

Snohomish School District Equity and Inclusion Framework March 2022

The Snohomish School District is dedicated to providing each and every student access to relevant and challenging academic experiences while maintaining safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for all levels of learners. Our goal is to ensure that any student who entrusts us with their education earns their diploma while having a positive learning and safe, social-emotional experience in our schools.

Snohomish School District commits to honor and value the lives of each and every student, staff, and community member regardless of race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, neurodiversity, social class or disability.

This is a journey not a destination. By creating an environment whereas listening, reflecting, and valuing one another is the norm, we will continually improve whereas this year is better than last year. Below are some of the steps already taken by the district:

- Welcome and promote open and honest dialogue, valuing all thoughts and opinions.
- Professional development for the Board, administration, and staff.
- Support for our staff and students for growth with equity and inclusion opportunities.
- Creating and filling a Cabinet level, Director of Equity and Inclusion.
- Adopting the Snohomish School District Human Rights and Equity Committee's recommendations to the Board, which are:
 - Committing to seeking and hearing students' voices
 - Being readily available and committed to learning from the experiences of all families
 - Ongoing professional development for our staff
- Using a lens of equity and inclusion when developing or adopting policies.
- Implemented an anonymous Tip Line designed to provide students, staff, and community members with a safe and confidential way to report a threat or potential threat to student or school safety.
- Improving District hiring processes to ensure our success in recruiting a diverse pool of candidates and providing bias training for the hiring committees.

This Equity and Inclusion Framework is divided into four sections:

1. Vision
2. Mission
3. Action Steps
4. Framework Concepts

1. Vision:

Our equity and inclusion work focuses on identifying needs in order to develop and implement cross-departmental plans to navigate and/or remove barriers to academic and social-emotional student growth, while honoring our collective cultural diversity throughout the district.

We honor and value cultural diversity. Honoring and valuing cultures serves to:

- improve our personal awareness and readiness for intercultural and intracultural curiosity and enrichment,
- communicate and increase sense of belonging for our diverse community,
- create safe, welcoming, and inclusive environments for members of and visitors to our community,
- empower staff, students, and families to become knowledgeable global citizens.

We support and encourage staff to facilitate transformational learning which integrates multiple perspectives, incorporates student and community voice, and presents the opportunity for students to see themselves represented authentically in instructional materials.

2. Mission:

Our mission is to ensure that staff are confident, competent, and empowered to take an active role in educating and providing support for each and every learner in alignment with the academic mission, integrating purpose and clarity, engaging instruction, and assessment literacy to maximize student potential. We commit to ongoing learning and professional development in the use of guaranteed aligned curriculum and supplemental materials to encourage education. We strive to empower staff and students to engage in complex conversations in order to address salient social concerns while embracing multiple perspectives.

3. Action Steps:

Strategic Objectives

Based on feedback, research, and previous work through student groups, staff, community, and consultants, our strategic objectives will focus on three key areas: Student Voice, Family/Community Voice, and Building Organizational and Staff Capacity.

1. Student Voice: Student voice provides the opportunity for students to give input and advocate for their needs. Our goal is for student to know their opinions, ideas, and voices are valued in our schools. Student voice and empowerment also provides our students with the opportunity to develop problem solving, critical thinking, and leadership skills which they will be able to apply throughout their lives.

