



REPORT OF THE POLICY COMMITTEE

The Policy Committee met on Friday, July 10, 2020 at 3:30 PM via the Blue Jeans Video Conferencing Tool.

VIRTUAL ATTENDEES

Student Achievement Committee Members

Chairperson Mike Moroski, Pamela Bowers, Ryan Messer

Administration

Leslie Bryant, Customer Help Center Manager; Emily Campbell, Director of Curriculum; Kathy Crable, Executive Secretary to General Counsel; Daniel Hoying, General Counsel; Justin Leach, Director of Test Administration; Paul McDole, Director, Human Resources; Kayla Ritter Rickles, College Manager; Stephanie Scott, Assistant General Counsel

Mr. Moroski began the meeting and “level set” and explained to the public how a policy becomes a policy in the District. He reported that the anti-racism policy is just a beginning draft, and that he assigned General Counsel and Assistant General Counsel at the Board’s June 10, 2020, Regular Business meeting to draft language for an anti-racism policy.

Mr. Moroski reported that students and community members were engaged in the drafting of the document, and then Board discussion must take place in the drafting of a final policy.

Proposed New Policy 2255 - Anti-Racism

Assistant General Counsel Stephanie Scott updated the Committee on a working draft of the policy and reported that the policy will also align to District Policy 2255 – Equity and Excellence in Education.

The purpose of the policy is to eliminate all forms of racism from the District in conjunction with related Board policies.

She also reported that Legal reviewed various anti-racism policies already in place across the country. They also reviewed information from the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#) that focuses on rights for various groups.

She also informed the Committee that the language is also aligned to various anti-discriminatory aspects contained in the Constitution of the United States.

Legal will also add to the policy any Ohio Revised Code and language reflecting prohibition against discrimination.

Committee member Bowers inquired about language in the policy that talks about ensuring consistency in student discipline and the various types of demographic data that would be collected and what would be done with the data upon collection.

Ms. Scott reported that language will be added to the policy on how the District will show itself accountable.

Committee Chair Moroski asked if the policy needs to include language on how discipline is done. General Counsel Hoying reported that a section on enforcement is contained in the policy.

ACTIONS: Committee member Messer expressed a desire to put together a task force of community members to provide input in creating the policy, engage experts knowledgeable in the field to help the Board think holistically in drafting the policy, as well as including students, staff and parents in the conversation. He also advised to form a working group.

Mr. Moroski advised Ms. Scott and/or Legal and the Office of Communications and Engagement to follow-up on Mr. Messer's request for community engagement in drafting the policy.

A working draft of the policy is attached to these minutes.

Proposed New Policy 5321 - Face Mask

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine announced on July 2, 2020, that schools implement face covering policies.

General Counsel Hoying reported that he used Governor DeWine's guidance, assistance from the Ohio Department of Education, and the City of Cincinnati's policy to create a draft of the policy for the District.

The Committee had various questions about the policy as to when masks need to be worn, if teachers needed to wear them, and the difference in face coverings versus a mask.

ACTION: The Committee agreed that a broader discussion about the policy needs to take place with the full Board at a Regular Board Business meeting.

Graduation Policies

Mr. Leach, Director of Testing, updated the Committee on the following policies.

- **5460 - Graduation Requirements**

The policy was revised to capture the following new requirements for the graduating class of 2023. *For students entering 9th grade on or after July 1, 2019 (Class of 2023 and beyond), a diploma shall be awarded to students meeting the curriculum requirements; a reading and math competency score as defined by the Ohio Department of Education or demonstrate the alternative options to competency; and earn at least two diploma seals- with at least one of the diploma seals being a state-defined diploma seal.*

The Board offers the following additional district assigned seals in accordance with adopted administrative guidelines: Community Service Seal (Local); Fine and Performing Arts Seal (Local) and Student Engagement Seal (Local)

ACTION: The Committee agreed with the revised policy and will recommend it to the Board for approval at a Regular Business Meeting.

