

NEW POLICY: Passed unanimously by the School Board November 28, 2022.

COMMITMENT OF CENTRAL CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT TO EQUITY IN EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Central Consolidated School District (CCSD) recognizes the findings in *Yazzie/Martinez v. State of New Mexico* and the historic inequitable actions that have resulted in academic achievement and social-emotional gaps of students. CCSD further recognizes the value of diverse culture and language and the implementation of the Hispanic Education Act, Indian Education Act, Black Education Act, and Bilingual Multicultural Education Act. These multicultural education statutes provide goals and requirements for providing Native American, Hispanic, African-American, English-Language Learners, and At-Risk students with an equitable, culturally relevant education through collaboration between governmental stakeholders including schools, Native American tribes, and appropriate federal and state government entities. CCSD also recognizes the importance of identifying learning and other disabilities early in their education so that the District can provide support and resources as early as possible to help students grow and learn to the best of their ability.

With the implementation of this Policy, CCSD is beginning a process by which it is evaluating the best mechanisms to incorporate the requirements of the following sources of law:

Yazzie/Martinez v. State of New Mexico

In 2014, students, parents, and school districts filed two lawsuits, *Martinez v. State of New Mexico* and *Yazzie v. State of New Mexico*, alleging the state was not providing students with a sufficient education, especially Native American students, English language learners, students with disabilities, low-income students, and other students at risk of poor outcomes. In July 2018, the district court ruled that the state's public education funding, oversight, and outcomes did not meet the state's constitutional obligation to provide a sufficient education to these students. Overall, the court found student achievement and attainment "dismal" and attributed these poor educational outputs to insufficient educational funding and state oversight.

Native American students, who make up over 95 percent of enrollment at CCSD, have significant educational and social emotional gaps as compared to their peers on state and national measures of achievement. Additionally, we have Hispanic, Filipino, African-American, Anglo and students of multi-cultural descent. Our District has extremely high-poverty rates and many of our children face challenges with homelessness, hunger, trauma, abuse, neglect and other social injustices. Many of our students have learning and other disabilities. In recognition of the *Yazzie-Martinez* decision, CCSD is committed to addressing the needs of all of its students from a holistic, whole-child approach to ensure that we bridge educational and social emotional gaps as quickly as possible.

Bilingual Multicultural Education Act, NMSA 22-23-1.1 et seq.

- Requires that school districts provide English Language Learners with programs that use two languages, including English and the home or heritage language, as a medium of instruction in the teaching and learning process.

Indian Education Act, NMSA 22-23A-1 et seq.

- Requires that Native American students in New Mexico are provided with opportunities for equitable and culturally appropriate education in public schools;
- Requires school districts and charter schools to collaborate with tribal governments on matters related to culturally inclusive and relevant curricula, teaching, support services, and other programs to meet the needs of Native American students; and
- Requires improved educational opportunities for Native American students for the purpose of closing the achievement gap, increasing graduation rates and increasing postsecondary enrollment, retention and completion.

Hispanic Education Act, NMSA 22-23B-5 et seq.

- Requires improved educational opportunities for Hispanic students for the purpose of closing the achievement gap, increasing graduation rates and increasing postsecondary enrollment, retention and completion.

Black Education Act, 2021 HB 43

- Requires the inclusion of culturally inclusive curricula; anti-racism policies; racial sensitivity and anti-racism training;
- Requires the creation of an Advisory council; Black Education Liaison; curriculum coordinator; hotline manager; and professional development/training coordinator;
- Requires implementation of restorative justice disciplinary procedures; and
- Allows students to carry and administer his/her own medication, including asthma and anaphylaxis medication, as recommended by a healthcare provider.

Intercultural Community Outreach Department (ICO):

Historically, there have been deficiencies and difficulties with adequate funding, and other structural and programmatic challenges which have resulted in a system that has not met the needs of our students in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.

As a result, the District has created a new department with expanded staffing and resources,

the Intercultural Community Outreach Department (ICO), to ensure that CCSD is implementing and coordinating programs that strive to overcome disparities, reduce learning and social emotional gaps and track and assess the progress of these programs on student outcomes.

