

**Board Policy BAC: Equity**

**Status:** ADOPTED

**Original Adopted Date:** 04/08/2019 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 04/08/2019

The Atlanta Board of Education is committed to providing each student at every school with the full support and opportunity to fulfill their highest potential. The Board acknowledges the historic and current inequity, bias, and oppression existing at all levels of our society, including our schools. In Atlanta, we have experienced unique challenges which have divided neighborhoods, broken trust, and called integrity into question. We seek to understand, disrupt, and dismantle patterns and structures of institutional bias (conscious or unconscious) creating disparities and perpetuating achievement gaps among students.

The Atlanta Board of Education recognizes equity means the quality or ideal of being just and fair, regardless of economic, social, cultural, and human differences among and between persons. We believe that achieving equity requires strategic decision-making to remedy opportunity and learning gaps and create a barrier-free environment, which enables all students to graduate ready for college and career. The aim of equity is to provide students with additional and differentiated resources based on their educational needs. We must be bold and intentional if we are to design systems which are free from bias and favoritism and which truly affirm all the gifts and needs that make each of our students unique individuals.

The history of Atlanta and Atlanta Public Schools demands that the primary focus of our equity policy must be race. In APS, data shows our greatest opportunity gaps exist among our African-American and Hispanic students across all neighborhoods, and further that race is closely correlated with income. However, the Board recognizes other characteristics which can intersect with race and with one another, including but not limited to: ethnicity, national origin, and cultural/language heritage; gender; sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression; religion; family structure; housing situation; interaction with the justice system; physical, intellectual, or emotional disability; and learning differences. These factors reach beyond our traditional narrative of the north-south divide to expose disparities within neighborhoods, schools, and classrooms.

The Board directs the Superintendent to factor equity into all the district does, including, but not limited to practices, procedures, programs, assessments, evaluations, school governance, professional development, resource allocations, sites, facilities, operations, budgets, spending, services, contracts, partnerships, and all strategic planning, including:

- The District shall remedy the practices that lead to: (1) the disproportionate representation of students of color in areas such as special education and discipline and assignment to alternative schools and (2) the under-representation of students of color in the Gifted and Talented Education program and advanced studies.
- The District shall identify and address any barriers to equity that result from school governance structures.
- The District shall create robust Cluster and school-based communication plans.
- The District commits to work aggressively toward equity in the allocation of resources.
- The District will work aggressively to ensure that every classroom and every school has high quality teachers and principals.

In support of equity:

- The Superintendent shall establish a Community Equity Advisory Committee to provide advice and input to the Superintendent on equity issues within the school district. Each Board Member will make one appointment to this advisory committee. The Advisory Committee shall consist of no more than eleven members.
- The Superintendent shall develop a biennial equity plan. In conjunction with the beginning of the budget process, the Board will review the Superintendent's equity plan to ensure that all students are being provided equitable access to excellent educational opportunities.
- The Board and Superintendent will develop annual equity goals and the district shall review existing policies, programs, professional development and procedures to ensure the promotion of equity.
- At the November Board of Education meeting each year, the Superintendent shall provide an equity update presentation to the Board. The Board may also require updates on equity plan execution on an ad hoc basis, depending on circumstances. The Superintendent is directed to develop regulations to implement this policy.

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