



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Chief Operating Officer

BY EMAIL

December 28, 2020

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

RE: Letter of Response for Grievance #3826 filed on October 26, 2020

Dear [REDACTED]:

In accordance with Chapter 24 Subtitle 5-B, Section 2405 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations (DCMR), D.C. Public Schools (DCPS) Comprehensive Alternative Resolution and Equity (CARE) team has completed its preliminary investigation of the above referenced written grievance.

Grievance Issues

Based on a review of the information provided, the grievance raised the following issues under the jurisdiction of this office:

1. **5-B DCMR Subtitle 2405.1(d) & 2405.1(e):** where it is alleged that there has been a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color and national origin; and the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977 which, in part, prohibits discrimination on the basis of race and color.

a. The grievance alleges that on [REDACTED], [REDACTED] called STUDENT B [REDACTED] during the class's morning meeting.

Investigative Procedure

The investigation included interviews with the following individuals:

1. [REDACTED], Principal at [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED], Social Worker at [REDACTED]
3. Parent of [REDACTED]
4. Parent of STUDENT B

The investigation also included review of the following documents which were either submitted by the complainant, submitted by the school, or accessible via DCPS data systems:

1. Teacher [REDACTED]'s summary of the incident and conversation with students, provided by [REDACTED]

General Findings of Fact

The following findings of fact resulted from the investigation:

1. The incident occurred on [REDACTED], in Teacher [REDACTED]'s class.
2. The class was participating in a charades activity that required students to act out their feelings. Other students could guess the student's feeling via Teams chat.
3. During STUDENT B's turn, [REDACTED] guessed [REDACTED] via Microsoft Teams chat.
4. Teacher [REDACTED] immediately requested [REDACTED] to remove the message from the chat. [REDACTED] complied with the request.
5. A restorative conversation with [REDACTED] and STUDENT B was facilitated by Social Worker [REDACTED] and Teacher [REDACTED]
6. STUDENT B expressed how the incident made them feel; [REDACTED] stated they did not understand the historical context of calling a [REDACTED] person [REDACTED] and apologized.
7. Parent of [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] did not understand the context for the use of the word [REDACTED] as it relates to [REDACTED] people. Parent of [REDACTED] states they feel that [REDACTED] now understands that the use was inappropriate, given the context.
8. Parent of STUDENT B stated they felt [REDACTED] was responding to the situation appropriately. They added that they did not feel the behavior was vindictive but also wanted to make sure that the incident was addressed.

Discussion/Conclusion

DCPS CARE conducted a preliminary review of this allegation to determine if it violated DCPS' Notice of Nondiscrimination, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The use of the word [REDACTED] to refer to a [REDACTED] person can be considered an offensive and discriminatory term; however, [REDACTED] did not know or understand the historical context of the word [REDACTED] as a derogatory term for [REDACTED] people. [REDACTED] expressed remorse for using the word and hurting STUDENT B's feelings. Given this information, the incident does not sufficiently rise to a level to violate DCPS' anti-discrimination policy. As a result, this matter does not warrant further investigation by the DCPS CARE team.

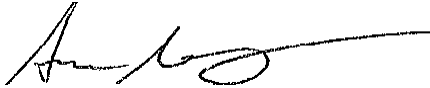
DCPS has taken the following actions below to address this incident:

1. On [REDACTED], Social Worker [REDACTED] and Teacher [REDACTED] facilitated a restorative conversation with [REDACTED] and STUDENT B
2. On [REDACTED], [REDACTED] met with the DCPS Central Equity Response Team to discuss short-term and long-term goals for supporting the school community.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you have the right to file an appeal. Appeals must be submitted in writing and received within 10 calendar days of receipt of this notice. Please submit appeal requests to the Office of Integrity via U.S. Postal Mail to 1200 First St., NE, 10th Floor; Attn: CIO or via email at dcps.cio@k12.dc.gov. You may also contact the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (1-800-421-3481) to report any educational discrimination.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at dcps.care@k12.dc.gov or 202.442.5405.

Sincerely,



Anitra Allen, Director CARE

Cc: Principal
Instructional Superintendent