

PRIOR LAKE - SAVAGE AREA SCHOOLS COMMITMENT TO EQUITY AND INCLUSION

WHEREAS, the learning and safety of the students of Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools is our top priority, and it is our responsibility to create a safe, secure, and inclusive environment for all learners, which requires that we promote equity and inclusion for all people notwithstanding race, ethnicity, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, linguistic diversity, socio-economic status, or membership in any other protected class; and

WHEREAS, providing a safe and inclusive school environment that ensures the physical and emotional safety of students and staff creates the conditions necessary to foster academic achievement; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota, including Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools, consistently has one of the largest opportunity gaps in the country; and

WHEREAS, as the Minnesota Department of Education states, “Educational equity is the condition of justice, fairness and inclusion in our systems of education so that all students have access to the opportunities to learn and develop to their fullest potentials;” and

WHEREAS, the concept of educational equity goes beyond formal equality — where all learners are treated the same — to providing a barrier-free environment where all students have the resources and opportunities to succeed notwithstanding their race, ethnicity, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, linguistic diversity, socio-economic status, or membership in any other protected class; and

WHEREAS, The District’s strategic plan commits us to increase measurable student learning and reduce opportunity gaps as we provide equitable student opportunities through personalized learning and student engagement; and

WHEREAS, District Policy 413 dictates that the District “maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment, and violence on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability;” and

WHEREAS, racism and implicit bias manifest in myriad ways, including, but not limited to, hate speech, open hostility and bigotry, systematic and institutionalized practices and policies, microaggressions, color-blind ideology, willful ignorance, and unconscious bias in decision making, each of which have the effect of negatively impacting Black, Indigenous, and people of color and members of other marginalized groups; and

WHEREAS, discrimination, hate, bias, and racist incidents against Black, Indigenous, and people of color and members of other marginalized groups harm them mentally, physically, emotionally, and academically; and

WHEREAS, the District's strategic plan commits us to engage students, parents, families, staff, and community members to strengthen a culture of respect and inclusion; and

WHEREAS, students, parents, families, staff, and community members have raised concerns about racism, equity, inclusion, and social justice and expect Board and District leadership to address these issues with intention; and

WHEREAS, as leaders in Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools, we are compelled to embrace an anti-racist stance and speak out in response to all forms of racism, discrimination, and bias that impact our students, parents, families, staff, and community.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The Board of Education of
Prior Lake-Savage Area Schools:**

Is fully committed to developing and sustaining an inclusive and anti-racist school community, where ALL students, parents, families, staff, and community members are safe, welcomed, and valued, notwithstanding their race, ethnicity, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, linguistic diversity, socio-economic status, or membership in any other protected class;

Commits to its own work, as a Board and as individuals, and to the training necessary to strengthen our collective ability and competence to oversee the District in becoming equitable, inclusive, and anti-racist in policies, beliefs, and actions;

Affirms its commitment to support the superintendent in continuing to lead District priorities to advance equity and inclusion efforts, including but not limited to, professional development opportunities, increasing equitable access to a diverse workforce, and establishing a safe and secure environment that is free of implicit bias and is anti-racist for all people notwithstanding race, ethnicity, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, linguistic diversity, socio-economic status, or membership in any other protected class;

Encourages and supports our educators and staff as they seek to adapt instructional practices, incorporate restorative justice practices, expand their own understanding of anti-racism and implicit bias, and develop their skill sets and mindsets to respond more effectively to the needs and aspirations of all of the learners they serve and demonstrate their belief in the value of each student;

Commits, as a Board and as individuals, to viewing and analyzing all of our work on behalf of the District through both a racial and cultural equity lens and a social justice lens and reforming current policies should they not be aligned with the vision presented in this resolution;

Will create more opportunities to elevate and listen to the voices of students, parents, families, staff, and community members who are Black, Indigenous, and people of color and members of other marginalized groups and partner with them to identify and eliminate barriers that can interfere with opportunities to excel; and

Will commit to being accountable to achieving the vision established in this resolution.