

**EQUITY, INCLUSIVITY AND DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION**

Equity is a focus of New York's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan. Equity in education is about providing each student with what they need to succeed. Equality is treating everyone the same, not all learners begin at the same place, and not all learners have the same needs. The support one student needs should and will rightfully differ from that of another.

The Board of Education is committed to creating and maintaining a positive and inclusive learning environment where all students, especially those currently and historically marginalized, feel safe, included, welcomed, and accepted, and experience a sense of belonging and academic success.

Generally Accepted Beliefs and Agreements

All students deserve to have equal access to opportunity regardless of skin color, religion or creed, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, the language they speak or ethnic background. This belief is fundamental to our UPK-12 education program. The District also recognizes that some students have been marginalized due to inequities associated with aspects of their identities including, but not limited to, socioeconomic status, race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sex; sexual orientation, or gender (including gender identity and expression).

The District does not support turning a blind eye toward, discrimination of, and marginalization of any people or groups of people, whether intentional or not. Such actions damage the individuals and groups targeted and the community as a whole.

Through this policy the District is committed to analyzing and addressing the root causes of inequities where they are found to exist and in so doing enhance learning opportunities throughout the District.

Goals

To achieve educational equity and inclusive education, the District acknowledges the presence of socioeconomically disadvantaged and culturally diverse students. The District recognizes the need for students to find relevant connections among themselves, the subject matter taught and the tasks teachers request be completed.

The District will develop the individual and organizational knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices to create culturally responsive learning and working environments that expect and support high academic achievement for students and employees. This includes cultural nuances aligned to the layers of our students' lives, i.e. poverty, religion or lack of religious affiliation, or language of origin.

In order to realize these goals, the Board, its officers, and employees, should be conversant in the historical injustices and inequalities that have shaped our society and recognize and attempt to eliminate the institutional barriers, including racism and biases, which contribute to disparate educational outcomes within our schools.

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Equity and inclusive education aims to understand, identify, address, and eliminate the biases, barriers, and disparities that limit a student's chance to graduate high school prepared for college, for a career, and for life.

The Superintendent or designee(s) will ensure curriculum and instructional materials reflect the Board's commitment to educational equity. Curriculum and instructional materials shall reflect diversity and include a range of perspectives and experiences, particularly those of historically underrepresented groups in a progressive and strengths-based depiction. Curriculum materials shall be examined for bias, by all appropriate stakeholders, including teachers and students and their families. Class instructional activities and extracurricular programs shall be designed to provide opportunities for cross-cultural experiences that foster respect for diversity.

Equity and inclusive education is an ongoing process requiring shared commitment and leadership to meet the ever-evolving society, unique learning needs of students, and diverse backgrounds of our communities and schools. The Board understands that equity and inclusive education is achieved when each adult collaborates and affirms each student by creating a respectful learning environment inclusive of actual or perceived personal characteristics.

Educational equity is based on the principles of fairness and ensuring every student has access to the resources and educational rigor they need at the right moment in their education, despite any individual's actual or perceived personal characteristics. Educational equity is not to be used interchangeably with principles of equality, which is treating all students the same.

Inclusive education is based on the principles of acceptance and inclusion of all students. Students see themselves reflected in their curriculum, their physical surroundings and the broader environment, in which diversity is honored and all individuals are respected. Our students must be seen by all faculty members, and honored for who they are within our culture, AND also within our instructional design and daily educational routines and practices.

Diversity in education means students, staff, families and community are our greatest strength and diversity is viewed as an asset. Diversity means the condition of being different or having differences, including, but not limited to, sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, socioeconomic status, religion, and ability, and other human differences. Embracing these diversities and moving beyond tolerance to inclusivity and student-specific rigor and validation will help the district reach our goal of creating a community that ensures that each and every voice is heard and responded to with action steps.

Accountability, Transparency and Review

The Board and the District accepts responsibility and will be accountable for students having access to quality education, qualified teachers, challenging curriculum, opportunity to learn, and sufficient, individually-tailored support for learning so they can achieve academically and socially.

The District accepts its responsibility for moving forward on this journey and committing time, energy and resources to develop a more equitable, inclusive, and diverse welcoming environment for students, parents and staff.

The Board supports and authorizes the establishment of training programs for students and for employees to raise awareness of the issues surrounding socioeconomic diversity and the

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impacts of poverty on learning, cultural responsiveness, equity and inclusion and to implement preventative measures to help counteract biases and practices that perpetuate achievement disparities and lead to disproportionate levels of student success. Age-appropriate instructional materials will be incorporated into the curriculum to educate students so that they can learn from a diverse range of experiences and points of view. Curricular materials and staffing decisions will support these efforts.

The Board of Education and the Superintendent will monitor and review the training and equity activities, all pertinent data related (e.g.attendance, feedback, disciplinary records) and adjust accordingly. Equity Policy Communication

To be successful in this endeavor, it is imperative that all members of the school community are aware of this policy. The Superintendent shall ensure this policy is posted in areas visible to both staff and students.

Policy Enforcement

The Board directs the Superintendent or designee(s) to enforce this policy and create practices to implement this policy. The Board will annually review the District's implementation of this policy and take appropriate action to ensure compliance with and enforcement of this policy.

Adoption Date: August 17, 2021

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF  
DISTRICT'S EQUITY, INCLUSIVITY AND DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION POLICY**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received the District's Equity, Inclusivity and Diversity in Education Policy, effective August 17, 2021. I have reviewed this Policy, and I have had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the Policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Employee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date