



Frederick County Public Schools
Board of Education
EDUCATIONAL EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE
Policy 444

A. Policy Purpose

1. To ensure that every relevant Board of Education (Board) policy, procedure, and practice provides educational equity.
2. To ensure that students receive an education experience that prepares them for lifelong learning, the world of work, and full participation in representative government.
3. 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 categories.
4. To ensure access to FCPS educational opportunities to all students while eliminating the predictability and disproportionality of which student groups access FCPS educational opportunities.
5. To ensure the recruitment, hiring, support, and retention of culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse administrative, instructional, and support personnel.

B. Definitions

1. “Achievement Gap” is defined to mean that significant and persistent disparities in academic performance or educational attainment between different groups of students.
2. “Educational Equality” is defined to mean that every student receives the same resources and same opportunities. This could refer to the same funding for all schools, the same quality of and abundance of materials and facilities, and/or the same quality of instruction.
3. “Educational Equity” is defined to mean that every student has access to the opportunities, resources, and educational rigor they need throughout their educational career to maximize academic success and social/emotional well-being and to view each student’s individual characteristics as valuable.
4. “Educational Opportunities” is defined to mean all students have access to rigorous, well-rounded academic programs and experiences that enrich their educational career and prepare them for academic and career success.
5. “Equity Lens” is defined to mean that for any program, practice, decision, or action the impact on all students is addressed, with strategic focus on marginalized student groups.

6. “Opportunity Gap” is defined to mean 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.

C. Policy Statement

1. 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.
2. To meet the commitment set forth in section C(1), it is the Board’s expectation that FCPS establish and promote a culture valuing the unique characteristics and identifiers of every student, including ability (cognitive, social emotional, and physical), age, ethnicity, family structure, gender, gender expression, gender identity, language, nationality, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, social/emotional/behavioral well-being and socioeconomic status.
3. The Board is also committed to ensuring that 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.

D. Implementation

1. To support the objectives set forth in section C, the Board supports using the following questions offered by the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) to guide systemic decision-making:
 - a. Who are the under-represented groups affected by this policy, program, practice, decision, or action? What are the potential impacts on these groups?
 - b. Does this policy, program, practice, decision, or action worsen existing disparities or produce other unintended consequences?
 - c. 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 (a) and (b) above, having considered this stakeholder reaction?
 - d. What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g., mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic, or managerial)
 - e. How will negative impacts and identified barriers be addressed and/or mitigated?
2. In pursuit of the objectives set forth in section C, the Board directs the Superintendent to use an equity lens to:
 - a. 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.
- b. Include cultural responsiveness in reviews of curriculum, pedagogy, instructional materials, and assessments design.
 - c. 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.
 - d. Align accountability measures to support educational equity and ensure that performance or growth measures are relevant and meaningful to educators, students, and families.
 - e. 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.
 - f. Include in all plans for new construction and/or renovation of existing facilities, consideration of equitable access to twenty-first century learning environments.
 - g. Identify partnerships with stakeholders throughout the Frederick community to support educational equity.
3. 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.
 4. This Superintendent or their designee will review this policy at least every three (3) years in accordance with Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) Section 13A.01.06.04(B) and recommend it for revision as necessary.

E. Related Information

1. **Board Policy**
 - a. [Policy 117](#), *Anti-Racism*
 - b. [Policy 500](#), *Approval of Curriculum and Instructional Materials (formerly Curriculum and Courses of Study)*
2. **Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR)**
 - a. [COMAR 13A.01.06](#), *Educational Equity*
3. **External Resources**
 - a. [Maryland Association of Boards of Education, Educational Equity](#)
 - b. [Maryland Association of Boards of Education, Looking through the Equity Lens](#)
4. **Federal Law**
 - a. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) 20 USC § 6301
5. **FCPS Regulations**
 - a. [Regulation 444-01](#), *Educational Equity and Excellence*
 - b. [Regulation 100-09](#), *Racial Equity Committee*

6. **FCPS Resources**

- a. [FCPS Achievement and Equity Website](#)
- b. [FCPS' Every Student Succeeds Act \(ESSA\) Consolidated Strategic Plan](#)

F. Policy History (Maintained by Legal Services)

<i>Responsible Office</i>	Equity Office
Adoption Dates	10/11/17
Review Dates	2019, 2020, 2023
Revision Dates	04/10/19, 03/25/20, 02/14/24