

I. Policy Statement

The Howard County Board of Education is committed to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace as it accomplishes its mission to ensure academic success and social-emotional well-being for each student in an environment that closes opportunity gaps. To this end, the Board seeks to attract, recruit, retain, support and develop a workforce that will leverage the diverse knowledge and experiences of all our employees. The Board's commitment to diversity and inclusion includes increasing employment and advancement opportunities for groups that are underrepresented in the workforce. It is committed to doing so by incorporating innovative methods to improve our outreach and recruiting efforts and creating a workplace culture that ensures fairness in the selection of individuals for career development programs, retention, and promotional opportunities.

II. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction and accountability in the pursuit of a diverse and inclusive workforce where the implementation of employment practices are free of discrimination.

III. Definitions

Within the context of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- A. Discrimination – Any act or omission due to an individual's status or perceived status in a protected class that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment; or substantially interferes with an individual's ability to work, learn, or otherwise is sufficiently serious to limit an individual's employment opportunities.
- B. Diversity – Recognizing, accepting and respecting that individuals come from many different life experiences with various frames of reference and perspectives. While diversity values unique perspectives and individual differences, it also values the commonalities we all share. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, race/ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, language, culture, religion/beliefs, mental and physical ability, age and national origin.
- C. Equity – Providing the access, opportunities and supports needed to help students, families, and employees reach their full potential by removing barriers to success that individuals face. It does not mean equal or giving everyone the same thing.

- D. Employee – An individual whose compensation is paid in whole or part by the Board and/or an individual who is a student teacher, an intern, or an independent contractor for the school system.
- E. Inclusion – Ensuring that all individuals are engaged participants in the professional learning environment and community. All employees feel valued, respected, appreciated and involved. Individuals see their unique identities reflected in all facets of education, including staffing, curriculum, instruction, and activities.

IV. Standards

- A. The Board of Education will comply fully with all applicable federal, state, and local nondiscrimination laws with regard to equal employment opportunities.
- B. Discrimination is forbidden in any employment policy or practice, including the recruitment, employment, assignment, recognition, compensation, promotion, retention, support, and transfer of employees.
- C. Per Policy 1010 Anti-Discrimination, an employee or third party will file a discrimination complaint with the Equity Assurance Manager/designee or with a school-based administrator or supervisor as appropriate. All such reports will be forwarded to the Equity Assurance Manager/designee.
- D. The Howard County Public School System (HCPSS) will maintain a diverse and inclusive workforce in order to provide a more enriched experience for students, employees, educators, families, and community members.
- E. The HCPSS will respond to significant underrepresentation of a particular race, ethnicity, or gender within appropriate job categories.
- F. The Board will receive available and legally permissible workforce diversity and inclusion data in the Human Resources Annual Report. The report will provide: information on recruitment and retention efforts; data for promotion and separations for employees; data regarding the racial composition of employees along with the racial distribution of employees in schools; trends data; and a description/progress report of programs utilized to achieve the stated goals.

V. Responsibilities

- A. The Superintendent/designee will ensure a diverse and inclusive workforce in order to provide a more enriched experience for students, employees, educators, families, and community members.
- B. The Superintendent will implement procedures that will ensure compliance with this policy, as well as local, state, and federal laws regarding employment.

- C. The Equity Assurance Manager/designee will commence appropriate action within two working days upon receipt of a discrimination complaint.
- D. The Superintendent/designee will submit to the Board the Human Resources Annual Report.

VI. Delegation of Authority

The Superintendent is authorized to develop procedures for the implementation of this policy.

VII. References

- A. Legal
Rehabilitation Act of 1973, U.S.C. 29, §794 et seq.
Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II, 42 U.S.C. §12115 et seq. 42 U.S.C. §12134
Fairness for All Marylanders Act of 2014
- B. Other Board Policies
Policy 1010 Anti-Discrimination
Policy 1080 Educational Equity
- C. Relevant Data Sources
- D. Other

VIII. History

ADOPTED: August 5, 1969
REVIEWED: July 1, 2011
MODIFIED:
REVISED: October 12, 1989
January 13, 2005
June 11, 2020
EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2020

WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Effective: July 1, 2020

I. Definitions

Within the context of these implementation procedures, the following definition applies:

Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Plan – A strategic plan to create and maintain a workplace that is fair and inclusive and promotes a workforce that better reflects the diversity of our students, parents and communities.

