ANet's Anti-Racist Policy and Standards

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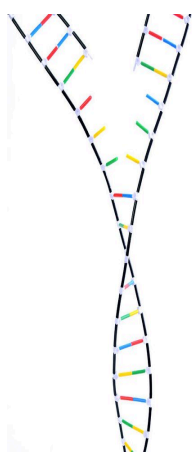
"The original problem of racism has not been solved by suasion. Knowledge is only power if knowledge is put to the struggle for power. Changing minds is not a movement. Critiquing racism is not activism. Changing minds is not activism. An activist produces power and policy change, not mental change. If a person has no record of power or policy change then that person is not an activist." ~Ibram X. Kendi, How to be an Antiracist

In our effort to become an anti-racist organization, we believe an Anti-Racist Organization Policy is necessary to influence our mindset, structures, and systems. We visualize this as a double helix of our organizational DNA where we seek to address our anti-racist standards through structures, systems, personal mindset, and learning.

We cannot rely on the good intentions of well meaning people in the absence of a policy to guide ANet's anti-racist work forward. Just as desegregation of public areas and institutions in the U.S. required explicit laws in order to be implemented, so is the case in the work of anti-racism.

This Policy formalizes the behaviors, actions, and decisions we must uphold to be true to our anti-racism commitment. It helps ground the creation of procedures that anchor ANet in how it operates within it's anti-racist beliefs.

The Policy is grounded in our organizational desire for continuous learning and development towards anti-racism. The Anti-Racist Policy strengthens and compliments our Anti-Harassment Policy, which ensures we strike a balance between learning and accountability.

Alongside our Anti-Harassment Policy, this Policy helps to ensure we have guidelines to protect us and know what procedures to follow when oppressive acts occur within ANet. This Policy does not supersede in any way our Anti-Harassment Policy. If you have experienced or witnessed racism or discrimination by any ANet employee, contractor, school/district partner, or vendor, you should report the incident immediately to our Vice President of Talent or our General Counsel as soon as possible so that appropriate action can be taken.

Our Beliefs

- All forms of oppression prevent marginalized students from experiencing educational equity.

- Racism and other forms of oppression have prevented and continue to prevent students from racially marginalized communities from experiencing educational equity.

- Students living in poverty, students from racially marginalized communities, students with learning differences, and students who are multilingual emergent are at risk for lowered expectations due to the effects of systemic oppression, white supremacy culture, and unconscious biases.

- Access to high-quality, equitable education for all students is a matter of justice.

- In order to achieve equitable instruction, we must recognize, respond, and provide support and resources consistent with [anti-oppression principles](#).

- When given access to standards-aligned, culturally diverse curricula and assessments, paired with educators who believe in and provide consistent high-quality instruction, students in marginalized groups can achieve at a high level.

- **The same systems and beliefs of oppression that impact students do not stop at the schoolhouse door and may directly impact employee experience in our organization.**

ANet's Anti-Racist Organizational Standards

What are anti-racist organizational standards?

ANet is already on its journey to becoming an anti-racist organization. ANet's Anti-Racist Organizational Standards will further our organization's progress in this journey, serving to challenge us to understand and correct the inequities that may unintentionally exist within our organization, to proactively act in ways that promote anti-racism, and to build on the strengths that have enabled our past conversations about race and bias.

Similar to educational standards, ANet's Anti-Racist Organizational Standards (AROS) represent the vision and goals that we will achieve as we move towards becoming [an anti-racist organization](). The standards focus on five areas: Leadership, Policies and Procedures, Human Resources, Programs and Communication. These standards will guide our work in the present and the future, serving as a framework for further longer-term, multi-year learning strategies that guide the organization towards anti-racism.

What will the anti-racist organizational standards help us do?

- **Bring awareness to our biases** by strengthening our ability to recognize subtle bias
- **Identify structural racism** within the organization and support the planning needed to take action
- Develop a reliable way to **measure success** toward becoming an anti-racist organization
- **Live out our core values**: Advance Equity, People Matter, Bold thinking, Drive Results, promote leadership and Team First
- **Increase dialogue** about what it means for ANet to be an Anti-racist organization
- **Increase joy** at work for all ANetters, leading to higher level of impact towards our mission

Why is it important to become an anti-racist organization?

