

Mission – Goals – Objectives

Equity and Diversity

Values

Every student deserves a respectful learning environment in which their cultural, racial and ethnic diversity is valued and contributes to successful academic outcomes. The New London Public Schools is committed to identifying and correcting practices and policies that perpetuate the achievement gap and institutional racism in all forms, in order to provide all of its students with the opportunity to succeed. Learning and work environments are enriched and improved by the contributions, perspectives and very presence of diverse participants. The New London School District is committed to the success of every student in each of our schools.

The Board of Education (Board) believes that the responsibility for student success is broadly shared by District staff, families, our community and our student's own efforts. Achievement gaps between students with different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds are unacceptable, if we are to achieve our mission and vision and to meet our moral obligations to our students, their families and our community. Gaps in learning and opportunity are contrary to our belief that all children can learn and succeed. Adult behaviors must not contribute to achievement gaps or create barriers to success. Adults must concentrate on eliminating gaps -- particularly those that are predicated on a student's race, ethnicity, home language, personal characteristics or culture -- and on assurance of educational equity.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Ensure that the District acts consistently:
 - [a] with its beliefs that all children can learn and succeed and that the diversity of our student body, community and staff is a strength that should be fostered; and
 - [b] with its obligation to provide all its students with educational equity and the opportunity to succeed; and
2. establish a policy framework for eliminating bias, institutional racism and other barriers to success and for achieving educational equity; and
3. ensure that the District:
 - [a] evaluates proposed policies and practices for disparate impacts on learning and development of students with different personal characteristics and on resource allocation; and
 - [b] adopts effective policies that achieve the District's goals without disparate impacts; and
4. ensure that no District policies or practices contribute to achievement gaps between students of different races, colors, socio-economic status, ethnicity, home languages, country of origin or other personal characteristics.

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Equity and Diversity (continued)

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy the following terms shall have these meanings:

- A. **“Diversity”** includes characters of persons including, but not limited to race, culture, color, creed or religion, national origin, gender, mental and physical ability, age, marital status, family structure, citizenship status, sexual orientation, sexual expression or identity, economic status, veteran’s status, and any other protected class in conformance with federal, state and local laws.
- B. **“District staff”** includes all employees, consultants and contractors of the New London Public Schools.
- C. **“Educational equity”** means raising the achievement of all students while (1) narrowing the gaps between the lowest and highest performing students, and (2) eliminating the racial or cultural predictability and disproportionality of which student groups occupy the highest and lowest achievement categories including rates of graduation.
- D. **“Institutional racism”** means the collective failure of a public or private organization to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their race, color, culture or ethnic origin which can be seen or detected in practices, processes, systems, attitudes and behavior. It looks beyond individual acts of prejudice to the systemic biases that may be built into institutions. These systemic biases discriminate against and disadvantage people of color through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness or racial stereotyping.

Implementation Procedures

DIVERSITY:

- 1. The District shall adopt employment procedures (recruitment, hiring, training and retention) to strive for diversity in an excellent workforce that reflects communities and student diversity (as defined in this policy). Children of all races, cultures, and backgrounds benefit from seeing familiar role models in schools. District staff diversity provides all students a better chance of seeing themselves as belonging to the education system. District staff diversity provides all children with the opportunity to learn from others with dissimilar backgrounds.
- 2. The District shall make efforts to increase diversity of vendors and suppliers corps in accordance with law and District policy.

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Equity and Diversity (continued)

Implementation Procedures

DIVERSITY: (continued)

3. The District shall offer professional development opportunities for all staff to improve their effectiveness and capacity (individual and collective) (1) to teach an ethnically and racially diverse student population and (2) to serve similarly diverse families and communities.

EQUITY:

4. The District shall offer professional development opportunities to teaching and administrative staff specifically to strengthen and deepen their knowledge and skills for (1) eliminating barriers to learning and barriers to opportunities for academic success and for (2) closing achievement and opportunity gaps between student groups.
 - (a) The Board, Superintendent and employees will offer opportunities for students and families to provide their recommendations for identifying barriers to achievement and opportunities for academic success.
 - (b) Because school attendance is essential to student engagement and learning, and to reducing gaps in achievement and opportunity, the District will ensure its attendance policies and practices eliminate barriers to opportunities for academic success through positive practices.
 - (c) District staff members are responsible - within the parameters of their duties - for complying with this policy and for making suggestions to appropriate authorities to improve the District's ability to reduce achievement and opportunity gaps. The Superintendent is responsible for distribution of this policy to each teaching and administrative staff member.
5. The District shall evaluate proposed policies and practices relative to their goals (1) for potential disparate impacts on learning and development of students with different personal characteristics and (2) for resource allocations potentially adverse to students with particular personal characteristics. The District shall adopt policies and practices that achieve District goals without disparate impacts.
6. The District shall work collaboratively with teachers, administrators and other experts to eliminate current practices, procedures and programs that result in over or under representation of students with certain personal characteristics as compared to their peers. The District shall subject all practices, procedures and programs to close review to assure that they do not contribute to achievement gaps between students based on personal characteristics.

