

Worthington City Schools

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy - DRAFT

Definitions

Diversity – All ways in which people differ. It encompasses all the different characteristics, ideas, perspectives and values that make one individual or group different from another.

Equity - The lack of discrimination or bias, and fair access, treatment, opportunities, and advancement for all. This is not to be confused with equality, which is treating everyone as if they and their experiences are the same.

Inclusion – Authentically bringing together traditionally excluding individuals and/or groups to ensure their sharing of power and leveraging of diverse perspectives and experiences in decision-making processes.

Diversity in Education - Requires that we see, value, and embrace the differences that make each of us unique. It demands:

- Leveraging our differences to make us stronger
- Recognizing that understanding our biases and working to embrace diversity is a lifelong journey
- Believing a diverse educational community creates the most powerful and effective learning environment

Equity in Education - Requires that we, as a community, share responsibility for addressing the opportunity gaps that exist within our society and impact our students' ability to reach their full potential. It demands:

- Creating solutions that level the playing field while concurrently raising the bar across all schools
- Providing each student appropriate resources he/she needs to achieve success
- Providing safe school environments for all students in collaboration with surrounding communities

Inclusion in Education - Requires that our district choose to be a welcoming environment that reflects our whole community as we seek to positively support and advance the educational and developmental needs of our children. It demands:

- Accepting, valuing, and learning from each other's strengths and differences
- Listening to all the voices in our community, looking for the talents each individual possesses, and celebrating the diversity of backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences in our community
- Considering and embracing different points of view, teaching us to empathize with and understand perspectives and experiences unlike our own

General Policy Statement

In alignment with our mission and vision, the district is committed to providing all students with the opportunity to succeed and educating and empowering students to think critically, independently, and creatively. The district is committed to promoting learning and working environments that respect and value diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging in order to create a culture of acceptance, as well as celebration and empowerment of differences.

The district acknowledges that in order to ensure every child succeeds, we must understand how race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, socioeconomic status, religion and cognitive/physical ability impacts the educational process. The district is committed to identify and correcting practices and policies that result in a lack of equity and perpetuate gaps [due to racism, bias and/or privilege], to acting on a plan that mitigates those disparities, and fostering a culture that addresses the root causes and improves the experience for students, families, and employees.

The district acknowledges the history and impacts of racism, discrimination, and privilege both locally and nationally.

The district acknowledges the value and necessity of intentionally engaging other perspective and voices to create this cultural change. This work is collectively shared by the Board, district staff, administrators, educators, families, broader community, and community based-organizations.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to identify any form of bias, racism or inequity; work to counter its effects; and work to eliminate racist, discriminatory or inequitable practices and policies from the District in conjunction with related Board policies.

These directives are designed to undo and remedy the effects and outcomes resulting from bias and systemic racism in the district

Organizational StructureCommunication

- The district shall have aAn ongoing school site committee or building DEI representative (building champions) in each school regarding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts and

accountability. ~~This committee or DEI representative's work must also be a part of each school's Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP).~~

- ~~This policy shall be included in student handbooks provided to students and families.~~
- The District will identify and establish key benchmarks that demonstrate growth in each area outlined in this policy and to develop a plan with clear, measurable accountability standard and procedures that can be assessed and reported transparently to the public. The Worthington City Schools Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan will be submitted annually to the Board (for approval) and the Board will hear quarterly reports from the Superintendent or Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion regarding the districts efforts.
- Administration shall also engage in utilizing surveys to staff, students and families to as a tool for gathering information to racial inclusion and to evaluate the success of this policy.

Leadership and Administration

- ~~The district shall~~ Conduct an _____ equity audit every 2 to 3 years to identify processes and practices (and their root causes) that cause inequitable outcomes.
- Identify the needed financial and human resources to achieve the goals of the Board's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policy.
- ~~Direct the~~ The Superintendent or Superintendent designees to access and adjust practices that pertain to positive school culture.
- ~~Human Resources Department needs to embed capacity to address racism and race-related misconduct in its practices.~~

Curriculum and Instruction

- Curriculum and instructional material for all grades should be relevant and represent the diversity of the student population and include a range of perspectives and experiences, particularly of those of historically underrepresented groups ~~of color~~, in a way that is age appropriate.
- All curriculum materials shall be examined for bias and addressed appropriately, partnering with members of the administration focused on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. ~~Various stakeholders (i.e. students, families and community members) will be given the opportunity to examine our curriculum, provide feedback and input. They should partner with the Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and examine the materials for racial bias.~~

Training and Professional Development

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

All District staff shall be trained in a District-approved program about diversity, equity and inclusion and about how discrimination produces inequitable practices and outcomes in education within their first year of being hired.

Human Resources

The Human Resources Department needs to embed capacity to address racism and race-related misconduct in its practices.

The District shall include in its hiring practices and systems the opportunity to share information with applicants regarding the District's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion stance.

Hiring data shall be aggregated by race to identify areas of improvement, strengths and weaknesses as related to the potential biases in the hiring process. This data should be reported by school and level.

Recruitment practices and data shall be review by the Superintendent to revise and reassess the need of anti-racist practices in recruitment and determine benchmarks.

Policy Enforcement

To ensure consistency in student discipline, each school shall collect and report data on all disciplinary actions. Schools shall review data, regularly, with the goal of reducing discipline disparities and reducing severity of corrective action.

When it is determined that a student has violated the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy, the person 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

When it is determined that a teacher, member of administration, or staff member has violated the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy, the person 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 [insert appropriate language regarding accountability].

The District shall ensure there are various, including anonymous, means for students and staff to report racism and other forms of discrimination. Complaints of racial misconduct should be reported and resolved in accordance with the [identify policy/policies].

Note:

- May still need "Communication" section
- This policy shall be included in student handbooks provided to students and families.
- Modify to address cultural diversity
- May want to add definition of culture and root cause