

# **Department of Facilities Management**

## **Equity Action Plan**

**Organization: Division of School Plant Operations**

**As of: September, 2014**

### **Foreword**

The Department of Facilities Management (DFM) is committed to the tenets of the Montgomery County Public Schools *Culture of Respect* compact, and it values the rich racial, ethnic and cultural diversity of our work force, our students, and our community. The DFM recognizes that in a culture of respect individuals are aware and understand the impact of their behavior and decisions on others, and that they have an awareness, understanding, and acceptance of others' interests, viewpoints, culture, and background. The promotion of equitable practices in the department is critical to fostering a work environment where excellence and continuous improvement are achieved.

Equitable practices are defined as activities that promote understanding of racial, ethnic and cultural differences, and that harness these differences to strengthen performance of DFM units. The DFM pursues equitable practices by focusing on six major areas: human resource activities, professional development and growth, communications, team building, customers and stakeholders, and organizational leadership. This Equity Plan provides actions that DFM units will pursue in each of the six equity areas.

### **Utilization of the Action Plan**

Subordinate elements (divisions, teams or units) of the DFM are organized and staffed differently according to their respective missions and functions. Not all potential actions are either feasible or practical to be implemented by such diverse group of organizational elements. Therefore, the DFM action plan is designed to provide subordinate divisions, teams, and units the capability and flexibility to independently specify actions appropriate to their respective organizations.

The DFM action plan contains a master list of subject areas, strategies, and actions that subordinate organizational elements must edit with notes to indicate the actions being used or implemented.

**Department of Facilities Management  
Equity in the Workplace  
Action Plan**

**Organization:** Division of School Plant Operations

**As of:** February, 2011

<b>I. Human Resource Activities</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<p><b>A. STRATEGY: Integrate equity into recruiting and hiring</b> <b><u>ACTIONS</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage employees to refer candidates who reflect the diversity of the community, diversity of perspective, and who possess the skills and attitudes required to be successful</li> <li>2. Ensure that interviews promote the selection of highly qualified candidates who reflect the diversity of the community</li> <li>3. To the extent possible, interview panels should reflect the diversity of the applicants</li> <li>4. <b>Review existing policies, procedures and practices to identify any structures that may unintentionally create disadvantages for any group of employees.</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>DSPO Monthly collaboration meetings with OHRD</b></p>
<p><b>B. STRATEGY: Integrate equity into new employee orientations</b> <b><u>ACTIONS</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New employee orientations will include discussion of racial and cultural sensitivity and the organizational culture of respect</li> <li>2. New employee orientations will be specific to the job and include expectations, competencies, and requirements to be successful</li> <li>3. Meet with all new employees during their probationary periods to stress open and honest communications and respect in the workplace</li> <li>4. <b>Provide a sample induction plan to principals and BSMs for introducing new employees to new positions</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Formal New Leader Induction Program</b></p>
<p><b>C. STRATEGY: Ensure equity in the assignment of duties</b> <b><u>ACTIONS</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assign and distribute work among all employees with impartiality, fairness, and equality of opportunities for professional cross-training and developmental experience</li> <li>2. Provide equitable opportunities for non-supervisory staff to participate on leadership teams and committees and in meetings that provide opportunities for professional development</li> </ol>	
<p><b>D. STRATEGY: Integrate equity into employee development</b> <b><u>ACTIONS</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Train, coach, counsel, and mentor all employees on the importance of self-assessment, professional development, and the pursuit of career objectives that may serve as paths to competitive advancement</li> <li>2. Encourage all employees to seek training and development that help them to achieve their full potential and career objectives</li> <li>3. Ensure that all employees prepare professional development plans (PDPs), and that supervisors review PDPs with employees at least annually</li> </ol>	

4. Provide opportunities for staff to contribute to the success of the organization through cross training and developmental assignments
5. Train, coach, counsel, and mentor all employees fairly and impartially as a means to integrate equity into organizational succession planning

<p><b>E. STRATEGY: Apply equity in setting job expectations</b>  <u><b>ACTIONS</b></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Impartially and fairly set and enforce high expectations and standards of conduct for all employees</li> <li>2. Ensure that performance standards and criteria used to evaluate staff are clear, consistent, and communicated to all employees well in advance of evaluations</li> <li>3. Encourage all employees are to speak openly and honestly when they feel that job expectations are in conflict with their cultural heritage or beliefs</li> </ol>	
<p><b>F. STRATEGY: Ensure equity in feedback and recognition</b>  <u><b>ACTIONS</b></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide regular performance feedback to all employees to encourage them to continue to improve and grow professionally</li> <li>2. Encourage employees to provide feedback to their supervisors regarding problems or challenges related to workplace equity</li> <li>3. Regularly solicit and acknowledge the importance of employee feedback</li> <li>4. Provide consistent, accurate, and specific oral and/or written feedback to employees that supports improved performance and motivation</li> <li>5. Be fair and impartial in recognizing employees for good performance or for specific accomplishments, either one-on-one or in front of peers, as appropriate to the situation</li> </ol>	
<p><b>II. Professional Development and Growth</b></p>	<p><b>Notes</b></p>
<p><b>A. STRATEGY: Ensure equity in professional development</b>  <u><b>ACTIONS</b></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that all employees understand their duties, responsibilities, required competencies, and job expectations through periodic one-on-one and/or group counseling</li> <li>2. Equitably adhere to and reinforce principles and requirements of current MCPS professional growth systems for all employees</li> <li>3. Encourage employees to participate in the MCPS mentoring and in-service training programs to enhance their cultural awareness and competence as part of their own professional development</li> <li>4. Annually provide initial and/or refresher training for leaders and supervisors in workplace equity, cultural competence, and the MCPS culture of respect</li> <li>5. Ensure that organizational training events recognize and respect the language, background, and culture of the participants</li> <li>6. Address workplace equity and cultural competence with all employees</li> <li>7. Encourage all employees to carefully assess, plan, and pursue their career objectives according to their interests and abilities</li> <li>8. Teach and/or help employees to assess their developmental needs and support their efforts to pursue developmental opportunities</li> </ol>	

