

## **2021 – 2022 Equal Employment Opportunity / Affirmative Action Plan Independence Community School District, Independence, Iowa**

### **Administrative Statement**

The Independence Community School District is deeply committed to the principles of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action to attain a workforce representative of ethnic and gender diversity. A diverse workforce serves as role models for our students. A diverse workforce broadens and deepens the capacity of our organization to address issues related to diversity. This plan contains the policy and employment goals to assist us in continuing toward our goal of an increasingly diverse organization.

Every employee of the Independence Community School District plays a vital role in promoting equal employment opportunity and diversity in the workplace. In the 2021 – 2022 school year, we will target recruitment efforts to boost applicants in underrepresented categories, review application and interview materials to ensure nondiscrimination, and provide equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, and intergroup relations training for employees who hire and supervise.

In employing individuals, the board will consider the qualifications, credentials, and records of the applicants without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. In keeping with the law, however, the board will consider the veteran status of the applicants. Furthermore, reasonable accommodations will be made to the known limitations of otherwise qualified applicants or employees with disabilities except where such accommodations are determined to impose an undue hardship. Any employee who files a complaint of discrimination or harassment will be protected against retaliation. District policies for non-discrimination, affirmative action, harassment and bullying are appended to this plan. Annually, data will be collected to determine progress with meeting plan goals.

This plan is designed to meet the requirements of Iowa Code chapter 19B.11 and Iowa Administrative Code chapter 95.



Russell Reiter, Superintendent

November 15, 2021

Date

### **Identification of Coordinator**

The employee responsible for coordinating the development and implementation of the equal employment opportunity and affirmative action plan is the Superintendent of Schools. Inquiries or grievances related to the Independence Community School District's Equal Employment Opportunity / Affirmative Action policies or plan may be directed to Erin Burmeister, Director of School Improvement, Independence Community School District, 1207 1<sup>st</sup> Street West, Independence, IA 50644, 319-334-7400, [eburmeister@indeek12.org](mailto:eburmeister@indeek12.org); or to the Director of the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, to the Director of the Region VII Office of the United States Equal Opportunity Commission, or the Region VII Office of Civil Rights within the United States Education Department. In addition, inquiries may also be directed to the Director, Iowa Department of Education, Grimes State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319-0146, 515-281-5294.

### **Workforce Analysis**

The following analysis of workforce distribution is based on gender, race and ethnicity. Employment groups analyzed are certificated and professional staff, including administrators, teachers and other professional staff, and support staff, including paraprofessionals, food service, maintenance, transportation, administrative assistants and secretaries, and technical/supervisor staff.

The analysis of distribution data is done to provide a portrait of the district's employees and to monitor growth toward hiring and recruitment goals. Charts are presented to show employees based on race, gender and employment positions. The data is based on the October, 2021 employee database.

### Administrators/Directors

The district employs 13 administrators/directors. There is (1) chief executive administrator – the superintendent. There are 4 building level administrators and 8 district level directors. There is (1) full-time principal at the junior-senior high school, (1) full time assistant principal at the junior-senior high school, (1) full time K-12 activities director, (1) full time elementary principal at the grades 3-6 elementary, (1) full time elementary principal at the K-2 building who also oversees an early childhood center, (1) full time district school improvement director, (1) district technology director, (1) district finance director/board secretary, (1) district level food service director, (1) district level buildings and grounds director, (1) district level transportation director, and (1) district level human resources director.

Chart 1 shows the gender and the racial/ethnic composition of the district's administrative staff. There is a balance of male and female administrative staff. Racial and ethnic groups are underrepresented in this category.