CCSD is committed to the cultural enrichment of all students through programs rooted in the preservation and extension of cultural and linguistic knowledge and values. CCSD is committed to intercultural education and views cultural diversity as a valuable resource that should be preserved and extended. CCSD's goal is to prepare students to live and learn in a world with more opportunities than the past with an understanding of the importance of their own culture and the culture of others. CCSD strives to provide a positive learning and work environment for all students and staff by developing, implementing, and monitoring policies, programs and procedures that enhance cultural awareness, understanding, knowledge and diversity; provide meaningful intercultural education, and promote diversity in staffing for CCSD.

CCSD is committed to the principles and practices of education that recognize and celebrate cultural diversity as an essential ingredient to student success and the fulfillment of CCSD's mission to provide a quality education for EVERY student. This commitment is directed toward the elimination of racism and prejudice and the removal of cultural barriers wherever they may exist throughout CCSD, including intentional or unintentional discriminatory practices in classrooms, schools, offices, and other work places and learning environments.

The goal of CCSD is to prepare students to live and work in a global, intercultural society by creating and supporting a teaching-learning environment where all students and staff understand and value commonalities and differences within and across various cultures in order to produce a harmonious community of lifelong learners. Contributions to this education process will require staff, students, parents and community involvement as well as interagency and government-to-government collaboration.

CCSD is committed to providing opportunities for all staff to learn about various cultures and to improve their skills in cross-cultural communication. The school system shall continue to promote a diverse work force by increasing personnel recruitment efforts and by fulfilling the commitment to maintain a school district that is free of prejudice and illegal discrimination in all aspects of employment.

Development and Implementation of Strategic Equity Plan

Together with input from community and tribal stakeholders, parents, students and staff, CCSD shall develop and implement a **Strategic Equity Plan** that provides cultural and linguistic responsive instruction for all students, appropriate instructional and assessment practices in general and special education, bilingual, and biliteracy, opportunities for all students to develop cultural understanding, respect and knowledge of their culture and other cultures, and holistic wellness programs that address the social-emotional needs of students and staff.

The Board directs the superintendent to develop and implement a system-wide Strategic Equity Plan with appropriate procedural directives to implement this policy with clear accountability and metrics that will result in measurable academic improvements for CCSD students. The superintendent shall regularly report progress on the plan and outcomes.

CCSD created the Intercultural Community Outreach Department (ICO) and the Equity Council to collaborate with other Departments and Buildings to assist the District in the development and implementation of the equity plan and the elimination of academic achievement and social-emotional gaps through the following measures:

Overarching Foundational Principles/Mission/Goals:

Strategic Resource Allocation

- Provide technical assistance to support schools in the strategic allocation and fair distribution of resources to provide opportunities for all children to thrive in the District; and
- Improve efforts to allocate resources strategically to support students most in need.

Community Schools

- Foster community schools in communities and neighborhoods of concentrated poverty by providing technical assistance and financial resources to enable rigorous implementation of a community school framework;
- Increase the number of community schools serving communities throughout CCSD;
- Improve the quality of implementation of the community school framework in designated community schools; and
- Ensure that designated community schools are able to sustain the framework beyond the life of the state implementation grant.

Family and Community Engagement

- Provide professional development and technical assistance to support schools to implement robust and culturally relevant family and community engagement practices;
- Foster authentic school-home relationships, rooted in community healing, mutual trust, and reciprocal accountability;
- Cultivate goal-setting opportunities that:
 - balance the dynamics between families and educators to prioritize student growth;
 - empower families and teachers with resources to monitor social-emotional and intellectual growth and development in school, home and beyond;

- identify struggling students as early as possible to ensure they get the resources they need to succeed; and
 - identify and assist students in receiving wrap-around services.
- Provide culturally relevant and linguistically accessible information and resources that communicate academic expectations, support a shared culture of learning, and advocate for needs of the whole child; and
- Increase the number of home visits and follow-through on needs of CCSD students and families to help achieve the goals stated in this policy.

Meeting the needs of Yazzie/Martinez to provide equitable learning opportunities

- Increase funding and oversight to support at-risk students across programs;
- Increase access to broadband and devices necessary for students to fully participate in education;
- Increase access to physical and behavioral health services;
- Increase access to high quality nutrition and decrease food insecurity;
- Increase supports and resources to eliminate barriers to school attendance;
- Increase learning time for at risk students;
- Prioritize ELTP funding and K-5 Plus funding for schools serving high percentages of at risk students in a manner that honors the needs of local schools and communities;
- Improve advocacy and advice for students who are at-risk;
- Improve tribal consultation; and
- Implement recommendations from the CCSD Equity Council regarding equitable learning opportunities.

