

G.E.P.A. Statement

(General Educational Provisions Act)

Beaufort County School District serves an academically, culturally, and socio-economically diverse population of children and families. The district and the Board of Education are strongly committed to equal access and treatment for all students, families, employees, and the general public.

Beaufort County School District's board policy of nondiscrimination guides and governs decision making at all levels. Such policies incorporate the following principles: the Board of Education shall not discriminate against children, parents or guardians of children, employees, applicants, contractors, or individuals participating in board and/or agency sponsored activities. The board is committed to the provision of equal access in all child/family/employment and business programs, activities, services and operations that are deployed or provided directly by the board. This policy is established to provide an environment free from discrimination and harassment based upon age, race, color, disability, gender, marital status, national origin, religion, or sexual orientation.

Beaufort County School District's Personnel Department and the Director of Grants Management monitors, coordinates, and recommends action to ensure compliance with the above policies. To effectively and fairly resolve conflicts should they arise, the district has established grievance procedures related to equal access for applicants, employees and/or children and their families alleging discrimination. These procedures are accessible for use by consumers, employees, and the general public.

The district also offers in-service training to increase staff effectiveness in recognizing and correcting biased attitudes.

Beaufort County School District and its partners are committed to implementing specific strategies for ensuring equal access to and participation in programs for consumers, staff of partnering agencies, and employees. The following steps will be carried out with the intent to reduce and eliminate access barriers based on gender, race, national origin, color, disability, and age to maximize participation in the grant program:

1. Develop and administer brochures, flyers and newsletters for students, parents and family members of targeted attendees of grant-related events, such as tutoring, the homework center, enrichment activities, leadership programs, enrichment/sports programs and family literacy programs. The purpose of this information will be to notify, inform and provide information to consumers regarding access – such as wheel chair and other handicapped access and translator services. Because of the high percentage of English as Second Language speakers, print material will be produced in both English and Spanish.
2. All grant program-related sessions/activities will be held in Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible and compliant facilities. As needed, the grant staff will further develop and implement a ‘plan of action’ that will address the identified special access needs indicated by program registrants that go over and beyond the access provisions of the ADA facilities, themselves.
3. Coordinate and offer cultural sensitivity and ADA training for program staff, as recommended by the Beaufort County School District’s Personnel Department.
4. Hire, recruit, and involve individuals from social and ethnic minority groups, multi-lingual individuals, consumers, and individuals with disabilities to plan, implement, and evaluate program services, to the greatest extent possible.

5. Develop or acquire and disseminate culturally relevant and sensitive curriculum and information materials that can be understood and accessible to all potential participants, regardless of their unique challenges or backgrounds.
6. Offer transportation for advisory members of the program and participants who might need transportation to attend grant meetings, activities, and workshops, as needed and if available.
7. Offer multi-lingual services for consumers and others as needed and appropriate.
8. Offer onsite childcare for individuals who must bring their children to program training events and activities.

The above listed provisions and strategies will help to ensure that the following principles are reflected in our work with children and the community: valuing diversity and similarities among all peoples; understanding and effectively responding to cultural differences; willingness to continually engage in cultural self-assessment at the individual and organizational level; making adoptions to the delivery of services; and institutionalizing cultural knowledge and avenues for improvement in programming and service delivery.