- a. Student conversations and listening sessions

- b. Student surveys
 - c. Student Leadership Collaboration Groups (SLCG)
 - d. Bystander Training/Speak Up
2. Family/Community Voice: Family/Community voice provides the opportunity for families and community members to be engaged with our schools, share their thoughts and concerns, while also enhancing our overall cultural awareness and ability to support each other.
- a. Develop, implement, and maintain processes for community engagement
 - i. Community conversations
 - ii. Information and education (EMBRACE (Empowering Myself for Better Relationship Awareness and cultural enrichment))
 - iii. District/building level community/family equity groups (EAACH (Equity Alliance for Achievement))
 - b. Build and maintain internal and external relationships
 - i. Departments (Intradistrict)
 - ii. Schools
 - iii. Community Partners
 - iv. Neighboring districts
 - v. Higher Education
 - vi. ESD
 - vii. WSSDA
 - viii. WASA
 - ix. OSPI
3. Building Organizational and Staff Capacity: Building organizational and staff capacity serves as the core of equity and inclusion work and furthers the belief that we each have a role in supporting students and families. We will continue to learn and grow, while intentionally looking inward for voices and leaders with our current staff to facilitate training and provide support when needed.
- a. Identify areas of celebration and areas of growth (within scope of influence)
 - i. Staff conversations
 - ii. Staff surveys
 - iii. Staff facilitated training
 - b. Develop and implement process for training and support of leadership teams and staff
 - i. CCDEI training and support

- ii. Data/disproportionality analysis
- iii. Intervention oversight and implementation

- c. Program reviews for equity and inclusion
 - i. Special Education
 - ii. ELL
 - iii. Title/LAP
 - iv. Highly Capable

- d. Draft and Adopt Equity and Inclusion Policy
 - i. 2022 - 2023

Learn, Look/Listen, and Lead:

Learn: Our staff and students will improve personal and collective awareness and understanding around cultural competency, diversity, equity, and inclusion (CCDEI). We will continue to engage in research to deliver culturally responsive professional development and relevant instruction which incorporates global perspectives, utilizes an objective lens, and emphasizes student and community voice.

Look/Listen: Our staff and students will improve awareness of culture and community to include identification people/organizations of influence and occurrences of exclusion and/or discrimination. We will engage in observation and listening, seek true voice, and identify systems for observation and listening amongst staff, students, and community partners. We commit to working collaboratively to identify, remove, and navigate potential barriers to student and staff success.

Lead: Our staff and students will be proactive in building relationships, working to establish and maintain welcoming, inclusive, and supportive learning environments for all students, families, staff, and community members, and develop skills necessary to respond appropriately to incidents of concern. We will identify and develop leaders within our organization and community through survey of skill and interest.

4. Framework Concepts

Through improved competence and confidence, our staff and students will be empowered with skills necessary to navigate the greater global community and lead efforts to maximize our human potential. We strive to understand and provide clarity as to where we are, where we want to go, and model the attitudes and actions reflective of our collective community vision, facilitating recruitment and retention of quality staff. To support this, we have researched and are facilitating professional development and community conversations centered around the following concepts to create entry points for discussion, improve self-awareness, build, and strengthen relationships, and construct foundations for comprehensive and sustainable action.

The following concepts provide the foundation for the Snohomish School District Equity and Inclusion Framework:

1. Speak – Up
2. The Five Dysfunctions of a Team
3. Dimensions of Diversity
4. Developing Cultural Sensitivity
5. Cultural Competency Continuum
6. Restorative Practices

Framework Concept #1:

Speak Up

When tasked with planning an assembly at one of our schools honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the student leadership team adopted the theme, “I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear.” We reflect on this considering what could be seen as acceptance of hate, humiliation, and violence whether targeted or generalized in social media, mass media, throughout society and even within our communities.

Rather than focus on or highlight hate, we would like to take this opportunity to look at how we can continue to move forward and work to be better with one another. We can start with increasing our awareness of hate speech and engage in conversations around how to address it and support those impacted by it. To be clear, hate negatively impacts everyone.

Hate speech is identified as language or action meant to vilify, humiliate, dehumanize, or insult a person, group, or organization based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability/disability, or religion. Below are some tips and strategies for positive support and intervention when we witness or are aware of hateful/humiliating attitudes, speech, or interactions. Some strategies for intervention include:

- Interrupt (speech, action, social media posts)
 - Every biased remark
 - Every time
 - In the moment
 - Without exception
- Question (seek to understand and be understood)
 - What was said
 - Why it was said
 - How to address (participant/recipient)
- Educate (yourself and others)
 - Explain why it is offensive
 - Encourage a different choice
- Echo (do not allow someone to speak up alone)
 - Recognize others who speak up/speak out

- Reiterate anti-bias

If you or someone you know is being targeted by hateful, harmful, or humiliating speech/actions, please reach out to a trusted adult. Similarly, if you know of someone engaging in hateful, harmful, or humiliating speech/actions, please contact a trusted adult. Please contact your building administrator or the [Office of Equity and Inclusion](#) if you have any questions or would like more information.

