



Title New Policy-- Safe, Respectful, and Inclusive Education

Section 2000 Program

Status Draft\_4.12.23ar

Policy Number New

### **Purpose**

Each member of a school community (students, staff, and families) is an integral part of the overall success of the system. Florida is working hard to ensure that each and every student has this opportunity by improving the performance of all students while also closing achievement gaps through the implementation of system-level strategies and by measuring and tracking key performance metrics. In support of these goals, Florida's Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan establishes ambitious, rigorous academic standards for all students; measures mastery of those standards and publicly reports results; informs parental educational decisions through a simple, easily understood metric for each school based on student performance; and identifies, supports, and, if necessary, closes underperforming schools. Consistent with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) section 1111(c)(2)(B)., the subgroups Florida includes for reporting purposes are as follows:

- A. Students from major racial and ethnic groups (White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska native, and two or more races);
- B. Children with disabilities;
- C. Economically disadvantaged students;
- D. English Language Learners; and
- E. In addition to the subgroups required by ESSA, Florida includes the lowest-performing 25% of students in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics learning gains to encourage schools and districts to focus on providing support to the lowest-performing students regardless of other subgroup membership.

To that end, the School Board of Indian River recognizes that a diversified student population requires varied instructional approaches and services that are needed to ensure a positive education experience for each student.

The School Board is committed to cultivating safe, respectful, and supportive school environments designed to increase achievement, on-time graduation, and other key indicators for ALL students, while simultaneously narrowing achievement and student discipline disparities for all students.

### **Close Eliminate Achievement Gaps**

In furtherance of the Board's commitment to building an educational and community culture that embraces and reinforces democratic values of acceptance, respect, tolerance, accountability, and responsibility, the Superintendent shall:

- ~~A. Comply with the 1967 Desegregation Order and accomplishment of the goals of the 2018 Joint Plan for the Achievement of Unitary Status in the Matter Styled *Sharpton, et al. v. School Board of Indian River County, FL*, No. 1:64-cv-00721 (S.D. Fla.) (see Policy 2130);~~
- B. Invite and include people from all diverse backgrounds to examine issues and find adaptive solutions; and
- C. Eliminate practices that result in lower academic achievement for any student group identified through the Every Student Succeeds Act compared to peers.

### **Ensure Inclusion and Educational Access**

The Superintendent shall lead from a system-wide lens that embraces family, student and community inclusion, engagement, and leadership that supports teaching and learning for all students.

### **Family, Student, and Community Engagement**

Board employees will develop and implement inclusive practices for and with our students, their families, and other community members including:

- A. High-quality, meaningful, and authentic standards-aligned curricula and resources for all students and teachers;
- B. Instructional content, pedagogical techniques, and assessments that leverage the backgrounds, experiences, and strengths all students bring with them into the classroom;
- C. ~~Eliminating~~ Reducing barriers to a safe and rigorous learning environment, such that academic achievement opportunities for all students are identified and reinforced as early as possible in their education; and
- D. Ensuring family and community engagement practices to encourage and enhance participation in schools and community forums, by reducing language barriers; ensuring culturally, ethnically, and religiously appropriate and inclusive events; fostering involvement through translated communications from our schools (i.e., District website translation feature); and providing outreach to stakeholders through multiple communication channels to ensure that District messages reach all families.

### **Leadership**

Furthermore, the Board is committed to implementing policies and practices that promote equal opportunity and prohibit all forms of discrimination in the District's employment practices and policies. As such, the District has an obligation to promote equal opportunity in all its business practices. As a public institution operating through the use of public funds, the District reserves the right to require those entering public contracts with the District be in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws which prohibit illegal discrimination.

The Board will ensure that a lens of inclusivity guides employees' actions and leads to improved academic results by:

- A. Attracting, recruiting, developing, and retaining staff who are reflective of our students, our community, and our region; and
- B. Using data to identify and ~~eliminate~~ **remove** any district and school-based policies, structures, and practices that contribute to disproportionate access and outcomes.

### **Teaching and Learning**

Student-centered instruction is not attainable without intentional lesson design that considers the unique and diverse needs of students. Board employees will:

- A. Ensure lesson design that includes rigorous, relevant, and engaging curriculum to support and accommodate the diverse needs of all students;
- B. Embrace collaborative approaches empowering teachers and administrators to enhance opportunities for students to become active participants in their own learning processes; and
- C. Give all students equal opportunity to succeed while building intentional supports to build student engagement, understanding, and achievement, especially for our most academically vulnerable students.

### **Implementation and Monitoring**

The Board directs the Superintendent to provide all students with the significant opportunity to receive a fair, inclusive, and high-quality education to maximize their full potential.

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