

Houston County School District, Georgia
Resolution Agreement
OCR Complaint Numbers 04-20-1216 and 04-20-1218

Houston County School District (District) enters into this Resolution Agreement (Agreement) to resolve issues raised in Complaint Number 04-20-1216 and Complaint Number 04-20-1218. The District assures OCR that it will take the following actions to comply with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), 42 U.S.C. § 2000d, and its implementing regulation, 34 C.F.R. Part 100, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities that receive Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education.

Prior to the completion of OCR's investigation, the District agreed to resolve the issues of this investigation pursuant to Section 302 of OCR's Case Processing Manual. This Agreement does not constitute an admission of wrongdoing or liability by the District pursuant to Title VI. Accordingly, to ensure compliance with Title VI and its implementing regulation, the District voluntarily agrees to the following actions.

Section I: Anti-harassment Statement

1. **By September 30, 2024**, or within 30 days of receipt of approval from OCR, whichever is later, the Superintendent will issue a statement described below by publishing it on the District's website, printing it in appropriate publications reaching all District parents/guardians, students, and employees, and posting it in prominent locations at [redacted content] (School). The statement will state that the District does not tolerate acts of harassment, including acts of harassment based on a student's race, color or national origin; affirm that students and their parents have the right to report harassment and describe how the District community benefits from individuals bringing harassment to the attention of School or other District staff; and, encourage any student who believes he or she has been subjected to harassment or a hostile environment based on race to report it to the District and identify the process that should be used to file such complaints. It will state the District's commitment to conducting a prompt investigation. The statement will warn that students or employees found to have engaged in acts of harassment that create a hostile environment based on race may be disciplined and make clear that such discipline may include, if circumstances warrant, suspension, expulsion or termination of employment. The statement will also state that the District will not tolerate acts of retaliation against individuals who report harassment or a hostile environment based on race and encourage students, parents/guardians, and District staff to work together to prevent acts of harassment and retaliation.

Reporting Requirement:

- a) **By August 1, 2024**, the District will submit to OCR a draft anti-harassment statement for approval. The District will promptly and fully address OCR's feedback, if any, until the District receives OCR's final approval of the anti-harassment statement.

- b) **By October 31, 2024**, or within 30 days of receipt of OCR's final approval of the anti-harassment statement, whichever is later, the District will submit to OCR documentation which demonstrates the District has issued, published and posted the statement pursuant to this Item of the Agreement, including website links, copies of print publications and other evidence of posting. The District will promptly and fully address OCR's feedback, if any, until the District receives notice from OCR that no further reporting is required this Item of the Agreement.

Section II: Staff Training

- 2. **By December 15, 2024**, or within 30 days of OCR's final approval of the training materials and presenters, whichever is later, the District will provide Title VI training by a qualified individual knowledgeable about Title VI to all School staff, all District staff who provide athletics, [redacted content] or other extracurricular activity coaching services to School students and all district-level administrators. The training will cover, at a minimum, the following topics:
 - a) Title VI's prohibition against discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin;
 - b) examples of different treatment and harassment based on race, color or national origin, including examples of such discrimination with respect to [redacted content] and other non-academic activities;
 - c) the application of the Title VI prohibition to discrimination or harassment that occurs through contractual or other arrangements;
 - d) the District's duty to eliminate a racially hostile environment created at a school or in a District program;
 - e) the Title VI prohibition on retaliation; and
 - f) examples of retaliation prohibited by Title VI.

Reporting Requirement:

- a. **By October 15, 2024**, the District will submit to OCR for review and approval, proposed training materials and the name(s), title(s)/position(s), and qualifications of the individual(s) who will provide the training. The District will promptly and fully address OCR's feedback, if any, until the District receives OCR's final approval of the training materials and trainer(s).
- b. **By January 15, 2025**, or within 45 days of the District's receipt of OCR's approval of the training materials and trainer(s), whichever is later, the District will ensure that all staff are trained and will submit to OCR: (i) the date, time, and location of the training(s); (ii) confirmation that the approved training materials were used; (iii) confirmation that the approved trainer(s) was used; (iv) the names and titles/positions of the staff who attended the training; and (v) the names and titles/positions of staff who did not attend the training, an explanation for each person's absence, and a plan to train each person. The

District will promptly and fully address OCR's feedback, if any, until the District receives notice from OCR that no further reporting is required for this Reporting Requirement.

