

## Community Relations

**SUBJECT: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING IN THE DISTRICT\*****Overview**

Research shows that all students benefit when schools implement strong diversity, equity, inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) policies and practices. These benefits include academic, cognitive, civic, social-emotional, and economic. This is true regardless of a school's geographic location or the demographic composition of its students and staff.

This policy provides a framework as to how the District will foster DEIB in its schools. This policy considers the entirety of the educational process by addressing the following essential elements: governance; teaching and learning; family and community engagement; workforce diversity; diverse schools and learning opportunities; and student support, discipline, and wellness. It is just one component of the District's overall commitment to maintaining a diverse, equitable, and inclusive educational and work environment.

\*\*The District may develop a DEIB plan to manage and coordinate the execution of this policy.

\*\*\*Inquiries about this policy may be directed to the District's DEIB Coordinator.

**Generally Accepted Beliefs and Agreements**

All children deserve to have equal access to opportunity regardless of the color of their skin, their gender, their sexual orientation, the language they speak, or their background. This freedom is fundamental to our K-12 educational program and is extended to everyone without exception. However, the district also recognizes that students have been historically marginalized due to inequities associated with aspects of their identities and their contexts, including, but not limited to, race, color, weight, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sex; sexual orientation, or gender (including gender identity and expression). Racism, discrimination, and marginalization of any people or groups of people, whether intentional or not, have no place in our schools, our district, or our community. Such actions damage not only those individuals and groups at which they are directed, but also our community as a whole. We are committed to addressing these inequities and helping each and every student to equitably access learning opportunities in school to enable them all to thrive and to build a better society.

**Anti-racism**

The New Paltz Central School District recognizes that racism is destructive to the District's mission, vision, and guiding principles. Racism is defined as different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. The District is committed to the following principles:

- A. Establishing and sustaining a school community that shares the collective responsibility to affirmatively address, eliminate, and prevent actions, decisions, and outcomes that result from and perpetuate racism.

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- B. Eliminating inequitable practices and cultivating the unique gifts, talents, interests, and backgrounds of every student to end the predictive value of social or cultural factors on student success.
- C. Respecting and championing the diversity and life experiences of all community members to support the District's mission, vision, and guiding principles.
- D. Acknowledging that racism is often compounded by other forms of discrimination, including, but not limited to, national origin, religion, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, and refugee or immigration status.
- E. Recognizing diversity as an asset to our school community.
- F. All policies must be viewed with an anti-racist, DEIB lens.

**Defining Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

For purposes of this policy:

- a) "Diversity" includes, but is not limited to: race; color; ethnicity; nationality; religion; socioeconomic status; veteran status; education; marital status; language; age; gender; gender expression; gender identity; sexual orientation; mental or physical ability; genetic information; and learning style.
- b) "Equity" includes, but is not limited to, seeking the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of all groups.
- c) "Inclusion" includes, but is not limited to, authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision or policymaking in a way that shares power and ensures equitable access to opportunities and resources.
- d) "Belonging" is the outgrowth of all successful DEIB policy and practice. It includes, but is not limited to, actively building an educational and social space where students, faculty and staff can affirm that they are valued members of the community.

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**SUBJECT: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING IN THE DISTRICT (Cont'd.)****Governance**District Equity Team (DET)

The District is responsible for ensuring that every student has full access to quality education, qualified teachers, challenging curriculum, full opportunities to learn, and sufficient, individually-tailored support for learning so they can reach their full potential in academic and other student outcomes. The District also commits to developing a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all students, faculty, and staff. The District will maintain a District Equity Team that meets periodically throughout the year. The purpose of the DET is to assist the District in creating and implementing plans that advance the District's commitment to maintaining a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment where all individuals feel valued and respected. As needed, the DET will also review District policies, practices, programs and provide suggestions as to how they could potentially be modified to better promote DEIB. The Superintendent, or designee, will adopt goals and corresponding metrics related to this policy. The district will identify multiple indicators as necessary to monitor student outcomes, engagement, school climate, and specific data that will be used to ensure accountability for student, school, and district-wide performance; to reduce variability in outcomes; and to ensure that academic outcomes will not be predictable by actual or perceived personal characteristics. These goals and corresponding metrics will be assessed and reported transparently to the public.

