

## **Draft Policy: Cultural Competency**

Cultural competency refers to an ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures and is comprised of four components: (1) Awareness of one's own cultural worldview, (2) Attitude towards cultural differences, (3) Knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews, and (4) cross-cultural skills.

The word culture implies the integrated patterns of human behavior that includes thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups. The word competency implies having the capacity to function in a particular way: the capacity to function within the context of culturally integrated patterns of human behavior defined by a group. Competency in functioning cross-culturally means learning new patterns of behavior and effectively applying them in the appropriate settings.

The Charleston County School District will adopt the following elements that are essential for its employees to contribute to the District's ability to become more culturally proficient:

1. Value Diversity: Claim Differences
  - Incorporate differences in the curriculum – students must see themselves in their curriculum and instructional materials
  - Acknowledge the contribution of various cultural and ethnic groups through teaching and learning
2. Institutionalize Cultural Knowledge
  - Incorporate cultural knowledge and training into the professional development of all District staff
  - Ensure educators' pedagogy is culturally responsive
  - Structure opportunities to engage parents and communities in cultural awareness
3. Adapt to Diversity
  - Develop structures for revisiting community needs and values to align school policies and resources