Chart 1: Gender and Ethnic composition of administrative staff

	<i>Nonwhite</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Superintendent	0	1	0	1
Principals	0	1	2	3
Assistant Principal	0	1	0	1
Activities Director	0	1	0	1
Director of School Improvement	0	0	1	1
Director of Technology	0	1	0	1
Director of Finance/Board Secretary	0	0	1	1
Director of Food Service	0	0	1	1
Director of Buildings and Grounds	0	1	0	1
Director of Transportation	0	0	1	1
Human Resources Director	0	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	0	6	7	13
<b>Percentage</b>	0%	46%	54%	100%

### Teachers and Other Professional Staff

The district employs 112 teachers and other professional staff. There are (103) teachers, (4) professional school counselors, (1) librarian and (4) other professional staff. Each of these staff holds a license granted by a governing board or other oversight group. Chart 2 shows the gender and the racial/ethnic composition of the district's teachers and other professional staff. Males are underrepresented in the following categories: preschool teachers, elementary teachers and special education teachers. There is a balance of males and females in the categories of secondary teachers. Racial and ethnic groups are underrepresented in all categories of teachers and other professional staff.

Chart 2: Gender and Racial/Ethnic composition of teachers and other professional staff

	<i>Nonwhite</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Preschool teachers	0	0	1	1
Elementary teachers (K-6)	1	4	43	47
Secondary teachers (7-12)	0	22	18	40
Special Education teachers	0	2	13	15
Counselors	0	1	3	4
Librarians	1	0	1	1
Other professional staff	0	0	4	4
<b>Total</b>	2	29	83	112
<b>Percentage</b>	1%	26%	74%	100%

## Support Staff

The district employs 94 support staff employees. This number reflects a per-person count and not a full-time equivalency. Paraprofessionals are employees who provide in-classroom support for special needs students, or provide support to other teachers or programs. Paraprofessionals include special education paraprofessionals, regular education paraprofessionals, and media paraprofessionals. Other support staff includes the auditorium manager and technician, the assistant to the director of technology, the volunteer mentor coordinator, and Juvenile Court School Coach. Chart 3 shows the distribution of support staff over position categories according to gender and race/ethnicity. Males and females each dominate job categories traditionally gender-bound. Specifically, males are underrepresented in the paraprofessional, food service worker, building secretary, and nurse categories. Racial and ethnic groups are underrepresented in all categories of support staff.

Chart 3: Gender and Racial/Ethnic composition of support staff

	<i>Nonwhite</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Paraprofessional	0	0	44	44
Food Service worker	0	1	12	13
Custodial	0	3	4	7
Bus/Van driver	0	9	2	11
Payroll/Acct Payable/Admin Assist	0	0	3	3
Building Level Secretary	0	0	8	8
Nurse	0	0	3	3
District Grounds & Maintenance	0	2	0	2
Other Support Staff	0	2	1	3
<b>Total</b>	0	17	77	94
<b>Percentage</b>	0%	18%	82%	100%

## Employees with disabilities

Iowa Administrative Code 95.5(3) directs that for the “purpose of confidentiality, disability data may be based on total agency figures, rather than those of major job categories.” Of the district’s 219 total employees, not one employee has a known disability.

## Qualitative Analysis

The district has had a stable workforce, with little to no turnover in most employment categories. Annually, the district hires approximately three to seven percent (3% - 7%) for vacant PK-12 teaching positions. Over seventy percent (72%) of the district’s teaching staff has been employed by the district for five or more years.

A qualitative analysis of the district’s employment and personnel policies and practices reveal no intended or unintended bias toward or against a candidate for employment based on race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability. In keeping with the law, however, the board will consider the veteran status of the applicants. In employment categories where vacancies have occurred, the data indicates the district has been successful in hiring men and women in positions traditionally held by one gender. However, the data reveals that the district has been unsuccessful in hiring employees of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds in any job category.

The district’s recruitment efforts consist of posting vacancy notices in the local newspapers, on the district’s website, and on Teach Iowa. The district will need to learn how to target its recruitment efforts to boost applicants in underrepresented categories. It will need to review its application and interview materials to ensure nondiscrimination. Finally, it will need to provide more equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, and intergroup relations trainings for employees who hire and supervise.

## 2021 – 2022 Qualitative Goals/Actions/Timelines

1. Target recruitment efforts to boost applicants in underrepresented categories.
2. Review application and interview materials to ensure nondiscrimination.
3. Provide equal employment opportunity, affirmative action, and intergroup relations training for employees who hire and supervise.

