



Megan Shields <mshields@haldaneschool.org>

Important DEI Policy Update

1 message

Haldane Central School District <connect@haldaneschool.org>
Reply-To: Haldane Central School District <connect@haldaneschool.org>
To: mshields@haldaneschool.org

Thu, May 1, 2025 at 8:37 AM

Dear Haldane Community,

On April 22, 2025, the Haldane Board of Education voted to temporarily suspend the District's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policy, following a same-day recommendation from our legal counsel. **We are writing today to inform you of our intent to reinstate the policy in its entirety at our Board meeting on Tuesday, May 6.**

The Board and the District are committed to the aims and principles of our DEI policy. Our goal was to safeguard federal funding while we reviewed the policy. This was not an easy decision for us. It stemmed from our steadfast commitment to doing what we believe is best for students and the District.

Here's a summary of how recent events involving the DEI policy unfolded:

- April 22, 2025: The Board of Education voted to temporarily suspend the District's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policy. We were faced with an April 24 deadline for certifying the District's compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and advice from our legal counsel that some of the wording in our DEI policy would prevent the recommended certification. The result would have been a threat to \$450,000 in federal financial assistance for students with disabilities and students who qualify for free- and reduced-price lunch.
- April 24, 2025: Three federal court judges temporarily blocked the U.S. Department of Education from withholding federal funds based on principles tied to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- April 29, 2025: The Board met in executive session with the District attorney to determine the best way forward to reinstate our DEI policy. Given that there is no longer an imminent threat of losing any federal financial assistance, the Board decided to reinstate our policy in its entirety at our May 6, 2025 meeting.

Over the past week, we have done our best to connect with those who reached out with questions and feedback for us. Next week, there will be two gatherings that we invite you to attend.

Monday, May 5 at 6:30pm. The Haldane PTA will hold a community forum at the Butterfield Library. Two Board members and the Interim Superintendent will be there to listen and respond to questions and concerns. This is an opportunity for interactive dialogue.

Tuesday, May 6 at 7:00pm. The Board will hold a regular business meeting at the Middle School/High School Library and the agenda will include opportunities for public comment. However, please note that the Board's policy is to listen to public comments during school board meetings, not to engage in dialogue or conversation.

In addition, this Friday, two Board members will meet with high school students to hear directly from them.

These are challenging times for public schools. The District may continue to encounter difficult decisions in the coming months and years. We also know there will be exciting developments and many things to celebrate. As our new superintendent, Dr. Duffy, gets settled in her role, we will work with her to explore new ways to communicate and engage with you.

Sincerely,

The Haldane Board of Education

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