

**DIVERSITY** Diversity is the presence of difference(s) within a given setting. In this case the workplace is the setting and the differences typically refer to identity like race and gender, and sometimes ethnicity, religion, nationality, or sexual orientation.

**INCLUSION** Inclusion has to do with people with different identities feeling and being valued, leveraged, and welcomed within a given setting (whether that's a team, workplace, or industry).

**EQUITY** Equity is an approach that ensures everyone has access to the same opportunities. Equity recognizes that we don't all start from the same place because advantages and barriers exist. It's a process that acknowledges uneven starting places and seeks to correct the imbalance.

**STATEMENT OF BELIEFS** Texas School for the Deaf is committed to a diverse, inclusive, and equitable environment where all Board members, staff, and students feel respected and valued regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation or identity, disability, education, or any other bias.

The School is committed to being nondiscriminatory and providing equal opportunities for employment and advancement in all areas of our work.

The School respects the value that diverse life experiences bring to our Board, leadership, and staff and we strive to listen to their views and give them value.

The School is committed to modeling diversity, inclusion, equity and maintaining fair and equal treatment for all.

**GOALS** The Board's goals to provide informed leadership for diversity, inclusion, and equity include:

- We will strive to see diversity, inclusion, and equity in connection with our vision and mission for the benefit of those we serve.
- We aim to recognize and address inequities in our policies, programs, and services at our School.

- We will update and document progress on our diversity, equity, and inclusion practices.
- We will review underlying assumptions that interfere with our diversity policy.
- We will advocate for removing systemic inequities that impact our work at the board level and address it according to this policy and in accordance with our mission.
- We commit to being transparent about diversity in all our interactions.
- We will dedicate our time and resources to expanding greater diversity within our Board and leadership positions.
- We commit to leading with respect and cultural competence and we encourage all employees to express this in their work within our organization.

## ACTIONS

The Board agrees to abide by the following action items to promote diversity, inclusion, and equity in our work:

1. We will create new learning opportunities and formal, transparent policies as we strive for cultural competency throughout our organization.
2. We will explore potential underlying, unquestioned assumptions that interfere with inclusiveness.
3. We will acknowledge and dismantle any inequities within our policies, systems, programs, and services, and continually update and report organization progress.
4. We will take action to improve diversity, inclusion, and equity in our board and leadership positions.
5. We will develop resources that demonstrate our commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity and present them to our members and members of our community.
6. We will develop a system to create awareness and address biases during our recruiting, hiring, and evaluating processes.
7. We will train our personnel to be responsible for orienting, onboarding, and training our staff and volunteers on equitable practices.

8. We will advocate for and support board-level thinking about how systemic inequities impact our organization's work, and how best to address that in a way that is consistent with our mission.
9. We will Improve our cultural leadership pipeline by creating and supporting programs and policies that foster leadership that reflects the diversity of American society.

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Amended: