

Equity Policy

High Desert ESD (HDES) is dedicated to serving all students and families. In order to achieve this, we must embrace a cultural and organizational transformation to ensure a culture of inclusion and acceptance.

As an educational organization, HDES is committed to equitable practices that will ensure the success of all students and families. This commitment means that success will not be predicted nor predetermined by race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, cognitive/physical ability, language, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or religion.

The principle of equity goes beyond formal equality where all persons are treated the same. Instead, equity fosters an inclusive and barrier-free environment in which everyone will fully benefit. HDES will apply this principle of equity to all policies, programs, operations, practices, and resource allocations. All students will have access and opportunity to a high-quality education.

Every decision HDES makes will be committed to the following foundational beliefs:

1. Culturally responsive instructional practices are necessary for each student to access educational support at the highest level;
2. Maximizing the success of each and every student requires allocating resources equitably;
3. Every adult in the district shares the moral imperative and collective ownership to identify and eliminate disparities to ensure all students are prepared for current and future success to close the achievement and opportunity gap;
4. We honor the cultures and background experiences of all families and members of our community, recognizing them as critical partners in supporting students' educational success.

To achieve our mission and vision of educational equity, HDES will:

5. Seek to be the change that will lead staff to be ambassadors of equity and culturally responsive practices. Provide professional development training to deepen the understanding of the root causes of achievement and opportunity gaps;
6. Eliminate barriers in recruitment, hiring, retention and internal processes in order to mirror the student and family population we serve;
7. Adopt culturally relevant practices based on data, where available, by race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, language, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, cognitive/physical ability, or religion to assess and evaluate the needs of the students and all families;
8. Include all families with equitable access and practices to equip them with the right tools to support and amplify their children's academic and personal success;
9. Create catalytic leadership for educational and community partners that respectfully, firmly, and persistently accelerates their adoption of gap-closing policies and practices;
10. Provide students with equitable access to high-quality curriculum, programs, teachers and administrators, extracurricular activities and support services, even when this means differentiating resource allocation;
11. Support the continuing development of all personnel with a focus on their mindset, beliefs, knowledge, and skills, including an understanding of implicit bias and racial identity, to ensure the success of all students;
12. Incorporate the voices, cultures, and perspectives of diverse students, families, and communities into decision making to support success for all students; and affirm these differences to create a sense of belonging for all.