Goals	Actions	Timeline
1. Target recruitment efforts	a. Expand recruiting efforts geographically	Continually
	b. Participate in job fairs	As available
	c. Recruit via personal contact at employment offices/job placement offices/career counseling center	Continually
2. Review application and interview materials	a. Collect and review principals' and supervisors' application and interview materials	On a yearly basis
	b. Revise materials as appropriate	Continually
3. Provide training for employees who hire and supervise	a. Gather information on available training from DE, AEA, other school districts, community/county groups	June 2022
	b. Conduct training for supervisors	Continually

## Goals

The district will aspire to the following numerical goals when hiring for the biennium for those employment vacancies for which an internal transfer does not occur. The categories listed are those in which one gender is underrepresented in the current employment pool, or in those categories that typically hire on an annual basis.

	<i>Nonwhite</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
Elementary teacher (K-6)	1	3		4
Secondary teacher (7-12)	1			1
Special Education teacher	1	3		4
Teacher assistant	1	3		4
Food prep worker	1	3		4
Janitor/custodial	1		1	2
Bus driver	1			1
<b>Total</b>	7	12	1	20
<b>Percentage</b>	35%	60%	5%	100%

## Appendix

- A. Equal Employment/Affirmative Action policy
- B. Non-discrimination statement
- C. Anti-Bullying/Harassment policy

## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Independence Community School District will provide equal opportunity to employees and applicants for employment in accordance with applicable equal employment opportunity and affirmative action laws, directives and regulations of federal, state and local governing bodies. Opportunity to all employees and applicants for employment includes hiring, placement, promotion, transfer or demotion, recruitment, advertising or solicitation for employment, treatment during employment, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and layoff or termination. The school district will take affirmative action in major job categories where women, men, minorities and persons with disabilities are underrepresented. Employees will support and comply with the district's established equal employment opportunity and affirmative action policies. Employees will be given notice of this policy annually.

The board will appoint an affirmative action coordinator. The affirmative action coordinator will have the responsibility for drafting the affirmative action plan. The affirmative action plan will be reviewed by the board annually.

Individuals who file an application with the school district will be given consideration for employment if they meet or exceed the qualifications set by the board, administration, and Iowa Department of Education for the position for which they apply. In employing individuals, the board will consider the qualifications, credentials, and records of the applicants without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. In keeping with the law, however, the board will consider the veteran status of the applicants.

Prior to a final offer of employment for any position, the school district will perform the background checks required by law. Based upon the results of the background checks, the school district will determine whether an offer will be extended.

Advertisements and notices for vacancies within the district will contain the following statement: "The Independence Community School District is an equal employment opportunity/affirmative action (EEO/AA) employer." The statement will also appear on application forms.

Inquiries by employees or applicants for employment regarding compliance with equal employment opportunity and affirmative action laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, will be directed to the Affirmative Action Coordinator by writing to the Affirmative Action Coordinator, Independence Community School District, 1207 – 1<sup>st</sup> Street West, Independence, Iowa 50644; or by (319) 334-7400.

## EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Inquiries by employees or applicants for employment regarding compliance with equal employment opportunity and affirmative action laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, may also be directed in writing to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commissions, Milwaukee Area Office, Reuss Federal Plaza, 310 West Wisconsin Ave., Suite 800, Milwaukee, WI., 53203-2292, (800) 669-4000 or TTY (800) 669-6820. <http://www.eeoc.gov/field/milwaukee/index.cfm> or the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, 400 E. 14th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319-1004, Phone: 515-281-4121, Toll Free: 1-800-457-4416, <http://www.state.ia.us/government/crc/index.html>. This inquiry or complaint to the federal office may be done instead of, or in addition to, an inquiry or complaint at the local level.

Further information and copies of the procedures for filing a complaint are available in the school district's central administrative office and the administrative office in each attendance center.

Legal Reference: 29 U.S.C. §§ 621-634.  
42 U.S.C. §§ 2000e et seq.  
42 U.S.C. §§ 12101 et seq.  
Iowa Code §§ 19B; 20; 35C; 73; 216; 279.8.  
281 I.A.C. 12.4; 95.