- New Policy 5466 - Identification of Students at Risk of Not Qualifying for a High School Diploma
Mr. Leach reported that the policy is required by the State of Ohio in-order for districts to develop graduation plans as part of the new graduation requirements for the class of 2023 and to create a system to identify students at risk of not qualifying for a diploma.

Committee member Bowers expressed concern about the confidentiality of mental health services information being in Student Success Plans or school records.

Mr. Leach reported that that was an important consideration and he will ensure that the information is kept confidential and addressed in Administrative Procedures. He will also include language within the policy to that effect.

ACTION: The Committee agreed with the revised policy and will recommend it to the Board for approval at a Regular Business Meeting.

Policy 5113 – Inter-District Open Enrollment

Mr. Hoying reported that the Board advised the Policy Committee to discuss the policy to determine how the District will handle Inter-District Open Enrollment during the pandemic.

The policy applies to students outside of the District and whether they are eligible to attend CPS schools, open enrollment being for vacant seats that are within the District, and for residents having first priority at every school. Additional information about the policy can be viewed at: <https://www.cps-k12.org/about-cps/board-of-education/board-policies>

Mr. Hoying informed the group that vacancies for open enrollment will be limited due to efforts in social distancing and preservation of space in schools for resident students.

Mr. Hoying reported that vacancies in Digital Academy (online) are available for students in grades K-12.

He reported that Virtual is available for high school students, part in class and part online. If there is availability, the Digital program may be offered to students outside the District due to neighboring schools not offering digital programs.

ACTION: Committee member Messer recommended that this topic be discussed by the full Board during Board Matters at a Regular Business Meeting.

Draft Resolution Suspending Board Policies

The Committee reviewed the below policies at their June 5, 2020, Policy Committee for consideration of suspending the policies due to the new reality (COVID-19).

- a. 2340 – Field and Other District Sponsored Trips
- b. 2451 - Alternative To Expulsion Program, Grades 4-12
- c. 7510 – Use of District Facilities
- d. 9150 – School Visitors

General Counsel advised that the policies will not be rescinded and will and can be reinstated in the future when the environment is back in order (COVID-19). The policies can also be reinstated at any time.

Mr. Messer recommended drafting language that gives authority to the Superintendent and the Administration to administer policies based on plans that have been approved by the Board of Education.

ACTION: Mr. Hoying reviewed the following resolution with the Committee. The Committee agreed with the recommended revision to include flexibility within the language and will recommend the resolution to the Board for approval at the July 13, 2020 Regular Business meeting.

**A RESOLUTION SUSPENDING BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES
FOR THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR**

WHEREAS, on June 29, 2020, the Board of Education voted to approve a blended in-person / remote learning model for educating students during the 2020-21 school year; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education suspends the following Board policies for the 2020-21 school year:

Policy 2340 – Field and Other District Sponsored Trips – The Board suspends Board Policy 2340 supporting and encouraging field trips for students for the 2020-21 school year. The Board presently anticipates that no staff travel or student field trips outside of a 100-mile radius will be scheduled or approved for the 2020-21 school year.

Policy 5610.06 – Alternative to Suspension / Expulsion – The Board will suspend its Alternative to Suspension / Expulsion program for the 2020-21 school year.

Policy 7510 – Use of District Facilities – The Board will suspend its policy encouraging the use of District facilities. Use of District facilities will be limited to essential functions during the 2020-21 school year.

Policy 9150 – School Visitors – The Board will temporarily suspend its policy encouraging School Visitors. Non-essential school visitors will be significantly restricted for the 2020-21 school year.

Committee Chair Moroski asked if a new procedure and policy will be forth coming in the future, if things will be different, and what happens to students needing to attend the *Alternative to Expulsion (A2E)/Alternative to Suspension (A2S)* program.

ACTION: Mr. Hoying reported that more discussion is needed on A2E/A2S.

Committee member Bowers would like more information about school visitors.

