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# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan

## Impact Statement

To achieve quality learning and superior performance for all, Forsyth County Schools will create a culture of belonging where differences, abilities and beliefs are respected and celebrated.

## What We Believe about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- We must challenge ourselves to see through another’s lens.
- Respect and openness are vital.
- Diversity strengthens our relationships, schools and community.
- We have a responsibility to prepare and inspire our students, staff and others to be inclusive.
- All students and staff can lead and succeed given optimal resources and support.

## What We Mean by Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Diversity, equity and inclusion are core concepts that operate in relation to each other.

**Diversity:** The broad set of visible and invisible dimensions encompassing all the ways in which people, processes and perspectives differ within the FCS family. Dimensions include:

|                         |                    |                     |
|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Abilities/Disabilities  | Age                | Appearance          |
| Culture                 | Education          | Ethnicity           |
| Gender/Gender Identity  | Geography          | Income              |
| Language                | Learning Styles    | Life Experiences    |
| Military/Veteran Status | Nationality        | Occupation          |
| Parental/Family Status  | Personality        | Philosophy          |
| Political Beliefs       | Race               | Relationship Status |
| Religion                | Sexual Orientation | Values              |

**Equity:** The result of ensuring each individual has what they need to lead and succeed. Equity includes identifying and removing personal and systemic barriers that limit the full participation of all individuals and groups.

**Inclusion:** The active process of welcoming, respecting, supporting, connecting and valuing while acknowledging the uniqueness or identity of all FCS family members.



## Goal Area 1: Student Engagement and Learning

**Strategy:** Incorporate the use of culturally relevant and responsive instruction and curriculum.

### Action Steps:

- Increase the use of culturally relevant and responsive teaching and curriculum through professional learning
- Provide support to faculty and programs for the development, implementation and evaluation of courses and academic programs related to diversity, equity and inclusion
- Provide staff with resources to identify culturally relevant and responsive teaching strategies such as videos, podcasts, and other mechanisms to see these strategies in action
- Review current social emotional programming for elements of diversity, equity and inclusion
- Develop leaders' capacity in use of culturally relevant and responsive teaching and curriculum, and provide tools and training for evaluation

### Linked to Strategic Plan Goal Area #1, Learning and Growth:

Foster social and emotional growth.

Initiative A: Implement social emotional learning competencies K-12 in all schools.

**Strategy:** Measure and monitor academic excellence for diverse groups.

### Action Steps:

- Examine current national practices related to promoting academic excellence for underrepresented students in order to provide opportunities for collaboration and replication
- Promote use of various forms of data for identification of underrepresented students in advanced programs and courses
- Encourage counseling departments and teachers to identify underrepresented students who have the ability to be successful in advanced programs and courses
- Develop and implement support programs for students who participate in advanced courses and programs
- Create a discipline matrix to monitor disproportionality of suspensions and expulsions for student subgroups
- Study current services for English Language Learners in order to provide appropriate student support
- Monitor measures of academic growth for students by subgroup

### Linked to Strategic Plan Goal Area #1, Learning and Growth:

Increase student achievement.

Initiative A: Improve student content mastery resulting in positive growth of academic measures.



## Goal Area 2: Staff Capacity

**Strategy:** Recruit and develop excellent, talented and diverse staff for all positions.

### Action Steps:

- Measure and monitor increases in certified staff-to-student diversity ratio by increasing the number of underrepresented staff members
- Develop a comprehensive recruitment plan with identified goals for underrepresented school and department staff that targets recruitment efforts at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic Serving Institutions as well as consortia, internship programs, and regional networks
- Focus recruitment efforts to include multiple dimensions of diversity
- Actively recruit students of diversity to high school teaching pathways
- Create companion recruitment opportunities with the Chamber of Commerce and local businesses for experienced teachers, other instructional staff, and leaders relocating to Forsyth County
- Train FCS staff responsible for hiring to incorporate diversity as an added value
- Monitor salary and benefits at all levels for equity
- Monitor staff perspectives and opinions about diversity, equity, and inclusion

### Linked to Strategic Plan Goal Area #2, Culture and Climate:

Acquire, develop, and retain excellent staff for all positions.

Initiative B: Acquire (Attract highly effective staff members.)

**Strategy:** Develop and retain culturally competent staff with a deeper understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

### Action Steps:

- Develop and administer a needs assessment in each school building and district department to determine knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion and use to inform decisions about professional learning
- Incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion into all district and school-based professional learning opportunities
- Plan and implement diversity, equity, and inclusion learning for every staff member
- Provide a system of professional supports to underrepresented teachers and leaders including but not limited to mentors, affinity groups, etc.
- Provide consistent onboarding and orientation for all new faculty, staff and students to ensure awareness and understanding of all diversity, equity and inclusion policies, resources and goals
- Establish a superintendent's advisory group for minority professionals in FCS

### Linked to Strategic Plan Goal Area #1, Learning and Growth:

Build staff capacity.

Initiative A: Relevant and appropriate professional development for all staff.

Initiative B: Professional learning times available within calendar/contract.



## Goal Area 3: Culture and Climate

**Strategy:** Demonstrate a clear commitment to addressing the concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion in Forsyth County Schools.

### Action Steps:

- Develop a public district statement about the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion in FCS
- Communicate the district's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all district and school initiatives
- Publicize programs and opportunities in the district related to diversity and inclusion
- Establish expectations for district departments and schools to implement initiatives related to diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Create a position and job description responsible for diversity, equity, and inclusion focus in FCS
- Measure and monitor implementation of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan including periodic updates about progress on goals

### Linked to Strategic Plan Goal Area #2, Culture and Climate:

Develop and apply effective cultural strategies.

Initiative A: Develop district Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan

**Strategy:** Create a more inclusive and culturally aware Forsyth County Schools community.

### Action Steps:

- Use data to determine current climate regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion and identify areas of improvement
- **Develop opportunities in each school that celebrate diversity and inclusion**
- Utilize district and community resources to provide guests of diverse backgrounds and/or materials for schools and programs
- **Review and revise policies and procedures**, including professional learning plan **and accommodations regarding discrimination**, harassment, and bullying annually
- **Conduct simulations to understand bias, poverty, customs and traditions, and physicality through others' perspectives**
- Encourage each employee to serve as an ambassador for diversity, equity and inclusion in the district
- Ensure school PTA/Os, booster clubs and alumni associations are partners in implementing the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan
- Develop new partnerships with culturally diverse institutions and leaders
- Enhance and cultivate relationships with other school districts, civic and community organizations, business, and government agencies/library to embrace diversity

### Linked to Strategic Plan Goal Area #2, Culture and Climate:

Develop and apply effective cultural strategies.

Initiative A: Develop district Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan

