

ABINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT
ABINGTON, PENNSYLVANIA

SUPERINTENDENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE
PROCEDURE

REGARDING: **Equitable Practices**

Section: **Equity**

Effective Date: June 8, 2021

Reissued: 9/9/21, 8/10/22

See Also: Related Board Policy

Purpose

Abington School District endeavors to *foster* belonging through a culture of dignity in which members of our community feels validated, accepted and treated fairly. We can achieve this culture of belonging by *recognizing* the innate, equal worth of each human being. We *acknowledge* that while our mission states that excellence is our standard and that achievement is the result, there are cultural, structural, racial and social barriers that exist for students that can impede their path to academic achievement and personal growth. As such, we will *listen* to and *validate* the lived experiences of our stakeholders and we will work to continue to *educate* our school community on diversity and inclusion and be self-reflective. Lastly, we will *advocate* on behalf of our students, especially the most marginalized and vulnerable.

Our District commits to eliminate or modify policies and practices that perpetuate inequitable outcomes so that all students can benefit and be afforded the opportunity to graduate ready to succeed and thrive in postsecondary education and/or the workforce and engage productively in an increasingly-diverse local, national, and global community.

Definitions

Academic Achievement shall mean academic indicators including but not limited to test scores, grade point averages, and graduation rates.

Achievement gaps shall mean the academic disparities and/or differences between groups of students, as indicated through variances in academic indicators such as test scores, grade point average and graduation rates.

Antiracism shall mean the work of actively opposing racism.

Barriers shall mean factors that block or hinder movement or progression. Barriers to educational equity may include, but are not limited to, policies, administrative regulations

and practices; explicit and implicit biases; facilities; budgeted funds; curriculum and instruction; personnel; class size; Code of Student Conduct and school climate.

Culture shall mean the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively; or, the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group.

Cultural competency shall mean an ability to interact effectively with individuals of other cultures.

Cultural proficiency shall mean the level of knowledge-based skills and understanding that is required to successfully teach and interact with students and to work effectively with colleagues, families and communities from other cultures. It requires an ongoing examination and self-reflection to challenge one's own cultural biases and understand the cultural perspectives and experiences of others.

Culturally responsive shall mean the inclusion of students' cultural references in all aspects of learning, school experiences and student engagement.

Disparity shall mean the lack of similarity or equality; inequality.

Disparate impact shall mean educational practices that are nondiscriminatory, however they have a disproportionately negative effect on members of diverse identity groups.

Educational Equity Action Plan shall mean the steps education stakeholders in a school district engage in to pursue equity.

Educational Equity Audit shall mean a comprehensive equity and inclusion benchmarking instrument that assesses a district's policies, programs, and practices including barriers to opportunity and progress towards achieving the outcomes described in the school district's Educational Equity Action Plan.

Equality shall mean the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities.

Equity shall mean the distribution of resources based upon each individual student's needs.

Equity lens shall mean an intentional focus on assessing any inequitable impact the execution of a program, practice, operation, decision or action may have on a student or group of students.

Equitable resources shall mean funding programs, policies, initiatives, and supports that, consistent with budgetary limits, target each student's unique background and school context to promote every student having access to a high-quality education and opportunity for achievement of success in school.

Ethnicity shall mean the fact or state of belonging to a social group that has a common national or cultural tradition.

Explicit bias shall mean the actions, attitudes and beliefs we have about a person or group on a conscious level.

Gender shall mean socially determined characteristics, roles, behaviors, and attributes a society expects from and considers appropriate for males and females; these characteristics are often referred to as “feminine” and “masculine.”

Implicit bias shall mean the actions, attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions and decisions in a subconscious manner.

Inclusion shall mean engaging, valuing and respecting all groups (students, parents/guardians, community members, administrators, instructional and support personnel and other education stakeholders) and including all groups as essential partners in the education process.

Inequality shall mean the state of not being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities

Intersectionality shall mean the complex and cumulative ways that different forms of discrimination (racism, sexism, classism) combine, overlap and intersect – especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.

LGBTQ+ (see SAP - “Nondiscrimination of students in classroom practices”) is an acronym that stands for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning.” Questioning incorporates those who are uncertain or fluid about their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. The “+” symbol is added to acknowledge that other descriptors exist. Sometimes an “I” for intersex and “A” for asexual are added to the acronym.

