



WILLIAMSVILLE
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**DIVERSITY
EQUITY &
INCLUSION**

SPEAKER SERIES

March 2, 2023 / 6:00-7:30 p.m. / Transit Middle School



PURPOSE OF A DEI PLAN

Why do we need this?

The Board of Regents launched an initiative to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in schools across the New York State. The Board expects that all school districts will develop policies that advance diversity, equity and inclusion – and that they implement such policies with fidelity and urgency.

DEI Policy – October 2021

- Policy 3431: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the District
- Governance:

DEI Committee The District will establish a DEI Committee to meet periodically throughout the year. The purpose of the DEI Committee is to assist the District in creating and implementing plans that advance the District's commitment to maintaining a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment where all individuals feel valued and respected. As needed, the DEI Committee may also review District policies, practices, and programs and provide suggestions as to how they could potentially be modified to better promote DEI.

- Sections of the Policy include:
 - Definitions
 - Teaching and Learning
 - Workforce Diversity
 - Training
 - Student Supports, Discipline, and Wellness
 - Governance
 - Family and Community Engagement
 - Diverse Schools and Learning Opportunities
 - Notification

DEI Policy *(con't)*

The District will actively seek members for the DEI Committee...

The DEI Committee will be representative of District stakeholders, and may include (to the extent possible), but not be limited to, representatives from the following groups:

- a) Students; Parents and persons in parental relation;
- b) District/building administrators;
- c) Teachers, including at least one special education teacher;
- d) Guidance staff, including at least one school psychologist, social worker, or counselor;
- e) Other District staff;
- f) The Board; and
- g) Community members

Purpose of a DEI Plan

- State Education Departments video “Equity, Excellence, and Access”, New York students explain that learning becomes possible – and joyful – when they are seen, heard, and valued for who they are
- Board of Regents Call to Action, and CR-S Framework:
 - Welcoming and Affirming Environment,
 - High Expectations and Rigorous Instruction,
 - Inclusive Curriculum and Assessment,
 - Ongoing Professional Learning

DEI Goals

- Six (6) Goal Areas:
 - Creating a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Culture in the District and Schools
 - DEI in the Curriculum
 - Raising Student Voice
 - Family and Community Engagement
 - Ensuring Workforce Diversity
 - Ongoing Professional Learning
- Goal Statements and Goal Activities

DEI Goal Area #1

- Creating a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Culture in the District and Schools
 - **Goal Statement 1A:** Each school will establish a DEI Team, representing its diverse stakeholders. These teams will work together with building administrators to develop the building-level work of the DEI plan and share their work with faculty and the District DEI Team.
 - **Goal Statement 1B:** District and building teams will examine existing committees, practices, curricula, schedules, structures through a DEI lens and ensure that all voices are equitably represented.
 - **Goal Statement 1C:** The District and schools will share responsibility for establishing restorative communities in which all students' academic and wellness needs are met.
 - **Goal Statement 1D:** The District and schools will promote the use of inclusive language that meets the evolving needs of our community. Inclusive language fosters belonging; we must choose words that include, rather than exclude.

DEI Goal Area #2

- DEI in the Curriculum
 - **Goal Statement 2A:** The full diversity of our District community and beyond will be reflected in the curriculum in order to ensure that students will both relate to the curriculum and respect the perspectives and experiences of others.
 - **Goal Statement 2B:** All students will have equitable access to the curriculum (e.g. differentiated instruction, intervention, accelerated coursework)
 - **Goal Statement 2C:** All faculty will implement inclusive, culturally- responsive and sustaining pedagogical practices.

DEI Goal Area #3

- Raising Student Voice
 - **Goal Statement 3A:** Students are comfortable expressing their identities and have opportunities to do so in the school setting.
 - **Goal Statement 3B:** Student voice should be honored at all levels through age-appropriate expression. Community-building circles (a tier-one restorative practice) should be used to help students develop their voice.
 - **Goal Statement 3C:** Students will have equitable opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities, clubs, and other enrichment experiences with appropriate support.

DEI Goal Area #4

- Family and Community Engagement
 - **Goal Statement 4A:** The District and school swill plan, develop, and implement meaningful, responsive, engaging activities that educate, raise awareness of, and support the diverse cultures in our community.
 - **Goal Statement 4B:** The District and schools will ensure culturally-responsive, two-way communication with families and community members.
 - **Goal Statement 4C:** The District and schools will examine policies and procedures to eliminate barriers and foster family and community involvement.
 - **Goal Statement 4D:** The District and schools will encourage collaboration between and among staff, families, and community members to build a welcoming, positive school environment for which all members feel they belong and are viewed as assets.

