



## EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION

### **I. Purpose of Policy**

Mountain Views Supervisory Union (MVSU) and its member districts are committed to creating and maintaining a positive and inclusive learning environment where all students, especially those who are currently or historically marginalized, feel safe, included, welcomed, and accepted, and experience a sense of belonging and academic success in a safe and caring learning environment. The purpose of this policy is to acknowledge and eliminate all forms of racism and inequitable practices that create prejudicial or disparate outcomes for students due to their race, ethnicity, national origin, language, disability, sexual orientation, religion, gender, gender identity, family background, and/or family income. Mountain Views Supervisory Union commits to:

1. **Purposeful Culture** - Promote critical thinking and open dialogue regarding the history, contribution, perspectives, and structural barriers placed upon diverse ethnic and social groups, specifically those traditionally discounted in K-12 education.
2. **Inclusive Studies**- Incorporate classroom content and learning strategies, which enable students to recognize and analyze the impacts of all forms of racism and inequalities in a wide variety of settings.
3. **Professional Development** - Provide annual professional development that aligns with the purpose and intentions of the Equity, Inclusion and Diversity in Education policy.
4. **Collective Accountability** - Establish procedures to identify and ensure accountability when addressing issues and instances of racism and inequality occurring within the school district.
5. **Family Engagement** - Create opportunities that provide families with a transparent, accessible means of raising any concern about the student(s) experience as it relates to racial, ethnic, or social identity at school.
6. **Student-led Initiatives** - Encourage and support student-led groups and programs that align with the purpose and intentions of the Equity, Inclusion and Diversity in Education policy.

### **II. Policy Scope**

This policy applies to all schools, facilities, and programs in the Mountain Views Supervisory Union and to all members including, but not limited to, students, staff, volunteers, visitors, teachers, and contracted individuals.

### **III. Policy Statement**

It is the policy of the Mountain Views Supervisory Union to:

1. Affirm the need to provide Brave Spaces (see definition below) of learning for all students, to address the potential need for extended conversation for students to better grasp diverse teachings centered on the unequal consequences of systemic and institutional barriers.
2. Promote the examination of the implications and impact of white supremacy, superiority and/or privilege by acknowledging the violence, disenfranchisement, and generational trauma that may become unearthed during these difficult discussions.

3. Identify and eliminate inequitable practices that create prejudicial or disparate outcomes for students due to their race, ethnicity, national origin, language, disability, sexual orientation, religion, gender, gender identity, family background and/or family income.
4. Foster an anti-racist, equity-centered culture for students and faculty that addresses the impact of institutional, systemic, and individual racism and inequalities on the District and the broader world, and acknowledging that racism and inequalities are intersectional and often are compounded by other forms of discrimination.
5. Establish and implement training and procedures to effectively deal with conflicts related to racial, ethnic or social identity, specifically those that go beyond the current anti-harassment/bullying procedures.
  - a. Procedures shall include a specific process to notify guardians/parents if students are involved, and supervisors if an employee is involved.
  - b. Notification shall include but is not limited to: investigation, developments, and decisions regarding disciplines.

#### **IV. Definitions**

**Anti-racism:** the practice of identifying, challenging, and changing the values, structures and behaviors that perpetuate systemic racism.

**Brave Spaces:** a non-physical space within a school or organization designed to help create an environment that allows individuals (i.e. students and faculty) to engage with one another over controversial issues like race, diversity, and social justice with honesty, sensitivity, respect. The intention is to help reassure those who feel anxious about sharing their thoughts and feelings regarding these sensitive and controversial issues.

**Ethnicity:** the social characteristics that people may have in common, such as language, religion, regional background, culture, foods, etc. Ethnicity is revealed by the traditions one follows, a person's native language, and so on.

**Explicit Bias:** Biases we are aware of on a conscious level. Explicit bias is the traditional conceptualization of bias. Overt racism and racist comments are examples of explicit biases (for example, feeling threatened by another group and delivering hate speech as a result).

**Implicit (Or Unconscious) Bias:** An unconscious association, belief, or attitude toward any social group. These biases often arise as a result of trying to find patterns and navigate the overwhelming stimuli in this very complicated world. Culture, media, and upbringing can also contribute to the development of such biases.

**Individual Racism:** pre-judgment, bias, or discrimination by an individual based on race. Individual racism includes both privately held beliefs, conscious and unconscious, and external behaviors and actions towards others.

**Institutional Racism:** occurs within institutions and organizations, such as schools, that adopt and maintain policies, practices, and procedures that often unintentionally produce inequitable outcomes for people of color and advantages for white people.

**Racism:** Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices.

**Racist Act:** conduct, whether verbal or physical, that demonstrates prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against a person on the basis of their membership in a particular ethnic or racial group.

**Social Identity:** Social identities reflect how we see ourselves and how others see us with respect to major social categories. Their meanings are not fixed but take shape in particular social contexts. They are sometimes obvious and clear, sometimes not obvious and unclear, often self-claimed and frequently ascribed by others. Social identity indicates who a person is in terms of the groups to which they belong and includes many social categories including gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, class, and disability.

**Systemic or Structural Racism:** The way in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various ways to reinforce and perpetuate racial group inequity. It is not something we as individual members of society actively choose to practice, instead it is a feature of the social, economic, and political systems in which we all exist. It refers to the history, culture, ideology, and interactions of institutions and policies that perpetuate a system of inequity that is detrimental to communities of color.

**White Privilege:** a web of institutional and cultural treatment and exemption from racial and national oppression that results in preferential treatment for white people.

**White Supremacy:** the political, economic, and cultural systems in which white individuals overwhelmingly control power over material resources—a form of dominance and control, and not just the overt hate of one group towards another.

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