

Equity Policy

I. Equity Definition:

The Board of Directors of Vancouver Public Schools defines “equity” as a condition that balances two dimensions: fairness and inclusion. As a function of fairness, equity implies ensuring people have what they need to participate in school life and to reach their full potential (flourish). As a function of inclusion, equity ensures that essential educational programs, services, activities, and technologies are accessible to all. The board acknowledges that equity is evolving and as the term evolves the district will adjust its practices.

II. District Commitments:

- A. Vancouver Public Schools is committed to educational equity and providing all students an educational experience that prepares them for college, career and life. This includes preparing all students to thrive in a racially and culturally diverse local, national and global community.
- B. The district’s commitment to educational equity means striving to cultivate a school district where educational outcomes are not predetermined by race, ethnicity, family economics, mobility, language, family status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, or initial proficiencies. This commitment also means that the diversity of our students and community is acknowledged, affirmed and integrated into learning and school culture.
- C. The board recognizes that complex societal and historical facts contribute to inequity within society and in education. The board commits to addressing factors within the district’s control that contribute to educational inequity and disparate educational outcomes for students.
- D. We believe that it is the right of every student to have an equitable educational experience within Vancouver Public Schools. We further believe that the responsibility for supporting student success and educational equity is broadly shared by our school community, including by the board, district administrators, district employees, our families and the community- at- large. The district is guided by the belief that educational equity benefits every student, which, in turn, benefits our entire community. We embrace a concept of educational equity that goes beyond formal equality, where every student is treated the same, to fostering an educational environment where every student is supported and has an opportunity to benefit equally. Therefore, Vancouver Public Schools will strive to provide a learning environment for all students that is enriching, equitable, and affirming of diversity.
- E. In order to achieve and maintain educational equity, the Board of Directors of Vancouver Public Schools commits to:
 - 1. Equitable student-centered district programs;
 - 2. Application of an equity lens focus for all future policy adoptions;
 - 3. Implementation of curriculum and evidenced-based instructional practices that advance cultural connections;
 - 4. Ambitious goals for increasing work-force diversity and investing resources to increase, retain and promote workforce diversity;
 - 5. Prioritization of resources to achieve equitable outcomes across student populations, including differentiating resources for schools with underserved populations, concentrations of students living in poverty and concentrations of students who need additional supports to succeed academically;

6. Review and monitor district operations to improve levels of inclusion and equitable access;
7. Equitable representation in programs of choice;
8. Implementation of additional processes to improve school culture and climate, including reducing discipline disparities;
9. Increased family/community voice and perspective for underserved and marginalized populations;
10. Progress monitoring on all equity initiatives through quarterly reporting requirements and biannual achievement and discipline data reviews; and
11. Diversity in student voice by collecting input regarding student issues related to educational equity.

III. Action Plans

The board directs the superintendent to develop action plans which will result in measurable progress towards achieving the following goals:

- A. Student Learning: Enhance academic supports and processes to increase student learning.
- B. Culture & Climate: Increase student and staff sense of belonging.
- C. Deploy Resources: Achieve equitable outcomes for students in alignment with student equity action plans.
- D. Curriculum and Evidence-Based Instructional Practices: Advance student learning through cultural connections.
- E. Equity Lens: Application of an equity lens for policy amendments and adoption.
- F. Professional Staff: Hire and retain professional staff whose practices align with the district's equity policy and goals.

IV. Progress Monitoring

The superintendent and/or designee will provide quarterly progress monitoring reports and annually report to the board regarding the implementation of this policy. The board will review the quarterly monitoring reports and relevant data points to assess implementation progress and make recommendations. Additionally, the board will annually review this policy and revise as needed.

Adopted: February 8, 2022

VPS