DEI Goal Area #5

- Ensuring Workforce Diversity
 - **Goal Statement 5A:** The District will provide anti-bias training for everyone involved in the recruitment and selection process.
 - **Goal Statement 5B:** In adherence to District legal guidelines, the District will create a structure and process that allows stakeholders from our community to participate in efforts to support a diverse workforce.
 - **Goal Statement 5C:** The District will cultivate partnerships and collaborate with BOCES, institutions of high education, and community-based organizations to recruit more diverse candidates and enhance workforce diversity.
 - **Goal Statement 5D:** The District will explore and implement opportunities for staff and students to grow, learn, and contribute to the organization and/or advance their career.

DEI Goal Area #6

- Ongoing Professional Learning
 - **Goal Statement 6A:** All staff will engage in consistent and clear, ongoing professional learning opportunities around fundamental DEI concepts including, but not limited to culturally-responsive and sustaining educational practices, identity, microaggressions, stereotypes, bias, intent and impact, marginalization, and systemic inequities. More extensive opportunities for learning and practice will be offered through after school classes, professional learning communities (PLCs), etc.

DEI Goal Area #6

- Ongoing Professional Learning
 - **Goal Statement 6B:** The District will ensure that all building DEI committees are provided enhanced professional learning opportunities in DEI implementation.
 - **Goal Statement 6C:** The District will provide curriculum-specific professional learning opportunities to ensure that teachers are prepared to implement culturally responsive-sustaining best practices in their content.
 - **Goal Statement 6D:** The District will provide professional learning opportunities that provide illustrative examples of best practices in encouraging student-centered, constructive dialogue around difficult topics and promoting students as agents of positive social change.

DEI - New York State

The New York State Education Department has a video titled *Equity, Excellence and Access*, they share that "*In this new video, New York students explain that learning becomes possible – and joyful – when they are seen, heard, and valued for who they are.*" Please let us know what that means to you and how your work with our District helps to make that a reality.

Foundational Understandings

- DEI work is about educating yourself outside of your experiences. (Dan Levy)
- DEI work is difficult work.
- DEI work is not a training; it is an experience, a journey, an exploration into your own and others' experiences.
- DEI is identity work - for us and for our students. It is about understanding that our identities impact how we experience situations.



Foundational Understandings

We don't teach diversity.

We don't teach equity.

We don't teach inclusion.

We don't teach Critical Race Theory.

**“Diversity is a fact.
Equity is a choice.
Inclusion is an action.
Belonging is an outcome.”**

-Arthur Chan, DEI Strategist

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Respect for and responsiveness to various cultural identities, including but not limited to race, color, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, veteran status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual information, and learning styles.

Source: NYS Education Department

WCSD Strategic Goals

Area #2 – Wellness, Community, and Sustainability

1. All students and staff will have equitable access to instruction, tools, experiences, and practices that support and enhance their **physical, social, and emotional safety and wellness**.

Goal Activities:

1. The District will ensure that the State Education Department's SEL competencies are explicitly taught and integrated into daily learning experiences for all staff and students.
 2. The District will integrate Restorative Practices into its policies and practices to enhance all students' and staff's self-identity, self-confidence, and self-esteem.
 3. The District will seek to assure that Districtwide practices provide equitable access to experiences for all students.
2. All stakeholders will feel welcomed, connected and have a sense of belonging to their school and District communities.

Goal Activities:

1. All stakeholder groups will have both collaborative and educational opportunities in order to understand, support, and benefit from our “whole child” development initiatives. {e.g. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI); Social-Emotional Learning (SEL); Restorative Justice Practices (RJP); Trauma and Trauma Informed Care (TTIC)}
2. The District and schools will ensure that the diverse cultures of students, staff, and families are accepted, respected, and valued as important components of our Williamsville community.

WCSD Strategic Goals

Area #3 – Teaching, Learning, and Leadership

1. The District will engage in and continue to develop responsive educational practices, opportunities, and learning experiences that support and advance individual student growth within a diverse community.
2. The District will engage in and continue to develop responsive educational practices, opportunities, and learning experiences that support and advance leadership potential within a diverse community.
3. The District will engage in and continue to develop responsive educational practices, opportunities, and learning experiences that support and advance social emotional skills within a diverse community.

