

POLICY

BALTIMORE CITY BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS

EQUITY

I. Purpose

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners (“Board”) 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. Baltimore City Public Schools (“City Schools”) must take action for removing, and actively repairing these inequities to ensure positive educational outcomes for children.

Through this policy, City Schools acknowledges the role educational institutions have in creating and implementing policies and practices that that data consistently shows result in predictably lower academic and graduation outcomes and disproportionate disciplinary action, for students of color than for their white peers. City Schools recognizes that these disparities contradict the beliefs and values it articulates about what students can achieve and the role of adults in ensuring conditions for success.

City Schools must move to disrupt and dismantle inequities in every area of our work. City Schools will work to aggressively and efficiently eliminate inequitable practices, systems, and structures that create advantages for some students and families while disadvantaging others. City Schools 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.

We believe the answers are in Baltimore - within our schools, communities, families, and those we choose as partners in this work. As we make this shift, the voices of our students will guide our work to ensure their talents, dreams, and potential are fully maximized.

II. Definitions

A. *Educational equity*- an educational system that ensures that 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 views each student’s individual characteristics as valuable. These characteristics 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*- for 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 higher education, careers, and community, every City Schools employee and partner operate from and are accountable to the racial equity standards set forth in this policy consistent with all applicable U.S. Constitutional rights, civil rights, federal and state privacy laws, rules, and regulations

A. Disrupting and Eliminating Systemic Inequities

1. To provide professional development experiences for City Schools to build personal, professional, and organizational capacity on understanding the impact of race on educational equity and inequity, City Schools will:
 - a) Ensure that its staff 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 its role in perpetuating or interrupting systemic inequities.
2. City Schools will use a shared volume of research and vocabulary that strengthens and grounds diverse perspectives.
3. City Schools staff will 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. City Schools will develop a communication plan that outlines required strategies to engage students, parents, and families, and communities as partners in the full educational process, including but not limited to policy development and curriculum selection.
5. City Schools will prioritize the allocation of resources, including but not limited to curriculum, facilities, staffing, support services, technology, transportation, 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. City Schools will take all reasonable actions to ensure that:
2. a) Students receive holistic instruction and opportunities to apply learning that is tailored to the assets of their racial, geographic, and socioeconomic existence/realities.
b) Curriculum and materials must honor the experience, culture and humanity of students absent the traditionally taught dominant framing and narrative.
2. City Schools and partner organizations shall take actions to understand the historical context of the intersection of race and other factors on schooling in Baltimore city and the communities surrounding individual schools.
3. City Schools and partner organizations will ensure that school environments are engaging and responsive to the needs of students of color by including the diverse perspectives of students, families, and communities.
4. City Schools' communication and instructional strategies facilitate interactions where students and families are 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, including but not limited to Restorative Practices, Trauma Informed Care, De-escalation strategies.

C. Ensuring Access & Representation in Academic Programming

1. City Schools will take all reasonable actions to ensure that:
2. a) Students have equitable access to curricular materials, practices, instruction, and assessment that is and culturally relevant for students of color;
b) Specialized programming and support models are formulated and adopted to create opportunities for historically oppressed learners to thrive in academic programs;
c) Admissions processes include unbiased criteria which will allow for an increase in underrepresented students in advanced academics and schools/programs with selective entrance criteria;
d) Partner organizations are required to develop or employ application processes, scoring, and admissions criteria that do not adversely or disproportionately disadvantage students of color;
e) Budgeting, scheduling, and staffing structures reflect a robust academic experience for all students, including but not limited to: science, technology, math, social studies,

health, the arts, physical education, and extra-curricular activities; and

f) 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. City Schools staff will:

a) Utilize a set of questions for decision-making that ensures ways of thinking and problem solving through an equity lens.

b) Utilize disaggregated data to analyze trends, identify gaps, and develop racial equity priorities for schools and offices;

c) Raise issues of inequity and offer solutions to remedy;

d) Ensure that purchasing/procurement practices provide access and economic opportunities within communities represented by students of color;

e) Recruit, hire, develop, and retain racially conscious and linguistically diverse teachers, administrators, and staff whose culture and experiences are reflective of the student population;

f) Form and nurture partnerships with external stakeholders that have a demonstrated commitment to supporting racial educational equity; and

g) Communicate de-identified, 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 Chief Executive Officer (“CEO) of City Schools 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 and/or designee, will operationalize the policy by developing an annual plan for training and programming with a timeline to ensure full implementation.

C. The CEO and/or 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, adopted June 11, 2019