

EQUITY EDUCATION

Equity Education allows all students to reach their potential as learners. It recognizes that the full measure of one's learning is not only the new information or understandings that one has gained, but also includes the extent to which the learner has changed and grown because of the material. Equity Education is a process to ensure the dignity and safety of each person in society by fostering an environment in which individuals develop skills to behave respectfully in different cultural settings. It focuses on increasing knowledge and understanding of diverse groups that include but are not limited to ethnic and racial populations, religious and language groups, gender, sexual orientation *, disabilities, and age groups. Equity Education prepares individuals and institutions to respond to the human condition with sensitivity and understanding in order to become informed and productive members of a diverse democratic society.

Equity Education is intended to:

1. Ensure that the school environment reflects and respects the diversity of all people throughout the school system and the community;
2. Integrate into the curriculum various perspectives and contributions which continue to shape the community, the Commonwealth, the nation and the world;
3. Develop confident and competent students while preparing them for life and work in a diverse society; and
4. Ensure that all students feel safe in an environment that is conducive to learning.

The Board believes in "Excellence Through Equity" and therefore supports the integration of diverse learning opportunities and experiences into the school setting, including the education and celebration of holidays, as a means of promoting appreciation, understanding, and respect among students and staff for people of diverse backgrounds. Administrators and teachers should seek activities that are relevant to the curriculum, have been thoughtfully selected, and represent the pluralism of our world. Staff development should be an ongoing area of focus to enable teachers and administrators to incorporate a diverse perspective into the instructional program.

Adopted: November 8, 2001

Reviewed: July 12, 2007

* Definition of Sexual Orientation: One's attraction to the same sex, opposite sex or both sexes, real or perceived. This definition is intended to describe the status of persons and does not render lawful any conduct prohibited by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia.