

Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union	WSESU Code: C41
Policy Statement	First Reading: 4/26/2021 Second Reading: 5/24/2021 Third Reading: 6/28/2021 Date Adopted: 6/28/2021

Anti-Racism Policy

I. Purpose of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to eliminate all forms of racism in the Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union (Mt. Ascutney School District, Weathersfield School, Hartland Elementary School). The goals of this Anti-Racism policy include:

1. Acknowledging historical and contemporary omissions that impact contributions and perspectives of diverse ethnic and social groups, specifically those traditionally excluded from current K-12 educational curriculum encouraging analytical thinking regarding the same;
2. Incorporating classroom content and strategies that create brave spaces to enable students to safely explore questions of identity and membership in diverse ethnic and social groups, race equality, and racism;
3. Creating engagement opportunities that provide families with a welcoming means of raising any concern about their child's experience as it relates to racial, ethnic, or social identity at school;¹
4. Creating measures to ensure that students leave their school district within the Supervisory Union with a baseline understanding of anti-racism and the impacts of white supremacy/superiority/privilege, and all forms of racism;
5. Developing a space for those harmed by racism to be able to report their experiences through a safe, non-punitive, anonymous platform;
6. Recognizing that anti-racism is a lifelong process which requires personal and communal growth and action;
7. Committing that all Districts within the Supervisory Union are ensuring employees are equipped to deal with instances of racism, discrimination, and bias within the school settings; and
8. Distinguishing racist acts as a specialized type of harm rooted in history with long-term impacts, separate from the harm outlined in existing anti-harassment and anti-bullying policies procedures.

¹H.3 (Act 1) (g)(2)(A)(i-iii)(B)

II. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all schools, facilities and programs in the Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union and to all members of the Supervisory Union including, but not limited to, students, staff, volunteers, visitors, and teachers.

III. Definitions

Anti-racism: The practice of identifying, challenging, and changing the values, structures and behaviors that perpetuate systemic racism.²

BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, People of Color. The term intentionally separates Black and Indigenous communities from the term “people of color” to acknowledge the heightened layers of systemic oppression these communities face in this country.³

Brave Spaces: A non-physical space within a school designed to help create an environment that allows individuals to engage with one another over controversial issues like race, diversity, and social justice with honesty, sensitivity, and respect. The intention is to help reassure those who feel anxious about sharing their thoughts and feelings regarding these sensitive and controversial issues.³

Ethnicity: The social characteristics that people may have in common, such as language, religion, regional background, culture, foods, etc. Ethnicity is revealed by the traditions one follows, a person’s native language, and so on.

Explicit Bias: Biases we are aware of on a conscious level. Explicit bias is the traditional conceptualization of bias. Overt racism and racist comments are examples of explicit biases (for example, feeling threatened by another group and delivering hate speech as a result).⁴

Equality: A state where everyone gets the same things in order to enjoy full, healthy lives. It can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same things, which requires understanding historic, systemic barriers that create hindrances.⁵

Equity: The state, quality or ideal of being just, impartial and fair. The concept of equity is synonymous with fairness and justice. To be achieved and sustained, equity needs to be thought of as a structural and systemic concept.⁶

Implicit (Or Unconscious) Bias: an unconscious association, belief, or attitude toward any social group.⁷ These biases often arise as a result of trying to find patterns and navigate the overwhelming stimuli in this very complicated world. Culture, media, and upbringing can also contribute to the development of such biases.⁸

² Alberta Civil Liberties Research Centre, Anti-Racism Defined, <http://www.aclrc.com/antiracism-defined>. Ontario Anti-Racism Secretariat. ³Brian Arao and Kristi Clemens (2013) in chapter eight—“From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces”—of their book *The Art of Effective Facilitation: Reflections From Social Justice Educators*, <https://sites.lsa.umich.edu/inclusive-teaching-2/wp-content/uploads/sites/732/2016/06/From-Safe-Spaces-to-Brave-Spaces.pdf>.

⁴<https://www.justice.gov/crs/file/836431/download>.

⁵<https://www.aecf.org/blog/racial-justice-definitions/>

⁶<https://www.aecf.org/blog/racial-justice-definitions/>

⁷<https://www.verywellmind.com/implicit-bias-overview-4178401>.

⁸<https://www.simplypsychology.org/implicit-bias.html>.

Individual Racism: Pre-judgment, bias, or discrimination by an individual based on race. Individual racism includes both privately held beliefs, conscious and unconscious, and external behaviors and actions towards others.

Institutional Racism: Occurs within institutions and organizations, such as schools, that adopt and maintain policies, practices, and procedures that often unintentionally produce inequitable outcomes for people of color and advantages for white people.

Racism: The marginalization and/or oppression of people of color based on a socially constructed racial hierarchy that privileges white people.⁹

Systemic or Structural Racism: The way in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various ways to reinforce and perpetuate racial group inequity. It is not something we as individual members of society actively choose to practice, instead it is a feature of the social, economic and political systems in which we all exist. It refers to the history, culture, ideology, and interactions of the institutions and policies that perpetuate a system of inequity that is detrimental to communities of color.

White Privilege: A web of historical and contemporary institutional and cultural treatment and exemption from racial and national oppression that results in preferential treatment for white people.¹⁰

White Supremacy/Superiority: The political, economic, and cultural systems in which white individuals overwhelmingly control power over material resources—a form of dominance and control, and not just the overt hate of one group towards another.

IV. Policy Statement

It is the policy of all Districts within the Supervisory Union to:

1. Affirm the need to provide safe educational spaces of learning for all students.
2. Oppose teachings that perpetuate white supremacy/superiority, white privilege by acknowledging the violence, disenfranchisement, and bigotry these topics depict before a lesson begins because doing otherwise would be equivalent to claiming these prejudices never existed and individuals are not harmed by them every day.
3. Commit to a collective responsibility within the District to address, eliminate, and prevent actions, decisions, and outcomes that result from and perpetuate racism.
4. Eliminate inequitable practices that create prejudicial or disparate outcomes for students based on social or cultural factors, such as race, class, ability, ethnicity, religion, gender, or gender identity.¹¹
5. Respect and champion the diversity and varied life experiences of all community members which contribute to all districts within the Supervisory Union's goals of inclusivity, equity, and justice.

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7. Acknowledge that racism is often compounded by other forms of discrimination.
8. Establish a procedure to effectively deal with racially-motivated conflicts that explicitly recognizes that anti-harassment procedures are insufficient to deal with conflicts of this nature.

The superintendent shall identify outcome indicators as necessary to monitor this policy and shall provide a quarterly status report to the Board.

⁹<https://www.adl.org/racism>.

¹⁰Racial Equity Tools, <https://www.racialequitytools.org/resourcefiles/martinas1.pdf>.

¹¹Albemarle County Public Schools, *Anti-Racism Policy*, <https://www.k12albemarle.org/acps/division/anti-racism-policy/Pages/policy.aspx>. (last visited: June 9, 2020)