

# Worthington City Schools

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy - DRAFT

### Definitions

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

**Equity** – Equity is 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 their characteristics, experiences, ideas, perspectives, and values are the same.

**Inclusion** – Inclusion is authentically bringing together traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups to ensure the sharing of power and leveraging of diverse perspectives and experiences in decision-making processes.

### General Policy Statement

In alignment with the District's mission and vision, the Board of Education is committed to providing all students with the opportunity to succeed and educating and empowering students to think critically, independently, and creatively. The Board of Education is committed to promoting learning and working environments that respect and value Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in order to create a culture of acceptance, as well as celebration and empowerment of differences.

The Board of Education acknowledges that in order to ensure the success of students and employees, the District must understand how race/ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, sexual identity, socioeconomic status, religion and cognitive/physical ability impacts the educational process. The Board of Education 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 Board of Education acknowledges the value and necessity of intentionally engaging other perspective and voices to create this cultural change. This work is shared by the District and broader community.

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

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Education

Diversity in Education - Requires that the District see, value, and embrace the differences that make each of us unique, including:

- Leveraging our differences to make us stronger;
- Recognizing that understanding our biases and working to embrace diversity is a lifelong journey; and
- 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, including:

- 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; and

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; and
- Considering and embracing different points of view, teaching us to empathize with and understand perspectives and experiences unlike our own.

#### Purpose

The Board of Education directs the Superintendent to identify and remedy the effects and outcomes resulting from bias, systemic racism or inequity. These directives, in conjunction with related Board policies, are designed to eliminate discriminatory and inequitable District practices.

#### **Organizational Structure**

- The Superintendent shall have an ongoing school site committee or building representative(s) in each school focused on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts and accountability.
- The Superintendent shall 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. A Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan shall be reviewed annually with the Board and the Board shall receive periodic reports from the Superintendent or Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion regarding the District's efforts.
- The Superintendent shall survey staff, students and families to gather information regarding inclusion and to evaluate the success of this policy.

### **Leadership and Administration**

- The Superintendent shall periodically conduct an equity audit, or similar evaluation, to identify processes and practices (and their root causes) that result in discriminatory or inequitable practices. The Superintendent shall adjust practices to remedy these outcomes.
- The Superintendent shall identify the necessary financial and human resources to support this policy.

### **Curriculum and Instruction**

- The Superintendent shall ensure curriculum for all grades is relevant and represent the diversity of the student population and includes a range of perspectives and experiences, particularly of those of historically underrepresented groups, in a manner that is age appropriate.
- The Superintendent shall ensure curriculum materials are examined for bias and addressed appropriately, with a focus on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Education.

### **Training and Professional Development**

The Superintendent shall ensure the District is informed of policy.

The Superintendent shall ensure training on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Education is included within their first year of being hired.

### **Recruiting & Retention Practices**

The Superintendent shall ensure the District's recruitment and retention practices strive to create diversity among staff that mirrors the District's student population.

The Superintendent shall include in District recruiting the opportunity to share information with applicants regarding the District's commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Education.

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
- Reevaluate use of "culture"
- Review hiring section through the lens of promotion