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OAKLAND UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Community Schools, Thriving Students

Memo

To Board of Education

From Antwan Wilson, Superintendent
Devin Dillon, Chief Academic Officer
Chris Chatmon, Executive Director, African American Male Achievement Initiative

Board Meeting Date August 12, 2015

Subject Board Policy BP 5032

Action Requested

First Reading of Board Policy BP 5032 Equity Policy

Background/ Discussion

An equity policy is necessary to improve academic opportunities for all students and reduce achievement gaps between groups of students. In order to close the achievement gap, the District must proactively work to eradicate inequities that exist throughout the organization (centrally and in school sites), which serve to perpetuate negative stereotypes about groups of students, marginalize students or staff who seek to disrupt institutional bias, and restrict access to rigorous academic programs for certain groups of students based on race, special education placement, being a designated English Language Learner, and other factors.

While the primary focus of this equity policy is on race and ethnicity, the District also acknowledges and will seek to end other forms of social inequalities and oppression, including gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, immigration status, foster youth, and students with disabilities and learning differences. The District is committed to explicitly identifying and addressing all disparities in educational outcomes for the purpose of targeting areas for action, intervention and investment.

This policy also confronts institutional bias (whether conscious or unconscious) that results in predictably lower academic achievement most notably for students of color. Eliminating institutional bias (e.g. race based, identity bias, economic) will increase achievement and graduation rates for *all* students, while narrowing the academic and opportunity gaps between the highest and lowest performing students.

Recommendation

First Reading of Board Policy BP 5032 Equity Policy



Fiscal Impact

N/A

Attachments

- Proposed Board Policy 5032

OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board Policy

BP 5032

EQUITY POLICY

PURPOSE

Oakland Unified School District (the “District”) students are at the heart of the District’s equity policy. This policy also confronts institutional bias (whether conscious or unconscious) that results in predictably lower academic achievement most notably for students of color. Eliminating institutional bias (e.g. race based, identity bias, economic) will increase achievement and graduation rates for *all* students, while narrowing the academic and opportunity gaps between the highest and lowest performing students.

The District acknowledges that complex societal and historical factors contribute to the inequity within our district. Nonetheless, rather than perpetuating the resulting disparities, the District will address and overcome these inequities and the institutional bias which exists throughout the organization, thereby providing all students the opportunity to graduate and be college, career and community ready.

This policy is necessary because in order to improve academic opportunities for all students and reduce achievement gaps between groups of students, the District must proactively work to eradicate inequities that exist throughout the organization (centrally and in school sites), which serve to perpetuate negative stereotypes about groups of students, marginalize students or staff who seek to disrupt institutional bias, and restrict access to rigorous academic programs for certain groups of students based on race, special education placement, being a designated English Language Learner, and other factors.

Students deserve to be educated in environments that respect them as individuals, including their racial and ethnic diversity, thereby facilitating successful academic outcomes. District students must be honored and valued in every classroom by supporting their social, emotional and cultural needs. This can be achieved by hearing and listening to student voices through restorative justice circles, regular morning meetings with students, and culturally responsive pedagogy.

DRAFT v.1.6 - PROPOSAL FOR EQUITY POLICY IN THE DISTRICT
8.12.15 First Reading Board of Education

While the primary focus of this equity policy is on race and ethnicity,¹ the District also acknowledges and will seek to end other forms of social inequalities and oppression, including gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, immigration status, foster youth, and students with disabilities and learning differences. The District is committed to explicitly identifying and addressing all disparities in educational outcomes for the purpose of targeting areas for action, intervention and investment.

LEGAL REFERENCES

U.S. Const. amend XIV, § 1 (Equal Protection)
20 U.S.C. § 1703 (Equal Educational Opportunity)
42 U.S.C. § 2000c et seq. (Desegregation)
42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)
42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2 (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)

¹Targeting race explicitly and examining how it intersects with other forms of inequity, provides a framework which offers an important sociological and historical perspective (See, Race Reporting Guide by Race Forward (2015), The Center for Racial Justice Innovation, www.raceforward.org).