POLICY NO. 1020
Adopted: 4-27-22
Revised 10-8-25

EQUITY

POLICY:

Lake Stevens School District believes that these core principles are intrinsic to our communal vision for our district and our community; by adhering to them, we foster a district culture committed to removing barriers to access and opportunity for all students so they thrive in our school system and beyond.

Our Core Principles:

- We believe diversity reflected in each student, family, staff, and community member is a quality to be valued, respected, and celebrated.
- We believe people excel when they feel they belong within a safe and positive climate that promotes trust, empathy, respect, and collaboration.
- We believe that in creating strong relationships among students, staff, and family members, we effectively address academic and social-emotional development, improving outcomes for each student.
- We believe students must have equitable access to rigorous, relevant, and culturally sustaining curriculum and instruction with appropriate support.
- We believe we have a collective responsibility to provide data-informed, equitable distribution of resources to all students and learning environments across the district.
- We believe that these values are realized with our collective support and effort across our Lake Stevens community.

Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The Lake Stevens School District is committed to honoring the identities of all of our students and creating an inclusive environment in which they are empowered to learn and grow. We collectively assume responsibility for providing equitable opportunities for students to thrive in a nurturing and supportive environment so that each student can achieve academic success, feel a strong sense of belonging in their schools and classrooms, build self-efficacy, and succeed at high levels throughout their P-12 experience. We value and recognize the importance of celebrating diversity across all Lake Stevens School District settings.

As part of this commitment, we assume the ongoing responsibility of creating and nurturing inclusive environments, addressing and resolving incidents of

hate, racism, bias, and discrimination in our spaces, systems, and processes with transparency and fairness. We commit to dismantling current and historical structures and systems that have resulted in discrepant access and outcomes, seeking to honor the diversity of races, ethnicities, languages, abilities, religions, socioeconomic statuses, mental health statuses, and identities of our students and staff.

Our Collective Work

- Foster authentic, respectful relationships where students are known by their names, strengths, goals, and identities.
- Provide supportive and enriching experiences for all students that meet individuals where they are in their unique developmental journeys and support them in their culturally sustaining academic and personal goals.
- Provide respectful and relevant learning communities that uplift diversity and create schools where students, families, community members, and employees feel welcomed, safe, supported, and valued.
- Create and maintain hiring practices to attract and retain staff members who ensure students see themselves represented in all levels of staff.
- Provide professional development for staff and students in anti-racist practices, culturally sustaining educational practices, and awareness and elimination of hate speech, microaggressions, and bias.
- Develop processes to report, investigate, and hold accountable actions of discrimination and racism among students and staff on our campuses, and model diversity, equity, and inclusion as alternatives to racist or discriminatory behavior.
- Ensure that curricula and instructional practices are relevant, representative, appropriate, and prepare students for success, meeting students' learning needs at each level and category. Examine existing and new curricular materials, looking for appropriate cultural representation and historical accuracy.
- Examine various academic and extracurricular programs, ensuring diverse voices are represented, looking for and addressing possible barriers to participation for any subgroup of students.

Definitions:
Bias: A preference either for or against an individual or group that affects fair judgment.

Culture: The customs, beliefs, languages, values, knowledge, and collective identities belonging to individual communities and social groups.

Culturally Relevant Practices: A set of pedagogical ideas and practices that emphasize academic achievement, cultural competence, and critical consciousness in empowering students using culture as a necessary resource to impart knowledge, skills, abilities, and disposition.

Culturally Sustaining Educational Practices: Educational practices that

respect, honor, and intentionally nurture a student's culture.

Discrimination: Unfair treatment of members of various groups based on age, sex, race, ethnicity, creed, religion, color, national origin, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, homelessness, immigration or citizenship status, marital status, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, neurodivergence, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability.

Diversity: The practice or quality of including people from a variety of different social and ethnic backgrounds. This term describes the qualities and conditions that are different from our own and outside the groups to which we belong, yet are present in other individuals and groups. These include, but are not limited to age, sex, race, ethnicity, creed, religion, color, national origin, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, homelessness, immigration or citizenship status, marital status, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, neurodivergence, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability.

Equity: Educating each student in a way that ensures every student is achieving excellence. The focus is on eliminating significant gaps in outcomes throughout the district, while increasing opportunities for achievement among students not performing to their full potential. Whereas, equality tends to focus primarily on similarity of input, equity purposefully focuses on how those inputs impact outcomes.

Hate Speech: Any speech that vilifies, humiliates, dehumanizes, and/or insults people based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, ability or disability, and/or religion.

Identity: The various characteristics we use to categorize and define ourselves and the various characteristics that are projected on us by others.

Inclusion: The practice and policy of providing equal access to opportunities including classes, content, curriculum, extracurricular activities, and resources with a voice in decision making for people who might be excluded or marginalized.

Marginalized Groups: This includes students of color, students living in poverty, students who are neurodiverse, students receiving special education and English language development services, students who identify as LGBTQ+, and highly mobile student populations.

Microaggression: A comment or action that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group.

Racism: The belief that race is a fundamental determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race; behavior or attitudes that reflect and foster this belief through racial discrimination or prejudice; the systemic oppression of a racial group to the social, economic, and political advantage of another.

Relevant Learning: Learning that is applicable to students' interests, aspirations, and identities.

Cross References:

Policy No. 4005: Affirmative Action
Policy No. 4007: Equity in Education
Policy No. 4010: Nondiscrimination
Policy No. 5080: Language Access Plan
Policy No. 5090: Student Nondiscrimination
Policy No. 5100: Student Rights and Responsibilities
Policy No. 5590: Gender-Inclusive Schools
Policy No. 6005.6: Transitional Bilingual Instruction

Legal References:

RCW 28A.642 Discrimination Prohibition