POLICY 4

EQUITY AND DISPROPORTIONALITY

SONOMA COUNTY

EQUITY AND DISPROPORTIONALITY

Equity: A Definition

Ensuring equal access to educational opportunity for all students by minimizing or eliminating the impact of disparities in abilities, levels of preparation, available resources and socio-cultural differences in achievement and performance so that all students may perform at optimum levels.

Equity Policy Statement Sonoma County SELPA

The Sonoma County SELPA is strongly committed to maintaining high expectations for all students and to eliminating persistent disparities in achievement, performance and socio-emotional adjustment among subgroups based on race, ethnicity, language, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, socio-economic status or disability. All policies and practices will reflect the goals of eliminating gaps in access to educational opportunities for all students to ensure they achieve academic proficiency through their educational journeys. The SELPA will support LEAs to advance these goals by supporting a culturally competent staff, maintaining uniformly high expectations for all, promoting rigorous curricula, differentiating instruction, and maximizing access for all students to high-level educational opportunities. Given the urgency of this mission, the SELPA is committed to having a proper emphasis on culturally responsive service delivery and consistently examining and monitoring policies, programs, practices, and written documents to ensure that they are consistent with these goals.

All staff will understand how their positions contribute directly or indirectly to these goals, develop the knowledge and skills needed in their areas of influence to serve diverse students and families, and be accountable for implementing a plan that will achieve these goals. By purpose and design, the SELPA will promote practices that provide students with the academic, emotional and social supports needed to increase the achievement of underperforming subgroups at an accelerated rate while maintaining and increasing overall student performance. It is anticipated that each LEA will work with the broader community (the private sector, faith-based groups, community-based agencies and organizations, and higher education institutions, etc.) to support all youth in achieving academic and social proficiency.

Disproportionality: A Definition

Disproportionality is the inappropriate overrepresentation and over-identification of ethnic minority children in special education. The disproportionality is in the relationship or association between a child's race or ethnicity and the numbers and type of special education classification and placement that result.

(Technical Assistance Center on Disproportionality, 2010)

Policy Statement on Disproportionality Sonoma County SELPA

The Sonoma County SELPA is committed to becoming a SELPA in which all students, staff and community respect cultural, racial and economic diversity and all students are recognized and supported for their individuality and culture. The SELPA recognizes that the overrepresentation of certain ethnic minority students in special education and in the disciplinary system is a nationwide problem and that multiple factors contribute to disparities in academic achievement, socio-emotional adjustment and behavior between student sub groups. The causes of disproportionality are complex and cross many social systems and the SELPA recognizes that inappropriate identification and placement of students in special education can have long-term deleterious effects. The SELPA is committed to examining the root causes of disproportionality to ensure that race, ethnicity, gender and socio-economic status are not predictors of which students will be referred for special education services or to the disciplinary system and partnering with health and human service agencies, LEAs and community based organizations to correct these persistent patterns.