WCSD Strategic Plan

Goal Area #4 – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

“The District will support and advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in accordance with District policies and in alignment with the New York State Board of Regents policies, frameworks, and initiatives.”

**“We find these joys to be self evident: that all children are created whole, endowed with innate intelligence, with dignity and wonder, worthy of respect. The embodiment of life, liberty, and happiness; children are original blessings, here to learn their own song. Every girl and boy is entitled to love, to dream and belong to a loving ‘village.’
And to pursue a life of purpose.”**

- Raffi

“The world in which you were born is just one model of reality. Other cultures are not failed attempts at being you.”

- Wade Davis, Cultural Anthropologist



Equity, Excellence, and Access

THE NY STATE BUILDING BLOCKS FOR THE WILLIAMSVILLE DEI PLAN

DR. FATIMA MORRELL, PANELIST

3/2/23

CENTERING EQUITY AND JOY IN THE LIVES OF STUDENTS



“We need to structure a society where joyfulness has priority. We need to structure institutions where joyfulness and learning are in relationship with each other... I just think it’s a grave injustice to have these years be children’s suffering years.”

Dr. Janice Johnson Dias
Author of *Parent Like it Matters*

CENTERING EQUITY AND JOY IN THE LIVES OF STUDENTS

- Creating Welcoming Learning Environments
- Developing a Diverse Teaching Staff
- Elevating Student Voice and Identity
- Parent, Family, and Community Engagement
- Socio-Emotional Wellness
- Culturally Inclusive Curriculum

DIVERSITY IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS 2018

Percentage of books depicting characters from diverse backgrounds based on the 2018 publishing statistics compiled by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison:
ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pcstats.asp



23 BOOKS **1%**

**American
Indians/
First Nations**

170 BOOKS **5%**

Latinx

218 BOOKS **7%**

**Asian Pacific
Islander/Asian
Pacific American**

301 BOOKS **10%**

**African/
African
American**

864 BOOKS **27%**

Animals/Other

1,558 BOOKS **50%**

White

Illustration by David Huyck, in consultation with Sarah Park Dahlen
Released under a Creative Commons BY-SA license: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>

The CCBC inventory includes 3,134 books published in 2018. This graphic would not have been possible without the statistics compiled by the CCBC, and the review and feedback we received from Edith Campbell, Molly Beth Griffin, K. T. Horning, Debbie Reese, Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, and Madeline Tyner. Many thanks.

Key Components of the Williamsville DEI Plan

DEI Goal Area 1 - Creating a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Culture in the District and Schools

1. Each school will establish a DEI Team, representing its diverse stakeholders. These teams will work together with building administrators to develop the building-level work of the DEI plan and share their work with faculty and the District DEI Team.

DEI Goal Area 2 - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Curriculum

1. The full diversity of our District community and beyond will be reflected in the curriculum in order to ensure that students will both relate to the curriculum and respect the perspectives and experiences of others.

DEI Goal Area 3 - Raising Student Voice

1. Students are comfortable expressing their identities and have opportunities to do so in the school setting.
2. Student voice should be honored at all levels through age-appropriate expression. Community-building circles (a tier-one restorative practice) should be used to help students develop their voice.

DEI Goal Area 4 - Family and Community Engagement

1. The District and schools will plan, develop, and implement meaningful, responsive, engaging activities that educate, raise awareness of, and support the diverse cultures in our community.

Key Components of the Williamsville DEI Plan, Cont..

DEI Goal Area 5 - Ensuring Workforce Diversity

1.The District will provide implicit-bias training for everyone involved in the recruitment and selection process.

DEI Goal Area 6 - Ongoing Professional Learning

1.All staff will engage in consistent and clear, ongoing professional learning opportunities around fundamental DEI concepts including, but not limited to culturally-responsive and sustaining educational practices, identity, microaggressions, stereotypes, bias, intent and impact, marginalization, and systemic inequities. More extensive opportunities for learning and practice will be offered through after school classes, professional learning communities (PLCs), etc.



»Be the
CHANGE
—you wish
to see in the
WORLD

Tomorrow's leaders may not yet have seen themselves in a book. But we have the power to change that.



THANK YOU