Cross Reference: 102 Equal Educational Opportunity  
106 Anti-Bullying/Harassment  
405.2 Licensed Employee Qualifications, Recruitment, Selection  
411.2 Classified Employee Qualifications, Recruitment, Selection

Approved 06/19/2007

Reviewed 07/18/2011  
09/21/2020

Revised 06/19/2007  
04/26/2010  
11/18/2013  
03/21/2016  
09/21/2020

## Appendix B: Statement of Non-Discrimination

### CONTINUOUS NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Independence School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy, please contact:

<b>Equity Coordinator:</b>	Erin Burmeister, Director of School Improvement
<b>Contact Address:</b>	1207 1st Street West, Independence, IA 50644
<b>Contact Telephone Number:</b>	(319) 334-7400
<b>Contact Email Address:</b>	<a href="mailto:eburmeister@indeek12.org">eburmeister@indeek12.org</a>



## ANTI-BULLYING/ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

The Independence Community School District is committed to providing all students, employees, and volunteers with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying and/or harassing behavior can seriously disrupt the ability of school employees to maintain a safe and civil environment, and the ability of students to learn and succeed.

Bullying and/or harassment of or by students, employees, and volunteers is against federal, state, and local policy and is not tolerated by the board.

Accordingly, school employees, volunteers, and students shall not engage in bullying or harassing behavior while on school property, while on school-owned or school-operated vehicles, while attending or participating in school-sponsored or sanctioned activities, and while away from school grounds if the conduct materially interferes with the orderly operation of the educational environment or is likely to do so.

Complaints may be filed with the superintendent or superintendent's designee pursuant to the regulation accompanying this policy. Complaints will be investigated within a reasonable time frame.

A school employee, volunteer, or student, or a student's parent or guardian who promptly, reasonably, and in good faith reports an incident of bullying or harassment, in compliance with the procedures in the regulation, to the appropriate school official designated by the school district, shall be immune from civil or criminal liability relating to such report and to participation in any administrative or judicial proceeding resulting from or relating to the report.

### **Retaliation Prohibited**

Individuals who knowingly file false bullying or harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline by appropriate measures.

Any student found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Any school employee found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. Any school volunteer found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, removal from service and exclusion from school grounds.

### **Definitions**

For the purposes of this policy, the defined words shall have the following meaning:

- "Electronic" means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optic cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. "Electronic" includes but is not limited to communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, and electronic text messaging. "Harassment" and "bullying" mean any repeated or potentially repeated electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or other ongoing conduct toward an individual based on any trait or characteristic of the individual which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:

## ANTI-BULLYING/ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

- (1) Places the individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual's person or property.
  - (2) Has a substantial detrimental effect on the individual's physical or mental health.
  - (3) Has the effect of substantially interfering with the individual's academic or career performance.
  - (4) Has the effect of substantially interfering with the individual's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.
- "Trait or characteristic of the individual" includes but is not limited to age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status.
  - "Volunteer" means an individual who has regular, significant contact with students.

### Publication of Policy

The board will annually publish this policy. The policy may be publicized by the following means:

- Inclusion in the student handbook,
- Inclusion in the employee handbook,
- Inclusion in the registration materials,
- Inclusion on the school or school district's website, and
- a copy shall be made to any person making a request at the Central Administrative Office located at 1207 1st Street West, Independence, IA.

Legal References:      20 U.S.C. §§ 1221-1234i.  
                                 29 U.S.C. § 794.  
                                 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d-2000d-7.  
                                 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101 2et. seq.  
                                 Iowa Code §§ 216.9; 280.28; 280.3.  
                                 281 I.A.C. 12.3(6).  
                                 Morse v. Frederick, 551 U.S. 393 (2007)

Cross References:      103    Equal Educational Opportunity  
                                 502    Student Rights and Responsibilities  
                                 503    Student Discipline  
                                 506    Student Records

Approved 09/21/2020

Reviewed 09/21/2020

Revised \_\_\_\_\_