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105 SCHOOL BOARD STANCE ON ANTI-OPPRESSION AND ANTI-RACISM IN BROOKLYN CENTER COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

I. PURPOSE

Brooklyn Center Community Schools is committed to anti-racist and anti-oppressive policies, practices, and procedures throughout the entire organization. We honor that, because of the permanence of racism, a district free from oppression is not attainable. Anti-oppressive and anti-racist practices cannot be an end goal, they must be guide posts that allow us to consistently reflect on how our practices are contributing to the communal empowerment and health of Brooklyn Center. Our statement honors that we will be in a constant struggle with the entrenchment of oppressive systems that enable white supremacy while we orient towards a justice-centered school district that holds the fact that racism is not independent of other forms of oppression. These guideposts will be used by our district as practical and theoretical analytics for our material practices and policies. Everything we do must be directly shaped from these beliefs--anything less is inherently oppressive.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

This Board commits itself not only to address the symbols of institutional racism and white supremacy, but also to proactively identify and address biases, practices, policies, and institutional barriers that perpetuate injustice and inequality in our schools and our community.

Additionally, this Board vows to work proactively to identify class and cultural biases as well as practices, policies, and institutional barriers that negatively influence student learning, perpetuate achievement gaps, and impede equal access to opportunities for all students in order to eradicate institutional bias of any kind, including implicit or unintentional biases and prejudices that affect student achievement, and to eliminate disparities in educational outcomes for students from historically underserved and under-represented populations.

Finally, the Brooklyn Center Community Schools School Board recognizes the importance in disrupting a “business as usual” approach for marginalized indigenous, racial and ethnic students and their families, and using this opportunity to ensure our budget elevates excellence for each student and their family; and mandates training across the organization including board members, administrators, teachers and staff.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Anti-racism: Anti-racism is defined as the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts.

B. Anti-oppressive: The process of making one's views of the world large enough to include everyone—looking for ways to make connections among different people's struggles and finding ways to think about how issues affect different people in different ways. It means not just not accepting 'norms,' 'isms' and oppressive dynamics, but actively working to make the invisible visible, and challenging the systems that hold them in place. Also, an anti-oppression analysis acknowledges that all forms of oppression are linked and that the best way to organize against oppression is to take into account that all oppressions are linked.

C. White-Supremacy: An historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations, and peoples of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent, for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power, and privilege.