

Da Vinci Schools

Policies and Procedures

POLICY TO ADDRESS RACIST, DISCRIMINATORY, AND DEHUMANIZING INCIDENTS

Purpose

Da Vinci Schools (“Da Vinci”) rejects all forms of racism, discrimination, and dehumanizing conduct as destructive to the mission, vision, core values, and goals of the organization. Da Vinci is committed to the following principles:

1. Establishing and sustaining equitable practices and a school community that shares the collective responsibility to address, eliminate, and prevent actions, decisions, and outcomes that result from and perpetuate racism, discrimination, and dehumanizing conduct.
2. Cultivating the unique gifts, talents, and interests of every child to end the predictive value of social or cultural factors, such as race, class, ability, or gender, on student success.
3. Respecting and championing the diversity and life experiences of all community members to support Da Vinci’s mission, vision, core values, goals, and objectives.
4. Providing a safe and healthy learning environment free of harmful racist and dehumanizing conduct boosts academic achievement and student wellbeing.

Educators play a vital role in reducing racism and inequity by recognizing the manifestations of racism, creating culturally inclusive learning and working environments, and dismantling educational systems that directly or indirectly perpetuate racism, discrimination, or dehumanizing conduct.

As combating racism, discrimination, and dehumanizing conduct is a legal, ethical, and moral imperative, the purpose of this policy is to eliminate all forms of racist and dehumanizing conduct and to complement existing Da Vinci policies (e.g., Student Code of Conduct and nondiscrimination policies) to help foster a safe, empowering, and healthy school environment.

Our organization, schools, and community have an obligation to promote mutual respect. Furthermore, the Board believes that a healthy, positive psychosocial school environment enhances and increases academic achievement and social-emotional development, and therefore the prevention and effective disposition of racist and dehumanizing incidents are fundamental to achieving Da Vinci’s mission, vision, core values, and goals.

Prohibited Racist and Dehumanizing Incidents

Da Vinci Schools will not tolerate behavior, such as intimidation, harassment, bullying, or racist and dehumanizing incidents.

Pursuant to Education Code section 220, no person shall be subjected to incidents of harassment, discrimination, intimidation, bullying, or racist and dehumanizing conduct on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code, including immigration status.

The term “racist and dehumanizing incidents” as used in this policy means expression of hostility or discrimination against a person, property, or institution because of the target’s real or perceived protected characteristics (e.g., race, gender, national origin, ethnic group, sexual orientation, and other protected characteristics listed below.). This may include using bigoted insults, taunts, or slurs, defacing, removing, or destroying posted materials or announcements, posting or circulating demeaning jokes or correspondence (e.g., social media), aggressive physical gestures, or sending insulting or threatening messages by phone, e-mail, Web sites, social media, or any other electronic or written communication.

Reporting and Investigating Racist and Dehumanizing Incidents

Da Vinci expects students, parents, and staff to immediately report incidents of intimidation, harassment, bullying, and racist and dehumanizing conduct to the Principal or designee. Staff who witness such acts must take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so. School staff will solicit feedback through methods such as providing a contact email address and complaints box.

Da Vinci will promptly investigate complaints of racist and dehumanizing incidents. An investigation may include: (1) interviewing pertinent staff and students; and (2) reviewing relevant notes, communications, and materials.

Da Vinci shall endeavor to investigate each complaint in a thorough and confidential manner. Da Vinci prohibits retaliation in any form for filing of a complaint, reporting racist or dehumanizing incidents, or for participating in the complaint-filing or investigation process. If the party raising a complaint feels that appropriate resolution of the investigation or complaint has not been reached, the party should contact the Principal.

Da Vinci may complete an investigation pursuant to its Uniform Complaint Procedures policy depending on the circumstances. The Chief Executive Officer or designee may refer a matter to law enforcement for investigation if warranted.

Staff Training to Support Learning Environment

To help ensure racist and dehumanizing incidents do not occur on school campuses, Da Vinci will provide ongoing staff development training to cultivate respect and understanding in all students and staff and a safe and healthy learning environment for all staff and students.

Da Vinci will actively work to establish a safe, anti-racist, inclusive, and caring school culture where students and staff are respected and celebrated for their differences. This work includes stating clear expectations for student and staff behavior and modeling, teaching and practicing these expected behaviors, and teaching lessons and strategies that reinforce the Da Vinci's Student Code of Conduct.

Teachers should discuss this policy with their students in an age-appropriate manner and should assure them that they need not endure any incidents of racist and dehumanizing conduct. All staff, students, and their parents will receive a summary of this policy at the beginning of the school year as part of the Student and Family Handbook, during new student orientation, freshman overnigher, and through Da Vinci's parent notification system.

Consequences for Violating Policy

Students are expected to treat others with respect. Students who violate this policy by committing or otherwise participating in a racist or dehumanizing incident are subject to disciplinary action which may include:

- Taking measures to repair the harm caused by the racist and dehumanizing incident through Restorative Practices. (Restorative practices are grounded in *restorative justice*, a way of looking at wrongdoing that focuses on repairing the harm done to people and the relationships rather than on punishing offenders. The most critical function of restorative practices is restoring and building relationships. Students and staff must meet with those they have wronged, explore what happened, and make necessary amends. The restorative practices process can happen in groups as small as three and as large as a whole class).
- Suspension or Expulsion.

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