academic performance or educational attainment between different groups of students.
- B. College and Career Ready – Academic and career readiness consistent with Maryland's College and Career Ready Standards. These education standards establish a set of shared goals and expectations for what Maryland students should understand and be able to do in grades Pre-K – 12 and upon graduation.
- C. Educational Equity – To ensure access to essential academic, social, emotional and economic resources, supports, and opportunities; in order to engage each student, throughout their educational career.
- D. Equity Lens – Practiced when making a decision for any policy, program, practice, decision or action. The knowledge and skills that equips an individual with the ability to see overt and subtle ways in which access and opportunity are distributed unfairly across race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, language, and other factors.
- E. Linguistically Diverse – The ability to communicate in more than one language.

- F. Opportunity Gap - Ways in which systemic structures, practices, and allocation of resources allows for reduced or denied opportunities generally by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English proficiency, community wealth, familial situations, or other factors.
- G. Social and Emotional Skills – a child’s ability to understand the feelings of others, control his or her own feelings and behaviors, get along with other children, and build relationships with adults.
- H. Cultural Responsiveness- pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including culture in all aspects of learning through equitable and inclusive practices that promote high expectations.
- I. Structural and institutional barriers - positions, policies, practices, and process that systematically disadvantage certain groups of people.
- J. Social Identifiers – demographic factors identified as, but not limited to, age, race, cognitive, social, emotional, and physical ability, ethnicity, family structure, gender identity and expression, language, national origin, nationality, religion, and socio-economic status.
- K. Implicit Bias – the attitudes and stereotypes that reflect our understanding, actions, and decisions. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, may be activated involuntarily and without an individual’s awareness or intentional control.

III. Policy Statement

- A. The Board of Education believes each student can learn with adequate support at the highest levels when all staff provide equitable access and opportunity for learning and hold each student to high expectations. Maximizing the academic achievement of each child requires allocating funding and resources equitably, not necessarily equally. An inclusive and welcoming environment plays a critical role in supporting a child’s educational goals.
- B. The Board recognizes that creating equitable learning opportunities for each child and eliminating achievement gaps among student subgroups is a goal that requires significant investment in professional development, curricular resources, and educational programs to implement lasting change across all schools. The Board directs the Superintendent to implement procedures to achieve the goals of this policy statement.

IV. Guidelines

- A. In order to advance these goals, the Board directs the Superintendent to report annually on:
 - 1. Progress made toward eliminating student achievement and opportunity gaps.
 - 2. Budget allocations, resources and professional development required to ensure culturally responsive instruction to eliminate achievement and

opportunity gaps among all student subgroups and ensure equitable professional opportunities for all staff.

3. The Local Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Consolidated Strategic Plan as it relates to equity.
4. The employment, retention, recruiting, and placement of persons from underrepresented groups.
5. The development of culturally responsive curriculum, instructional materials, and assessments that have undergone bias and sensitivity reviews.
6. Disproportionality as it pertains to the discipline of minority students, English language learners, and special education students.
7. The recruitment and participation of individuals from underrepresented groups in advanced academics.

V. Delegation of Authority

- A. The Superintendent is directed to implement this policy in accordance with all local policies and local, state, and federal laws and regulations and to communicate this policy to all relevant parties.

VI. Exceptions

- A. There are no exceptions to this policy. However, the Board, by majority vote, may temporarily suspend all or part of this policy. Suspension of all or part of this policy, however, in no way relieves the Board of its obligation to comply with the pertinent local, state, and federal laws and regulations or the rules and regulations of the Maryland State Board of Education and the Maryland State Department of Education.

VII. Review

- A. This policy will be reviewed at the end of four years, or sooner, if approved by majority vote of the Board of Education in public session.

VIII. Effective Date

- A. This policy is effective August 13, 2020.

Citations

COMAR 13A.01.06.01-05