Equity Council: To address the inequities found in the Yazzie/Martinez lawsuit, CCSD has formed an Equity Council that reports to the Superintendent. The function of the Equity Council is to include community and student input into how we achieve equitable opportunities for our students. At least half of the Equity Council must represent students who are Native American, Hispanic, English language learners, economically disadvantaged, or have one or more disabilities. Additionally, membership on the Council shall include a liaison for each culture/ethnicity in our school district (e.g., Native American, African American, Hispanic, Filipino, Anglo, etc).

Expand Data Functionality and Close Digital Gaps

- Expand Data programs and resources to monitor and track student proficiency and assessment;
- Provide increased funding and technical assistance to expand student access to digital devices and high-speed internet services across CCSD;

- Provide every student with access to internet connectivity and devices necessary for remote learning;
- Improve the ability of schools to integrate technology into daily routines that support students and families; and
- Expand use of technology and data.

Holistic Wellness and Health Services and High-Quality Nutrition

- Enable schools to provide high quality holistic wellness and health services and nutrition to all students so they are ready to engage with learning;
- Ensure that every student has access to a school nurse, school-based health clinic, or other community health option;
- Ensure that every student has access to affordable, nutritious breakfasts and lunches; and
- Potentially expand meal accessibility beyond breakfast and lunch during the school day as well as during school breaks and holidays for those students in need.

Student Attendance

- Support schools to promptly identify absenteeism and train school staff in the use of non-punitive sports, other incentives and wrap-around services that address the root causes of absenteeism; and
- Support ability of schools to address and reduce the root causes of chronic absenteeism.

Extended Learning and Out-Of-School-Time Opportunities that honor the needs of local schools and communities

Equip districts and charters to increase student participation in extended learning and out of school time programs, including K-5 Plus, Extending Learning Time Program (ELTP), and other opportunities that take place before and after the typical school day and during summer that honors the needs of local schools and communities.

- Increase the number of schools that are implementing innovative schedules and programming to engage students outside of “traditional“ school hours that honors the needs of local schools and communities;
- Increase the number and percentage of students who participate in an extended learning or out of school time program that honors the needs of local schools and communities; and
- Improve students' holistic health and well-being and deepen their engagement in school.

Student, School, District Safety

- Establish and Implement Safety Team Strategic Plan;

- Expansion of See Something/Say Something to function as a reporting hotline. The Safety Team will function as the hotline manager;
- Implement and Expand policies and training on Cultural and Racial Sensitivity, Anti-Racism, and Anti-Oppression;
- Allows students to carry and administer their own medication, including asthma and anaphylaxis medication, as recommended by their healthcare provider; and
- Provide sufficient training to students, school health staff, teachers and support staff on student self-administered medication.

Foundational Pillars:

Pillar 1. Address the Needs of the Whole Child: Implement programs that seek to help each student reach their full potential by focusing on the social-emotional well-being of students, which includes prioritizing the needs of the whole child, honoring multicultural and linguistic diversity, and holistic wellness programs. Pillar 1 seeks to implement programs that focus on the needs of the whole child and provides resources to children to help them address challenges and barriers to learning that each child may have coming to school as follows:

- instill resilience and self-sufficiency, coping skills, social-emotional wellness, and life skills;
- incorporate and promote holistic wellness skills, and knowledge needed to be one's best self and the ability to thrive regardless of the circumstances;
- teach students life skills necessary to thrive;
- teach better decision-making and sound judgment;
- provide resources necessary to support the student to navigate challenging circumstances they may be facing;
- identify and provide effective wrap-around services; and
- promote healthy self-identity.

