

EQUITY, INCLUSIVITY AND DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION

The Board of Education is committed to creating and maintaining a positive and inclusive learning environment where every student, especially those currently and historically marginalized, feels safe, included, welcomed, and accepted, and experiences a sense of belonging and success in the areas of academics and other valued outcomes such as social-emotional learning, attendance, behavior, connection, and engagement.

Generally Accepted Beliefs and Agreements

Each and every student deserves equity in education, a core belief fundamental to the Saratoga Springs City School District that extends to everyone without exception. The district recognizes that simply providing opportunities does not ensure equal access and subsequent success. The district also recognizes that there are students who are currently and have been historically marginalized due to inequities associated with aspects of their identities and their contexts, including, but not limited to: race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, all types of disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, socio-economic status, immigration status, housing status, caregiver status, and primary language(s).

Racism, discrimination, and marginalization of any people or groups of people, whether intentional or not, have no place in our schools, our district, or our community. Such actions damage not only those individuals and groups at which they are directed, but also our community as a whole. We are committed to addressing these inequities and to helping each and every student equitably access learning opportunities in school to enable them to thrive and to build a better society.

Goals

The district will provide equitable, inclusive, and diverse opportunities for each and every student to reach their highest potential, acknowledging the presence of a diverse student body and the need for students to find relevant connections among themselves and the subject matter.

The district will develop the individual and organizational knowledge, attitudes, skills, and practices to create culturally responsive learning and working environments that expect and support success for each and every student, acknowledging the historical injustices and inequalities that have shaped our society and recognizing and working to eliminate the institutional barriers, including racism and biases, that contribute to pervasive disparate outcomes for our diverse student body.

The district will ensure that curriculum and instructional materials reflect a commitment to educational equity, providing curriculum and instructional materials for all grades that reflect the range of perspectives and experiences of our diverse student body, particularly those of historically marginalized and underrepresented groups. All curriculum materials shall be examined for bias, and class instructional activities and extracurricular programs shall be designed to foster respect for diversity, creating a community that ensures that each and every voice is heard and valued.

The district will implement preventative measures to help counteract racism, biases, and practices that perpetuate the disparities in access and opportunity that lead to disproportionate levels of student success.

The district will direct that training programs be established for students and staff on an annual basis to raise awareness of the issues surrounding cultural responsiveness, equity, and inclusion, and to facilitate the implementation of the aforementioned preventative measures.

The district will embrace the diversity of our student body, moving beyond tolerance and celebration to inclusivity and respect, helping the district reach our goal of creating an equitable and inclusive school community.

Accountability, Transparency, and Review

The Board of Education and all district staff accept responsibility and will hold themselves and each other accountable for providing every student with an equitable education, qualified teachers, challenging curriculum, and sufficient, individually-tailored support for learning so they can achieve success in the areas of academics and other valued outcomes.

The district also accepts its responsibility and will commit time, energy, and resources to develop a more equitable, inclusive, and welcoming environment for every student, family, and staff member. To this end, the Superintendent or their designee will establish a District Equity and Inclusion Committee, as well as building-level equity teams in each school. Committees will include representation from school and community stakeholders, including students, parents, staff, administrators, Board Trustees, and community members. The district-wide committee and the building-level teams will assist district and building administration in developing and implementing specific prevention initiatives, including the adoption and revision of policies and the implementation of practices designed to promote diversity, prevent racism and discrimination, and ensure equitable access to high quality educational staff, facilities, and materials to set up every student for success.

The district will adopt goals based on corresponding metrics related to this policy. The district will identify the multiple indicators necessary to monitor student outcomes and school climate and the specific data that will be used to ensure accountability for student, school, and district-wide success; reduce variability in outcomes; and ensure that these outcomes will not be predictable by actual or perceived personal characteristics. The district will ensure that this data is assessed and reported transparently to the public. Reporting may include, but is not limited to: standardized test scores; referrals, suspension, and expulsion reports; the percentage of students placed in Bilingual or English as a New Language (ENL), Honors/Advanced Placement courses, and Academic Intervention Services; as well as employee, family/caregiver, and student perceptions about school.

The Board of Education and the Superintendent or their designee will monitor, review, and report on the district's goals and metrics, the extent to which district schools are complying with this policy, and the progress made toward attaining the goals of this policy. Based on those results, this policy and the specific objectives set to meet its goals may be revised as needed.

Equity Policy Communication

To be successful in this endeavor, it is imperative that each and every member of the school community is aware of this policy, its purpose and procedures, and the district's commitment to equity and inclusion.

The Superintendent or their designee is directed to ensure that this policy is communicated to students, staff, and the community. This policy will be posted on the district's website, and will also be published in student registration materials; student, family/caregiver, and employee handbooks; and other appropriate school publications.

Policy Enforcement

The Board directs the Superintendent or their designee to enforce this policy and create regulations and practices to implement this policy. The Board will annually review the district's implementation of this policy and take appropriate action to ensure compliance with and enforcement of this policy.

Cross-ref:

4000, Goals for Instructional Programs
4511, Textbook Selection and Adoption
5153, Student Assignment to Schools and Classes
9240, Recruiting and Hiring
9700, Professional Development

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