- The District shall collect, review, and provide an annual report by July 31st, as part of the DEI policy, to the Board of Education on data regarding DEIB. The written reports shall also be made available to the public.
- The District should conduct a bi-annual self-assessment in January and July of each year specific to the achievement of the identified DEIB framework above as well as the District's anti-racism principles. The results of the self-assessment shall be presented to the public.
- Each school and the District shall ensure there are various, including anonymous, means for students and staff to report racism and other forms of discrimination.

The District Equity Team will be representative of all stakeholders, and may include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to, representatives from the following groups:

- a) Students;
- b) Parents and persons in parental relation;
- c) District/building administrators;
- d) Teachers, including at least one special education teacher;
- e) Guidance staff, including at least one school psychologist, social worker, or counselor;
- f) Other District staff;
- g) Community members.

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**SUBJECT: DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING IN THE DISTRICT (Cont'd.)**DEIB Coordinator

The Superintendent has designated the following District employee to serve as its DEIB Coordinator:

Deputy Superintendent                      845-256-4030   [loehlermarx@newpaltz.k12.ny.us](mailto:loehlermarx@newpaltz.k12.ny.us)  
New Paltz Central School District  
196 Main Street  
New Paltz, NY 12561

The DEIB Coordinator will be a facilitator of the DET and convene and coordinate the activities and plans of the DET.

Each school shall have an active Equity Team that meets at least once bi-monthly, and will report out to DET.

**Teaching and Learning**

The District will strive to advance inclusive and culturally responsive teaching and learning through, but not limited to, the following means: curricula in all content areas; books and instructional materials; pedagogical practices and professional development; classroom grouping policies and practices; student support systems for all developmental pathways; full and equitable opportunities to learn for all students; and multiple assessment measures. As part of this effort, the District will seek to:

- a) Implement a Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) Education Framework that embeds the ideals of diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging by creating student-centered learning environments that:
  1. Affirm cultural identities;
  2. Foster positive academic outcomes;
  3. Develop students' abilities to connect across lines of difference;
  4. Elevate historically marginalized voices;
  5. Empower students as agents of social change; and
  6. Contribute to individual student engagement, learning, growth, and achievement through the cultivation of critical thinking.
- b) Offer coherent opportunities for students to actively participate in experiences that prepare them for a lifetime of civic engagement and contributions to social justice, including, for example, completing projects that enable them to apply the learning they have acquired within and across subject areas.

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- c) Encourage academic discussions about systemic marginalization and bias, as well as movement toward justice, equity, and belonging.

**Family and Community Engagement**

The District will strive to foster family and community engagement practices that are based on mutual trust, confidence, and respect. As part of this effort, the District will seek to:

- a) Encourage participation from all stakeholders in community building conversations.
- b) Reduce language barriers through various means, including, but not limited to, providing translated communications when appropriate.

**Workforce Diversity**

The District will strive to create a workforce that is not only diverse and inclusive, but one that recognizes and values the differences among people. As part of this effort, the District will seek to:

- a) Recruit and retain a diverse workforce in all areas and at all levels, thereby reducing stereotypes and preparing students for an increasingly global society.
- b) Provide staff with opportunities for professional development on cultural proficiency.

**Diverse Schools and Learning Opportunities**

The District will strive to promote diverse, equitable, and inclusive classrooms in which students have equal access and opportunities to learn and realize their full potential. As part of this effort, the District will seek to:

- a) Eliminate the use of terms and phrases within District schools that perpetuate negative stereotypes and minimize student opportunities.
- b) Create coursework, programs, and activities that are accessible to all students, regardless of their disability status, native language, income level, or any other basis.

**Student Supports, Discipline, and Wellness**

The District will strive to focus on the well-being of the "whole child." As part of this effort, the District will seek to:

- a) Employ programs, resources and instructional practices that enhance all students' self-identity, self-confidence, and self-esteem.
- b) Maintain non-discriminatory discipline policies and practices.

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- c) Consider and address the full range of student developmental pathways.

## Training

To foster DEIB in its schools, the District will provide DEIB training to staff and students, as appropriate. This training may be delivered in various forms including, but not limited to: workshops; instructor-led classes; webinars; videos; workbooks; pamphlets; and/or emailed information. Although specific objectives will vary from training to training, in general, trainings will be designed to:

- a) Increase awareness of the content of this policy and/or various DEIB issues; and
- b) Promote a welcoming and inclusive environment for all District community members.

## Notification

The District will share information about this policy via the District website and/or District-wide communications, as appropriate.

NOTE: Refer also to Policies #8241 -- Patriotism, Citizenship, and Human Rights Education