

# **Board Equity and Inclusion Committee meeting**

Thursday, March 7, 2024 1:00 PM

Virtual Via Zoom

## **1. Call to Order**

1.A. Board goals assigned to the Equity and Inclusion Committee

1.A.1. Ensure inclusion through implementing our equity lens to achieve equitable district outcomes

1.A.2. Continue to focus and prioritization of regional leadership around equity

1.B. Strategic Plan goals tied to the Equity and Inclusion Committee

1.B.1. Creating a high quality learning experience for all

1.B.2. Operationalizing systems that engage and empower communities

1.B.3. Building a culturally responsive workforce

**2. Review minutes from the February 1, 2024 meeting and report on action items**

**3. 2023-2024 committee goals and action steps**

3.A. Continue to review the Educational Equity Policy utilizing the equity lens tool

**4. Develop a process and guidelines for the Land Acknowledgement/Educational Opportunity**

4.A. Clear guidelines for Board members on topics, time limits, etc.

# Board Equity and Inclusion Committee

Thursday, February 1, 2024

## 2023-2028 Agency Goals

#1 – Creating a high-quality learning experience for all

#2 – Operationalizing systems that engage and empower communities

#3 – Building a culturally responsive workforce

MESD Board Equity Lens-<https://www.multnomahesd.org/board-equity.html>

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 1, 2024 by Committee Chair Ying.

### • CALL TO ORDER

**Present:** Helen Ying, Chair  
Denyse Peterson, Board member

**Absent:** Danny Cage, Board member

**Administration:** Sascha Perrins, Assistant Superintendent  
Heather Severns, Board Secretary  
Reiko Williams, Director of Regional Equity Initiatives and Partnerships

### Guests:

1. **Review notes from the January 4 meeting-** The committee approved the minutes from the January 4, 2024 meeting.
2. **2023-2024 committee goals and action steps**
  - a. Continue to review the Educational Equity Policy utilizing the Equity Lens tool.
    - i. The committee discussed items in the policy that can be improved on.
      1. Creating a structure to communicate the policy to staff, students and families because we do not currently have one. We need an outline for implementation.
      2. Get feedback from families, students and staff starting with the Indigenous students and parent group that Jeidah Dezurney, MESD's Native Youth and Family Program Manager is convening.
        - a. We need a consistent way to run things through the community lens and we do not have that structure right now. At some of our programs we are not allowed to talk to the parents.
        - b. Senate Bill 732 requires districts of more than 10,000 students have a Superintendents Equity Advisory Committee. MESD is not required but the District Equity Leadership team and the Native Parent/Family Advisory could integrate families into those groups. We want to do this without tokenizing the parent voice.

- c. Something we can do immediately is simplify the language around the policies on the website. We can put the information in newsletters to help people find it, explain how the policies work and how they hang together in the bigger system.
  - d. MESD has conducted empathy interviews starting with Arata Creek to enlist student voice in decision making. The next step is to do empathy interviews of families at the same school. We will also conduct these interviews with staff.
  - e. We have surveyed Administrators to find out how they engage families and what ways they seek feedback. Are they just informing families or are they deferring to families. We are working with the Instructional Leadership Team to provide training around moving toward that continuum from informing families to deferring to and collaborating with families. Because of the lack of proximity to our families, and nature in which our families come to us, where they have had many issues. These are students of families who have been pushed out. They are disproportionately kids of color that are served by our programs that are disconnected. They are also geographically disconnected from our programs. We need to do some trust building in order to engage with them and engage their voices.
  - f. There was a discussion around bringing this back to Cabinet with the suggestion of having Amanda Shannahan and her team in assessment and evaluation take this on. Committee Chair Ying asked if Communications Director Marifer Sager could be brought in on this.
3. There will be a language change on page on, item 2. The following language will be taken out of the sentence, “while narrowing the gap between the lowest and highest performing students”. The sentence will now read “Raising the achievement of all students.”
  4. There was a discussion about the need for an action plan with accountability and metrics and include a report on progress toward the goals of the policy. This will be included in the administrative rule.
  5. Should an AR be created for this policy?

### **3. Develop a process and guidelines for the Land Acknowledgement/Educational Opportunity-**

- a. Clear guidelines for Board members on topics, time limits, etc-A discussion took place regarding guidelines. We will look back at when this practice was established to see what might have been set in place. Denyse let the group know she would like to be able to bring in expert guest speakers.
- b. A discussion regarding the evolution from Land Acknowledgment to Educational Opportunity within the Equity and Inclusion Committee and MESD Board took place. Reiko Williams shared an article from an Indigenous leader that stated that Land

Acknowledgment is often performative. Educational Information can be performative as well if this does not change decision making or priorities.

**4. Action Steps**

- a. Bring the idea of how to set up a structure for bringing the voices of the community in, not just to help us review policies but to give us feedback on other things as well.
- b. Change the language on page one, number 2 and just keep the first part of the sentence.
- c. Find ways to ensure our staff understand policies in terms of having this be consistently be part of our onboarding or other meetings.
- d. Take the bookmark with the Equity Lens to the Board for approval at the February 20<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Adjourn**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned 1:58 p.m. The next meeting of this committee will be March 7 at 1:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Severns  
Executive Assistant/Board Secretary

# Multnomah Education Service District

Code: **JB**  
Adopted: 1/16/18  
Revised: 3/15/2022

## **Educational Equity**

The MESD Board is committed to the success of every student in each of our schools, our component districts, and achieving our mission of:

We support all students to achieve excellence.

The board is focused on goals that prepare students to graduating ready for college, career, and life.

The concept of education equity goes beyond the idea of equality where all students are treated the same. Educational equity fosters a barrier-free environment in which all students, regardless of race, class, creed, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, economic status, sex, sexual orientation, including but not limited to gender expression or identity, pregnancy status, marital status, physical appearance, or the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability, have the opportunity to access education and benefit in the learning equally.

Educational equity requires differentiating resource allocations, within budgetary limitations, to meet the needs of students who need additional supports and services to succeed academically.

For that success to occur, MESD is committed to equity by recognizing institutional barriers and creating access and opportunities that benefit each student. “Achieving educational equity” means students’ identities will not predict or predetermine their success in school.

Educational equity is based on the principles of fairness and justice in allocating resources, opportunity, treatment and creating success for each student.

Educational equity promotes the real possibility of equality of educational results for each student and between diverse groups of students. Equity strategies are intentional, systemic and focused on the core of the teaching and learning process.

To achieve educational equity MESD will commit to:

1. Systematically using MESD-wide and individual school level data, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, national origin, language, special education, sex, socioeconomic status and mobility<sup>1</sup> to inform MESD decision making.
2. Raising the achievement of all students while narrowing the gap between the lowest and the highest performing students.

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<sup>1</sup>These are data categories that the Oregon Department of Education collects. ESDs may choose to add to this list from data the ESD collects.

3. Eliminating the predictability and disparity in all aspects of education and its administration, including but not limited to, the disproportionate representation of students by race, poverty, sex, sexual orientation<sup>2</sup>, gender identity, and national origin in discipline, special education and in various advanced learning.
4. Graduating all students ready to succeed in a diverse local, national and global community.

In order to achieve educational equity for each and every student:

1. The MESD shall provide every student with equitable access to high quality curriculum, support, facilities and other educational resources, even when this means differentiating resource allocation.
2. The MESD shall review existing policies, programs, professional development and procedures for the promotion of educational equity, and all applicable new policies, programs and procedures will be developed using an educational equity analysis tool.
3. The MESD shall actively work toward a balanced teacher and administrator workforce to reflect the diversity of the student body. The MESD seeks to recruit, employ, support and retain a workforce that includes racial, gender and linguistic diversity, as well as culturally and linguistically responsive administrative, instructional and support personnel.
4. The MESD shall provide professional development to strengthen employees' knowledge and skills for eliminating opportunity gaps and other disparities in achievement.
5. The MESD shall create schools with a welcoming, inclusive culture and environment that reflects and supports diversity of the student population, our families and our communities.
6. The MESD shall include partners who have demonstrated culturally specific expertise, including but not limited to, families, government agencies, institutions of higher learning, early childhood education organizations, community-based organizations, local businesses and the community in general, in meeting our high goals for educational outcomes. The MESD shall seek to involve students, staff, families and community members that reflect MESD demographics to inform decisions regarding the narrowing of the achievement and other opportunity gaps.
7. The MESD shall provide multiple pathways to success in order to meet the needs of the diverse student body and shall actively encourage, support and expect high academic achievement for each student.
8. The MESD shall provide materials and assessments that reflect the diversity of students and staff and are geared toward the understanding and appreciation of culture, class,

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<sup>2</sup>“Sexual orientation” is defined by Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 174.100(7) to mean an individual’s actual or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality or gender identity, regardless of whether the individual’s gender identity, appearance, expression or behavior differs from that traditionally associated with the individual’s sex at birth.

language, ethnicity, poverty, ability and other differences that contribute to the uniqueness of each student and staff member.

The superintendent shall develop an action plan with clear accountability and metrics, and include equity practices in the ESD's strategic plan strategies to implement this policy. The superintendent will report on progress toward these goals three times per year, and provide the Board with updated action plans each year.

END OF POLICY

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**Legal Reference(s):**

[ORS 174.100\(7\)](#)

[ORS 332.075](#)

[ORS 334.125](#)

[ORS 342.437 to -342.449](#)

## MESD Board Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Lens

- **Adopted definition for Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity**
  - ❖ **Diversity** – The full range of differences and similarities, visible and non-visible, that make each individual unique.
  - ❖ **Inclusion** – An environment that engages multiple perspectives, differing ideas, and individuals from different backgrounds to help define organizational policy and practice, and help shape organizational culture.
  - ❖ **Equity** – Values “equal outputs” (of performance, achievement, opportunity, resources, etc.) Assumes everyone starts from different places (in terms of history, experiences, opportunities, resources, etc.)
  
- **An Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Lens is a set of questions we ask ourselves to ensure equitable outcomes when you are planning, developing and evaluating a policy, program or service. These questions will help diagnose barriers and identify, measure, and evaluate best practices within access, equity and diversity.**
  - ❖ **PEOPLE**
    - How are people affected positively or negatively in terms of barriers they experience?
    - Who are the racial/ethnic groups affected by this policy, program, practice or decision? And what are the potential impacts on these groups?
  
  - ❖ **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)
  
  - ❖ **POWER**
    - How is the power of decision-making shared with those it affects?
    - How have you intentionally involved stakeholders who are also members of the communities affected by this policy, program, practice or decision?
  
  - ❖ **PROCESS**
    - Does the policy, program or decision improve, worsen or make no change to existing disparities or produce other unintended consequences?
  
  - ❖ **PLAN**
    - How will you reduce the negative impacts and address the barriers?