

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN
FAIR LAWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Fair Lawn, New Jersey

Original Plan	8/13/76
Date of Revision	1/26/89
Reviewed and	
Readopted:	4/12/07
Effective through	6/30/17

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION COMMITTEE: 16 -17 School Year

Nadia Yar, Lyncrest
Marilyn Coats-Thomas, Memorial Middle
Kathleen Casey, Milnes
Henry Van Kooy, High School
Kathy Neumann, Warren Point
Christine Hildebrant, Westmoreland
Karen Landrigan, Radburn
Bonnie Constantine, Thomas Jefferson Middle
George Schmidt, Forrest
Michele Perino, District Affirmative Action Officer
Lisa M. Panagia, Central Office

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN
FAIR LAWN SCHOOL DISTRICT
Fair Lawn, New Jersey

Lisa M. Panagia, Affirmative Action Officer

FAIR LAWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

TOWARD EQUAL EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

AN AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

It is the policy of the Fair Lawn Board of Education that its public school system:

1. Provide all of its youngsters with equal educational opportunities;
2. Eliminate existing and future discriminatory practices in the classroom and workplace;
3. Promote understanding and mutual respect among the students for all people regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, social and/or economic status, or disability; and
4. Guarantee all persons equal access to all categories and conditions of employment, retention and advancement, regardless of race, color, age, creed, religion, sex, national origin, political affiliation, marital status or non-applicable disability.

To achieve these goals, an action plan was developed which defined the practices to be utilized so as to insure compliance with the State and Federal laws and the applicable policies of the Fair Lawn Board of Education. The original plan was promulgated in August, 1976. The ensuing plan is a revision of the original one and reflects the fruit of constant monitoring of the program. The present plan consists of three parts. Part I lists education-related practices, Part II the prescribed employment and contract practices, and Part III those grievance procedures that are to be followed by students, parents and/or staff members who believe that they had not received equitable treatment as set forth in the laws and policies.

The Superintendent of Schools shall have the ultimate responsibility for implementing this plan. He/she in turn, shall select and recommend to, and the Board shall annually appoint, an Affirmative Action Officer for the district. The Affirmative Action Officer shall function under the direction and supervision of the Superintendent and shall be responsible for compliance and the preparation of timely reports as directed by the Board. The Affirmative Action Officer, in turn, shall coordinate the activities of a district-wide Affirmative Action Committee which shall include representatives from all schools and facilities. These committee members shall assist in the dissemination of affirmative action information to all students and district employees, coordinate appropriate staff training meetings, and serve as a resource person to any individual seeking redress for alleged violation of these laws.

It shall be the responsibility of the Affirmative Action Officer and the Affirmative Action Committee, under the supervision of the Superintendent of Schools, to maintain on-going monitoring of the program so as to analyze, evaluate and, as deemed appropriate and advisable, to recommend revisions in the objectives and/or implementation activities and procedures.

With respect to educational activities and programs conducted by the schools, either during the normal school day or after regular hours, this plan shall have the following purposes and objectives:

1. To ensure that all of the educational institutions in the district are free from all forms of overt and covert discrimination;
2. To guarantee a non-discriminatory climate and a learning environment in which all students can achieve to their maximum educational potential;
3. To establish and maintain an awareness of and sensitivity to discrimination among faculty and staff through staff training and development programs;
4. To enhance the students' awareness of their abilities and options, regardless of their origins or sex, through the use and promotion of non-discriminatory teaching and counseling methods and materials;
5. To support a positive approach, by all school personnel, in the aggressive implementation of the plan; and
6. To encourage and publicly solicit participation by students, parents administrators and teachers to implement this plan.

The following are the specific activities prescribed to achieve the stated goals and objectives.

A. Personnel:

1. Familiarize students with the State and Federal laws on equal educational opportunities. This may be achieved through public address announcements, fliers and/or classroom discussions.

MONITORING TEAM: Principals and the Affirmative Action Committee.

2. Apprise parents of the State and Federal laws governing equal educational opportunities for their children. This may be achieved through articles in the PTA/PTO newsletters and/or presentations at the open meetings of these organizations.

MONITORING TEAM: Principals and the Affirmative Action Committee.

3. Make all school employees aware of the State and Federal laws associated with equal educational opportunities as well as the means to identify problems arising from prejudice based on race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin or social or economic status. Specifically, each school or faculty shall provide its staff with in-service training to increase awareness and sensitivity to problems of bias and discrimination in education, to learn how to handle identified problems in the school environment, and to familiarize staff with materials and resources available to help them understand, prevent and resolve problems

MONITORING TEAM: Principals and the Affirmative Action Committee.