**Framework Concept #2:
The Five Dysfunctions of a Team – Patrick Lencioni, 2005**



1. Trust – Build and maintain trust throughout organization and community,
2. Conflict – Create and maintain spaces where dialogue, challenge, and disagreement are encouraged in pursuit of organizational development,
3. Commitment – Through engaged collaboration, develop and implement action plans,
4. Accountability – Develop and maintain clear systems of leadership and peer level accountability,
5. Results – Assess outcomes, implementation, and program effectiveness (Does this match our expectations and what we set out to do?).

Framework Concept #3:

Dimensions of Diversity: diversity wheel, Marilyn Loden 1990

Inner Circle: Factors beyond our control

Outer Circle: Factors which we may be able to influence/change

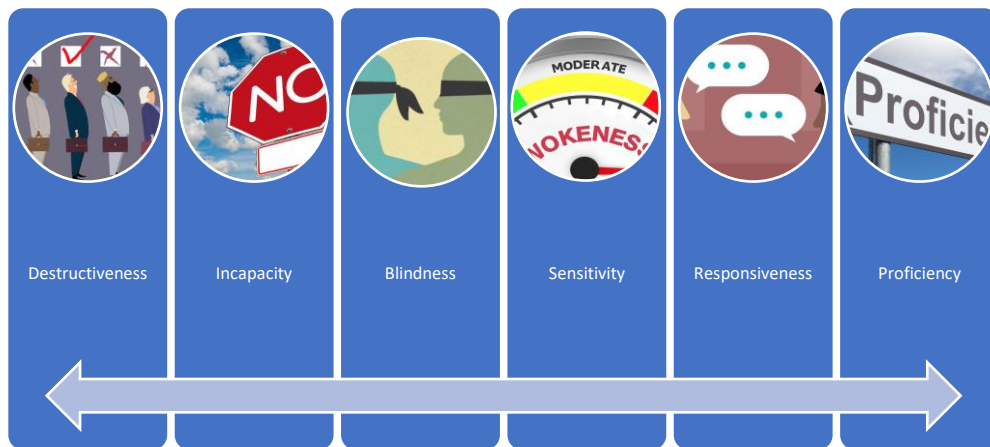
Other Factors: Environmental (Geographic Location, Interests, Experiences)



Each of us identify or can be identified through these categories (along with numerous others). Based on these categories, we can improve our understanding of the ways are voices amplified, silent, or silenced based as well as who has or is denied access to various spaces or resources.