Pillar 2. Address Educational and Social-Emotional Gaps: Implement strength-based programs that close educational and social-emotional gaps, while actively creating connections to learning opportunities and enhancing student and parent participation. Pillar 2 seeks to implement programs that address educational and social-emotional gaps as follows:

- Provide equitable access to education, culture and language;
- Provide resources to support students in challenges they may face due to external factors involving homelessness, food scarcity, familial unemployment, poverty, neglect, abuse or trauma, safety, health and/or disability;
- Implement restorative justice approaches to discipline so that students learn natural consequences to actions, accountability, making right the harm or wrong they caused others; learning from mistakes, creating connection and community between students and adults, and making better decisions;
- Implement programs that assist students in addressing challenges rather than engage in problem avoidance with substance abuse, or other damaging behaviors;
- Implement programs that instill respect of one's own culture and other cultures;

- Implement programs that promote diversity of cultures and languages as a strength and asset;
- Implement hiring practices, training and leadership advancement that promote diverse staff and diverse students;
- Implement curricula that instills critical thinking skills and cultural inclusion, racial sensitivity and anti-racism training;
- Create pathways to develop and promote opportunities for student leadership, advocacy and voice;
- Prioritize Culture and Language;
- Provide training and mentorship in De-Escalation/Crisis Prevention Intervention (CPI)/First Aid;
- Make Cultural Linguistic Relevant Instruction (CLRI) and Multi-Layered Student Systems (MLSS) a focus and component of all curriculum; and
- Expand Data programs and resources to monitor and track student Proficiency and Assessment

Pillar 3. Ongoing Development of Roadmap Needed to Attain Post-Graduation Skills and Knowledge for College, Career, Technology and Workforce Readiness: Implement a continuous process that identifies 21st Century life skills and educational competencies needed in order to be successful students, adults, and life-long learners. This continuous process is referred to as the Graduate Profile. The identification and prioritization of the Graduate Profile honors cultural and linguistic values through ongoing collaboration with students, their families, District staff, and community stakeholders. Backwards planning is then utilized to create learning pathways that are implemented with Pre-K-12 curricula and other programs to support the Graduate Profile.

Pillar 4. Educational Workforce Community Resources: Cultivate a positive, supportive and collaborative workforce of administrative and academic leaders; teachers and instructional staff; student health, disability and wellness professionals; and all support staff (Workforce). CCSD’s Workforce will focus on the needs of our diverse cultural, linguistic, differently-abled, and varied socio-economic student populations.

CCSD’s Workforce will share knowledge, expertise and experience by learning from and mentoring each other. Our Workforce will work together to help our students reach their full potential and become life-long learners that actively participate in being positive, responsible, global citizens. We will accomplish this by building thriving collaborative systems and partnerships across social and cultural communities. CCSD will strive to support our Workforce with expanded resources, educational opportunities and training in order to better provide students with an optimal learning environment and engage families and communities by providing the following:

- **Staff Holistic Wellness Programs:** Implement a Staff Holistic Wellness Team that includes representatives from all Departments and buildings that collaborate on identifying what resources are needed and develops recommendations on what holistic wellness programs would best provide resources for our Workforce including:

- Holistic Wellness Programming: CCSD will create an environment that supports holistic staff wellness. Staff wellness programs will include active participation to enhance their knowledge, skills and commitment to promote a healthier work-life balance and lifestyle. Holistic wellness will incorporate a best practice approach to physical, mental, spiritual, social-emotional, stress management, psychological and environmental wellness. This approach will provide staff with opportunities to engage in various programs, activities, events and learning modalities;
- Cultural Wellness Initiatives: Workshops will be provided that promote wellness topics for staff to learn, engage and utilize for their own cultural awareness and wellness enhancement;
- The wellness team will provide healthy concepts and tips through newsletters, emails, calendar, with posters, flyers and other methods of communication;
- Wellness equipment and suitable spaces will be available at various locations throughout the district for staff to utilize that are convenient and accessible throughout the workday; and
- Ongoing health and wellness reimbursement program that provides staff with the opportunity to enroll in various health and wellness related programs, equipment subscriptions, and workshops.
- Hiring, Recruitment, and Retention
 - Grow Our Own:
 - Implement programs that recruit, train, and promote staff from within our local communities to become certified teachers and student health professionals (e.g., nurses, social workers, school counselors, speech pathologists, etc). CCSD will prioritize inclusion of individuals into these programs that meet the needs of our diverse cultural, linguistic, differently-abled, and varied socio-economic student populations;
 - Cultivate Grow Our Own partnerships between local schools, school districts, colleges, community organizations, and teacher preparation programs;
 - Expand funding sources and seek additional grants that support Grow Our Own programs; and
 - Establish micro-campus and virtual opportunities to reach Grow Our Own candidates in rural and remote communities.
 - Recruitment and Retention Programs:
 - Implement incentive programs to attract and retain employees;
 - Implement a retention and recruitment strategic plan in collaboration with all of the departments and buildings;
 - Establish a retention and recruitment team with representatives from the departments and buildings that actively works throughout the year on retention and recruitment efforts;

