

POLICY

BALTIMORE CITY BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS

EQUITY

I. Purpose

Baltimore City Public Schools acknowledges the historical, generational, and compounding reality of the systems, structures, and practices that have intentionally created and continued to afford advantages to some groups while perpetuating racial inequities for others. The district must take responsibility and action for removing, and actively repairing these inequities to ensure positive educational outcomes for children.

Through this policy, City Schools owns its role in creating and implementing policies and practices that result in predictably lower academic and graduation outcomes and disproportionate disciplinary action, for students of color than for their white peers. The district recognizes that these disparities contradict the beliefs and values we articulate about what students can achieve and the role of adults in ensuring conditions for success.

Rather than, continuing to perpetuate and contribute to institutional racism, Baltimore City Schools must move to disrupt and dismantle it in every area of our work. Our Board, district administrators, and school-based staff will work together to aggressively and efficiently eliminate inequitable practices, systems, and structures that create advantages for some students and families while disadvantaging others. We will allocate resources to replace those inequitable practices, systems, and structures with new ones to ensure that we provide racially equitable education and environments to children and families of color.

II. Definitions

A. *Educational equity*- every student has access to the opportunities, resources and educational rigor they need throughout their educational career to maximize academic success and social emotional well-being and to view each student's individual characteristics as valuable. The characteristics of each individual student include but are not limited to ability (cognitive, social emotional and physical), ethnicity, family structure, gender identity and expression, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economics.

B. *Equity lens*- any program, practice, decision, or action, the impact on all students is addressed, with strategic focus on marginalized student groups.

C. *Racial equity*- the result achieved when you can't predict advantage or disadvantage by race.

III. Policy Standards

To build a generation of young people with the skills, knowledge, and understanding to succeed in college, careers, and community, every City Schools employee takes an active role and accountability for the standards set forth in this policy.

A. Disrupting and Eliminating Systemic Inequities

1. Provide learning experiences for staff to build personal, professional, and organizational capacity on understanding the impact of race on educational equity and inequity. Staff will:
 - a. Explore an understanding of their own racial identity.
 - b. Explore an understanding of the root causes and structural impact of oppression.
 - i. Address the impact on historically oppressed and historically advantaged learners.
 - ii. Address the causes of distrust/mistrust in marginalized communities.
 - iii. Decenter dominant narratives that problematize students of color.
 - c. Explore an understanding of their role in perpetuating or interrupting systemic inequities.
2. Staff use a shared volume of research and vocabulary that strengthens and grounds diverse perspectives.
3. Staff develop capacity to analyze and eliminate policies and practices employed by the district that result in the predictability of systemic inequities: use of assessments, lower academic achievement for students of color; over-identification and representation of students of color in special education; under-identification and representation of students of color in advanced academics; disproportionality in suspension.
4. A communication plan outlines required strategies to engage students, parents, and families as partners in the full educational process (policy development, curriculum selection, etc.)
5. The district prioritizes the allocation of resources (curriculum, facilities, staffing, support services, technology, transportation, etc.) in a manner that ensures historically underserved students and schools get what they need to participate in a world class education.

B. Honoring Culture, Experiences, & Humanity of Students, Families & Community

1. Students receive holistic instruction and opportunities to apply learning that is tailored to the assets of their racial, geographic, and socioeconomic existence/realities.

2. Curriculum and materials must honor the experience, culture and humanity of students absent the traditionally taught dominant framing and narrative.
3. School staff understand the history of the community in which they teach and ensure the school environments are engaging and responsive to the needs of students of color.
4. The district's communication strategy facilitates interactions where students and families feel welcomed, empowered, and treated as authentic thought partners in the educational process.
5. The social and emotional learning needs of students and families guide the selection, implementation, and monitoring of solutions to create safe, inclusive school climates to include, but not limited to Restorative Practices, Trauma Informed Care, De-escalation strategies, etc.

C. Ensuring Access & Representation in Academic Programming

1. The district ensures equitable access to curricular materials, practices, instruction, and assessment that is and culturally relevant for students of color.
2. Specialized programming and support models will create opportunities for historically oppressed learners to thrive in academic programs.
3. Admissions criteria allow for an increase in underrepresented students in advanced academics and schools/programs with selective entrance criteria.
4. Partner organizations are required to develop application processes, scoring, and admissions criteria that reflects the racial demographics of the student population.
5. Budgeting, scheduling, and staffing structures reflect a robust academic experience for students, to include but not limited to: science, social studies, health, art, physical education, extra-curricular activities, etc.
6. Cross curricular conditions for learning allow for collaborative planning, professional learning for teachers, evaluation designed to provide growth opportunities, and access to all curricula.

D. Building Staff Capacity for Equity-based Teaching and Leading

1. School and district staff utilize a set of questions for decision-making that ensures ways of thinking and problem solving through an equity lens.
2. School and district leaders utilize disaggregated data to analyze trends, identify gaps, and develop racial equity priorities for schools and offices.
3. School and district staff at all levels raise issues of inequity and offer solutions to remedy.

4. Purchasing/procurement practices provide access and economic opportunities within communities represented by students of color.
5. The district recruits, hires, develops, and retains racially conscious and linguistically diverse teachers, administrators, and staff whose culture and experiences are reflective of the student population.
6. The district forms and nurtures partnerships with external stakeholders that have a demonstrated commitment to supporting racial educational equity.
7. The district communicates disaggregated systemwide data in a transparent and accessible manner, to all stakeholders and offers a plan to mitigate and address inequities.

IV. Implementation Strategies

A. The CEO is responsible for ensuring that the provisions of the Code of Maryland Regulations (“COMAR”) and applicable federal and state laws are followed.

B. The CEO/designee will operationalize the policy by developing an annual plan for training and programming with a timeline to ensure full implementation.

C. The CEO/designee will develop an Evaluation Plan and Accountability Standards for measuring success, progress monitoring, and ongoing plan for continuous improvement.

V. Compliance

Each school and district office will develop annual equity priorities aligned with the Blueprint (strategic plan) and outlined in the Annual School Performance Plan.

An Equity Advisory Committee will be established to engage with district staff on progress towards implementation of the policy.

A report on Equity will be provided to the Board annually to ensure implementation of the policy.

VI. Legal and Policy References

A. Legal Authority

COMAR 13A.01.06

B. Policy References

C. Administrative Regulation References

Sponsoring Officer: Chief Executive Officer

Policy History: New Policy