Board Policy Equity Lens Tool

Title of board policy being reviewed:

JEC-School Admissions

Describe the purpose of this policy:

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for admission and enrollment in MESD programs. It recognizes the different admission requirements associated with component districts, outside agency contracts, and grant-funded programs while allowing individual MESD schools to establish enrollment criteria appropriate to their educational models and student populations.

What is your experience with this policy:

This policy provides a more comprehensive framework for admissions by recognizing the different agreements, funding sources, and educational models through which MESD serves students. Its primary equity strength is the flexibility to establish enrollment criteria appropriate to individual programs. Its effectiveness will depend on transparent procedures, consistent implementation, and ongoing review to ensure that flexibility does not create unintended barriers or disparities in student access.

Superintendent Dr. Paul Coakley

Board of Directors Renee Anderson • Jessica Arzate • Kristin Cornuelle • Katrina Doughty • Dr. Samuel Henry • Denyse Peterson • Helen Ying

What is the plan to communicate this policy to staff, students, and/or families? What is the plan to communicate this policy to linguistically diverse students and their families?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Is this policy:

Easy to locate for staff?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Accessible to students and families?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Included in onboarding, intake, or other training?

This policy will be available in the Board's online handbook. The policy will also be posted on the district website for easy access.

Clear and easy to understand?

Yes. The policy clearly identifies the different pathways for admission to MESD programs and establishes responsibility for developing school-specific enrollment procedures. Additional administrative regulations will be important to ensure that eligibility requirements are clearly communicated and consistently applied.

People

How are people affected positively or negatively by the policy? What potential barriers might people encounter? What barriers might be reduced by this policy?

The policy positively impacts students and families by establishing clearer expectations for accessing MESD programs and recognizing the unique purposes of different educational settings.

Potential barriers include differences in eligibility requirements, referral processes, and access to information across programs. Clear administrative regulations and consistent communication can help reduce confusion and improve access to appropriate educational services.

Can you identify the racial or ethnic groups affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision? Do you know the potential impacts to these populations? If you don't know, how will you find out?

The policy applies to all students seeking admission to MESD programs. However, students from historically underserved racial and ethnic communities, multilingual families, and students with disabilities may experience additional barriers when navigating different enrollment requirements.

The policy has the potential to support equitable access when eligibility criteria are transparent, consistently applied, and reviewed to ensure they do not unintentionally disadvantage particular student populations.

Were these populations involved in any way, at any point in the development, implementation, and evaluation of this policy? If so, when and how?

The policy does not specifically indicate whether students, families, or historically underserved communities were involved in its development.

As school-specific enrollment criteria and administrative regulations are developed, MESD can seek input from students, families, component districts, and community partners to ensure procedures are accessible and responsive to student needs.

What priorities and commitments are communicated by this policy?

The policy communicates commitments to educational access, legal compliance, program accountability, and flexibility in meeting diverse student needs. It recognizes that MESD serves students through multiple educational models and funding structures while emphasizing consistent alignment with state and federal law.

Place

What kind of positive or negative environment are we creating?

What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g. mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic or managerial)

The policy creates a structured yet flexible environment that recognizes the unique needs and purposes of MESD programs.

Barriers to equitable outcomes may include inconsistent enrollment practices, language barriers, limited family awareness of available programs, and differences in eligibility requirements. Clear communication and consistent administrative oversight will be important to ensure equitable access.

Power

How is the power of decision-making shared with those it affects?

How have you intentionally involved the communities affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision?

The policy distributes responsibility for admissions among component districts, contractual and grant requirements, and MESD administration. However, it does not explicitly establish opportunities for student or family participation in enrollment decisions.

Power-sharing can be strengthened by involving students, families, and community partners in reviewing enrollment procedures and ensuring families understand eligibility requirements and available options.

Process

Does the policy, program, or decision improve, worsen, or make no change to existing disparities?

Does it create other unintended consequences?

The policy has the potential to improve equity by clarifying admission pathways and allowing enrollment criteria to reflect the specific educational needs of students served by MESD programs.

However, unintended disparities could arise if school-specific criteria create inconsistent access or disproportionately exclude certain student populations. Regular review of enrollment patterns and eligibility requirements can help identify and address these concerns.

Plan

How will you reduce the negative impacts and address the barriers?

Negative impacts can be reduced by developing clear, consistent, and accessible administrative regulations; providing multilingual enrollment information; and monitoring admission and enrollment data for disparities.

MESD can also work collaboratively with component districts and community partners to identify barriers, improve referral processes, and ensure enrollment criteria support equitable access to appropriate educational programs.