

**BERKELEY COUNTY FILE: IDF
INSTRUCTION**

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

I. General

A. Scope

This policy sets forth the requirement for equity and inclusion for schools and personnel within Berkeley County Schools.

B. Authority

West Virginia Code §18-5-15a, West Virginia Board of Education Policies (2322, 2510, 2315, and 4373) and Berkeley County Schools Board of Education Policies (IBA, IC and JGG).

II. Rationale and Philosophy

The Berkeley County Board of Education (BCBE) believes that the success of all students is dependent upon quality and equity in education. The intent of this policy is to provide guidelines and goals for equity and inclusion in areas of curricula, instruction, professional learning, and instructional resources that are culturally appropriate, inclusive, and respect individual differences, while acknowledging and celebrating the cultural diversity of students within the classroom, school, community, state, nation and world.

Equity and inclusion are continuous, integrated, multiethnic, multidisciplinary processes that include, but are not limited to, cultural factors such as race, ethnicity, geographic location, religion, gender, language, socioeconomic status, age, and ability.

III. Policy Development

- A. This policy was developed and will be revised with input from teachers, principals, district administrators, parents, students and community leaders.
- B. The Superintendent or superintendent designee shall ensure that an annual equity and inclusion evaluation is conducted to determine the effectiveness of this policy.

IV. Definitions

- A. Bias – a mental leaning or inclination, or partiality.
- B. Commonality – a sharing of common features, characteristics, or traits, or all of these.
- C. Culture – a set of practices and beliefs shared by members of a particular group (individually or organizationally) that distinguish that group from other groups.
- D. Cultural groups – groups that identify by the factors such as race, ethnicity, geographic location, religion, gender, language, socioeconomic status, age, or ability.
- E. Cultural linguistic patterns – the patterns of language unique to each cultural group.
- F. Cultural proficiency – the policies and practices of an organization, or the values and behaviors of an individual, that enable that organization or person to interact effectively with clients, colleagues, and the community using the essential elements of cultural competence: assessing culture, valuing diversity, managing the dynamics of difference, adapting to diversity, and institutionalizing cultural knowledge.
- G. Discrimination – an act of exclusion prompted by prejudice.
- H. Diversity – differences based on, but not limited to race, ethnicity, region, ideologies, learning styles, religion, gender, language, socioeconomic status, age, and ability.
- I. Equity – practices based on student needs rather than group identity, resulting in positive outcomes for all students.
- J. Ethnicity – the classification or affiliation of any of the racial groups or national divisions of people.
- K. Evaluation – determining the value, merit, quality, and effectiveness of an entity.
- L. Global competency – the knowledge, skills, and dispositions which focus on students' understanding and effective participation in their world, as well as issues of global significance that encourage multicultural understanding.

- M. Inclusion – a classroom, school, or organizational setting where diverse groups are represented and included in all sectors of the classroom, school, and organization.
- N. West Virginia Standardized State Assessment – assessments in English language arts, mathematics, and science which provide relevant information for:
 - (1) School and school system accountability purposes; and
 - (2) School improvement and planning.
- O. Pluralistic society – means the existence within a nation or a society of groups distinctive in ethnic origin, cultural patterns, religion, values, institutions, organizations, or the like.
- P. Prejudice – means an implied, preconceived, and unreasonable judgement or opinion, usually an unfavorable one marked by suspicion, fear, intolerance, or hatred.
- Q. Racism – unequal or discriminatory treatment of, or attitudes towards, individuals or groups based on race.
- R. Sexism – unequal or discriminatory treatment of, or attitudes towards, individuals or groups based on gender.
- S. Stereotype – the belief that all the individuals of a certain group will be the same and behave in the same way.