Marginalized shall mean relegated to an unimportant or powerless position within a society or group.

Opportunity gaps shall mean the disparities in the delivery of educational and extracurricular opportunities, funding and other resources between and among different student groups, leading to different academic, extracurricular, social and economic outcomes for students.

Race shall mean any one of the groups that humans are often divided into based on physical traits regarded as common among people of shared ancestry.

Racism shall mean prejudice, discrimination or antagonism directed against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized.

School climate shall mean the quality and character of school life; based on patterns of students’, parents’ and school personnel’s experience of school life and reflects norms, goals, values, interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures.

Authority

This Superintendent's Administrative Procedure has been formulated under authority of the Board of School Directors to provide equitable access and outcomes to the students in the Abington School District.

Delegation of Responsibility

The District shall use an equity lens and quantitative and qualitative data to assess systematically which students and/or student groups are experiencing the least growth and achievement, determine why, and target resources and efforts to address identified needs and improve overall outcomes.

Each District employee shall be expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the principles of this Superintendent's Administrative Procedure (SAP) and the accompanying Board Policy and to foster a school climate that is equity focused and culturally responsive. Employees shall receive supports in the form of training regarding culturally responsive practices, implicit bias, explicit bias, diversity and inclusion.

"District employees" means all individuals employed by the District, as well as, those employed by or through a contractor or agency whose role or function involves providing services to the District.

In order to promote equity in all District schools, programs, and services, the Superintendent or designee(s) shall pursue the following:

1. **School-based Equity Action Plans:** Developing such plans that center on the commitment to academic excellence as the standard and achievement as a result, but acknowledge and work to both identify and remove barriers so that all students can achieve success based on their individual needs.
2. **Academic Achievement:** Assessing achievement indicators to examine for disproportionality and address gaps.
3. **School Climate:** The promotion and maintenance of inclusive school environments.
4. **Professional Development:** Providing professional development for all District employees to strengthen their knowledge and skills in areas such as equity, culturally responsive practices, implicit and explicit bias, diversity, inclusion, and other equity initiatives. Such professional development should offer opportunities for professional growth and reflection.
5. **Discipline:** Engaging in effort to eliminate disparities in disciplinary practices that disproportionately impact marginalized student groups.
6. **Opportunity & Access:** Providing equitable access to rigorous coursework options, extracurricular and/or co-curricular participation in athletics, arts, music and other content areas, especially to our most marginalized student groups, including but not limited to students of color, students with disabilities, and students with limited English language proficiency.
7. **Curriculum:** Provision of materials and instruction that reflects the diversity of the Abington School District community and student body.

8. **Human Resources:** Engaging in efforts to recruit, employ, and maintain a workforce that is reflective of the diversity of the Abington School District community and providing a culture that is welcoming and culturally responsive to retain diversity in the workforce.
9. **Stakeholder Engagement & Communication:** Engaging and empowering students, their families, and members of the Abington School District community to be partners in the District's efforts to provide an equitable experience for every student.
10. **Policy Review/Development:** Review, evaluate, and propose modification of policies and practices that perpetuate inequitable outcomes for students, or that are otherwise inconsistent with the goals of this SAP or the accompanying Board Policy.

The Superintendent and/or designee(s) shall convene a District Equity Advisory Committee and an Equity Team in every school building. The work of these committees and teams shall be coordinated through the District Equity Office.

- **District Equity Advisory Committee** will include stakeholders from various facets of the District: parents/guardians, students, community members, professional staff, support staff member(s), and administrators who will provide feedback and support on the equity initiatives of the District.
- **School Equity Team** should include a diverse representation of school staff, including, but not limited to: administrator(s), school counselor(s), teachers, support staff member(s), as well as students and parent/guardian liaisons who will provide guidance, monitoring, and updates on school-based goals and equity initiatives.

