
**PROPOSED
NEW POLICY**

Information Item

Rationale:

In October 2020, the Board adopted a district equity resolution condemning racism and establishing policy directives on diversity, equity, inclusion and excellence in education. The resolution outlined district equity goals, one of which was adoption of a district equity policy. This policy describes the board's equity commitments and beliefs, and directs the Superintendent to develop and implement action plans to achieve the equity goals.

District Equity Policy

Equity Definition

The Vancouver School Board 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.

District Commitments

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.

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.

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.

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.

In order to achieve and maintain educational equity, the Vancouver Public Schools Board of Directors commits to:

1. Equitable student-centered district programs;
2. Diversity in student voice by collecting input regarding student issues related to educational equity;
3. Increased family/community voice and perspective for underserved, and marginalized populations;
4. Equitable representation in programs of choice;
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. Implementation of additional processes to improve school culture and climate;
7. Implementation of curriculum and evidenced-based instructional practices that advance cultural connections;
8. Application of an equity lens focus for all future policy adoptions;
9. Review and monitor district operations to improve levels of inclusion and equitable access;
10. Ambitious goals for increasing work-force diversity and investing resources to increase, retain and promote workforce diversity; and
11. Progress monitoring on all equity initiatives through quarterly reporting requirements and biannual achievement and discipline data reviews.

The board directs the superintendent to develop annual action plans which will result in measurable progress towards achieving the above goals. The superintendent and/or designee will annually report to the school board regarding the implementation of this policy.

Adopted:

VPS