The population of ANet is predominantly white and the communities that we serve are predominantly of color. Research done by ANet's Inclusive Culture Working Group has surfaced that racism within the organization, even when unintentional, is still an active problem. And we know that this racism negatively affects the experience of staff; our products and services; our relationships with our partners; and ultimately, students' experience within ANet schools.

Although many forms of racism appear unconsciously and without negative intent, we are making an organizational commitment, with the standards as our guide, to unearth and proactively address bias and racism resulting from living in a society steeped in structural racism.

Why is the Change Team starting with anti-racist organizational standards?

The Change Team is starting with supporting dialogue about anti-racism. Often, people think that talking is inaction. We know that it can feel like talking is not enough, and we are eager to move faster into concrete action. However, talking has a special power that is too often overlooked - the ability to change attitudes. The engine of discussion drives change in personal belief. For this reason, we will be engaging in small group conversations designed to give ANetters the opportunity to:

- Build stronger, deeper relationships across the organization, especially among those with different backgrounds,

- Identify allies in their efforts to promote anti-racism,

- Align around a shared vision for what it means to be a truly inclusive and respectful community, and

- Deepen their understanding of race and cultural differences.

In order to engage in these meaningful conversations, we must all have a shared understanding of where we are trying to go as an organization. ANet's Anti-Racist Organizational Standards represent our vision and desired state for how we will operate as an anti-racist organization. These standards will help increase the fluency and normalcy of having conversations about anti-racism and will enable the personal and organizational transformation called for by the standards.

How were the anti-racist organizational standards developed?

The Change Team developed these standards in partnership with Beyond Diversity using the anti-oppression principles and research referenced in this document. The Change Team is a diverse group of ANetters, representing 15% of the organization from various departments and teams, with a mission to build clarity and momentum around the commitment to anti-racism.

Anti Racist Organizational Standards

Leadership	Policies and Procedures	Human Resources	Programs	Communication

Leadership

1.1 . Our organizational leadership ensures that the organization's mission and operations align with anti-oppression principles.

1 .2. Our organizational leadership ensures that there is a cohesive vision among employees about anti-oppression principles.

1 .3. Our organizational leadership practices excellent intercultural skills.

1.4. Decision-making is shared by a racially diverse group in the organization.

1 .5. Decision-making is accountable to people of color and other people from marginalized populations.

1.6. Our organization continually develops leadership that uses anti-oppression practices.

Policies and Procedures

2.1 Our organization has a written commitment to address structural racism

2.2 Our organization has a written policy to use the viewpoints of people from marginalized racial groups to shape the operations of the organization.

2.3 Our organization has policies and procedures that promote anti-racist principles.

2.4 Our organization periodically reviews its policies and procedures to ensure the alignment with anti-racist principles.

2.5 Our organization includes a written intent or goal and explanation for all policies and procedures and the impact of these policies and procedures on the organization's anti-racist principles.

Human Resources

3.1. Our organization effectively recruits, selects, develops, and retains people of color at all levels of the organization.

3.2. People of color are given opportunities to develop, advance, and share their talents in the organization.

3.3. Our organization actively uses mechanisms to bring forth the concerns of staff of color.

3.4. Our organization has an effective process for resolving concerns and complaints that may arise from staff members' experiences of unfair, inequitable or oppressive treatment in the course of their employment.

3.5. Employee evaluations include the application of anti-oppression principles as appropriate for each job classification.

3.6. Staff members receive training focused on an understanding of oppression, racism, and white culture and its impact on the individual and organization

3.7 Our organization communicates its human resource process clearly and protocols are made accessible to all.

3.8 Our organization has a process for promotions that reflects anti-oppression principles.

3.9 Salary and benefits options are considered through anti-oppression principles.

Programs

4.1. Organization programs actively invite and do not exclude-overtly or inadvertently-people of color.

4.2. Organization programs are designed to address structural racism.

4.3. Organization programs are accountable to people of color.

4.4. Our organization's internal and external products and services are informed by the ways that racism and other forms of oppression negatively affect people from marginalized groups

4.5. To empower people from marginalized populations, organizational programs work to ensure (1) that people of color have greater levels of control over their own lives; (2) that local leadership is encouraged and developed; and (3) that the most important issues of the local community are given priority.