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Equity and Diversity (continued)

Implementation Procedures

Equity: (continued)

- (a) To assist the District in meeting its equitable education and business goals, the District may seek outside expertise from, e.g.: (1) government agencies, (2) non-profit organizations and (3) community groups supporting educational equity and cultural competencies.
7. To support the District goal of educational equity, the District shall provide each student with equitable access to high quality instruction, curriculum, support, facilities, opportunities, and other educational resources, even when this means differentiating resource allocations on the basis of student needs.
- (a) Because resource allocation must support educational equity while complying with state and federal funding mandates, the Superintendent shall conduct equity and diversity impact assessments on all policies and practices that have a significant impact on student learning and resource allocation.

EQUITY and DIVERSITY:

8. To fulfill the District's public accountability responsibility, the Superintendent shall keep the Board informed about the District's performance and progress toward educational equity, staff diversity and staff development, consistent with this policy.
- (a) The Superintendent shall annually report to the Board and the community regarding District performance goals on academic achievement and progress toward meeting these goals and closing the achievement gap. The report will also highlight discrepancies between the targets set and actual performance. This annual public report shall include an equity and diversity impact assessment to demonstrate that the District has adopted policies with the least disparate impact.

- (cf. 0521 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 1110.1 – Parental Involvement)
- (cf. 1110.3 – School Governance Council)
- (cf. 1210 – Community Associations)
- (cf. 1212 – Volunteers)
- (cf. 1330 or 3515 – Use of School Facilities)
- (cf. 1205 – Participation by the Public)
- (cf. 4111 – Recruitment and Selection)
- (cf. 4111.1/4211.1 – Affirmative Action)
- (cf. 4118.11 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 4118.113/4218.113 – Harassment)

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Equity and Diversity (continued)

- (cf. 4118.3 – District Minority Recruitment Plan)
- (cf. 4131 – Staff Development)
- (cf. 5118.1 – Homeless Students)
- (cf. 5131.911 – Bullying/Safe School Climate Plans)
- (cf. 5145.4 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 5145.5 – Sexual Harassment)
- (cf. 5145.51 – Peer Sexual Harassment)
- (cf. 5145.52 – Harassment)
- (cf. 5145.53 – Transgender and Non-Conforming Youth)
- (cf. 5145.6 – Student Grievance Procedure)
- (cf. 6115 – Ceremonies and Observances)
- (cf. 6121 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf. 6121.1 - Equal Educational Opportunity)
- (cf. 6141.21 – Religions in the Public Schools)
- (cf. 6141.22 – Religious Accommodations)
- (cf. 6141.311 – Programs for limited English Proficient Students)
- (cf. 6171 – Special Education)
- (cf. 9133 – Board of Education Advisory Committees)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

46a-60 Discriminatory employment practices prohibited.

10-15c Discrimination in public schools prohibited. School attendance by five-year olds. (Amended by P.A. 97-247 to include “sexual orientation” and P.A. 11-55 to include “gender identity or expression”)

10-153 Discrimination on account of marital status.

17a-101 Protection of children from abuse.

Connecticut State Board of Education “Position Statement on Culturally Responsive Education,” adopted May 4, 2011

Title VII, Civil Rights Act, 42 U.S.C. 2000e, et seq.

29 CFR 1604.11, EEOC Guidelines on Sex Discrimination.

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.

34 CFR Section 106.8(b), OCR Guidelines for Title IX.

Definitions, OCR Guidelines on Sexual Harassment, Fed. Reg. Vol 62, #49, 29 CFR Sec. 1606.8 (a) 62 Fed Reg. 12033 (March 13, 1997) and 66 Fed. Reg. 5512 (January 19, 2001)

20 U.S.C. 7905 (Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act contained in No Child Left Behind Act of 2001)

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Legal Reference: (continued)

Meritor Savings Bank. FSB v. Vinson, 477 U.S. 57 (1986)

Faragher v. City of Boca Raton, No. 97-282 (U.S. Supreme Court, June 26,1998)

Gebbser v. Lago Vista Indiana School District, No. 99-1866, (U.S. Supreme Court, June 26,1998)

Davis v. Monro County Board of Education, No. 97-843, (U.S. Supreme Court, May 24, 1999.)

The Vietnam Era Veterans’ Readjustment Act of 1974, as amended, 38 U.S.C. §4212

Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008

The Americans with Disabilities Act as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008

Public Law 111-256

Meacham v. Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory 128 S.Ct. 2395, 76 U.S.L.W. 4488 (2008)

Federal Express Corporation v. Holowecki 128 S.Ct. 1147, 76 U.S.L.W. 4110 (2008)

Kentucky Retirement Systems v. EEOC 128 S.Ct. 2361, 76 U.S.L.W. 4503 (2008)

Sprint/United Management Co. v. Mendelsohn 128 S.Ct. 1140, 76 U.S.L.W. 4107 (2008)

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NEW LONDON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New London, Connecticut