

## **Equity in Education**

### **Purposes**

The Board of Directors recognizes and respects the uniqueness of each student, staff member and citizen within the community. Teaming together, the school community creates a learning environment that fosters fair treatment and access to educational resources and programs for all students. The American democratic system depends on equal access to the opportunities for and benefits of public education for all young people: our future leaders, voters, taxpayers, workers, parents and adult citizens.

Students have a legal and moral right to equal educational access. Equal educational opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, age, ethnicity, language barrier, religious beliefs, politics, physical and mental handicap or disability, economic and social conditions, or actual or potential marital or parental status.

The purpose of the Yakima School District's equity policy is to affirm the district's belief that equitable educational access will strengthen individuals, our schools, our community, and our preparedness for a shared future. The district unequivocally asserts that prejudice and discrimination of any kind are intolerable and that the attainment of academic excellence for all students is dependent on principles of equity.

### **Policy Statement**

Students have the right to an equitable public education system. Educational equity is defined as fair treatment and access to educational resources and programs for all students.

Equitable education will take place in classroom instruction, school administration, student activities, and district programs and processes which are free of institutional and personal prejudice. Therefore, it is the Yakima School District's responsibility to manage its policies, procedures, curriculum and instruction, and budget in a manner which ensures that all students receive fair treatment and fair access to educational resources and programs. It is the responsibility of all students and families to fully participate in the educational process. As a result, educational equity is a shared responsibility of schools, students and families.

Further, the Yakima School District believes that, in order to achieve educational equity, the educational environment must maximize the potential for all students to be successful learners, and the school district must actively seek and reinforce parental involvement in the educational process. Educators have an obligation to identify and remedy conditions within the educational environment which contribute to inequities in academic achievement, discipline, and opportunities for student placement in and accessibility to district programs.

To ensure the humanity, dignity and equal rights of every student, parent and staff member, the Yakima School District has adopted the following equity goals which require that the district:

1. eliminate prejudice, bigotry and discrimination from the educational process;
2. improve achievement for all students based on equitable access to educational opportunities, experiences and expectations, including consistent and high standards for all;
3. promote and support the involvement of all parents, as defined in policy 2180, in their students' education;
4. train all staff to be competent in the education of a culturally diverse student body;
5. teach and model respect for cultural diversity and individual differences;
6. employ a diverse staff which serves as a role model by reflecting the ethnic and cultural composition of the district's student body;
7. achieve balance by meeting federal and state-mandated guidelines related to the correction of racial imbalance and by providing meaningful educational options within the district;
8. provide the opportunity for English language proficiency for all limited or non-English speaking students; and
9. distribute resources equitably to meet student needs and to better ensure academic success for all students.

The board directs the superintendent and his/her designated staff, including the district equity officer, to accomplish the direction of this policy and its procedures. The superintendent and building principals shall use reasonable measures to inform staff members, parents and students of this policy and grievance procedure. The superintendent shall direct that the evaluation center be responsible for annually evaluating the progress of the district in achieving the goals of this policy. The board shall receive this report annually.

The board directs the superintendent to prepare appropriate procedures to implement this policy.

Cross References:

- (cf.: 2121 – Curriculum Adoption)
- (cf.: 2150 – Co-curricular and Non-curricular Activity Program)
- (cf.: 2160 – Special Instructional Programs)
- (cf.: 2161 – Education of Students with Disabilities)
- (cf.: 2162 – Magnet Programs)
- (cf.: 2164 – Vocational Education)
- (cf.: 2165 – Home and Hospital Instruction)
- (cf.: 2168 – Categorical Programs)
- (cf.: 2169 – HIV/AIDS Prevention Education)
- (cf.: 2170 – Alternative Schools/Enrichment Programs)
- (cf.: 2180 – Parent, Family and Community Involvement)
- (cf.: 3131 – District Enrollment and Effects)
- (cf.: 3200 – Students Rights and Responsibilities)
- (cf.: 3201 – Student Rules, Regulations and Conduct)
- (cf.: 3210 – Nondiscrimination)
- (cf.: 3215 – Harassment)
- (cf.: 3216 – Sexual Harassment)

Legal References:

- RCW 9A.36.080 Malicious Harassment
- RCW 46.60 Law against Discrimination Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended in 1972 and 1991
- RCW 49.74.005 Legislative findings - Purpose

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended in 1972 and 1991  
Sec. 703, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended in 1972 and 1991, 29 CFR 1604.11

Federal Register Vol. 59, No. 47, Thursday, March 10, 1994, Racial Incidents and Harassment Against Students at Educational Institutions; Investigative Guidance  
Civil Rights Act of 1964

Management Resources:

- Yakima School District Board Resolution 13.90.91 of 1990 (Adoption of a Comprehensive Magnet School Program Design)
- Yakima School District Affirmative Action Plan 1999-2004
- Yakima School District Strategic Plan of 1998
- Equity in Education Joint Policy, State Board of Education, May 1994
- Yakima School District Educational Equity/Desegregation Plan of 2000

Adoption Date:

- 950512
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