MANHEIM TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) Initiative

Guiding Principles regarding Equity

Equity has been defined by the PA Department of Education as "every student having access to the educational resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background, and/or family income."

Goals

⇒ Advancing and supporting educational equity

⇒ Creating and maintaining welcoming, inclusive and equitable learning environments where students feel a sense of belonging, connection, respect

⇒ Closing achievement and opportunity gaps

Focus Areas

- School climate & restorative practices
- Instruction & Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)
- Curriculum accessibility & culturally responsive teaching
- Early learning & literacy
- Student voice & leadership

- Emotional and physical wellness
- Parent engagement
- Workplace diversity
- Community partnerships

Key Understandings

Diversity: refers to all of the ways people are alike and different, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, language, culture, age, religion/spirituality, disability, socio-economic status, political perspective, and immigration status.

Equity: refers to the fair and just practices and policies that promote achievement, fairness, and opportunity in education, including the important factor of inclusion; requires putting systems in place to ensure that every child has an equal chance for success.

Inclusion: refers to a school community where all students are and feel respected, have a sense of belonging, and are able to participate and achieve to their potential.

As stated by the PA School Boards Association, **pursuing equity** requires that schools access actions locally to overcome institutional barriers and create opportunities so that each and every student has the tools and supports necessary to achieve their highest potential. **Achieving equity** ensures that students' identities will not predetermine their success in schools.

To pursue and achieve equity within the schools, the district is using a collaborative, all-encompassing approach to create an educational system that is truly centered on the needs of ALL students. This approach involves the development and facilitation of a **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Advisory Committee** that brings together key stakeholders to engage in this important planning. The DEI Advisory Committee is comprised of students, parents, community members, district leaders, and school board members.

Each of the district's nine (9) schools will also be facilitating individual DEI School Level Teams that bring together a diverse group of parents and staff to discuss and plan for the important DEI work within each of the schools. These team meetings will operate in conjunction and alignment with the district Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Advisory Committee.

MTSD Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Advisory Committee
Purpose of Committee: To provide support, guidance, and information about topics and issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in our schools and programs.
- Welcoming, inclusive, and equitable school climate that promotes learning
- Policies and practices to promote DEI
- Rigor and relevance in curriculum & instruction; culturally responsive teaching & curriculum;
- Increased learning opportunities
- Aligned planning efforts with District and School-level Comprehensive Plans, Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework, District Data Team, early literacy initiatives, etc.
- Professional development and training
- Student voice and leadership
- Diverse workforce
- Equity audit
- Diversity and Equity Plan