V. Responsibility

The Berkeley County Board of Education shall:

- A. Employ a district administrator and/or coordinator to oversee and facilitate the guidelines outlined in this policy.
- B. Ensure public schools in Berkeley County provide, as a part of curricular and program offerings, appropriate instruction for developing knowledge, understanding, and appreciation for cultural groups in society as defined in West Virginia Board of Education Policies (2322, 2510, and 4373) and Berkeley County Schools Board of Education Policies (IC and JGG).
 - 1. The instructional program shall:
 - a. Promote a school climate that reflects the diversity of the community;
 - b. Promote a school climate in which different cultural linguistic patterns are respected;
 - c. Ensure that a student may not be denied access to equally rigorous academic instruction on the basis of cultural background;
 - d. Use instructional activities which recognize and appreciate students' cultural identity and learning styles;
 - e. Address racism, sexism, bias, discrimination, and prejudice;
 - f. Use organizations and community resources that promote inclusion and cultural and ethnic understanding;
 - g. Use instructional activities that promote an understanding of and a respect for a variety of ways of communicating both verbal and nonverbal;
 - h. Use instructional materials which reinforce the concept of the United States as a pluralistic society within a global context;
 - i. Incorporate multicultural education instructional materials in all subject areas; and
 - j. Provide opportunities for students to analyze and evaluate social issues and propose solutions to contemporary social problems.
 - 2. The curriculum shall provide opportunity for students to demonstrate the following attitudes and actions:
 - a. Valuing one's heritage;
 - b. Valuing the uniqueness of cultures other than one's own;
 - c. Valuing the richness of cultural diversity and commonality;
 - d. Develop global competency by respecting diverse cultural groups throughout the world;
 - e. Awareness of and sensitivity to individual differences within various cultural groups; and
 - f. Eliminating stereotypes related, but not limited to - race, ethnicity, geographic location, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, age, and individuals with disabilities.

- C. Provide criteria in evaluating and selecting PK – 12 instructional materials for schools that ensure proper recognition is given to cultural groups and historical contributions thereof.
- D. Support and require staff development and professional learning opportunities for all district personnel as defined in W.Va. Code §18-8-5a and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510
 - 1. The staff development shall include:
 - a. Activities involving professional and service personnel exploring attitudes and feelings about their own cultural identity;
 - b. Activities involving professional and service personnel exploring attitudes and feelings about the cultural identity of their colleagues as well as the parents and students their schools or departments serve;
 - c. Activities to identify instructional strategies, techniques, and materials appropriate for equity and inclusion;
 - d. Professional learning in assessing the prior knowledge, attitudes, abilities, and learning styles of students from varied backgrounds in order to develop multicultural and global instructional programs;
 - e. Professional learning to recognize and correct stereotyping, discrimination, bias, and prejudice;
 - f. Professional learning for fostering cultural proficiency, equity, inclusion and greater intergroup understanding;
 - g. Professional learning to recognize and correct the omissions and misrepresentations of groups and individuals in curriculum and instruction; and
 - h. Professional learning to recognize and correct inequitable participation in school activities by students, parents and staff from different backgrounds.
- E. Include goals and objectives in the district and schools' 5-year strategic plans pertaining to equity, inclusion, and professional learning based on West Virginia Board of Education Policies (2322, 2510, 2315 and 4373) and Berkeley County Schools Board of Education Policies (IBA, IC and JGG).
- F. Facilitate yearly advisory team meetings at the district and/or school levels to provide guidance and feedback pertaining to equity and inclusion.
 - 1. The advisory teams may include individuals including parents, guardians, business leaders, students, professional staff, service personnel, and community leaders.
 - 2. Needs assessments and climate surveys may be used as a form to provide guidance.
- G. Yearly review data to provide annual progress reports to the Board of Education regarding equity, inclusion and any disproportionalities among cultural groups as pertaining to, but not limited to, student performance on the West Virginia Standardized State Assessment, discipline, attendance, graduation rate, and college-going rate.
 - 1. The annual report shall include strategies to address any disproportionalities represented in data.
- H. Actively recruit and retain administrators, professional staff, and service personnel who are representative of the student population.

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