

Legislative Mandates & Curricular Integration ...

Presentation Objectives

- Provide overview and understanding of recent legislation
 - Persons with Disabilities and LGBTQ mandate
 - Diversity and Inclusion mandate
- Discuss how the district is implementing these mandates
- Address questions and concerns raised by public
- QSAC implications

New Legislative Mandates

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Persons with Disabilities and LGBTQ legislation

- Instruction on the political, economic, and social contributions of disabled and LGBTQ persons, in an appropriate place, in the middle and high school curriculum.
- Policies, procedures pertaining to inclusive instructional materials.
- Approved January 31, 2019; Effective 2020-21 school year

Diversity & Inclusion Legislation

- Highlight and promote diversity, including economic diversity, equity, inclusion, tolerance, and belonging in connection with gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, disabilities, and religious tolerance;
- Examine the impact that unconscious bias and economic disparities have at both an individual level and on society as a whole; and
- Encourage safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for all students regardless of race or ethnicity, sexual and gender identities, mental and physical disabilities, and religious beliefs.
- Approved March 1, 2021; Effective 2021-22 school year

So, what changes?

Haven't we always done this?

Yes. In our district, we have always taken pride in the ways we make our students and their families feel welcome and comfortable learning in our schools.

We have always and will continue to:

- Examine people's differences and commonalities and learn about cultures in the United States and around the world.
- Learn about the diversity of scientists, musicians, mathematicians, inventors, artists and many other careers in all of our subjects.
- Include a variety of perspectives of diverse people and cultures in our classrooms and library literature.
- Deliver lessons on respect, tolerance, acceptance, and positive behavior interactions.

Mandates already in place for many years

- Amistad Mandate
 - The Amistad Bill became law in 2002.
 - Implement materials and texts to include the teaching of the African slave trade, slavery in America, the vestiges of slavery in this country, and the contributions of African-Americans to this country across all content areas in all K-12 grades.
- Holocaust Mandate
 - NJ Commission on Holocaust Education began in 1974 and has a core mission to “promote Holocaust education in the State of NJ.”
 - The 1994 legislation indicated that issues of bias, prejudice and bigotry, including bullying through the teaching of the Holocaust and genocide, shall be included for all children from K-12th grade.

Mandates already in place for many years

- Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act (ABR)
 - The importance of protecting students from bullying has been emphasized through the ABR that became a law in New Jersey in January 2011, which strengthened the original bullying law that began in 2003.
 - School districts are encouraged to observe a “Week of Respect” to provide age-appropriate instruction focusing on preventing harassment, intimidation, or bullying (HIB).
 - Provide anti-bullying programs, and lessons teaching children empathy, respect for others, and address biases against individuals and/or groups of people

**How are these mandates implemented
in Lyndhurst Public Schools?**

Why is this work important?

- **Academic achievement increases** if students find meaning in the learning experiences in their school.
- **Social emotional health is supported** when children see themselves reflected in the curriculum.
- Embracing diversity and inclusion, **encourages acceptance** and helps **prepare students** to thrive in a diverse world.
- Researchers have found school connectedness, supportive educators, anti-bullying policies, and inclusive curricula **improve the health and wellbeing** of LGBTQ students.
- The danger of a single story-TED talk given by award-winning novelist Chimamanda Adichie.
- This work is in accordance with established Board policies 2240, 2510, 2530, 3310, 5512, 5750, 5756 (not exhaustive list of policies).

Why do we need diverse books and resources?



Mirrors, Windows, Sliding Glass Doors

Mirrors: We want students to be able to see themselves in literature so they can relate themselves and their particular situations to the world

Windows: We want students to be able to see into other people's worlds so they can have empathy for their peers and the lives of others

Sliding glass doors: We want students to be able to enter into the world that they might not normally have an opportunity to. For example: listening to cultural music, trying different food, learning about other holidays, etc.

District Implementation of Persons with Disabilities and LGBTQ

- Content area supervisors worked collaboratively with the Bergen County Curriculum Consortium in developing suggested lessons and resources. Sample lessons include:
 - Science/STEM: examining scientists from a variety of backgrounds who have contributed to the advancement of science.
 - Social Studies: examining the advancement of rights of persons with disabilities and the LGBTQ+ community including (the Americans with Disabilities Act, Stonewall Riots, Obergefell v. Hodges) and the people who fought for those rights
 - Additional Subjects: Examining varied mathematicians, musicians, inventors, athletes and their contributions to their profession
- LMS Summer Reading books supported the themes of books read during the school year.

District Implementation of Diversity and Inclusion

- District equity committee presentation
- School-based Equity Committees
- Professional Development for all district staff
- Reviewing curricular resources, classroom libraries, and school libraries for diverse perspectives

Addressing Questions/Concerns

Is the district teaching Critical Race Theory (CRT)?

- No. CRT is a sophisticated examination of U.S. law, which emerged in the 1980's, and sought to uncover the reason for continued disparities despite civil rights advancements. CRT seeks to examine and understand how social, cultural, economic, and legal issues have historically been influenced by race and racism. It is primarily examined in law schools, or in university postgraduate level courses.
- CRT is not appropriate to teach in a K-12 setting, it is not mentioned in any of the new legislative mandates, nor is it found in any of the NJ Student Learning Standards, and it is not in Lyndhurst Public School curricula which must be aligned to state standards.

Does the district teach about race, racism, and prejudice?

- Our teachers include a variety of balanced perspectives and sources when covering historical content to help students become critical thinkers and form their own ideas. We do not indoctrinate students into any particular way of thinking about an issue or historical event.
- Examination of legislative precedents
 - Jim Crow Laws, Plessy vs. Ferguson, Brown v. Board of Education, etc.
- Evaluation of historical and current events
 - Slavery, Civil War, Civil Rights Movement, Reconstruction, the KKK, Charlottesville Riots, etc.
- Discussion of civic responsibility
 - Bystanders, hate crimes, genocide

QSAC Implications

- ❖ Governance Indicator 6b (8 points)
- ❖ Districts must show how they are providing instruction that meets the persons with disabilities and LGBTQ mandate.
- ❖ Most likely reviewed during I&P review
- ❖ Ways districts can show they are meeting mandate
 - Highlighted in curriculum
 - Curriculum crosswalk
 - Identified list of units of study