4. Maintain an on-going alertness among the administration and staff in all schools and facilities to potential problems arising from prejudice on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin or social or economic status so as to be able to take appropriate and timely action to ameliorate them.

MONITORING TEAM: Principals, Supervisors, Teachers and the Affirmative Action Committee.

B. Educational Programs:

1. Establish that the educational goals of the district are consistent with the State and Federal laws governing equal educational opportunities and the resolutions of the Board of Education that address them.

MONITORING TEAM: Superintendent, Principals, Supervisors and the Affirmative Action Committee.

2. Maintain an on-going review of all programs and courses so as to ensure access to them by all students regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin or social or economic status. Such programs shall include, but not be limited to, physical education, industrial arts, home economics, athletics and extra-curricular activities.

MONITORING TEAM. Superintendent, Principals, Supervisors, Directors and the Affirmative Action Committee.

Annually review all existing materials and course contents to evaluate for bias and stereotyping. Where necessary, have supplementary materials produced to address the determined delinquencies.

MONITORING TEAM: Superintendent, Principals, Teachers and the Affirmative Action Committee.

4. Ensure that future curriculum development and the acquisition of all educational materials for research, resource and classroom activities are in compliance with State and Federal laws governing equal educational opportunities and applicable resolutions of the Board of Education.

MONITORING TEAM: Principals, Supervisors, Teachers and the Affirmative Action Committee.

5. Enforce the policy that ensures that students are not excluded from any educational program or activity because of pregnancy or related conditions unless the student requests or a physician certifies that such exclusion is necessary for the student's physical, mental or emotional well-being.

MONITORING TEAM: Principals and the Affirmative Action Committee.

6. Eliminate any discrimination in athletic and extra-curricular activities. Specifically, sports teams and non-athletic extra-curricular programs shall be available to all youngsters with equitable funding in compliance with the school's educational and legal commitment to equal opportunity.

MONITORING TEAM: Principals, Director of Athletics, Coordinator of Student Activities and the Affirmative Action Committee.

7. Utilize only those guidance counseling materials, tests, practices and procedures that are bias-free and do not differentiate or stereotype youngsters on the basis of color, race, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin or social or economic status.

MONITORING TEAM: Principals, Guidance, Supervisor, Guidance Counselors, Teachers and the Affirmative Action Committee.

II. EMPLOYMENT AND CONTRACT PRACTICES:

With respect to employment practices carried out in this district, this plan shall have the following purposes and objectives:

1. To guarantee equal access to all categories of employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, disability, or social or economic status;
2. To provide all employees with a workplace that is free from all forms of overt and covert discrimination;
3. To maintain an awareness and sensitivity to discriminatory practices among the district's school and program administrators and directors;

4. To provide equal promotional opportunities to all employees regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, disability, or social or economic status; and
5. Ensure that all contractors with whom the district does business, adhere to the Affirmative Action laws.

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES PRESCRIBED TO ACHIEVE THE STATED GOALS AND OBJECTIVES.

1. Utilize in-house and out-of-district recruitment procedures, including those for extra- and co-curricular positions, that are free from all discriminatory barriers.

MONITORING TEAM: Human Resources Director, Affirmative Action Officer and the Affirmative Action Committee.

2. Recruitment practices will first include the labor market in the school district and thereafter shall extend to cover an area of reasonable recruitment.

MONITORING TEAM: Human Resources Director and the Affirmative Action Committee.

3. Post all position vacancies in newspaper advertisements and/or at colleges serving minorities and men or women as well as through traditional channels.

MONITORING TEAM: Human Resources Director and the Affirmative Action Committee.

4. Insure that all advertising includes the phrase 'Equal Opportunity Employer, and does not express a preference for race, color, creed, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, disability, or social or economic status.

MONITORING TEAM: Human Resources Director and the Affirmative Action Committee.

5. Keep all persons involved with the recruitment and hiring processes thoroughly briefed on the use of objective standards and equal employment practices.

MONITORING TEAM: Human Resources Director and the Affirmative Action Committee.

Utilities interview procedures that ensure that all questions asked are relevant to job-related information and no questions are asked of members of racial or ethnic groups or either sex that are not asked of all applicants.