Framework Concept #4

Cultural Competency Continuum



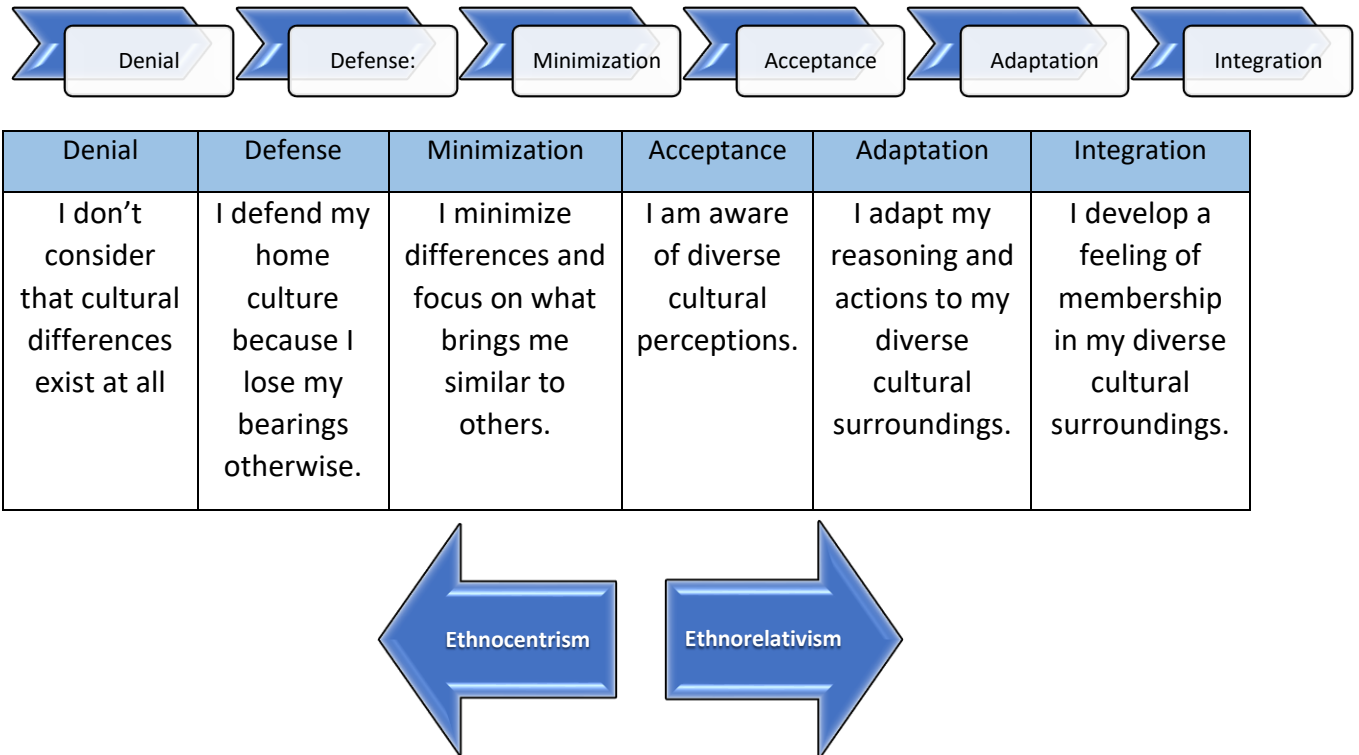
The cultural competency continuum serves as a tool for self-awareness. A person may typically identify themselves as being in a particular stage in the continuum based on a baseline approach to interactions related to age, gender, education level, occupation, race, socioeconomic status, religion, ability, country of origin, political affiliation, etc. However, a person may transition stages based on situational factors.

Increasing our own social and situational awareness can allow us to work together in being more responsive and proficient in meeting the needs of our students, families, staff, and community.

Framework Concept #5

Developing Cultural Sensitivity

Milton Bennett, 1993



Developing cultural sensitivity requires a person to move into a way of thinking which accepts, adapts, and integrates diversity. Our attitudes, actions, and interactions are rooted in our environment, education, and experiences. Acknowledging our different life experiences, allows us to be more inclusive and create spaces of safety and belonging.

Framework Concept #6

Restorative Practices

Restorative questions are a tool used to process an incident of wrongdoing or conflict. When a situation has occurred, the person(s) who has created the conflict takes some time and answers questions such as the following:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking about at the time of the incident?
- What are your thoughts now?
- Who was impacted by your actions, and how?
- How will you repair the harm?

The questions focus on the incident and allow the person to think about how his/her actions affected others. It encourages empathy, accountability, expression of feelings and thoughts, and problem solving. Restorative questions are also answered by those who were impacted by the incident, to help them process their feelings and determine what they need to make things right. (International Institute for Restorative Practices).

- What did you think when you realized what had happened?
- What impact has this incident had on you and others?
- What has been the hardest thing for you?
- What do you think needs to happen to make things right?