<p><b>B. STRATEGY: Support equity for English language learners</b>  <u><b>ACTIONS</b></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage employees to pursue opportunities to improve their English language skills, including in-service training</li> <li>2. Ensure that English language learners understand the career-enhancing implications of learning and using the English language</li> <li>3. Request or arrange for translation and interpreting services when necessary</li> </ol>	
<p><b>C. STRATEGY: Improve equity through cultural awareness</b>  <u><b>ACTIONS</b></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Integrate cultural awareness into scheduled organizational training, activities, and events as appropriate</li> <li>2. Cultural awareness events and training should highlight how employee differences enhance organizational effectiveness</li> <li>3. Use staff meetings as a forum to discuss diversity and culture</li> <li>4. Consistently respect the cultural differences of all employees</li> <li>5. Promote and encourage activities that celebrate diversity; e.g., international lunches and monthly celebrations of various groups</li> <li>6. Be alert to identify and promptly correct violations of culturally insensitive behaviors and attitudes</li> </ol>	
<p><b>III. Communications</b></p>	<p><b>Notes</b></p>
<p><b>A. STRATEGY: Integrate equity into communications</b>  <u><b>ACTIONS</b></u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communicate openly and honestly with all employees without regard to racial, ethnic, or cultural differences</li> <li>2. Treat all employees with equal levels of respect without regard to racial, ethnic, or cultural differences</li> <li>3. Fairly consider all employees' ideas and opinions</li> <li>4. Develop and employ effective listening skills to improve understanding of the communications of culturally diverse employees</li> <li>5. Recognize and respect that communication styles can vary with differences in employees' cultural backgrounds</li> <li>6. Use available means (meetings, emails, newsletters, website etc.) to reinforce the importance of celebrating cultural differences</li> <li>7. Model a culture of respect in all oral and written communications</li> <li>8. <b>Develop strategies to listen and learn from employees from diverse backgrounds to discover opportunities to improve communication and employee success.</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Meet with MCABSE, HAE, LEAAP and other affinity groups</b></p>

IV. Team Building	Notes
<p><b>A. STRATEGY: Enhance equity by effective team building</b></p> <p><b><u>ACTIONS</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create diverse membership on teams and committees</li> <li>2. Enforce a culture of respect in team development and operations</li> <li>3. Include team building principles in organizational training activities</li> <li>4. Attempt to resolve employee problems and grievances at the lowest possible level</li> <li>5. Utilize employee assistance program (EAP) or other mediation services to attempt to resolve difficult interpersonal conflicts between individuals or groups</li> <li>6. Use “study circle” techniques when appropriate to raise the awareness of diversity issues and to facilitate dialogue on race, ethnicity, language, and other factors of diversity</li> <li>7. Use interest-based bargaining strategies to ensure that the interests of all groups are fairly represented in operations and decision making</li> </ol>	
V. Customers and Stakeholders	Notes
<p><b>A. STRATEGY: Provide for equity in customer service</b></p> <p><b><u>ACTIONS</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide customer service guidelines to all employees to ensure that customers are consistently treated with respect without regard to racial, ethnic, or other cultural differences</li> <li>2. Periodically evaluate business processes and procedures to ensure that they are free of structural or institutional racism</li> <li>3. Provide business services with fairness, equity, and respect for the customer</li> <li>4. Evaluate customer feedback to ensure that services are being equitably provided, and that customer comments are not the result of service inequities</li> <li>5. Provide customer service guidelines to all employees to ensure that customers are consistently treated with respect without regard to racial, ethnic, or other cultural differences</li> <li>6. Periodically evaluate business processes and procedures to ensure that they are free of structural or institutional racism</li> <li>7. Provide business services with fairness, equity, and respect for the customer</li> </ol>	
<p><b>B. STRATEGY: Provide for equity in vendor/supplier support</b></p> <p><b><u>ACTIONS</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide vendors/suppliers with copies of the “MCPS Culture of Respect and “foreword” to the equity action plan to ensure that they understand and respect our goals</li> <li>2. Report alleged incidents of cultural disrespect by vendors/suppliers to the Division of Procurement for follow-up</li> </ol>	<p>Review foreword with buyer for possible inclusion in bid language and notice of award documents</p>

<b>VI. Organizational Leadership</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<p><b>A. STRATEGY: Make equitable practices flow top to bottom</b></p> <p><b><u>ACTIONS</u></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Ensure that new leaders understand the importance of cultural awareness and sensitivity</li><li>2. Provide or arrange for cultural training for all new leaders and refresher training for all other leaders</li><li>3. Model desired cultural competence behavior to subordinate leaders</li><li>4. Include equity and cultural competence issues in recurring counseling and mentoring activities</li><li>5. Expect, demand, and enforce equitable behavior by subordinate leaders, supported by periodic observation and counseling</li><li>6. Mentor all employees who show ability and potential to advance to leadership positions, without regard to racial or cultural diversity</li><li>7. Embrace and display a consistent philosophy of equity in the workplace</li></ol>	<p><b>Provide opportunities for leaders to participate in study circles, equity train the trainer courses, etc.</b></p>