



## **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, and INCLUSION POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

<b>DEI Mission Statement</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Diversity</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Equity</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Inclusion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>DEI Principles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Vulnerable Groups</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Schoolwide Commitment</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Progressive Discipline Policy</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Investigation and Process</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Disciplinary Action</b>	<b>5</b>

Benjamin Franklin High School is committed to maintaining an environment that celebrates diversity and promotes equity and inclusion. All students, faculty, and staff are to be treated fairly and with respect. Disrespect, discrimination, microaggressions, and prejudice are not tolerated. It is the responsibility of administration, teachers, and staff to instill a strong sense of right and wrong in all students, as well as a sense of compassion, understanding, acceptance, and the importance of inclusion and cultural humility. It is the responsibility of Benjamin Franklin High School to create, promote, and maintain a safe learning environment for all students regardless of race, religion, religious belief, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity, and socio-economic status.

### **DEI Mission Statement**

Benjamin Franklin High School believes that individual and cultural diversity is a value to be understood, affirmed and nurtured. We value and respect differences and understand that diversity is strength. We work diligently to remove all barriers to learning, including extracurricular opportunities, and ensure educational resources and opportunities are equitable and accessible to all students. We are committed to inclusion of all students and staff. It is our commitment to celebrate the individuality and uniqueness of each member of the Franklin family.

## Diversity

The variety of human differences, including but not limited to race, gender, gender identity, religion, religious beliefs, ability, socio-economic status or other ideologies and the understanding that each student brings unique experiences, strengths, and ideas. Diversity is the action of incorporating these differences and ideas into the fabric of our school.

## Equity

The act of offering and providing intentional and individualized support to all students that addresses possible barriers to learning and or social emotional development. Equity is adaptive, fair, thoughtful, and individualized. Inequity may present itself in many ways, including but not limited to: societal inequity, socio-economic inequity, cultural inequity, familial inequity, programmatic inequity, instructional inequity, and linguistic inequity. Inequities occur when biased or discriminatory policies, programs, practices, or expressions contribute to or perpetuate a lack of equality in educational performance, results, and outcomes.

## Inclusion

All students have a right to equal educational and extracurricular opportunities in a safe environment that is conducive and welcoming to all students and creates a sense of belonging. All students are recognized as unique individuals that contribute to the diversity of Benjamin Franklin High School.

## DEI Principles

- All students and staff will be treated with compassion and respect. All students and staff are of equal value regardless of race, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief, or socio-economic status.
- All students shall have equal access to resources and educational opportunities to promote student success.
- In collaboration with administration, teachers shall be committed to ensuring that culturally responsive pedagogy is implemented across the curricula.
- In addition to students, teachers and staff shall address and report any instances of discrimination or victimization to administration.
- Administration shall investigate and respond to all reports of violations to this policy.

- Administration, teachers, and staff shall be committed to ongoing professional development in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Administration, teachers, and staff shall embody the principles of the DEI Policy at all times.

## Vulnerable Groups

While all individuals can be victims of discrimination, implicit bias or unfair treatment, some individuals may be more vulnerable for becoming victims of inequality due to the following:

- Race
- Gender
- Gender Identity
- Sexual Orientation
- Religion
- Religious Beliefs
- Socio-economic status

Administration, teachers, and staff shall be committed to ensuring the safety of all students at all times.

## Schoolwide Commitment

Promoting a safe learning environment that celebrates diversity, and promotes equity and inclusion is a schoolwide responsibility. Administrators, teachers, and staff are expected to take an active role in dismantling any barriers that impede the successful promotion of student's academic success and social and emotional development that prejudice can create.

## Progressive Discipline Policy

The progressive discipline policy is designed to provide a structured corrective action process to mitigate and prevent violations to the DEI Policy. It is the responsibility of the administration, teachers, and staff to uphold the DEI Principles at all times. Reports of violations may be brought by students against an employee; by students against other students; by one employee against another employee, so long as they are directly the victim of a violation.

