

RICHFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**EQUITY POLICY****I. PURPOSE**

All students deserve a safe, supportive school environment to thrive academically and developmentally. The purpose of this policy is to provide a district environment in which all students achieve high-level academic outcomes that are not predictable by race, culture, socioeconomic status, language, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, migratory status or any other real or perceived demographic characteristic.

Richfield Public Schools (RPS) is committed to viewing and analyzing all of our work through a racial and cultural equity lens that intentionally subverts the policies and practices of institutional racism. Through this ongoing anti-racist work, we will identify and interrupt practices and policies that elevate white supremacy and/or perpetuate institutional racism in any form in order to ensure all RPS students succeed. Educational environments are enriched and improved by the contributions, perspectives and very presence of diverse participants. Richfield Public Schools will provide a high quality, personalized educational program with rich opportunities for all students in a real community where each individual is welcomed and belongs.

II. DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are provided to assist in understanding this policy:

- A. Anti-racism: The work of actively and consistently opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, educational, and social spheres.
- B. Diversity: All the characteristics that make an individual or group different from another, including race, ethnicity, gender/gender expression, age, national origin, religion, ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, language, and more.
- C. Educational Debt: The results of the historical lack of investment in educating children from marginalized communities, which continue to affect opportunities and achievement for children who are part of those communities today.
- D. Equity: The concept of being fair and impartial while acknowledging that society has not afforded the same resources, access, and

treatment to everyone and working to remedy all inequities through actions.

- E. Institutional Racism: The ways in which policies and practices within an organization create different and predictable outcomes for different racial groups, typically maintaining an advantage for white individuals and simultaneously maintaining a disadvantage for individuals of color.
- F. Intersectionality: The concept that demographic categories such as race, gender, ability, class, and sexual orientation cannot be solely examined in isolation from one another. Rather, these identities interact within individuals' lives, in society, and in social systems, creating a distinct effect within each intersection.
- G. Weaponization: the weaponization of public education against communities of color refers to situations when an educational institution uses its authority to act in a manner that is unfair, punitive, exclusionary, or harmful to students of color, and that makes those students and/or families feel unwelcome, unsafe, thought of as less than, and that interferes with students' abilities to learn, grow in healthy ways and achieve at high levels.

III. COMMITMENTS

- A. School district administration will develop, maintain, and be held accountable for the use of practices that provide quality education, high standards, rigorous curriculum and powerful instruction using culturally-relevant pedagogy to all students. Practices may include:
 - 1. Focusing on student strengths and a growth mindset
 - 2. Maintaining high expectations for all students
 - 3. Embedding social/emotional learning, including acknowledging the unique mental and emotional strain caused by historical, systemic, and institutionalized racism
 - 4. Using restorative practices to engage students in their school and classroom communities
 - 5. Incorporating student and family voice
 - 6. Radically transforming learning environments to serve all students

7. Taking steps to address the historical trauma caused by the weaponization of public education against communities of color
 8. Additional practices will continue to be researched, developed, and implemented with the specific goal of ensuring outstanding outcomes for all students.
- B. School district administration will promote a warm, welcoming and respectful district environment that celebrates each and every individual. This effort shall include acknowledging the intersectional identities of students and staff members, addressing the social-emotional needs of students and staff members, and engaging in bullying prevention efforts. School district administration may also provide opportunities for interested students to participate in anti-racist and equity-driven activities.
- C. School district administration will develop, support, model, and sustain equity-focused, anti-racist and culturally-responsive training and development for staff and students. This will include educating staff and students on the racial history of the United States and acknowledging the complexities of intersectional issues within the area of equity. These training and development initiatives will be ongoing to ensure continuing fidelity and growth in anti-racist and equity-driven work.
- D. The school district will work to recruit, employ, support and retain a workforce that reflects all forms of diversity of enrolled students, as well as culturally competent administrative, instructional and support personnel.
- E. School district administration will monitor programs and activities to assess educational equity. Administration will be responsible to design, redesign, and if necessary, terminate, programs and activities to serve the needs of all students.
- F. Consistent with state regulations and school district policy, the school district will develop, implement, and sustain curricular materials and assessments that reflect the diversity of students and staff and include learning and activities that deepen the understanding and appreciation of race, culture, socioeconomic status, language, gender, sexual orientation, ability, religion, migratory status and other differences that contribute to the uniqueness of each student and staff member.

- G. Each school and program will actively seek community input, specifically and actively ensuring that all voices are present to create a welcoming culture and inclusive environment that reflects and supports all forms of diversity of the school's student populations, their families, and communities.
- H. Hate speech and harassment of any kind is not tolerated in the RPS community. Procedures for reporting and addressing harassment are found in Policy 103: Harassment Prohibition.

IV. SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The Board of Directors shall refer to the values stated in this policy in conducting its business and in exercising its responsibilities to the people of Richfield and all individuals served by RPS.
- B. The Superintendent shall establish in accordance with this policy such plans and procedures as may be necessary and appropriate to accomplish its purpose and intent. Plans and procedures established shall include clear accountability for actions and oversight, and shall include metrics for evaluation.
- C. The Superintendent may create regulations and guidelines for the implementation of this policy.
- D. The School Board and Superintendent may establish specific goals to implement this policy as permitted by law.
- E. The Superintendent shall integrate information into reports to the Board of Directors and the community regarding progress toward the goals of this policy, including both process-driven changes and outcomes for students.
- F. District staff shall, within the parameters of their various duties and responsibilities, comply with and execute such plans as are designed to address the values and directions included in this policy. District staff are further responsible to make such suggestions to the appropriate authority to improve the ability of the district to address the educational debt owed to marginalized communities.
- G. Families and community members are partners with the District in its effort to address the educational debt and dismantle institutional patterns of racism in the Richfield community. Families and community members can embody this partnership through providing feedback to the district, advocating for their students, encouraging

their students to grow toward their own goals, supporting the learning environment and pursuing anti-racism in themselves and their communities.

- H. Students are partners in their academic achievement. School attendance and engagement are essential to making a more equitable society. Students will be intentionally encouraged to support the goals of this policy by providing feedback to the district, advocating for themselves, growing toward their own goals, supporting the learning environment and contributing to positive school culture. RPS staff members will support students in believing in their abilities to achieve their dreams and use their voices to create more equitable systems in our world.
- I. The School Board, Superintendent and employees will collaborate with students and families to identify and address barriers to achievement and opportunities for academic success. Richfield Public Schools leadership and staff will be responsible for empowering and inspiring students, families, and community members to actively listen, participate and engage in anti-racist and equity-driven practices to support the success of every student.

Cross References:

Policy 103: Harassment Prohibition

RATIFIED BY THE BOARD OF EDUCATION: April 19, 2021