Hearing of the Public

Approximately nine community members participated in the Hearing of the Public and provided comments on the anti-racism policy, wearing of masks, engaging the public about anti-racism, their experiences with anti-racism, creating an equity and diversity inclusion department, and anti-racism curriculums.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Policy Committee

Mike Moroski, Chair

Pamela Bowers

Ryan Messer

Staff Liaisons

Dan Hoying, General Counsel

Paul McDole, Director, Human Resources

DRAFT – Policy Committee 7-10-20 (SS)

Book: Cincinnati City School District Policies
Section: 2000 Programs
Title: Anti-Racism Policy (DRAFT)
Code: 2255.___
Status:
Legal: U.S. Const. amend XIV, § 1 (Equal Protection)
20 U.S.C. § 1703 (Equal Educational Opportunity)
42 U.S.C. § 2000c et seq. (Desegregation)
42 U.S.C § 2000d et seq. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)
42 U.S.C § 2000e-2 (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)

Adopted:

Last Reviewed:

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The Cincinnati Public Schools Board (“Board”) and the Cincinnati Public Schools (“District”) reject all forms of racism as destructive to the District’s mission, vision, values, and goals. The Board is committed to the following principles:

- Establishing and sustaining a school community that shares the collective responsibility to address, eliminate, and prevent actions, decisions, and outcomes that result from and perpetuate racism.
- Embracing the diversity within our District while actively eliminating practices that perpetuate the disparities among our students so that all students have the opportunity to benefit equally referenced in the District’s Equity and Excellence in Education Policy (2255).
- Respecting and championing the diversity and life experiences of all community members to support the school District’s mission, vision, values, goals, and objectives.
- Acknowledging that racism is often compounded by other forms of discrimination, including, but not limited to, those protective classes referenced in the District’s Non-discrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity Policy (2260).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to eliminate all forms of racism from the District in conjunction with related Board policies.

In this District, there are significant disparities between racial groups in student academic performance, achievement, and participation in academic programs. These include disparities in discipline rates, economic advantages, Students with Disabilities identification, Advanced Placement, gifted and enrichment services, athletics, arts, and extracurricular activities.

These equity gaps exist because of historical inequitable access to opportunities that have significant intergenerational effects and perpetuate economic, social, and educational inequity on certain communities of color. However, racial inequities were created over time and can be eliminated. Similarly, personal prejudice is learned and can be unlearned. Educators play a vital role in reducing racism and inequity by recognizing the manifestations of racism, creating culturally inclusive learning and working environments, and dismantling educational systems that directly or indirectly perpetuate racism and privilege through teaching, policy, and practice.

Anti-Racism Policy Regulations

These regulations are designed to dismantle the individual, institutional, and structural racism that exists in the District. The Board directs the following action:

Policy Communication

Each school shall post a public statement against racism in a location visible to students, staff, and visitors entering the school. The District will also post a public statement in high traffic locations at its main offices and on the District website. The public statement shall read: “Cincinnati Public Schools is committed to establishing and sustaining an equitable community that achieves the District’s equity mission to end the predictive value of race and ensure each individual student’s and staff’s success. The Cincinnati Public Schools Board and District reject all forms of racism as destructive to their mission, vision, values, and goals.” The District’s harassment hotline number (363-0111) should be included along with postings.

The Board shall establish an organization or committee of students in the District to promote equity and diversity and to serve as leaders and spokespersons within their schools and the District.

This policy shall be included in student handbooks provided to students and families.

This policy shall be translated into other languages and be made available for families.

Leadership and Administration

The Board shall address systemic racism as follows:

Develop and conduct a systemic Equity Needs Assessment for the District to identify processes and practices that cause or contribute to inequitable outcomes. The Assessment shall also include an inventory of what equity-related data is currently collected by the District. Following the assessment, strategies will be developed and implemented to address the identified issues.

To address disparities in course participation (including AP/honors participation):

All school staff making class recommendations shall provide a written electronic explanation for the recommendation to students and/or families.

School counselors shall be responsible for educating students and families as equitable partners in the selection process and course sequencing.