Section III: Student-Focused Remedies

3. **By January 30, 2025**, or within 30 days of OCR's final approval of training or other materials and presenters, whichever is later, the District will provide to students at the School an age-appropriate training, presentation or other program designed to help students understand how discrimination or harassment based on race, color, or national origin can impact the school environment for students experiencing the discrimination or harassment; students' right to report conduct that they believe is discriminatory or harassing based on race, color or national origin; and how to report discrimination or harassment based on race, color or national origin. The District will develop the training, presentation or other program in consultation with individuals with expertise regarding race, color or national origin discrimination or harassment; communicating with high school age students; and child development in high school.

Reporting Requirement:

- a. **By September 15, 2024**, the District will submit to OCR for approval, the name(s) and expertise and the consultants the District proposes to use in complying with this Item of the Agreement;
- b. **By November 15, 2024**, the District will submit to OCR for review and approval a description of the proposed training, presentation or other program; materials to be used in the training, presentation or other program; and the name(s), title(s)/position(s), and qualifications of the individual(s) who will provide the training, presentation or other program. The District will promptly and fully address OCR's feedback, if any, until the District receives OCR's final approval of the training, presentation or other program and proposed materials and trainer(s).
- c. **By January 30, 2025**, or within 45 days of the District's receipt of OCR's approval of the information and materials submitted to comply with Reporting Item b above, whichever is later, the District will provide documentation to OCR demonstrating that the District completed the training, presentation or other program required by this Item of the Agreement. The documentation or other information will include: (1) the date of each training session, presentation or other program; (2) the names and grades of the students who attended each session or program; (3) confirmation that the training, presentation or other program was presented by the individual(s) approved by OCR and that the District used the training or other materials approved by OCR; and (5) the plan for providing the training, presentation or other program to any students unable to attend the training, presentation or other program.

4. By **October 31, 2024**, or within 30 days of completion of the steps in Item, 1, whichever is later, the District will contact the Complainants (at the time the complaint was filed) to obtain current mailing addresses for the Students (at the time the complaint was filed) and within ten calendar days of receipt of the addresses, will send each Student a letter acknowledging that the Student and her parent or guardian raised racial harassment and retaliation concerns with the District related to the Students' experiences [redacted content] and including a copy of the anti-harassment statement issued as required by Item 1 of this Agreement.

Reporting Requirement:

By **November 30, 2024**, or within 30 days of completion of the steps in Item, 1, whichever is later, the District will submit to OCR documentation demonstrating that the District contacted the Complainants to obtain current mailing addresses for the Students, the response from the Complainants, and a copy of the letters to the Students.

By signing the Agreement, the District agrees to provide data and other information in a timely manner in accordance with the reporting requirements of the Agreement. During the monitoring of the Agreement, if necessary, OCR may visit the District, interview staff and students, and request such additional reports or data as are necessary for OCR to determine whether the District has fulfilled the terms of the Agreement.

The District understands that OCR will not close the monitoring of the Agreement until such time as OCR determines that the District is in compliance with the terms of the Agreement and the statute(s) and regulation(s) at issue in the case.

The District understands that OCR may initiate administrative enforcement proceedings or refer the case to the Department of Justice (DOJ) for judicial proceedings to enforce the specific terms of the resolution agreement and the applicable statute(s) and regulation(s). Before initiating such proceedings, OCR will give the District written notice of the alleged breach and 60 calendar days to cure the alleged breach.

This Agreement will become effective immediately upon the signature of the District's representative below.

Superintendent or Designee
Houston County School District

Date

Printed Name and Title