

Policy 1-204 No Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Initiatives

The **Peoria** Unified School District is committed to fostering an educational environment that prioritizes academic excellence and individual achievement. This Policy reflects our intentional choice to maintain neutrality regarding matters of diversity, equity, ~~and inclusion in all aspects of educational policy and practice.~~ **inclusion, critical race theory, culturally responsive learning and restorative practices in all aspects of educational policy and practice.**

Definitions

“Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion” or “DEI” refers to a framework that prioritizes identity-based characteristics – such as race, gender, or ethnicity – over merit, competence, and individual ability. In this view, diversity is seen as the forced inclusion of specific groups regardless of qualifications; equity is interpreted as the artificial leveling of outcomes through preferential treatment or lowered standards; and inclusion is framed as a coercive push to conform to ideological norms, often at the expense of free thought or genuine fairness.

“Critical Race Theory” is an academic framework that interprets society primarily through the lens of race and power. It asserts that that systemic racism is embedded in laws, institutions, and everyday interactions, often categorizing accusing individuals as either oppressors or oppressed based solely on race. Critical Race Theory promotes division, fosters resentment and undermines the principles of equal opportunity, individual merit and shared American values.

“Culturally Responsive Learning” emphasizes students’ membership in identity groups such as race, ethnicity or gender often prioritizing these categories over individual character, effort, and achievement. This approach can unintentionally undermine personal responsibility, weaken shared national identity, and foster division in classrooms. By centering narratives of oppression or victimhood, it risks promoting grievance over gratitude, and collective blame over individual agency, ultimately shifting the focus away from academic excellence and civic unity.

“Restorative Practices” are based on several ideological assumptions that shift the focus away from discipline and accountability and instead prioritize social justice narratives that redefine criminal behavior as a product of systemic oppression rather than personal responsibility. This leads to policies that fundamentally alter how schools respond to misbehavior, often creating an environment where discipline is seen as an injustice rather than a necessary safeguard.

Policy Statement

The **Peoria** Unified School District believes that educational success should be based solely on merit, academic performance, and individual effort. Consequently, the District will not support or engage in programs, curricula, or initiatives explicitly focused on

diversity, equity, inclusion, culturally responsive learning, restorative practices or critical race theory.

Policy Guidelines:

1. Curricular Content

1. The District will not adopt or implement any curricular materials, library books, or teaching practices that emphasize diversity, equity, inclusion, culturally responsive learning, critical race theory or restorative practices as basic tenets of the educational experience.

2. Training and Professional Development

1. The District will not require, endorse or fund training programs, workshops, **in state/out of state conferences** or professional development sessions focused on DEI principles, **Culturally Responsive Learning, Restorative Practices and Critical Race Theory** for staff or administration. **This includes conferences that include DEI even if District attendees pledge not to attend or support sessions that include DEI.**

3. Recruitment and Hiring Practices

1. Employment practices will not incorporate DEI goals. The selection and hiring of staff will focus solely on qualifications, experience, and suitability for their roles, without consideration of demographic factors.

4. Communication

1. All external communication and marketing from the District will focus on educational achievements, academic performance, and community engagement, without references to **DEI, Restorative Practices, Culturally Responsive Learning and Critical Race Theory.**

5. Compliance with State and Federal Laws

1. The District will ensure that it remains compliant with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations adhering to this Policy.

6. Any current **or future** programs, curricula, **contracts** or initiatives subject to removal based on this policy will be reviewed by the Governing Board at a regularly scheduled meeting prior to its removal.

7. **The District shall ensure that no grant narrative language applications will have DEI, Restorative Practices, Critical Race Theory or Culturally Responsive Learning.**