Middle and high schools will offer opportunities for supplementary coursework, such as summer bridge programs or tutoring during or after school, to students interested in moving to higher level courses.

The Board shall implement alternative discipline processes, such as restorative practice, to reduce racial disparities in discipline and suspension.

To ensure consistency in student discipline, each school shall collect and, at least annually, report data on all disciplinary actions. The data shall include the student’s race/ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, special education, and English Language Learner status, as well as a written explanation of the behavior leading to discipline and the specific corrective action taken.

When school administrators determine a student has committed a racist act, the student will be provided the opportunity to learn about the impact of their actions on others through such practices as restorative practices, mediation, role play or other explicit policies or training resources.

This policy ensures the understanding that racial misconduct is unacceptable and prohibited. All District staff are encouraged to reflect upon the issue of racial misconduct and how it may impact their professional standing, as racial misconduct directly affects the lives and conducts of others.

Such racial misconduct, on and off school grounds, includes but is not limited to inappropriate racial comments, slurs, jokes, pictures, objects, threats, physical assaults, intimidation, unequal application of policies, and unequal or biased grading. This encompasses offensiveness and misconduct that does not reach the level of racism, and misconduct that is sufficiently severe and pervasive that it rises to the level of racial harassment or discrimination.

Complaints of racial misconduct should be reported and resolved in accordance with the District's Prohibition against Harassment of Students and Staff Policy (2260.02).

Curriculum and Instruction

Curriculum and instructional materials for all grades shall reflect cultural and racial diversity and include a range of perspectives and experiences, particularly those of historically underrepresented groups of color.

All curriculum materials shall be examined for racial bias by the District's Curriculum Department. Where materials reflect racial bias, teachers utilizing the materials will acknowledge the bias and communicate it to students and parents.

The Board and District shall implement an anti-racist curriculum and provide educational resources for students at every grade level.

Student in-class and extra-curricular programs and activities shall be designed to provide opportunities for cross-cultural and cross-racial interactions to foster respect for cultural and racial diversity. The Board shall support interschool activities that will allow students to experience the diversity within the District.

Training

All Board and District staff shall be trained in this anti-racism policy.

All teachers and administrators shall be trained in cultural awareness and/or culturally responsive teaching practices. Additionally, they will be trained in anti-racist practices; including, but not limited to, recognizing implicit bias. Culturally responsive teaching practices shall be incorporated into Board approved appraisal systems, including the teacher appraisal system and the administrator performance appraisal.

All District staff shall be trained about racism and about how racism produces inequitable practices and outcomes.

Hiring Practices

All candidates being considered for hire within the district will be asked appropriate questions to gauge their understanding of anti-racist practices. Additionally, candidates will be screened for implicit and explicit biases.

Policy Enforcement

Staff shall collect, review, and provide an annual report to the Board on data regarding racial disparities in areas including, but not limited to, student achievement, enrollment, suspension/discipline, graduation

rates, and gifted identification. The report shall also include evidence of growth in each area outlined by the anti-racism policy (i.e., communication, leadership and administration, curriculum and instruction). The written reports shall also be made available to the public, to the student diversity committee, and to school equity teams.

The District's administration shall be responsible for implementation and evaluation of District strategies for implementation. Adequate resources shall be appropriated.

The District shall ensure there are various, including anonymous, means for students and staff to report racism and other forms of discrimination.

Definitions - adapted from various sources including the Government Alliance on Race and Equity at www.racialequityalliance.org

- Racism: defined as a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks (which is what we call “race”), that unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources. (Dr. Camara Jones)
- Anti-racism: the practice of identifying, challenging, and changing the values, structures, and behaviors that perpetuate systemic racism.
- 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 and their districts, that adopt and maintain policies, practices, and procedures that often unintentionally produce inequitable outcomes for people of color and advantages for white people.
- Structural (or systemic) racism: encompasses the history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions and society. It refers to the history, culture, ideology, and interactions of institutions and policies that perpetuate a system of inequity that is detrimental to communities of color.