
Office for Civil Rights Discrimination Complaint Form: Submission #738058

1. Enter information about yourself

First Name:

Last Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Best Time to Call You: Day

Primary Phone Number:

Alternative Phone Number: {Empty}

Your Email Address:

2. Who else can we call if we cannot reach you?

Contact's Name: {Empty}

Daytime Phone Number: {Empty}

Relationship to you: {Empty}

3. Who was discriminated against?

Yourself or Someone else Myself?

If someone other than yourself please include:

Injured Person's Name: {Empty}

Daytime Phone Number: {Empty}

Evening Phone Number: {Empty}

Relationship to You
(eg. son or daughter) {Empty}

Injured Person's Address: {Empty}

City: {Empty}

State: {Empty}

Zip Code: {Empty}

4. What institution discriminated?

Institution Name: (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)

Address: (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)

City: (b)(6); (b)(7)(A);
(b)(7)(C)

State: Maryland

Zip Code: (b)(6); (b)(7)(A);
(b)(7)(C)

School or department involved: (b)(6); (b)(7)(A);
(b)(7)(C)

5. Have you tried to resolve the complaint through the institution's grievance process, due process hearing, or with another agency?

Have you tried to resolve the complaint? No

6. Describe the discrimination

OCR enforces regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin; sex; disability; and/or age.

(You may select more than one.)

On what basis were you discriminated against? national origin

In the space provided below please describe each discriminatory action separately. For each action, you need to provide the following information: (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)

Not sure, but the material was handed out by the (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)
a list of black leaders was distributed including many openly anti-semitic black leaders

Unsure but it went to (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)

Do you have written information that you think will help us understand your complaint?

yes or no Yes

7. Your complaint must be filed within 180 days of the discriminatory action

The laws that we enforce require that complaints be filed with our office within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory event. If any of the alleged discriminatory actions took place more than 180 days before the postmark or receipt date of this complaint, you may request a waiver of the 180-day limit. When did the last act of discrimination occur?

When did the last act of discrimination occur?

Enter the date: (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)

Are you requesting a waiver of the 180-day filing time limit for discrimination that occurred more than 180 days before the filing of this complaint?

Are you requesting a waiver of the 180-day filing time limit for discrimination that occurred more than 180 days before the filing of this complaint?

yes or no No

Reason for not filing complaint before 180 days: {Empty}

8. What would you like the institution to do as a result of your complaint?

What remedy are you seeking? I'm seeking that the hcpsd school system should be investigated for anti-semitism (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)

I believe to combat that this has already occurred, the school should add education on the holocaust to the curriculum for the elementary school

9. Option to Participate in OCR's Early Mediation Process

I am interested in participating in early mediation: Yes



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

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100 PENN SQUARE EAST
PHILADELPHIA, PA 19107-3323

REGION III
DELAWARE
KENTUCKY
MARYLAND
PENNSYLVANIA
WEST VIRGINIA

March 25, 2024

Sent via email only to: Bill_Barnes@hcpss.org
William Barnes
Acting Superintendent
Howard County Public Schools

Re: OCR Docket No. 03-24-1154

Dear Acting Superintendent Barnes:

This letter is to notify you that the U.S. Department of Education (Department), Office for Civil Rights (OCR) received the above-referenced complaint against the Howard County Public Schools (the District). The Complainant alleges that the District discriminated against students on the basis of national origin (shared Jewish ancestry) by failing to respond to incidents of harassment during the 2023-2024 school year.

OCR enforces Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), 42 U.S.C. Section 2000d *et seq.*, and its implementing regulation at 34 C.F.R. Part 100, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin, including shared ancestry, in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance from the Department. Because the District receives federal financial assistance from the Department, OCR has jurisdiction over it pursuant to Title VI.

OCR is opening the following issue for investigation:

Whether the District failed to respond to alleged harassment of students based on national origin (shared Jewish ancestry) in a manner consistent with the requirements of Title VI.

Please note that opening the complaint for investigation in no way implies that OCR has made a determination on the merits of the complaint. During the investigation, OCR is a neutral fact-finder, collecting and analyzing relevant evidence from the Complainant, the District, and other sources, as appropriate. OCR will ensure its investigation is legally sufficient and fully responds to the allegation in accordance with the provisions of the Case Processing Manual (<http://www.ed.gov/ocr/docs/ocrspm.pdf>) (CPM).

Our goal is the prompt, appropriate resolution of the complaint. While we are proceeding with an investigation, there are other approaches that can achieve this goal. In particular, please note the section on resolution of a complaint prior to the conclusion of an investigation. If the District expresses an interest in resolving the complaint and OCR determines that resolution of the complaint prior to the completion of the investigation is appropriate, OCR may attempt to negotiate an agreement with the District pursuant to CPM Section 302.

Attached is a request for data necessary to investigate this complaint. The Department's regulation implementing Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, at 34 C.F.R. § 100.6(c) gives OCR the authority to request this information. Please note that OCR has the right of access to

records that are necessary for OCR’s investigation, even if those records contain names or other personally identifiable information. *See* 20 U.S.C. §§ 1232g(b)(1) and 1232g(b)(3) regarding the applicable provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; *see also* 34 C.F.R. § 100.6(c) and 34 C.F.R. § 99.31(a)(3)(iii).

