

Colts Neck Township Schools

Superintendent of Schools
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September 21, 2023

Dear Colts Neck Families,

During the September 20, 2023 meeting of the Colts Neck Township Board of Education, a majority vote of the Board (6-2) passed a resolution that repealed Policy 5756 - Transgender Students. That resolution is available on the [Public Meeting Agenda](#) posted to the district's website under "Board of Education".

My Superintendent's Report for that same meeting was a brief commentary on the Board's action item to repeal this policy. At this time, I would like to share my public commentary with our families and members of our school community:

"This Board, as well as prior Boards, have charged me, as Superintendent of Schools, to implement Board policies and practices that yield safe learning and working environments for students and staff. In Colts Neck, there is a shared commitment and accountability to provide experiences and spaces for students that are safe, supportive, engaging, free from discrimination, and operated in accordance with the law. That is not a choice. It is a duty and a responsibility; and, one that we take very seriously in Colts Neck.

In addition to providing the safest environment for students, we are also accountable to our parents. We have a responsibility and duty to communicate with parents about their children. And again, this is not a choice. It is a duty and a responsibility; and, one that we take very seriously in Colts Neck.

As Superintendent, I want the community of Colts Neck to be confident in the staff's commitment to the safety and well-being of every student, as this is non-negotiable. Equally, I want our parents to be confident that their roles as parents are prioritized within our policies, our systems, and our practices. No one in the Colts Neck Schools believes that these two things are separate and independent of each other. The success of our students is largely built upon our relationships and communication with our families. In the event that the safety and well-being of a child outside of the school environment is called into question, the district has and will continue to follow the law and requirements for these types of situations.

We recognize the often unique and delicate nature of situations involving children and appreciate our ability to work with our parents and families in support of them. And so, it is my duty and my responsibility as Superintendent to continue to prioritize children, relationships, and the work that provides the best learning experiences and environments for all students of Colts Neck."

It is important to note that N.J.A.C. 6A:7-1.4(a) – "Responsibilities of the District Board of Education" mandates the following:

- (a) Each district board of education shall adopt and implement written educational equity policies that:
1. Recognize and value the diversity of persons and groups within the community and promote the acceptance of persons of diverse backgrounds regardless of the protected categories listed at N.J.A.C. 6A:7-1.1(a); and
 2. Promote equitable educational opportunity and foster through the policies, programs, and practices of the district board of education a learning environment that is free from all forms of prejudice, discrimination, and harassment based upon the protected categories listed at N.J.A.C. 6A:7-1.1(a).

The following is a sample of current Colts Neck Township Board of Education Policies that address the aforementioned requirements:

Policy 5750 - EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Policy 5755: EQUITY IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Policy 1550 - AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAM FOR EMPLOYMENT AND CONTRACT PRACTICES

Policy 2260 - AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAM FOR SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM PRACTICES

Policy 1140 - AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PROGRAM

Policy 2411 - GUIDANCE COUNSELING

Policy 5600 - STUDENT DISCIPLINE/CODE OF CONDUCT

Policy 5512 - HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING

Policy 8465 - HATE CRIMES AND BIAS-RELATED ACTS

I sincerely thank you for your time, support, and continuing partnership with the Colts Neck Township Schools.

Educationally yours,

Dr. MaryJane Garibay,
Superintendent of Schools