

The Wake County Board of Education affirms the dignity and worth of all students, and strives to create a safe, orderly, caring, and inviting school environment to facilitate student learning and achievement. To that end, the Board prohibits discrimination as described in our policies on Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying and Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities.

The Board believes in and commits to all students having a fair, just, and equitable education that prepares them to reach their full potential and lead productive lives in a complex and changing world.

### **A. Definition of Equity**

Equity is an outcome and an action. Equity as an outcome is the elimination of predictability and disproportionality of outcomes based on student characteristics including but not limited to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language of origin, disability, sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation. Equity as an action is equipping every student with – and removing barriers to – access to opportunity, support, resources, and an **inclusive** environment in which they can learn, grow, succeed, and reach their unbounded potential.

### **B. Equity Lens**

The Board acknowledges that disparities exist within our school district, and that there is a predictive association between race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status **and student outcomes**. These patterns are not unique to the Wake County Public School system and are evident across the country.

The Board believes equity benefits all students. We hold ourselves accountable to practices that will interrupt the predictive association between race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.

Progress toward equity is made by applying an equity lens to view and analyze our service to students and their families. The Board expects this equity lens to be applied to all policies, programs, practices, and decisions by asking<sup>1</sup> and taking necessary actions to address:

1. How will this decision impact students or families disparately?
2. What current disparities exist for these groups? How does the knowledge of any disparity shape teaching and learning for impacted students and their opportunity for success?
3. What specific strategies are being used to mitigate opportunity gaps?
4. How are the voices and experiences of marginalized groups informing this work?
5. How does this work align with and advance our Core Beliefs and district equity goals?

Progress towards equity also requires an application of an equity lens to individual **practice beliefs and actions**. The Board believes all employees must apply an equity lens to examine and

reflect on individual ~~practice beliefs and biases~~ that negatively impact student outcomes by asking and taking necessary actions to address:

6. How might my own ~~practice beliefs and practices limit disrupt~~ opportunities for all students to learn, grow, and succeed?
7. How do I advance my understanding of students and their characteristics as defined above?
8. How do I recognize and make use of the gifts, talents, and skill sets that each of my students possesses?
9. How do I see, understand, and interrupt inequity?
10. In what ways do I center students and affirm their lived experiences, culture, and identities?

### **C. Commitments to Equity**

A commitment to equity ensures an educational environment in which all students have the opportunity to benefit equally. This can be accomplished only by identifying and appropriately interrupting practices and policies that perpetuate opportunity gaps in order to provide all students with the opportunity to succeed irrespective of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, language of origin, disability, sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation.

The Superintendent will ~~ensure take active steps to address~~ all areas and levels of the organization (schools and school supports) ~~as they~~ apply the equity lens(es) in their effort to achieve success for all students through the strategic plan pillars and priorities.

In particular, the District will endeavor to:

1. identify and address systemic deficiencies that create gaps in academic achievement by using disaggregated data to inform district decision-making and strategic planning to identify barriers to equitable opportunities and equitable outcomes for all students;
2. create and nurture an inclusive and welcoming environment for students, families, and staff;
3. identify and provide high quality instructional materials and methods that represent the rich diversity of our nation, respect the legitimacy of different cultures, and empower students to value diverse perspectives. These materials and methods are also appropriate for the maturity levels and abilities of the students and address a spectrum of learning styles.
4. provide students with equitable access to effective teachers and principals, and sufficient support services, even when this means differentiating resource allocation;
5. provide access to equitable school facilities and support facilities;
6. recruit and retain racially and linguistically diverse and culturally competent administrative, instructional, and support personnel;
7. provide evidence-based professional learning with a focus on understanding, teaching, and serving a diverse population and honors the legitimacy of different cultures and the

diverse capabilities, interests, and individual patterns of growth and learning of all students;

8. eliminate practices that lead to the over- or under-representation of any student group compared to peers in areas such as special education, student discipline, academically or intellectually gifted programs, advanced coursework, and Advanced Placement courses;
9. encourage effective partnerships with families, students, and communities to examine issues related to inequity in our schools. These stakeholders will serve as essential partners in planning and decision-making for their student's education and offer diverse perspectives in developing strategies to confront inequities;
10. ensure that the District's Strategic Plan embraces the principle of equity as a key feature and outlines measurable outcomes to attain the goal of preparing all students for college and career readiness;
11. promote equity in business practices and in the diversification of school system vendors and suppliers in accordance with law and Board policies on Participation by Historically Underutilized Businesses [and Minority Business Enterprise Participation in Construction Contracts](#).

This policy reflects the Board's philosophy, goals, and broad commitments regarding equity for the school district. This policy does not create enforceable rights for individuals and may not be used as the basis of any formal grievance or appeal under any Board policy. Any discriminatory treatment of individuals is not authorized by this policy.

Adopted:

Other References: <sup>1</sup>Questions adapted from The Annie E. Casey Foundation Racial Equity Impact Analysis