

State of Michigan  
State Board of Education

**RESOLUTION ON DIGNITY IN SCHOOLS**

WHEREAS, Suspensions, expulsions, and school-based arrests are used too often in our schools and may disproportionately impact students based on their race, color, or national origin; sex; LGBTQ status; and disability status.

WHEREAS, Data from the U.S. Department of Education (USED), during the 2013-2014 school year, indicate that Black K-12 students were 3.8 times more likely to receive an out-of-school suspension than white students, even though research shows there is no evidence that students of color misbehave more than their white peers.

WHEREAS, Research has shown that exclusionary discipline is a counterproductive response to student behavior, worsening educational outcomes both for the students suspended and for their classmates.

WHEREAS, In 2014, the U.S. Department of Justice and USED jointly released a school discipline guidance package that assisted states, districts, and schools in developing policies and practices to meet existing federal civil rights laws and to promote positive school climates.

WHEREAS, In December 2018, those federal departments rescinded the guidance package after a report from the federal School Safety Commission recommended doing so and indicated that the federal government no longer supported investigating district policies and practices that have a disparate impact on students of color.

WHEREAS, Federal law and regulations continue to prohibit district policies and practices that have a disparate impact on students based on their race, color, or national origin; sex; disability status; or age.

WHEREAS, Focusing on evidence-based policies and practices that create a positive school climate for all students and addressing school climate in the Michigan ESSA Plan increases student achievement and increases equitable access to educational opportunities.

WHEREAS, Trauma research and evidence-based practice shows response is necessary in sexual assault and harassment behavior to effectively address the impact on school climate and safety; and change the culture of assault with the acknowledgement that sexual assault and harassment disproportionately affects students of color. Transformative Justice is a general philosophical strategy for responding to conflicts that incorporates restorative justice and will provide a foundation for discussion and recommendations on practice and policy in this area.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT The State Board of Education reaffirms its commitment to upholding all federal and state civil rights laws; helping school districts enact policies that improve school climate, safety, and do not have a disparate impact on students based on their race, sex, LGBTQ status, disability status, or age; and eliminating the use of ineffective exclusionary discipline and increasing equity for all students.

Adopted March 12, 2019