District Equity Officer

The District Equity Officer is responsible for supporting the design and implementation of district-wide equity initiatives including but not limited to the following:

- Oversee the development, implementation and evaluation of the District's SAP regarding Equitable Practices.
- Ensure the development and delivery of training programs and opportunities for district employees that address issues of diversity, inclusion, and equity including but not limited to cultural responsiveness, implicit and explicit bias.
- Assist the District and schools in resolving educational and diversity issues affecting educators, students, parents, and the community.
- Monitor programs, initiatives, and events that supply academic and extracurricular opportunities for underrepresented and underserved student populations.
- Help foster, create, and maintain inclusive and welcoming school culture and learning environments for all students, educators, parents, families, and community partners.
- Collaborate with the Department of Teaching and Learning to assess District curricula and instructional materials, as well as, proposed resources, with respect to the promotion of inclusion, equity and diversity.
- Collaborate with District administration on the collection and review of data regarding disparate impact on students from diverse backgrounds and provide recommendations based upon the data review.
- Recommend policy and procedural changes to the Superintendent or designee as appropriate to address concerns of equity.

- Collaborate with staff, student and community groups to promote the District as a place of inclusion and equity.
- Collaborate with the Office of Human Resources to promote recruitment, employment, and retention of a workforce reflective of District demographics, particularly an instructional staff representative of student demographics.
- Support and monitor the fair and consistent application and interpretation of District policies and/or State, Federal, and local regulations including Title IX compliance.
- Perform other duties as directed by the Assistant Superintendent of Schools or their designee.

Feedback to the District Equity Officer

Abington School District strives to create a community where every student feels valued and safe, all students have access to a high-quality education in inclusive school environments, and every individual is treated with respect and equal human value.

The District Equity Officer will maintain a feedback form for members of the ASD community to share concerns related to equitable practices within the school district.

Educational Equity Audit

The District Equity Officer shall periodically conduct an audit to benchmark educational equity in school and District-wide achievement and opportunities. This audit shall align with the comprehensive planning cycle to occur on or about every three years.

District Review

The district shall, as a continuous practice, review current and newly developed policies, administrative regulations, practices, student support services, programs, procedures, professional development and locally controlled budget allocations with an equity lens. The district shall be aided in this process through the use of educational equity analysis and auditing tools.

Educational Equity Action Plan(s)

The Superintendent or designee(s), with the assistance of the District Equity Officer, shall develop and periodically update the District's Educational Equity Action Plan with clear accountability goals and metrics to address inequities. The Educational Equity Action Plan shall be reflective of the voices of administrators, teachers, staff, students, families and members of the community. This action plan will be developed to align with the comprehensive plan for the District. Each school will provide equity-based goals and action steps aimed at meeting the established equity goals for the District and review progress toward attainment on an annual basis.

Educational Equity Update

The Superintendent or designee(s) shall annually provide an educational equity update to the Board via a public presentation that reflects the efforts undertaken and progress made

to achieve more equitable practices, specifically with regards to the categories outlined in the Delegation Of Responsibility section of this SAP, in addition to recommended next steps for the District.

Annually, the following information will be provided to accompany the equity update:

Students

Student-related data shall be disaggregated and intersected by gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, English learner status and disability whenever possible. Student-related data may include but not be limited to:

1. Enrollment of each school.
2. Achievement indicators.
3. Attendance indicators.
 - a. Such indicators may include data regarding excused and unexcused absences.
4. Disciplinary indicators.
 - a. Such indicators may include: out-of-school suspension, in-school suspension, alternative education enrollment, the Office for Safe Schools reports, expulsion, all other offenses and referrals and other school discipline factors.
5. Opportunity indicators.
 - a. Such indicators may include enrollment in special education programs, student support services, gifted programs, Advanced Placement classes, honors classes, career and technical education and participation in extracurricular programs and activities.
6. School Climate Assessment Data.

Administrators, Teachers and Staff

Staff-related data shall be disaggregated and intersected by gender, race, and ethnicity.

Data may include:

1. The race, ethnicity, gender and years of experience of support staff, teachers, building administrators and District administration.
2. Efforts to recruit and select personnel.
3. The amount of teacher turnover District-wide and on a school-by-school basis.
4. The ways in which professional development includes equity.
5. Efforts to embed cultural responsiveness into the curriculum.

Resource Allocation

Annually, at the beginning of the budget process, the Superintendent or designee shall review the most recent educational equity update in conjunction with the current Educational Equity Action Plan to consider resource allocations in support of the District's commitment to educational equity.