

## COLCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT

### **POLICY: EQUITY**

**DATE ADOPTED:** September 5, 2023

### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The Colchester School Board holds itself and all district, school-site decision-makers, and employees accountable for building a district-wide commitment to equity for all members of the CSD community, inclusive of race, gender, color, creed, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, ethnicity, caste, language and linguistic diversity, socio-economic status, religion, housing status, or non-citizenship or immigration status.

The district will incorporate principles of equity within all policies, programs, operations, practices, and resource allocations. We recognize that disparities in achievement, opportunity, and well-being may impact students and families in our district. A student's success should not be predicted nor predetermined by socio-cultural context or lived experience. The district affirms that each student can thrive given authentic opportunities in a supportive, inclusive, and equitable educational system. The district will strive to:

- Provide a learning environment and educational opportunities for students and employees that are equitable, anti-racist, culturally responsive, anti-discriminatory, and inclusive.
- Respect and honor the diversity and lived experience of all individuals.
- Create a nurturing school environment where individuals feel welcomed, accepted, respected, included, and supported.
- Increase the awareness of disparities and inequities that exist in the district to create and sustain a climate and culture that supports equitable practices.
- Cultivate and sustain school communities that embrace a collective responsibility to address, eliminate, and prevent actions, decisions, and outcomes that result from and perpetuate racism and discrimination.
- Address the harm caused to individuals as a result of bias and inequity.
- Hold ourselves and one another accountable to equity, inclusion and belonging in our schools.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

To realize this commitment to equity within this policy and outlined in the Vermont Education Quality Standards, the District will:

1. Provide engaging, inclusive, anti-racist, culturally responsive, anti-discriminatory curriculum, flexible instructional and assessment practices aligned with current best

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practices and informed by district, state, and federal data on academic achievement, social emotional learning, school culture and climate.

2. Systematically use district-wide and individual school-level data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, language, ability, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic background to inform District decision-making to mitigate barriers that perpetuate gaps.
3. Provide every student with equitable access to all educational resources that respect their individual and intersectional needs, identities, cultures, backgrounds, abilities, and experiences. Educational resources include but are not limited to: facilities, technology, high-quality instruction, curriculum, support, grading and assessment practices, food services, co-curricular activities and transportation.
4. Allocate financial resources, personnel, supports, and opportunities based on need so that all students have equitable opportunities to achieve, engage, and feel belonging in an inclusive and welcoming school environment.
5. Offer robust opportunities to critically engage students with themes of diversity, equity, and inclusion including a comprehensive historical and socially conscious understanding across all academic areas that include diverse perspectives and positive and affirming representation.
6. Engage student, employee, and community voices, particularly those historically underrepresented and most impacted by inequity, with opportunities for feedback and engagement to influence and advise district and school based action plans, policies, and practices.
7. Identify and counteract biased practices and policies that perpetuate achievement disparities and opportunity gaps. Factors that perpetuate systemic inequities, institutional biases, and discriminatory practices will be identified, intentionally interrupted, and replaced with more equitable and just systems.
8. Provide opportunities and programming that prevent bias based harm through direct instruction and school wide events that promote a culture that uplifts diversity, equity and inclusion.
9. Incorporate trauma informed and restorative approaches to behavior management and repair of relational harm in order to achieve equity in our discipline practices and improve school culture and safety.
10. Address bias-based harm and discriminatory behavior with robust protocols that are in alignment with district, federal and state policy.
11. Provide ongoing and continuous professional development and accountability at all organizational levels to ensure all employees are able to engage in culturally responsive practices and consistently identify, interrupt, and prevent bias based harm, microaggressions, and hate emphasizing impact.
12. Maintain and embed equity into district and school based strategic plans by identifying measurable outcomes to mitigate barriers that perpetuate achievement gaps and improve the culture and climate for all individuals across the district.

- 13.** Schools will honor cultural, and religious traditions not acknowledged by CSD and regional calendars by providing reasonable accommodations including but not limited to space and time for individual students where religious tenet require observance during the school day and scheduling considerations with regard to major assignments, evening events, and assessments.
- 14.** The superintendent shall identify outcome indicators as necessary to monitor this policy and shall provide an annual status report to the Board.