Outlined below are the progressive discipline procedures that will be followed when violations are reported by a student of a faculty or staff, or by one employee against another. Violations between students are handled through the student Code of Conduct. Franklin reserves the right to combine or skip steps depending on the facts of each situation and the nature of the offense.

Previous policy violations despite coaching & training, employee's work record, and the gravity of the incident will all be taken into consideration.

## Investigation and Process

Any reported violation of the DEI Principals will result in an investigation. Violations may be reported in person or via email. If it is a student reporting the violation, they may seek the support of a trusted faculty member or parent. At the time of the report, others should not be involved, but the names of witnesses can be a part of the report.

- Complaints shall be submitted to Mr. Jackson, the Title IX Coordinator, who will determine if the reported violation is of Title IX or the DEI Policy. If the violation is being reported by a student, Mr. Jackson will also inform the student's parent or guardian of the nature of the complaint and the action that will be followed.
- Typically, the Title IX Investigator, Ms. Owens-Heath will interview all involved parties in order to gather information, including the person accused of a DEI violation.
- If Ms. Owens-Heath determines that there is a basis for the complaint, she will notify the complainant that the matter is being referred either to administration (if it is against an employee) or to Mr. Jackson (if it is against a student) for action. If she determines that there is not a basis for the complaint, she will meet with the complainant to discuss her findings. Corrective counseling may be held, even when it does not move into Progressive Discipline. Typically, the investigation process will require three to five school days.
- If the complaint is against a student, Mr. Jackson will follow Code of Conduct procedures.
- If the complaint is against an employee, it will be reported to Dr. Widhalm. He will advise the person accused of a violation that there will be a disciplinary meeting. If the person is a member of the Bargaining Unit, they may bring a union member to the meeting. If the person is not a member of the Bargaining Unit, they may invite another staff or faculty member to join them.
- In this meeting, the person accused of a violation will be presented with the results of the investigation and asked if there is any pertinent information not included. If that is the case, Dr. Widhalm will return the file to Ms. Owens-Heath for additional investigation. When the findings of the investigation hold, there will normally be three steps of progressive discipline. Franklin reserves the right to combine or skip steps depending on the facts of each situation and the nature of the offense. Previous policy violations despite coaching & training, employee's work record, and the gravity of the incident will all be taken into consideration. If the violation is considered egregious, Dr. Widhalm may decide to move immediately to Step 2 or Step 3.
- Examples of egregious violations included, but are not limited to using "the N-word" in a classroom, extracurricular activity, or any school event; body shaming a student; shaming a student's gender identity; blatant racist statements toward a student; blatant

derogatory statements against a students' religious or political views; repeated statements that a student or employee finds offensive and asks the offender to stop.

NOTE: If an allegation of a DEI violation is brought against Mr. Jackson or Ms Owens-Heath, Dr. Widhalm will designate another person to handle those responsibilities. If an allegation of a DEI violation is brought against Dr. Widhalm, the president of the Board, or their designee will handle his responsibilities.

## Disciplinary Action

### **Step 1 Corrective Counseling/Training & Written Warning**

Corrective counseling will be offered to an employee when a complaint is found to have merit. The goal of corrective counseling is to bring awareness to the area of concern as well as allow the employee an opportunity to learn, grow, and correct the behavior. The employee will also be required to complete training/professional development that is aligned with the problematic behavior. Corrective counseling and training are not optional. Written documentation will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

### **Step 2 Suspension**

Any employee that is found to be at fault for any violation of the DEI Policy, who has already completed corrective counseling and training, will be subject to suspension without pay. Typically, this will be for three school days without pay.

### **Step 3 Recommendation for Termination**

Any employee that is found to be at fault for any violation of the DEI Policy, who has already completed corrective counseling and training as well as has been suspended without pay, will be recommended for termination. Duties and access will be ended immediately, and with two-weeks pay provided.

### **Due Process**

Any employee who is suspended or terminated may appeal their case to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. Typically, the Executive Committee will only review written records from the investigation, the employee's file, and statements prepared by the employee. These deliberations will be conducted in accordance with the rules of executive session, in that it is not a public meeting.

The Executive Committee may uphold, modify, or overturn the decision of the Head of School. Their decision stands.