II. General

The Superintendent is responsible for ensuring nondiscrimination in employment and in implementing, directing, and maintaining the workforce diversity and inclusion policy and the Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

III. Specific responsibilities related to implementing a Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Plan are as follows:

A. Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Office of Human Resources

1. Assist in the review of policies and procedures related to equal employment opportunities, as appropriate.
2. As needed, review Howard County Public Schools' (HCPSS) Human Resources policies and procedures related to recruitment, promotion, hiring, separation, retention and employment engagement to determine the following:
 - a. Compliance with federal and state guidelines.
 - b. Effectiveness in meeting objectives.
 - c. Need for revision.
 - d. Ensure professional learning by annually conducting meetings and workshops for administrators and supervisors to explain, clarify, and review the purpose and responsibility of the implementation of this policy.
 - e. Provide direct assistance to administrators and other appropriate individuals in carrying out equal employment practices.
 - f. Assist in development and implementation of monitoring procedures to measure effectiveness of the program.

- g. Serve as liaison with governmental agencies and special interest groups in equal employment opportunities.

B. Office of Human Resources

1. Develop recruitment, promotion, employment, and retention procedures consistent with the Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Plan including the following:
 - a. Position HCPSS in a manner to attract the widest pool of applicants to include all present employees of the HCPSS, as appropriate.
 - b. Identify the Howard County Board of Education as an equal opportunity employer in all recruitment materials and other employment publications.
2. Develop and maintain recruitment sources such as:
 - a. Colleges and universities that have large numbers of students from underrepresented groups.
 - b. Facilities and resources of organizations serving underrepresented groups.
 - c. Maryland State Employment Services Offices.
 - d. Government agencies.
 - e. Local special interest groups.
3. Examine and update recruitment procedures and application materials to ensure:
 - a. Job announcements for classified and professional employees are uniform in format.
 - b. Applications forms and procedures are accessible and contain only job-related questions.
 - c. The Howard County Board of Education is identified as "An Equal Opportunity Employer".
 - d. Interview procedures and techniques are accessible and limit their scope to job-related questions.
4. Develop recruitment procedures that:
 - a. Use trained recruiters who reflect the diversity of employees and students in the school system.
 - b. Encourage partnerships with underrepresented groups and other special interest groups to attract qualified applicants.

5. Prepare an annual report on recruitment and employment results including:
 - a. Disaggregated employee data to assist hiring managers in assessing, creating, obtaining, and maintaining a diverse staff throughout the school system.
 - b. Results of trends in recruitment efforts.
 6. Educate hiring managers in regard to labor laws, regulations, policies and the Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Plan.
- C. Division of School Management and Instructional Leadership; Office of Human Resources

Establish selection, appointment, and assignment procedures that:

1. Establish a diverse group of individuals to reflect the school system when a panel is convened.
 2. Limit interview questions to those that are job-related.
 3. Develop selection processes that relate to essential job functions.
 4. Discuss specific needs with appropriate personnel (*i.e.* principal, cafeteria manager, etc.).
 5. Screen available applications in terms of essential job requirements and meeting minimum job qualifications.
 6. Involve principal and/or other administrators and supervisors in the selection process.
 7. Ensure accessibility throughout the process.
 8. Require hiring managers and administrators to submit a comprehensive report for each vacancy of all candidates interviewed along with interview and selection information.
- D. Office of Public Information
1. Ensure the Board's commitment to workforce diversity and inclusion is communicated widely.
 2. All forms of communications are developed and shared through a lens that is representative of our workforce diversity and inclusion commitment.

IV. Concerns or questions related to implementation of this policy should be submitted in writing to the Superintendent/designee.

V. History

ADOPTED: August 5, 1969
REVIEWED: July 1, 2011
MODIFIED:
REVISED: October 12, 1989

January 13, 2005
June 11, 2020
EFFECTIVE: July 1, 2020