



Smithtown Central School District

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District Position Paper

Topic: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Educators are tasked with meeting the needs of every child who walks through the schoolhouse door. Having a fundamental awareness and understanding that every child is different, and as such has different needs, is imperative if we are to properly assist each child meet their potential. The diversity of our student body comes in many forms, and we are tasked with the moral and legal responsibility to provide them with equitable opportunities to flourish and experience the successful outcomes that will provide them with a future of their choosing. Our ability to provide an inclusive environment, where all students feel welcomed and supported, is essential if we are truly going to realize our goal of success for all. To its credit, the Smithtown Central School District's Board of Education adopted a goal this school year to highlight the importance of this work.

Our collective responsibility to provide for the academic, social and emotional well-being of all students has been codified into law for quite some time. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act was signed into law by President George W. Bush on Jan. 8, 2002, with overwhelming bipartisan support. The law put a special focus on ensuring that states and schools boost the performance of certain groups of students, such as English-language learners, students in special education, and poor and minority children, whose achievement, on average, trailed their peers. The Every Student Succeeds Act also received bipartisan support and replaced NCLB in 2015, is now the main law for K-12 public education, and one of its primary goals is to ensure that all schools focus on preparing all students, regardless of race, family income, disability, ethnicity, or proficiency in English, for a successful college experience and fulfilling career. New York State's Dignity for All Students Act (The Dignity Act) seeks to provide the State's public elementary and secondary school students with a safe and supportive environment free from discrimination, intimidation, taunting, harassment, and bullying.

The Smithtown Central School District's work related to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion will be guided by a dispassionate, apolitical analysis as to whether or not our students are reaching the goals we have set for them. There will be no political agenda to advantage or disadvantage a particular group, but rather a concerted effort to identify the students who are having difficulty reaching our collective goals and applying interventions to reduce and eliminate gaps where they may exist. Once interventions are implemented, the district will monitor the progress of these strategies and make adjustments as necessary. There are no easy fixes, so continued attention to this work will be essential for us to determine if our efforts to meet the needs of all of our students are effective.

To achieve our objectives, the Success for ALL Committee will focus its work on realizing the Board of Education's goal that all students must feel they are welcome, they belong, and they are supported in every school, and success in this work will be built upon a foundation of diversity, equity, inclusion, access and opportunity.