OCR requests that the District submit this information within 21 calendar days of the date of this letter (i.e., by **April 15, 2024**). We prefer that you submit information electronically, if feasible. If any item in our request is unclear, or if you experience any difficulty complying with this request, please contact us at the telephone number(s) provided below prior to the expiration of the 21-day period. Please be aware that OCR may need to make additional requests for information in the future. If OCR needs to conduct an on-site investigation, we will notify you in advance.

Please be advised that the District must not harass, coerce, intimidate, discriminate, or otherwise retaliate against an individual because that individual asserts a right or privilege under a law enforced by OCR or files a complaint, testifies, or participates in an OCR proceeding. If this happens, the individual may file a retaliation complaint with OCR.

Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), it may be necessary to release this document and related correspondence and records upon request. If OCR receives such a request, we will seek to protect personally identifiable information that could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy if released, to the extent provided by law.

We look forward to your cooperation during the resolution of this complaint. If you have any questions, you may contact Connor Lacy, Team Attorney, at 215-656-6459 or connor.lacy@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

(b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)

Andrea DelMonte
Team Leader/Supervisory Attorney
Philadelphia Office
Office for Civil Rights

**Howard County School District
OCR Complaint No. 03-24-1154
Data Request**

Please submit the following information to OCR by **April 15, 2024**. We prefer that you submit information electronically, if feasible. If you are sending a large electronic file, please contact OCR for directions on how to upload the file to OCR's secure file-sharing platform. Additionally, if any of the information is available online, you may provide the URL in lieu of hard copy documents. Please note that OCR is not requesting, and the District should not provide, any social security numbers in response to this data request. If any item in our request is unclear, or if you experience any difficulty complying with this request, please contact us prior to the expiration of the 21-day period. Please be aware that OCR may need to make additional requests for information in the future. If OCR needs to conduct an on-site investigation, we will notify you in advance.

Preservation of requested and relevant data and documents: OCR may request supplemental data and documents that are relevant to the allegation(s) under investigation. To ensure that OCR can assess the recipient's compliance with the statutory and regulatory obligations at issue in this investigation, please ensure that District employees preserve the data and documents requested below for any timeframe specified in these requests and going forward until OCR closes this case. Please also ensure that recipient employees preserve other data and documents that are relevant to the allegation(s) under investigation until OCR closes this case.

The regulation implementing Title VI, at 34 C.F.R. §§ 100.6(b) and (c), requires that a recipient of federal financial assistance make available to OCR information that may be pertinent to reach a compliance determination.

Please provide the following data by **April 15, 2024**:

1. The name, title, and contact information of the District's:
 - a. Contact person for this complaint;
 - b. Person authorized to resolve this complaint;
 - c. Person responsible for responding to Title VI complaints; and
 - d. Person responsible for handling complaints of harassment/discrimination on the basis of national origin/shared Jewish ancestry, at each level of the process.
2. A copy of the District's policies and procedures, and/or a description of the District's practices, governing the investigation of complaints of harassment and/or discrimination on the basis of national origin, including shared ancestry. Include a detailed description of the complaint process, including each of the process, the length of the process, and the types of records maintained.
3. Copies of all formal and informal reports/complaints, including records of oral reports/complaints, concerning alleged harassment and/or discrimination based on national origin, including shared ancestry, during the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 academic years.

4. For each report/complaint in Item 3, provide the following:
 - a. the name(s) and title(s) of the individual(s) to whom the complaint/report was made, and the date of the complaint/report;
 - b. a detailed description of the complaint processing procedures employed to resolve the complaint/report;
 - c. the length of the process;
 - d. the name(s) and title(s) of the individual(s) involved in the handling of the complaint/report;
 - e. all actions the District took in response to the complaint/report;
 - f. the District's final determination regarding the complaint/report;
 - g. any corrective action taken including discipline and/or supportive measures; and
 - h. any notice of the findings provided to the complainant.

In the District's response to Items 3 and 4, include any reports or complaints the District received related to a (b)(6); (b)(7)(A); (b)(7)(C)

5. Copies of all documentation related to any complaint(s) identified in response to Item 3 and 4, including but not limited to correspondence, internal and external memoranda, investigative reports, witness statements, logs, forms, meeting minutes, personnel file documents, disciplinary documents, supportive measures provided, and notes generated for each complaint.
6. State whether the District conducts trainings and/or holds informational sessions with the student community and/or District staff regarding students' rights under Title VI, how to report possible violations of Title VI, and/or the District's obligation to respond to Title VI complaints. If so, provide the dates of such events, a description of the attendees, and any materials presented and/or distributed.
7. The names and titles of all persons who assisted in the preparation of these data responses.
8. A narrative response to the issue opened for investigation.
9. Any other information that the District believes will be helpful to OCR or relevant in this investigation.

If you are sending a large electronic file, please contact OCR for directions on how to upload the file to OCR's secure file-sharing platform.