

## Policy Development for Anti-Racism and Anti-Bias Education

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### Background

The School Board's Governance Committee directed staff to prepare a timeline that outlines when the School Board can expect the following:

- **Controversial Issues Policy (P3280.3):** Benchmarking what other comparable districts are doing and preparing suggested revisions that align with our hope to empower marginalized communities
- **Anti-Racism/Anti-Bias Policy:** Benchmarking what other districts are doing (especially LAUSD and Albemarle, VA), and preparing a draft policy for us to begin considering
- **Planning for the community engagement process** with strategic selection of external facilitation of that process
- **Stakeholders listed** to include the groups, individuals, and staff who must be involved and who the staff leads are

### Overview of Policy Recommendations

Fairfax County Schools acknowledges our history of systemic racism in our school system and we hope to initiate steps to reconciliation with our stakeholders by offering a Letter of Reckoning with Racism supported by policies that influence our actions to create, foster and sustain equitable outcomes for all students and families.

<b>Letter of Reckoning with Racism</b>	Acknowledging a history of systemic racism in FCPS
<b>Policy Recommendations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Controversial Issues Policy Revision</li><li>● Anti-Racism and Anti-Bias Education Policy Proposal</li><li>● Nondiscrimination Policy Review</li></ul>

- **Controversial Issues Policy (P3280.3):** Revisions to the Controversial Issues Policy and Regulation are necessary to support a learning environment appropriate for anti-bias and anti-racism education. The current policy and regulation emphasize the need for teachers to remain impartial on matters of contemporary controversy. In contrast, meaningful anti-bias and anti-racism education requires teachers to take a clear position on matters that may be perceived as controversial in order to affirm the dignity and belonging of all students. The revisions will need to clarify expectations for teachers and

students for supporting an inclusive learning environment when engaging controversial issues pertaining to bias, hate, and racism.

- **Anti-Racism and Anti-Bias Education Policy:** This policy would be developed to articulate the School Board's goals and expectations for anti-racism and anti-bias education. The policy would also include specific direction for the development of topical anti-bias lessons, including intended learning outcomes for students. Related expectations for staff, including demonstration of cultural competence and participation in adult learning, would also be expressed.
- **Nondiscrimination Policy ([P1450.6](#)):** Overview is pending based on feedback from HR.

**Facilitation:** It is recommended that the Board consider the following organizations for external facilitation of community, staff, and student engagement on the development of these School Board policies.

- [Leadership Academy](#) (formerly known as NYCLA): This organization currently leads equity coaching for FCPS Leadership Team and principals and offers hands-on, job-embedded learning experiences and deep group instruction to maximize development, and guide leaders through hard conversations on race and bias, developing their ability to lead their own staff in the work required to address inequities.
- [The Equity Collaborative](#): This organization supported stakeholder engagement in Loudoun County and focuses on building new capacities in the people and teams that comprise the system. They work at every level of the system to best understand all of the stakeholders in the school community and ensure alignment of purpose and action toward equitable outcomes.
- [Equity Literacy Institute](#): This organization has offered professional learning for the Equity and Cultural Responsiveness Team on anti-racism facilitation. They support organizations in developing an intentional equity vision, cultivating a common organizational language related to equity, and building equity initiatives intentionally around a set of well-defined principles and goals informed by deep equity knowledge.
- [Institute for Student Achievement](#): This organization has supported the Equity and Cultural Responsiveness team with the annual Summer Equity Symposium. Their work is designed so that all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, socioeconomic status, class, linguistic diversity, and exceptionality are given intentional and equitable opportunities to learn and excel. In its work with schools and districts, ISA uses a capacity-building approach to address problems of practice and to focus on continuous improvement.

**Community Engagement:** The following organizations are among those who might inform the development of policies related to anti-bias and anti-racism education in FCPS. Processes for community engagement could be determined in collaboration with the external organization identified for facilitation:

- **Students:** Student Advisory Council (SAC), Student Ambassadors, Student Advocacy Group (Student Activities/DSS), Gay Straight Alliance, Best Buddies, Minds Matter, Jewish Student Union, Muslim Student Association, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, additional clubs, Boy/Girls Scouts
- **Staff:** Principal Associations, Teacher Organizations (FEA, FCFT, AFPE), Fairfax Alliance of Black Educators (FABSE), Asian Educators Association, PRIDE, Hispanic Leadership Alliance, additional considerations for Support Employee organizations
- **Community:** PTSA, MSAOC, Religion Task Force, Title 1 Parent Committee, FLECAC, Fairfax County Council, Fairfax County SEPTA, Fairfax Anti-Racist Minds (FAM), NAACP, JCRC, NAAWA, VOICE, Rotary Club, ALAS, Fairfax for Anti-Racism in Education (FARE)

#### **Draft Timeline** (Staff Leads: Colleen Eddy and Alicia Hunter)

- **November 10 - December 4, 2020**
  - Research what policies other comparable districts have in place for Controversial Issues and Anti-Bias & Anti-Racism Education
  - Determine which external facilitators would meet the needs of the Board.
- **December 7, 2020 - January 4, 2021**
  - Collaborate with external facilitators to prepare for community engagement.
  - Prepare suggested revisions of the existing Controversial Issues regulation and policy as a draft for stakeholder review.
- **January 4 - February 26, 2021**
  - Facilitate listening groups with community groups, staff, and students to understand the current challenges with the existing policies, gather feedback on proposed revisions, and gather input on a policy supporting anti-bias and anti-racism education.
- **February 26-April 4, 2021**
  - Collaboratively prepare draft policy taking community input into account
- **March 9, 2021**
  - The Governance Committee reviews synthesized community input and informs drafting of policies.
- **April 6, 2021**
  - The School Board reviews the draft policy at scheduled work session and provides feedback.
- **April 22, 2021**
  - Public comments on draft policies are heard at the scheduled School Board meeting.
- **May 6, 2021**
  - School Board votes on Anti-Racism and Anti-Bias Policy at the scheduled School Board meeting.

#### **Related Possibilities**

- **Curriculum Reform:** As the revision of the VDOE History & Social Science curriculum will begin in January 2021 to be published in 2022, it may be possible to engage FCPS community voices on curriculum reform in parallel with the anti-bias and anti-racism policy work or in separate sessions hosted by the same external facilitators.
- **Nondiscrimination Policy** ([P1450.6](#)): Since the existing Nondiscrimination Policy directly relates to the development of policy for anti-bias and anti-racism education, the Board might consider stakeholder engagement to seek if improvements are warranted.
- **Letter of Reckoning with Racism:** The Board might consider, in collaboration with the Leadership Team, publishing a letter to the community focused on reckoning with the history and legacy of racism in Fairfax County Schools. This letter could include the commissioning of this policy work and an invitation for community engagement.