

<b>POLICY</b>	<b>BOARD OF EDUCATION OF FREDERICK COUNTY, MARYLAND</b>
<b>EDUCATIONAL EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE</b>	<b>POLICY 444</b>

**Purpose**

To ensure that every relevant Board of Education (Board) policy, procedure, and practice provides educational equity.

To ensure that students receive an education experience that prepares them for lifelong learning, the world of work, and full participation in representative government.

To ensure that achievement is raised for all Frederick County Public Schools (FCPS) students while eliminating the predictability and disproportionality of which student groups occupy the highest and lowest achievement.

To ensure the recruitment, hiring, support, and retention of culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse administrative, instructional, and support personnel.

**Definition**

Educational Equity:

- Valuing unique identifiers of every student such as ability (cognitive, social emotional, and physical), age, ethnicity, family structure, gender, gender expression, gender identity, language, nationality, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomics;
- Students have access to the resources and educational rigor they need at the right moment; and
- Appropriate academic, social, and economic supports are in place so that personal and social identifiers are not barriers or obstacles to accessing educational opportunities.

<b>Legal Reference</b>	COMAR 13A.01.06. Educational Equity		
<b>Source Document</b>	<i>Leading for Equity: Opportunities for State Education Chiefs</i> , The Aspen Institute Education & Society Program and Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), February 2017		
	FCPS Achievement and Equity Web Site <a href="http://www.fcps.org/centraloffice/educational-equity">http://www.fcps.org/centraloffice/educational-equity</a>		
	FCPS Regulation 400-41 (updated title and rewrite) <i>Educational Equity and Excellence</i>		
	<i>Equity and Excellence in Maryland: A Guide to Equity in Education</i> , Maryland Department of Education, 2019		
	<i>Looking Through the Equity Lens</i> , Maryland Association of Boards of Education, 2018		
<b>Policy History</b>	Reviewed 2019, 2020	Adopted 10/11/17	Revised 3/25/20

Equity Lens: Means that for any program, practice, decision, or action the impact on all students is addressed, with strategic focus on marginalized student groups.

Achievement Gap: Significant and persistent disparities in academic performance or educational attainment between different groups of students.

Opportunity Gap: Perpetuation of lower educational expectations, aspirations, participation, and achievement for certain groups of students often as the result of factors such as race, ethnicity, socioeconomics, English proficiency, wealth, or familial situations.

### **Policy Statement**

The Board is committed to the success and achievement of each and every student which means providing students with equitable access to high quality, culturally relevant instruction, curriculum, academic support, and extracurricular opportunities in environments that are equitable, safe, diverse, and inclusive. To support these objectives, the Board supports using the following questions offered by the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) <sup>1</sup> to guide systemic decision-making:

1. Who are the under-represented groups affected by this policy, program, practice, decision, or action? What are the potential impacts on these groups?
2. Does this policy, program, practice, decision, or action worsen existing disparities or produce other unintended consequences?
3. Have stakeholders been involved who are also members of the communities affected by this policy, program, practice, decision, or action? Can assessments be validated in #1 and #2 above, having considered this stakeholder reaction?
4. What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g. mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic, or managerial)
5. How will negative impacts and identified barriers be addressed and/or mitigated?

In pursuit of these objectives, the Board directs the Superintendent to use an equity lens to:

- Allocate resources to achieve fiscal equity and provide the necessary resources required to close achievement and opportunity gaps among all student groups. Resource allocation should ensure equitable access to, among other things, technology and broadband access, high quality and safe facilities, extracurricular opportunities, and facilities and equipment for such.

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<sup>1</sup> *Looking Through the Equity Lens*, Maryland Association of Boards of Education, 2018  
<https://www.mabe.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/2018-Equity-Lens-Card.pdf>  
<https://www.mabe.org/about/equity-initiatives/>

- Include cultural responsiveness in reviews of curriculum, pedagogy, instructional materials, and assessments design.
- Provide the necessary resources and professional development required to close achievement and opportunity gaps among all student subgroups and ensure equitable professional opportunities for all staff.
- Align accountability measures to support educational equity and ensure that performance or growth measures are relevant and meaningful to educators, students, and families.
- Establish processes to recruit, hire, retain, and promote increased participation of persons from under-represented groups to better reflect the diversity of our student population.
- Include in all plans for new construction and/or renovation of existing facilities, consideration of equitable access to twenty-first century learning environments.
- Identify partnerships with stakeholders throughout the Frederick community to support educational equity.

In the spirit of continuous improvement, the Superintendent shall annually report on the objectives as outlined above, specifically as they relate to the Board's systemic goals.