The Office of Equity and Accelerated Student Achievement continues to be intentional in our efforts in assisting schools in eliminating all gaps.

Project Unity

Project Unity is an initiative of the National Bullying Prevention Center designed to visibly show commitments to fostering kindness, acceptance, and inclusion, and to eliminate hate and bullying. The National Bullying Prevention Center encourages participants to wear orange as a clear indication of our commitment against bullying. Our efforts of Project Unity were expanded last year to include Social Justice Standards. The Social Justice Standards are a road map for anti-bias education at every grade level. The standards provide a common language
and organizational structure for what anti-bias attitudes and behaviors look like and sound like
in the classroom. Anti-bias spaces help children learn to be proud of themselves and their families, respect a range of human differences, recognize unfairness and bias, and speak up for the rights of others. The four standards that will be explored during the four Equity early dismissal days are Identity, Diversity, Justice and Action. On October 20, we focused on the Social Justice Standard: Identity. An example of a lesson included students expressing pride, confidence, and healthy self-esteem without denying the value and dignity of other people. On December 8, we focused on the Social Justice Standard: Diversity. An example of a lesson included students responding to diversity by building empathy, respect, understanding and connection. On February 9, we will focus on the Social Justice Standard: Justice. An example of a lesson would include students analyzing the harmful impact of bias and injustice on the world, historically and today. On March 30, we will focus on the Social Justice Standard: Action. An example of a lesson would include students recognizing their own responsibility to stand up to exclusion, prejudice and injustice. Project Unity supports the following Board of Education of Anne Arundel County policies: Bias Behavior & Language, Safe and Inclusive Environment for LGBTQ+ students, Educational Equity and Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, & Intimidation.

Equity Early Dismissal Professional Development – February 9, 2022

As a Maryland public school system, building teacher capacity in culturally responsive teaching is an expectation as evidenced by COMAR 13A.01.06 Educational Equity, Maryland State Department of Education’s Guide to Equity and Excellence in Maryland, the “Blueprint for Maryland” and the AACPS Educational Equity Policy and Regulations.

In accordance with state regulations, the AACPS Educational Equity Regulation defines cultural responsiveness as “pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including culture in all aspects
of learning through equitable and inclusive practices that promote high expectations.” Deepening our understanding of instructional best practices has prompted AACPS to use a research-based framework aimed at improving academic outcomes for all students across race, class, gender, and the broad spectrum of diversity of our students. The Framework includes: Awareness, Learning Partnerships, Information Processing and Community of Learners & Learning Environment. Staff will continue to explore more deeply the implementation of understanding the levels of culture of our students, how culture impacts how the brain works and understanding our own cultural lens through culturally responsive teaching moves.