

539 COUNSELING REGARDING PRE-CAREER AND TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

I. PURPOSE

- A. Counseling Materials: The purpose of this policy is to identify a procedure, tools and staff responsible to regularly evaluate whether District, counselor, or teacher developed promotional materials create or perpetuate stereotypes or limitations based on race, color, national origin, sex or disability.
- B. Disproportionate Enrollment: The District shall evaluate whether the disproportionate enrollment is the result of discrimination, address instances of disproportionate enrollment and take steps to encourage nontraditional participation and equity with respect to race, sex and disability.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Counseling Materials" are materials used for the purpose of promoting career and technical programs.
- B. "Disproportionate Enrollment" is the ratio between the percentage of persons in a particular race, sex, or disability demographic compared to the percentage of the race, sex, or disability demographic of all students enrolled.

III. COUNSELING MATERIALS

Establishing Bias-Free Materials

- A. District staff shall ensure that counseling and counseling materials are free from bias and stereotypes on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, or English Learner status. District staff will encourage students to consider programs of study, courses, extracurricular activities, and occupational opportunities on the basis of individual interests, abilities, and skills rather than race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, disability, homelessness, or English Learner status. The Superintendent or designee shall yearly examine counseling and testing materials for bias and address any bias found therein.
- B. The Superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with our counseling practices via interviews with staff, a review of counseling materials, and discussions with students and parents/guardians on a yearly basis.
- C. If a particular class is disproportionately male or female, the District must make sure this situation did not result because of a sex-biased counseling, a hostile environment, or the use of discriminatory counseling and/or testing methods.

IV. DISPROPORTIONATE ENROLLMENT

- A. After classes are set and students have registered, the Superintendent or designee will review enrollment numbers, determine if there is disproportionate enrollment, and consider what can be changed to increase enrollment in classes. When disproportionate enrollment occurs, the District must assess counseling materials and activities and make appropriate revisions, address any instances of discrimination or bias, or identify a legitimate, nondiscriminatory rationale.

- B. The District needs to demonstrate valid and nondiscriminatory reasons for disproportionate enrollment and ensure that all students are provided nondiscriminatory counseling services. If a disparity is identified, the school district must take action to ensure that the disproportionate enrollment is not the result of discrimination. Such actions may include staff training, reviewing master schedule conflicts, assignments of students to courses, recruitment efforts, and counseling information provided to students.

Examples of what can be done:

1. Analyze course enrollment data to identify disproportionate enrollment of minority, female and students with disabilities
2. Identify discriminatory practices in existing programs, policies and procedures.
3. Review guidance materials for stereotypes.
4. Improve the process to ensure all students and parents are informed of all course and program offerings.
5. Make sure course catalogs and brochures are periodically reviewed for bias.
6. Is the process for developing student schedules reviewed to ensure that counselors and advisors are not discouraging any student from enrolling in a particular program or course based on factors not related to program criteria?
7. Consider taking specific steps to encourage students to enroll in courses that are non-traditional.
8. Consider approaches to reduce disproportionate enrollment in future years. Examples: bring in speakers to discuss non-traditional careers with students, holding open-houses, displaying student work, offering college credit for courses, conducting survey of parent/student interest, after-school clubs, renaming courses or rewriting course descriptions.
9. Support training of staff members or administration on non-traditional enrollment, particularly on strategies to engage female students in STEM courses.

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