

BANGOR SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

73 Harlow Street – Bangor, Maine 04401

www.bangorschools.net



Kathy Harris-Smedberg, Ph.D.
Interim Superintendent and
Assistant Superintendent of Schools

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The Bangor School Department held a press conference at 11:00 am on Wednesday, December 30 where Interim Superintendent, Kathy Harris-Smedberg, Bangor High School Principal, Paul Butler, and Title IX and Affirmative Action Coordinator, Dana Carver-Bialer announced that a final report had been received from Berstein Shur in regards to the racial allegations that took place at Bangor High School.

“With the support of the School Committee, I believe that it is important to inform the complainants of the findings of the report and will release the report publicly after I have been in contact with each of the individuals involved and they have had time to review the materials. I would like to thank the complainants for coming forward with this sensitive topic. We know that this is an important topic and we have work to continue. The report investigated 22 points brought forward by the complainants. I am encouraged that many of the points were handled appropriately, while understanding that we have areas of growth. I see this report as an opportunity to make the Bangor School Department stronger. I am committed to moving forward on solutions and next steps that benefit our school and community,” stated Dr. Harris-Smedberg.

Carver-Bialer stated “We are here to do the *proactive* work of fostering a culture of multiculturalism, diversity, inclusion, and equity. Infusing these values into all aspects of education makes us stronger: it positions Bangor’s students to be tomorrow’s global leaders.”

The school department has not waited for the finalized report to start this work. Prior to the investigation, the BSD was moving forward on these initiatives and has continued this work. The BSD has updated the following policies:

- Affirmative Action policy
- Student expression policy to clarify that no hate symbols are allowed
- Updated handbook language on implicate bias and discrimination
- Clarified the Affirmative Action Coordinator and Title IX descriptions

Personnel added:

- Title IX and Affirmative Action Coordinator
- School Safety and Communication Director

Curriculum review:

- Extensive ongoing review for representation and inclusivity
- Database to check library collections
- Additional Social Emotional and Equity Education for all students PreK – 12 in the first two weeks of school and continued quarterly
- Inclusive educational events – diversity panel, civil rights lessons, kindness, etc.

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Professional development:

All BSD staff received multiple trainings
Implicit Bias (yearly requirement)
Diversity training (yearly requirement)
Inclusive classrooms and schools
Affirmative Action training including but not limited to microaggressions, bias, inclusivity, diversity, and structural/systemic dynamics of discrimination.
Bullying - recognition and response protocols
Discrimination awareness and harassment protocols

Reporting:

Added discrimination tip line on BSD app and all Bangor High School laptops.
All students (6-12) were trained on the usage of reporting tools
Tips are emailed directly to Affirmative Action Officers

Committees:

Formed BSD Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee
Helped form City Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

Civil Rights Teams:

Added Civil Rights Teams to Grades 4-5 and 6-8

“We are committed to this work and to this school” stated Butler.

The Bernstein Shur report will be made available to the public through the Bangor School Department website after all of the complainants have reviewed the report. To stay up to date on news from the Bangor School Department download the Bangor App, follow us on Facebook (@bangorschoolsmaine) and Twitter (@bangorschooldpt), and check www.bangorschools.net for up-to-date news stories.