MONITORING TEAM: Human Resources Director and the Affirmative Action Committee.

7. Utilize appropriate procedures to ensure that all school employees are notified of all promotional vacancies for which they may qualify.

MONITORING TEAM: Personnel Director and the Affirmative Action Committee.

8. Maintain all applications for positions for which there is an under-representations of minorities and/or men and women in an active file for two years for reconsideration for future openings.

MONITORING TEAM: Personnel Director and the Affirmative Action Committee

9. Ensure that all policies and practices concerning pregnancy and maternity are non-discriminatory.

MONITORING TEAM: Affirmative Action Committee.

10. Examine all contractual agreements to assure non- Discrimination in compensation, benefits and conditions of employment. This procedure shall apply to employment for athletic and extra-curricular activities as well as regular employment.

MONITORING TEAM: Affirmative Action Officer, the Personnel Director and the Affirmative Action Committee.

11. Provide all employees with the opportunity to review their status and determine equality of treatment in job classification, salary and benefits.

MONITORING TEAM: Personnel Director and the Affirmative Action Committee.

12. Examine all collective bargaining agreements, as they are being drawn up, to make certain that no provisions have the effect of preventing the system from achieving a balanced representation of men, women and minorities on all levels within the Fair Lawn School System.

MONITORING TEAM: Personnel Director, the Affirmative Action Officer and the Affirmative Action Committee.

13. Award public works contracts and pay monies only to those contractors who have agreed to contract performances which comply with the approval Affirmative Action Plan as set forth in New Jersey Public Law 1975 Chapter 127 and defined in the Manual For Affirmative Action Regulations, P.L. 1975, c. 127. This shall apply to procurement, service and construction contracts.

MONITORING TEAM: Assistant Superintendent-Business, the Affirmative Action Officer and the Affirmative Action Committee.

III. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The following procedures have been developed to provide students, parents, and employees with an administrative remedy through which they might seek redress for alleged violations, misinterpretations and/or inequitable applications of Federal and State laws and local district policies relative to discriminatory practices.

For the purposes of these procedures, the following definitions shall prevail.

GRIEVANCE - A formal written complaint.

GRIEVANT - Any student, parent or employee aggrieved by a decision or condition falling within the guidelines of federal or state antidiscriminatory laws.

GRIEVANCE OFFICER - The district employee designated to coordinate compliance efforts with respect to anti-discrimination legislation and charged with the responsibility of investigating complaints. This may be the Affirmative Action Officer or an appropriate designee.

The specific steps to be employed in addressing alleged violations shall be as follows:

STEP No. 1 The grievant shall present the complaint in written form to the Grievance Officer utilizing Grievance Report - Form A (see Addendum No.1)

STEP No. 2 The Grievance Officer shall investigate the alleged violation and respond to the grievant within five working days of receipt of the report. The response shall be made on Grievance Report - Form A.

STEP No. 3 If not satisfied, the grievant may appeal the response to the Superintendent or his designee (other than the Grievance Officer) utilizing Appeal - Form B (see Addendum No. 2). The appeal must be submitted within ten working days of receipt of the response from the Grievance Officer.

STEP No. 4 The Superintendent or his designee shall investigate the alleged violation and respond to the grievant within five working days of receipt of the appeal. The response shall be made on Appeal -Form B.

STEP No.5 If not satisfied at the Superintendent's level, the grievant may appeal to the Board of Education utilizing Appeal - Form C (see Addendum No.3). The appeal must be submitted within ten working days of receipt of the response from the Superintendent or his designee.

The Board of Education shall hear the complaint at its next regular meeting or within thirty calendar days of receipt of the response from the Superintendent or his designee. The local Board hearing shall be conducted so as to accord due process to all parties involved in the complaint. Specifically, the grievant(s) shall be provided with written notice of hearing dates and have the right to counsel, to present witnesses, to cross-examine and to present written statements. The meeting itself shall be public.

The decision of the Board shall be by a majority of the members present at the meeting.

STEP No.6 The Fair Lawn Board of Education shall respond to the grievant within thirty calendar days of the hearing using the space provided on Appeal - Form C.

STEP No. 7 If not satisfied with the decision or the Board of Education, the grievant may file the complaint with the Director of Civil Rights, Washington, D.C.

The grievant maintains the right to by-pass the grievance procedures enumerated above and submit the complaint directly to the Office of Civil Rights.

Grievance Forms A, B, and C are available in the Personnel Office of the Fair Lawn Board of Education.