4.6. Staff members apply anti-racism principles in their work.

Communication

5.1 Our organization's communications are racially-aware, not racially blind.

5.2 Our organization's communications demonstrate knowledge of and respect for people of color.

5.3 Our organization promotes a dialogue with staff and constituents about the meaning of anti-racist principles.

5.4 Our organization works to address racism and other forms of oppression through its communications.

5.5 Our organization continually communicates that it embraces anti-oppression principles and anti-racism protocols.

5.6. Our organization proactively works to include People of Color in the development of its communication approach.

5.7 Our organization intentionally embraces various forms of communication in support of a more inclusive working environment.

Purpose

This Policy was created to influence our behaviors and beliefs. By creating this Policy, we are putting a stake in the ground that we are working for a change and making a commitment to the continued work of becoming an anti-racist organization.

ANet's Anti-Racist Policy and Procedures

Each one of us is responsible for moving ANet towards being an anti-racist organization.

This personal responsibility requires us to:

- Participate in a clear system of support to dismantle and, along with our Anti-Harassment Policy, address systems and instances of institutional racism and other infringements of our anti-oppression principles. *(anti-racist standard 1.1: Our organizational leadership ensures that the organization's mission and operations align with anti-oppression principles as they exist within our organization.)*

- Identify, discuss, and challenge issues of bias and the impacts they have within our programs, leadership, policies, procedures, communications, and human resources. We will challenge ourselves to understand and correct the inequities we discover.

Doing this will ensure that our anti-racist standards and core values are lived out consistently within our work as individuals and organizationally.

Employees who influence partner decisions will also help partners move toward equitable instruction through an anti-racist lens as stated in ANet's coach practices. Some of these actions are already being implemented with partners and others we aspire to take action on as we learn more during the next three years.

These employees will support school and system leaders in:

- Deepening their belief that:
    - ALL students come with valuable knowledge and an innate ability to learn,
    - Educators must work actively to hold high expectations for ALL students, and
    - Educators must recognize and disrupt their own/others' biases, which can erode expectations for students.
- Building an instructional culture across classrooms and schools that is representative of all students' cultures and cultivates a growth mindset and culture of error.
- Grounding equitable instruction in principles of anti-oppression as supported by anti-racist standard 1.1.
- Increasing student agency and elevating student voice within their pursuit of equitable instruction.
- Fostering safe environments where ALL students shoulder the cognitive lift in their learning and share their developing thinking.
- Providing targeted opportunities to address unfinished learning/teaching to make grade-level instruction accessible for ALL students.
- Engaging in targeted analyses of data and student work to enable teachers to adjust instruction and respond to student needs.
- Ensuring that diverse communities have equitable access to their services and resources and that they are included in decision–making, as noted in our anti-oppression principles and supported by anti-racist standard 1.1.

Collective Internal Actions

We collectively work towards our anti-racist organizational standards internally by:

Individually

1. Ensuring that our conduct feels welcoming and respectful to people of diverse backgrounds.

2. Being open to feedback and accountability for our own actions and how they impact others.

3. Learning and practicing our core values and anti-racist standards for personal growth and organizational impact.

4. Holding our colleagues and ourselves accountable to our collective internal actions through our equity literacy skills.

5. Abiding by the Anti-Harassment Policy. *Employees with issues related to potential harassment should contact our Vice President of Talent or our General Counsel immediately as per our Anti-Harassment Policy.*

As an Organization

We are all responsible for recognizing the potential in people and ideas, and have the courage to develop that potential

1. Continuing to proactively recruit, hire, and promote the leadership of diverse employees who reflect the communities we serve at all levels of our organization, including senior leadership and the board of directors.

2. Continuing to implement programs and development opportunities that enrich and educate all staff on anti-racism, such as Change Team, Affinity Groups, Learning Together, mentorship programs, and more.

3. Using the anti-racist standards as a lens when shaping organizational priorities and as an accountability tool when assessing progress towards those priorities.

