



Corvallis

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Prepared for: Corvallis School Board

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Meeting Date: May 6, 2021

NO ACTION REQUIRED

Board Policy JBB—Racial Educational Equity (FKA: Educational Equity)—Revised—First Reading

Background

“Individual behaviors can shape the success of an individual. But policies determine the success of groups.” Ibram X. Kendi

Our Commitment

We are committed to becoming an **anti-racist** school district, with policies, practices, and procedures that promote racial equity and provide a culturally relevant, responsive, and inclusive environment for all students.

Vision

Corvallis School District acknowledges the historical, generational, and compounding reality of the systems and structures that have intentionally created opportunities for some groups and perpetuated racial inequities for others. This Racial Educational Equity Policy was written collectively with staff and the perspectives of our Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community and students.

We will use the word ‘we’ when referring to the District as we believe we are all responsible and accountable for the academic growth and well-being of every student in our district. We are committed to the success of every student in each of our schools. For that success to occur, we are committed to recognizing and dismantling institutional barriers and creating access and opportunities that benefit each student. We recognize that the historic, persistent racial opportunity gap is unacceptable, and these disparities contradict the beliefs and values that the District articulates. We will achieve equity when students’ identities, including racial identities, will not predict or predetermine their success in school.

Policy Development Process

For the 2020-21 school year, the school board set two goals: racial equity and community engagement.

Over the course of the year and with support of the Promise Scholarship, we conducted multiple work sessions with the Corvallis School Board to engage in conversations about racial equity. We began with a School Board retreat in September 2020 and held our final meeting in February 2021.

Prior to the February meeting, we spent time reviewing equity policies from around the country. Board members engaged in conversations by reviewing the current Educational Equity policy and using the following equity lens questions:

- How does this align with the District mission/vision?
- Who does this decision affect positively?
- Who does this decision affect negatively?
- How might this decision ignore or worsen existing disparities?
- What are the unintended consequences of this decision?
- How will those being affected by the decision be included in the process?
- What other possibilities were explored?
- How will this decision/outcome be sustainable?

As a result of the review of policies, including the District's current Educational Equity policy, board members provided feedback on a draft policy. A critical second step was to reach out and engage the community in providing input and voice in the draft policy, with an emphasis on organizations and groups that have been historically underrepresented in policy development. Over the last two months, we convened six focus groups with the following representation:

- District staff, including Family Liaisons, Equity Coaches, school office staff, teachers and assistants, Health Navigators, and members of the District's Leadership Team
- District families, including DELTA members and BIPOC community members
- Students from Students Advocating For Equity (SAFE)
- Community members from Casa Latinos Unidos, Benton County Health and Hewlett Packard

In these focus groups, we received critical reflections, feedback, and language suggestions from the community that better represents their hopes for our students and our collective community.

Themes and feedback that emerged from the focus groups include:

- Importance of implementation and accountability.
- Emphasis on race and acknowledging the intersectionality of race, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.
- Accessible language; language that is both strength based and is less hierarchical.

Summary

This work is a form of collective consciousness and capacity building. As a result of these conversations with our community, we have a deeper understanding that this policy is an imperative next step for us to create more inclusive and equitable schools for students, staff, and the community. We recognize that this will require significant work and resources, as well as courageous action and boldness, to implement across all schools. As a follow up to this policy, we will create an action plan that includes our community feedback and strategies to advance this important work.

Cost Impact

None.

Function

Review of revisions.