



Board Policy Equity Lens Tool

Title of board policy being reviewed:

IGDK-Non-MESD Sponsored Study and Activities Tours/Trips/Competitions Policy.

Describe the purpose of this policy:

The purpose of this policy is to clearly distinguish independently sponsored student trips, tours, competitions, and activities from those sponsored by MESD. It establishes boundaries regarding MESD resources, fundraising, staff involvement, recruitment, and use of the MESD name so families understand that these activities are under the responsibility of outside organizations.

What is your experience with this policy:

This policy primarily serves as a boundary-setting and transparency measure. Its equity strength is that it prevents MESD staff, resources, and institutional relationships from being used to promote outside opportunities that may not be equally available to all students. Its primary equity consideration is recognizing that independently funded opportunities may remain more accessible to students with greater financial and social resources.

What is the plan to communicate this policy to staff, students, and/or families? What is the plan to communicate this policy to linguistically diverse students and their families?

This policy and a summary of this policy will be available on the MESD web page. The summary of this policy is also available on the MESD website in Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Somali, and Vietnamese and, upon request, the summary and/or policy may be translated into other languages.

Is this policy:

Easy to locate for staff?

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Accessible to students and families?

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Included in onboarding, intake, or other training?

This policy will be communicated to the Board at its next Regular Session meeting as well as be available in the handbook. The policy will also be posted on the district website for easy access.

Clear and easy to understand?

Overall, yes. The policy clearly states that MESD does not sponsor, endorse, fund, recruit for, or control these activities. It also establishes expectations for students and staff regarding fundraising, recruitment, and use of MESD resources.

Some of the language is lengthy and could potentially be simplified to make the distinction between MESD-sponsored and non-MESD-sponsored activities even easier for students and families to understand.

People

How are people affected positively or negatively by the policy? What potential barriers might people encounter? What barriers might be reduced by this policy?

The policy positively protects students and families from mistakenly believing that an outside activity has been reviewed, endorsed, or financially supported by MESD. It also establishes boundaries that help prevent inappropriate use of staff influence or public resources.

A potential negative impact is that students with fewer financial resources may have less access to outside opportunities because MESD resources and fundraising mechanisms cannot be used to support their participation.

Can you identify the racial or ethnic groups affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision? Do you know the potential impacts to these populations? If you don't know, how will you find out?

The policy does not identify specific racial or ethnic groups as being directly affected. However, outside programs that are not open to all students or require significant personal financial resources could have different impacts across communities.

The policy itself acknowledges that many outside programs are not available to all students. Equity considerations may therefore arise from differences in financial resources, access to information, transportation, or other opportunities rather than from the policy's requirements themselves.

Were these populations involved in any way, at any point in the development, implementation, and evaluation of this policy? If so, when and how?

The policy does not indicate that students, families, staff, or community members were involved in its development.

Student and family feedback could be useful in determining whether the distinction between MESD-sponsored and independently sponsored opportunities is clearly understood.

What priorities and commitments are communicated by this policy?

The policy communicates commitments to transparency, appropriate use of public resources, ethical staff conduct, and clear organizational boundaries. It emphasizes that families should be able to distinguish between opportunities provided by MESD and those offered independently by outside organizations.

Place

What kind of positive or negative environment are we creating?

What are the barriers to more equitable outcomes? (e.g. mandated, political, emotional, financial, programmatic or managerial)

The policy creates an environment in which MESD-sponsored educational opportunities are clearly separated from private or independently sponsored activities.

Potential barriers to equitable outcomes include the cost of outside activities, differences in families' ability to fundraise independently, transportation, access to information, and the fact that some opportunities may not be available to all students.

Power

How is the power of decision-making shared with those it affects?

How have you intentionally involved the communities affected by this policy, program, practice, or decision?

The policy places decisions about participation in outside activities primarily with students, families, and the sponsoring organizations. MESD does not participate in selecting programs or advising families about which opportunities they should choose.

This protects family decision-making authority, although families are also responsible for evaluating the quality, safety, cost, and appropriateness of outside programs themselves.

Process

Does the policy, program, or decision improve, worsen, or make no change to existing disparities?

Does it create other unintended consequences?

The policy itself primarily establishes boundaries and does not directly address existing disparities. It helps ensure that students are not given preferential access to outside opportunities through MESD staff or resources.

An unintended consequence could be that students from families with greater financial resources or access to outside networks are better able to participate in these opportunities, while students with fewer resources have limited options for assistance because MESD cannot support their fundraising through district resources.

Plan

How will you reduce the negative impacts and address the barriers?

Within the scope of this policy, negative impacts can be reduced by clearly communicating which activities are and are not MESD sponsored and ensuring that staff apply the policy consistently to all students and outside organizations.

MESD can also continue to provide equitable MESD-sponsored educational and cocurricular opportunities so that access to meaningful student experiences does not depend primarily on a family's ability to participate in privately sponsored programs.