- Apply for and expand funds from state and federal grants to help fund the retention and recruitment effort;
 - Partner with external agencies and community programs on retention and recruitment efforts;
 - Streamline dossier and certification process; and
 - Expand assistance of professionals needing certification with funding opportunities and create efficiencies to make it easier for them to get certified and eligible.
- Ongoing professional learning and professional development: Expand ongoing professional learning and professional development programs:
 - Create and implement a professional learning and professional development strategic plan that is aligned with this policy, the strategic equity plan, and the District 90-Day Plan that addresses the needs of CCSD’s diverse cultural, linguistic, differently-abled, and varied socio-economic student populations;
 - Align continuous professional learning and professional development with this policy, the strategic equity plan, and the District 90-Day Plan;
 - Balance professional learning and professional development with experiential training and implementation time;
 - Approach professional learning and professional development from a strength-based perspective; and
 - Expand pathways for National Board certification and support/incentives for increased participation.
- Educational Leaders mentorship programs - (TEAM - Teacher Education and Mentoring Program):
 - Expand teacher mentorship programs and stronger mentorship networks and resources;
 - Develop a TEAM Committee that Includes key stakeholders (i.e. Upper Administrative/Executive Team, Principals, HR, ICO, C&I, SSO and Level 3 teachers) in planning the mentorship activities, programs and process;
 - Mentorship programs need to be coordinated by principals and their selected team to determine effective and best practices to meet the needs in their school building;
 - The school district needs to be aligned with SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound) Goals as a pathway for mentees to understand and achieve their professional goals consistent with this policy, the strategic equity plan, and the District 90-Day Plan that addresses the needs of CCSD’s diverse cultural, linguistic, differently-abled, and varied socio-economic student populations; and
 - Establish continuous monitoring and feedback of mentorship programs to make sure that the programs are consistent, effective and there is accountability of

outcomes ensuring mentees are getting the support they need. The TEAM committee will review the process that evaluates progress and growth on a quarterly basis from an effective best practices and strength-based perspective with the focus on ensuring that the TEAM identifies resources that mentees and mentors need.

- Support Governing Board involvement, engagement, and training
 - Provide Information for the Fall and Spring board retreat:
 - Reporting on what each department does on an annual basis and with updates on strategic plan actions;
 - Have each department present to the board regarding their department (grants, funds, accountability, compliance, strategic plan recommendations and progress); and
 - Create Board resource binders for each department training.

Definitions:

Whole Child Approach: A whole child approach to education is one that honors the humanity of each teacher and student, and is important to equitably preparing each student to reach their full potential. This starts by creating environments of belonging and connection for students and adults to engage and thrive.

Asset-Based or Strength-Based Teaching: an asset-based approach focuses on strengths. It views diversity in thought, culture, and traits as positive assets. Teachers and students alike are valued for what they bring to the classroom rather than being characterized by what they may need to work on or lack. Asset-based teaching seeks to unlock students' potential by focusing on their talents. Also known as strengths-based teaching, this approach contrasts with the more common deficit-based style of teaching which highlights students' inadequacies.

Passed unanimously by the School Board November 28, 2022.

References:

Legal Ref:

- Hispanic Education Act Section 22-23B-2 NMSA 1978
- Indian Education Act Section 22-23A-10 NMSA 1978
- Black Education Act 2021 HB 43
- Bilingual Multicultural Education Programs Act 22-23-1.1 NMSA 1978 Education Programs Act (NMSA 22-2)
- Section 22-2C-5 NMSA 1978
- Section 22-8-18 NMSA 1978
- Yazzie/Martinez v. State of New Mexico (2018)

Board Policy Cross Ref: