

BOARD FILE: ADB

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

The Douglas County School District (“School District”) Board of Education commits to establish an inclusive culture to ensure all students, staff, and community members feel safe and valued by increasing and embedding authentic and relevant learning opportunities and experiences involving inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility. In collaboration with community stakeholders, the School District is committed to providing educational and working environments that foster systemically aligned practices, opportunities, and experiences which promote the acceptance of all stakeholders, remove and avoid implementing barriers limiting stakeholders’ potential and success, and implement unbiased, culturally relevant, responsive, and sustaining learning environments.

Consistent with that commitment, the School District shall offer and afford every student and staff member equitable educational opportunities regardless of race, color, ancestry, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, religion, national origin, marital status, disability, socio-economic status, or eligibility for special education services.

This pursuit of equitable educational opportunity shall guide the Board of Education and School District staff in creating policies, crafting procedures, and making decisions related to School District facilities, selection of educational materials, equipment, staffing, curriculum, and regulations affecting students and staff. Further, the School District will develop and sustain a teaching and learning culture that addresses high expectations and supports for all employees and students while working to eliminate any misaligned and/or inequitable practices and situations. Further, the Board of Education commits to developing and implementing systems and structures to support the critical evaluation of and, if necessary, restructuring of current curricular and instructional resources and student programming initiatives to ensure representation, accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion within all School District-approved curriculum.

For the purposes of this policy, these terms carry the following meanings:

“Diversity” is the presence of difference within a given setting. In this case, schools and the School District are the settings, and the differences typically refer to identity like the races, colors, ancestries, creeds, sexes, genders, sexual orientations, gender expressions, gender identities, religions, national origins, marital status, disabilities, socio-economic statuses, and/or learning abilities of a given setting’s community members.

“Inclusion” refers to valuing and welcoming all individuals and groups of individuals with different identities (as defined below) into the District’s community, honoring them as equal stakeholders, and purposefully incorporating their specific needs into programming, activities, benefits, and opportunities available in the District. Inclusion also refers to the provision of space for all individuals and groups of individuals of diverse identities to act as equal voices in programming and decision-making.

“Equity” refers to providing all individuals and groups of individuals with fairness and respect in their opportunities to participate in and benefit from the District’s programs, and to ensure that every stakeholder has the opportunity to reach their potential.

“Accessibility” refers to the ability of all students, families, and staff to have complete and reasonable opportunities to obtain School District programming and benefits regardless of race, color, ancestry, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, religion, national origin, marital status, disability, socio-economic status, or eligibility for special education services. It also refers to the creation of systems to ensure such reasonable access.

“Identity” generally refers to one’s race, color, ancestry, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, religion, national origin, marital status, disability, socio-economic status, or eligibility for special education services. It also includes one’s lived experiences and self-expression in any given environment.

“Representation” means that students, staff, and community members at large see components of their individual and collective identities reflected in curricular and instructional resources with which they engage during the education process, as well as the educational environments they inhabit.

The Board of Education recognizes the need for criteria and indicators to address successful growth toward equity, inclusion, diversity, and accessibility.

The Board of Education shall NOT condone, by its staff, students, leadership, or any other community member representing School District interests:

- A) Biased, inequitable, racist, or exclusive practices
- B) Discriminatory behaviors that disproportionately impact any particular group or groups of individuals based on aspect of their collective identity
- C) Practices that promote inequality or inequity
- D) Deficit-focused instructional or operational implementation frameworks
- E) Perpetuation of racism or discrimination
- F) Policies and resolutions that support exclusion or intolerance

The School District will create and implement a targeted system to identify any of the above practices, frameworks, systems, behaviors, and/or policies. The School District will also develop, in conjunction with school and School District leaders, a restorative process to address the identified concern, repair harm to the community, and to eradicate any future inequities.

In order to create, implement, and enforce the above initiatives, the Board of Education and School District commit to maintain an Equity Advisory Council, comprised of school and School District leadership, teachers, students, parents, and community members, focused on system-wide implementation of this policy. The School District will designate cabinet-level responsibilities for managing initiatives in furtherance of this policy, including coordinating with

the Council. As part of its duties, the Council will additionally assist in the development of processes to recruit, hire, and retain a diverse pool of School District employees.

Nothing in this policy is intended to alter, amend or conflict with the School District's obligations under state or federal law.

Adopted: March 23, 2021

LEGAL REFS.:

20 U.S.C. §1681 (*Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972*)

20 U.S.C. §1701-1758 (*Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974*)

29 U.S.C. §701 et seq. (*Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*)

C.R.S. 2-4-401(13.5) (*definition of sexual orientation, which includes transgender*)

C.R.S. 22-32-10(9) (1)(II) (*Board duty to adopt written policies prohibiting discrimination*)

C.R.S. 22-32-109.1 (2) (*safe school plan to be revised as necessary in response to relevant data collected by the school district*)

C.R.S. 24-34-601 (*unlawful discrimination in places of public accommodation*)

C.R.S. 24-34-602 (*penalty and civil liability for unlawful discrimination*)

CROSS REFS.:

AC, Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity

GBA, Open Hiring/Equal Opportunity Employment

GBAA, Sexual Harassment

JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

JBB, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disability

JBA, Non-Discrimination/Non-Harassment of Students

JBC, Sexual Harassment Under Title IX and Other Prohibited Misconduct of a Sexual Nature