



NELMS Equity Position Statement

We, at the New England League of Middle School (NELMS), recognize that certain populations endure systemic discrimination, marginalization, and inequity. Among those are People of the Global Majority, Latine Persons, Indigenous Persons, many immigrant populations, those who are LGBTQIA+, families whose native language is not English, persons with disabilities, people of certain religions, and other populations who experience discrimination. Societal discriminatory behaviors affect education funding, school policies, climate and culture, how students are treated, disciplinary practices, curricula, and potential growth opportunities that many students are denied. Education professionals must model equity and racial and social justice to ensure each student's academic, social, and emotional success and the development of their healthy identities.

We, as members of NELMS, believe that middle grades educators at all levels must recognize and identify their biases, privileges, and discriminatory actions and use that information to initiate practices that promote culturally sustaining philosophies, behaviors, and pedagogy. We believe that leaders must plan faculty and administrator joint meetings to engage in essential conversations about how personal experiences impact their perspectives on equity. It is also imperative to examine school policies and practices that may discriminate against students and their families. The ultimate goal is **explicit action**, including:

- processes for engaging in extended and frequent conversations about *equity* (as opposed to *equality*)

- actions for including and valuing all stakeholders' experiences and perspectives
- engaging middle level students in surveys and conversations focused on equity
- identifying critical resources to educate a school's educators
- recognition of inequitable practices and policies and development of a plan to rectify them
- ensuring curricula reflect a full range of student experiences and identities and also employ multimodal opportunities for students to access and engage with them
- examining, revising, and/or eliminating a school's faculty and student body's heteronormative actions and behaviors
- the development of a school's equity position statement
- developing strategies and timelines for examining a school's culture, climate, policies, practices, Eurocratic curricula, and behaviors that may marginalize students, and implementing appropriate changes to ensure equity

These processes—including conversations—should be addressed on a frequent basis, recognizing that promoting equity and racial and social justice are continuous actions based on providing learning opportunities and experiences that all students deserve. All educators must engage in developing, advocating for, encouraging, and implementing equitable school funding, policies, procedures, practices, scheduling, and curricula, ensuring that each student receives equitable opportunities that reflect ethical and moral responsibilities of educators at all levels.

