

Statement from Paul Davis
Chair, Amity Board of Education (BOE)
Read into Record at the Amity BOE Meeting Conducted on March 24, 2025

Recent concerns raised by community members about Amity Regional School District No. 5's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts merit clarification. Many of these concerns are related to a U.S. Department of Education letter dated Feb. 14, 2025, which has been cited as containing a directive for schools to cease all DEI activities including staffing. However, this is a misinterpretation. The letter reiterates Title VI protections against discrimination for all students, regardless of race, color, or national origin, without mandating the end of DEI programs in K-12 schools or the removal of DEI positions. Amity does not engage in discrimination—our DEI principles focus on supporting every student's potential and does not favor any group over another.

Statutory updates to school climate policy made in 2023, however, now requires all districts to adopt a School Climate Policy by July 1, 2025. It defines "school climate" as the quality of school life, emphasizing relationships, safety, and equity. To align with this, Amity's DEI Coach will transition into the School Climate Coordinator. This new role, mandated by the policy we will adopt, ensures no drastic changes to how we champion student success. Retaining the DEI Coach position while adding the School Climate Coordinator position would have been permissible, but this did not seem logical nor fiscally sound, since the new position will cover the responsibilities of the DEI Coach. This deliberate and planned transition was first shared during the November 2024 Board of Education meeting.

Our Board of Education remains committed to fostering a safe, equitable, and inclusive learning environment for all students. This is in line with our core values, which include nurturing a community that embraces differences, ensures equitable access to resources, and promotes belonging for all learners.