4. Regularly assessing and monitoring the impact of ANet's anti-racist standards to set priorities.

5. Ensuring that implicit and explicit biases, white privilege, and white dominant culture within our organizational culture, structure, and policies are named and addressed.

6. Ensuring that decision-making is shared with and accountable to people of color and other

people from marginalized populations.

7. Practicing strong intercultural skills and emotional intelligence per our anti-racist standards.

8. Ensuring that team anti-racist priorities include anti-racist development and explicit connections to the function of the team, as well as the partners and communities we serve.

9. Ensuring that the ANet maintains as part of its organizational structure a function, such as the Anti-Racist Organizational Change Team, and that its members are supported to provide leadership and momentum around anti-racist organizational development.

All teams

What is expected of your team:

1. Regularly attending Learning Together because anti-racist development is not easy learning and requires significant investment.

2. Setting aside 60 minutes per month for Learning Together pre-work.

3. Attending org-wide make-up sessions when you cannot attend your group's Learning Together conversation.

4. Continuing learning, reflection, and development towards anti-racism on at least a quarterly basis in your teams.

What your team can expect from the organization and the Anti-Racism & Culture (ARC) team:

Equity & Anti-Oppression
Office of the CEO

The Equity and Anti-Oppression team defines, sets a vision for, and operationalizes embedding educational and institutional equity, anti-racism, and anti-oppression internally and externally to improve our organizational culture and better serve students in our partner schools and systems.

1. Continuing to prioritize educational and institutional equity, marginalized students, and anti-racism in our mission and org-wide focuses to illuminate and learn from instances of racism and bias.

2. Ensuring that pre-work is given 2-3 weeks in advance and establishing a flexible block of time for all employees to complete it.

3. Sharing regular attendance data by team and supporting managers with follow-up conversations in order to better understand and overcome barriers to attendance.

Optional Opportunities to Further your Development

Resources and support will also be provided by the ARC team, who will provide wrap-around, individualized support for teams. The ARC team will continuously update resources and opportunities available for learning and development, including these current resources and opportunities available now:

- ARC resources and learning modules for team and individual use
- Equity and anti-racism book studies
- ARC support for team building
- Learning Together groups and facilitators
- Affinity groups

Our grounding principles:

- Notice reacting versus responding
- Choose daring leadership versus armored leadership
- Anchor in the most enduring learning
- Leverage the wisdom and expertise of the communities we serve
- Notice adaptive vs. technical change contexts
- Choose change leadership vs change management

Collective External Commitments with the Partners We Serve

We, individually and together as an organization, will work towards living out our anti-racist standards by taking external actions that move toward these commitments, including:

1. Asserting that our collective commitment extends to work with external partners by providing space and time to engage in challenging dialogue and take strategic action that raises the profile of inequity within systems we serve. Given the stark reality that racism and bias exists within our society, we commit to acknowledging structural inequities that persist in our partner systems and schools.

2. Prioritizing and advocating for the eradication of racist and oppressive systems and structures throughout the educational landscape by building culture, practices, and leadership skills that guarantee equitable instruction for all students, especially students living in poverty, students from racially marginalized communities, students with learning differences, and students who are multilingual emergent.

3. Emphasizing that our educational system is the product of a complex and interconnected history of racism and bias, and that instruction and learning can be strengthened through an awareness of institutional racism and its effects. Using instructional leadership coaching as a key lever for change, we will recognize and respond to barriers to equitable instruction with strategic implementation of ANet's recommended resources for addressing inequities. Example areas of inequities include, but are not limited to, school policy, leadership, and management; discipline and suspension; students' personal development and progress; staff recruitment, training, and professional development; student advocacy and well being; awareness of trauma; and coaching across differences.

4. Promoting leadership within organizational teams to ensure the inclusion of people of color and people from marginalized communities in external products, marketing, and operations. Key organizational functions, for both partner and non-partner facing teams, must be designed to address structural inequities, ensuring that racism does not compromise our interdependent teams nor go unaddressed within key departments. Our organization's products and services must be informed by the ways that racism and other

forms of oppression negatively affect people from marginalized groups. Therefore, the structures and modes for organizational communications are racially-aware, not racially blind, and demonstrate knowledge of and respect for people of color and people from marginalized communities.