



Los Angeles Unified School District

## OFFICE OF STUDENT CIVIL RIGHTS

### FACT SHEET:

### Protecting Students from Discrimination Based on Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics

As a result of current global conflicts in addition to a nationwide increase in reports of hate crimes, harassment, and threats to school-age students who are or are perceived to be associated with groups including but not limited to Jewish, Christian, Israeli, Sikh, Muslim, Arab, Hindu, Buddhist, or Palestinian, we must continue to meet our legal obligation to ensure all of our students are provided with non-discriminatory, safe, and secure school environments. Hate-based discrimination, including harassment based on race, color, national origin, shared ancestry, or ethnic characteristics, has no place in our schools. The Los Angeles Unified School District is committed to identifying, preventing, and stopping hate-based discrimination that could harm any student in any of our school communities.

As noted in the USDOE OCR Dear Colleague Letter (2023), Title VI protects students from discrimination:

- Title VI is a federal law that protects persons from discrimination based on their actual or perceived race, color, national origin, shared ancestry, or ethnic characteristics, or based on their association with a country with a dominant religion or distinct religious identity, in any program or activity that receives federal financial assistance.
- Discriminatory conduct may violate Title VI, State law, and the District's Nondiscrimination Policy when it involves racial, ethnic, or ancestral slurs or stereotypes based on a student's skin color, physical features, or style of dress that reflects both ethnic and religious traditions; or is based on the country or region where a student is from or is perceived to have come from. Some examples of discrimination include targeted harassment based on a student's accent or name, a student's limited English proficiency, a student speaking a language other than English, or delivery of instruction/classroom environment that is not viewpoint neutral.
- School staff must take immediate and effective action to support alleged victims and respond to complaints of discrimination, including harassment based on race, color, national origin, shared ancestry, and/or ethnic characteristics. Supportive measures include promptly investigating and documenting appropriate action steps, such as parent/student conference(s); behavior contracts; reflective behavior journaling; social-emotional learning activities; restorative practices; safety planning; additional supervision; warnings; detention; and, in some instances, administering formal discipline. Staff should ensure that instructional practices are aligned with District policy and State standards and are culturally sensitive to not alienate students.

### What can a person do if a student experiences discrimination based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics?

Anyone who believes that a student in our school communities has experienced discrimination based on race, color, or national origin may contact the Office of Student Civil Rights for information specific to formal complaint procedures. Additional sources of support include the respective [Region Office](#), the [Division of Instruction](#), and [Human Relations, Diversity, and Equity](#). Adult-to-adult discrimination concerns can be addressed by contacting the [Equal Opportunity Section](#).

### Additional Resources

More information, including guidance from the Office for Civil Rights and applicable District policy documents, is available on the [Office of Student Civil Rights Title VI webpage](#).

#### Questions?

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#### Office of Student Civil Rights

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