

Policy #: 110
Title: EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE AND EQUITY
Date of Initial Approval: 04/19/2018
Revision/Re-authorization Dates:
Reviewers: MSA Superintendent; MSA Human Resources Office; MSA Instructional Leadership Team

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that educational excellence and educational equity are provided for each student at the Minnesota State Academies (MSA). Each student at MSA deserves a respectful learning environment in which their identity is valued and contributes to successful academic and social development outcomes for all students.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The Minnesota State Academies are committed to raising the academic achievement and social development levels for each student by creating a transformational system change to ensure equitable student achievement and positive self-identity development. This policy applies to all areas of education at MSA, including academics/coursework, co-curricular/extra-curricular activities, and/or other rights/privileges of enrollment.

Aligned with MSA Policy #102 (Equal Educational Opportunity), MSA is committed to challenging and remedying the institutional racism and other discriminatory systems that result in predictably lower academic and social development achievement for students from diverse backgrounds and identities. MSA acknowledges that complex societal and historical factors contribute to the inequity within our schools, communities, and nation. Nonetheless, rather than perpetuating the resulting disparities, MSA must work towards addressing and overcoming this inequity, providing all students with the support and opportunities necessary to succeed. This includes educating the community outside of our campuses regarding their responsibilities and duties in regards to accessibility and equity.

Through educational excellence and equity, each student at MSA will be empowered and equipped as a lifelong learner with the necessary tools to achieve their dreams and contribute to their community. MSA will establish and maintain a commitment to educational excellence and equity in its systematic practices, which will support its contribution towards a school community free from discriminatory practices and perspectives. Each student will be supported in their development of a positive self-identity that includes different cultural, gender, and/or societal identities.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. MSA administration and staff members will develop, support, model, and sustain equity-focused and culturally responsive training for staff and students.

- B. MSA administration and staff members will develop practices that create multiple pathways to success in order to meet the needs of our diverse students, and will actively encourage, support, and expect high academic and social development achievement for each student.

- C. MSA administration will monitor policies, programs, and practices to assess educational equity and work to eliminate racial, ethnic, gender, and any other disparities in all MSA programs, including attention to the following principles:
- a. Each student will receive high quality and culturally responsive pedagogy.
 - b. MSA will make every effort to recruit, employ, support, and retain a workforce that reflects the diversity, including racial diversity, of enrolled students, as well as culturally competent administrative, instructional, and support personnel.
 - c. MSA will model equity in all business practices and replace inequitable operational practices with systems that support implementation of this policy. MSA will educate our community partners and model appropriate practices in order to improve accessibility and equity in our students' communities.
 - d. Consistent with state regulations and other MSA policies, materials and assessments will be provided that reflect the diversity of students and staff, and are geared towards the understanding and appreciation of race, culture, gender, gender identity, economic status, language, ethnicity, ability, and other differences that contribute to the unique identity of each student and staff member.
 - e. Each program will seek community input and create a welcoming culture and inclusive environment that reflects the diversity of the school's diverse school populations, their families, and communities. People from all races, ethnic groups, and identities will be invited to examine issues and find adaptive solutions to address the root causes and systems, rather than focusing on one-time situational fixes. Partnerships will be sought out and developed between MSA programs and community members to bring multiple cultural perspectives to this process.
 - f. Consistent with this policy and feedback from community members, procedures will be developed to address specific areas of concern.