

Adopted: June 12, 2023

Revised: _____

531 POLICY OF BELONGING

I. PURPOSE

True cultural citizenship—belonging without barriers, requiring no legal papers, no border walls— is routinely denied by limiting travel, expecting people to accept disrespect for their identities, heritages, their contributions to history and community life, and their right to culture. Likewise, in our school district people are denied the fullness of belonging everyday on account of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, language, disability, immigration status, and other forms of identity that are oppressed by the structures of public education.

It is the policy of this school district to not require the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, nor to disrupt a sense of belonging for anyone who chooses for any reason to not participate in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Every member of the school district shall embody an ethic of belonging.

- A. Every district staff member will treat each person with respect, dignity, and humility.
- B. Every student, community member, and any individual brought into the district working with staff and/or students will treat each person with respect, dignity, and humility.
- C. If anybody does not understand how someone identifies or prefers to be acknowledged, then they will first seek out understanding on their own and then ask questions to gain deeper understanding without using shaming, accusatory, or hurtful language.

III. OBJECTIVES

- A. Nurture meaningful connection and conversation about the politics of belonging;

- B. Embody the connections between issues of social and environmental justice and belonging as a human right;
- C. Highlight unjust policies and practices that promote belonging at the expense of another person's identity, humanity, and right to dignity.
- D. Disrupt narratives of hate, uplifting love, connection, and equity;
- E. Activate a sense of agency and encourage participation in public life;
- F. Affirm that democracy depends on our voices being heard.

IV. INSTRUCTION

Every district member and student will be trained on how to use mindful inquiry to understand the differences that our community holds.

Cross References: U.S. Department of Arts and Culture, Policy on Belonging Toolkit

Legal References: Minn. Stat. § 121A.11, Subd. 3 (Pledge of Allegiance)
Minn. Stat. § 121A.11, Subd. 4 (Instruction)