

Delaware Multi-Tiered System of Support TA Center

Our Equity Mission Statement:

At the DE-MTSS Technical Assistance Center, we are committed to improving outcomes for each student through collaboration with the DE Dept. of Education, LEAs, and schools. Educational systems cannot be considered effective until they are effective for all students. A Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) is a framework that is designed to eradicate systemic barriers through prevention and responsiveness to the varied needs of all learners. This approach leverages the most positive presumption about student ability. MTSS teams embed equity into their implementation of all aspects of MTSS “[to ensure] that every learner has access (and opportunity) to the educational resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education across race, gender, ethnicity, religion, language, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, family background and/or family income” (The Aspen Education & Society Program & CCSSO, 2017). By fostering inclusive environments and practices and embracing diversity, we strive to create a more just and equitable educational landscape for all.

We believe...

1. In order to advance excellence in equity, leaders and practitioners must ensure that educational systems are working to advance the achievement of the “whole child.”
2. Cultural competence is fundamental to advancing educational outcomes for all students. It helps to enrich the educational experiences of youth in ways that empower students to succeed academically and thrive as individuals.
3. Equity and culturally responsive practices must be ingrained into all aspects of educational decision-making at the state, district, and school levels. It is not just an approach to teaching, it is a mindset that values and respects the cultural identities of all students.
4. Each student has a fundamental right to feel safe and to be welcomed as a valued member of the school community.
5. Educational systems must amplify and prioritize the voices of students and families who are historically academically marginalized and/or disciplined disproportionately with exclusionary practices in schools.
6. Representation matters in the curriculum and staffing and both should be representative of the communities they serve in and the students they serve.

7. Discipline policies and practices need to be equitable, preventative and restorative.
8. Decision-making in education must be data-driven and all data needs to be examined for bias, from including what is collected, how it is collected, and how it gets interpreted and reported.
9. Educational systems need to prioritize, educate, and continuously monitor our school community around equity and culturally responsive practices in order to best serve our students and families.
10. Equity requires schools to support social emotional learning and promotion of mental wellbeing for each member of the school community.
11. *Adults need to have cultural competency. At an individual level, this involves reflecting on one's own beliefs and attitudes, as well as gaining the necessary values, knowledge, skills, and qualities to effectively navigate and interact in diverse cultural contexts (Denboba, MCHB, 1993).*

In translating these beliefs into practices...

These translated practices aim to directly support the core beliefs about culturally responsive pedagogy, cultural competence, equity, and the holistic well-being of students in educational settings. The Center, schools, and districts can commit to these practices to ensure that their values are reflected in their actions, ultimately fostering an inclusive and equitable learning environment for all students.

1. Schools develop and revise Tier 1 practices, including the use of high quality instruction and instructional materials that reinforce not only school-wide expectations, but also foster rigorous academic and create holistic social and emotional experiences for all students. This includes the implementation of teaching matrices, ensuring with input and representation from all members of the school community (staff, families, and students).
2. LEAs and schools provide ongoing professional learning opportunities for educators focused on cultural competence, racism, bias, and privilege to increase awareness and sensitivity.
3. LEAs and schools ensure that students have equitable access to Tier 2 and 3 interventions, tailored to meet the unique needs of diverse learners.

4. LEAs and schools prioritize creating a safe and inclusive school environment and climate where every student feels welcomed and valued.
5. Schools actively seek and prioritize the voices and perspectives of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in decision-making processes and curriculum development.
6. LEAs and schools involve students and families in decision-making processes and policy development to ensure their voices are heard and valued.
7. Schools ensure that curriculum and staffing reflect the diversity of the student population, promoting representation and inclusivity.
8. LEAs and schools prioritize implementing restorative and culturally responsive discipline practices, moving away from exclusionary measures.
9. LEAs and schools analyze disaggregated data to identify and address disparities, ensuring decisions are informed by accurate and unbiased data.
10. LEAs and schools provide ongoing training, support, and self-reflection opportunities for educators and staff on equity and culturally responsive practices, fostering a continuous learning environment and a strengths-based approach to teaching and learning.
11. Schools prioritize social-emotional learning programs and mental health literacy for all students, staff, and families.