Equity Code of Conduct
Bard High School Early College/Bard Early College
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Preamble
Schools are communities that are sustained by the synergistic efforts of all community members working toward shared goals. A code of conduct is intended to guide and affirm members of a community in addressing barriers to achieving greater equity. We aim to strengthen the relationship between BEC leadership, educators, staff, and students by creating a concrete and scaffolded system for addressing these barriers such as recruiting and retaining more diverse faculty, prioritizing the needs and initiatives of marginalized faculty throughout the network, building a community that is actively supportive and inclusive, strengthening the ability of employees to build relationships across difference to improve student outcomes, and reviewing and assessing our curriculum and pedagogy to ensure that it is reflective of our students' diverse identities and experiences and geared toward their collective success.

Given this code's focus on equity, it is important to acknowlege that bias and discrimination function as impediments to the growth and success of our schools, especially the actions and implications that we do not readily see, and maintain systems of oppression. In order to address the problems, we must first acknowledge they exist and begin to understand the scope of these challenges.

Equity Statement
The practice of equity is necessary to the mission and goals of the Bard Early College (BEC) Network. Equity requires self-reflection, accountability, access to opportunities, and knowledge of power dynamics and systems of oppression that serve to marginalize.

The Bard Equity Code of Conduct outlines the values needed for our community to thrive together in systems of mutual respect and growth. It centers the needs of disenfranchised communities. It requires us to engage deeply and thoroughly with the personal transformation and education needed to meet differences with dignity, honor, and respect.

The Code of Conduct gives us identifiable tools to help us hold one another accountable to this work across barriers of identity and power. It asks those with more institutional authority to share their resources, space, and power.

Equity prioritizes the needs of those of marginalized experiences and/or identities and encourages everyone to reflect on how they may negatively impact others so that we can learn and grow as a community. Being equity centric also ensures that administration, faculty, staff, and students are able to operate and thrive in an environment which is supportive of and recognizes difference and how difference impacts emotional and intellectual labor, power dynamics, opportunity, and access.

Equity is dependent on the core values of respect, dignity, fairness, inclusion, and diverse representation. Equity recognizes the personal boundaries and sensitivities that each of us has as individuals, and the additional labor people of marginalized identities perform in order to provide the resources, support, and access to opportunity that is needed for all to thrive. Equity requires us to examine behavior and move from an emphasis on intention to an emphasis on impact.

The concept of equity extends beyond how we treat and interact with one another. It applies to interactions in classrooms, offices, community spaces, and even extends to events or incidents that occur beyond our campuses or the academic portion of the day, but which may impact directly on interpersonal relationships and standards.

All of the recommendations within this Equity Code of Conduct presume the inherent value of others. This document is a living entity that should be edited to reflect the needs of our evolving community.

Equity Code of Conduct

In our commitment towards proactive inclusion, we actively strive to:
- Be aware of the discomfort that occurs in a learning environment.
- Attend to the needs and perspectives of marginalized groups in our initiatives and assignments whether they be directly or indirectly related to equity.
- Examine our own biases, recognizing that our privileges give us blind spots that we need to engage with rather than ignore or deny.
- Seek out opportunities to become more culturally fluent and support one another's growth towards this goal.
- Restore relationships when harm arises.
- Exercise cultural humility.
- Engage in proactive problem-solving when issues arise.
- Recognize that institutionalized biases have marginalized members of our communities and work to proactively correct that bias.
- Seek to remove barriers to inclusion.
- Hold ourselves accountable when confronted with how we have exhibited bias.
- Create honest and equitable community conversation between parents, students, and Bard faculty and staff about educational needs and how they could be met, and to use these conversations to adjust current Bard practices and/or develop new practices.
- Uphold the dignity of all identities in our communities through our language and behavior during the Bard school day, as well as on social media and with other students and faculty members in public outside of school.
- Promote and provide access to clear and consistent opportunities for training for all staff, faculty, and student members in our equity agreements.
- Listen to one another.
- Be sensitive to the needs of our community.

You are going to grow. How can we support you?

Key Terms

Ageism
Prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on an individual's age (University of Massachusetts).

Ableism
Prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on an individual's physical, mental, or social ability (University of Massachusetts).

Accountability
The quality or state of being responsible.

Cissexism
a term describing all systems that promote transphobia and cisnormativity (the belief that that the cisgender experience is the normal and typical experience for people) as well as a term that specifically describes the marginalization of trans identities due to cultural or societal factors (University of Santa Barbara).

Classism
Prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on an individual's class position, due to social or monetary factors (University of Massachusetts).

Community
A unified group of people connected by interests, place, necessity, or other means (Merriam-Webster).

Cultural Humility
The ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is open to another person in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the person (Hook, J.N.)

Diversity
Psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among any and all individuals; including but not limited to race, color, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, veteran status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, gender expression, gender identity, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, genetic information and learning styles. A diverse group, community, or organization is one in which a variety of social and cultural characteristics exist.
(https://www.uh.edu/cdi//resdiversity_educationources/pdf/terms.pdf)

Discrimination

The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion and other categories. In the United States] the law makes it illegal to discriminate against someone on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. The law also makes it illegal to retaliate against a person because the person complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination, or participated in an employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit. The law also requires that employers reasonably accommodate applicants' and employees' sincerely held religious practices, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the employer's business (Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative).

Equity

The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all students, faculty, and staff, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to assist equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups.
(https://www.uh.edu/cdi//resdiversity_educationources/pdf/terms.pdf)

Hate Crime

A crime, typically one involving violence, that is motivated by prejudice on the basis of race, religion, sexual orientation, or other grounds.

Homophobia

A fear or, aversion to or discrimination against homosexuality or homosexuals.

Horizontal Oppression (also known as lateral oppression)

The result of people of target groups believing, enforcing, and acting on the agent system of discrimination. This can occur between members of the same group (e.g., a Chicano telling another Chicano to stop speaking Spanish), or between members of different target groups (e.g., Asian Americans fearing Blacks as criminals, Latinos believing stereotypes that Native Americans are alcoholics). (Caroline Kyungah Hong).

Intersectionality

An approach largely advanced by women of color, arguing that classifications such as gender, race, class, and others cannot be examined in isolation from one another; they interact

and intersect in individuals' lives, in society, in social systems, and are mutually constitutive.

Exposing [one's] multiple identities can help clarify they ways in which a person can simultaneously experience privilege and oppression. For example, a Black woman in America does not experience gender inequalities in exactly the same way as a white woman, nor racial oppression identical to that experienced by a Black man. Each race and gender intersection produces a qualitatively distinct life (Intergroup Resources, 2012)

Implicit Bias

It operates in an unintentional, even unconscious manner. This type of bias does not require the perceiver to endorse it or devote attention to its expression. Instead implicit bias can be activated quickly and unknowingly by situational cues (eg, a person's skin color or accent), silently exerting its influence on perception, memory, and behavior. Because implicit bias can operate without a person's intent or awareness, controlling it is not a straightforward matter (Blair, I. et al.; 2011).

Interpersonal Racism

Interpersonal racism occurs between individuals. Once we bring our private beliefs into our interaction with others, racism is now in the interpersonal realm. Examples: public expressions of racial prejudice, hate, bias and bigotry between individuals (Terry Keleher, 2011).

Mentorship

The influence, guidance, or direction given by a mentor (Mirriam Webster).

Microaggressions

Microaggressions are "brief commonplace daily verbal, behavior, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative…slights and insults to the target person or group on the basis of their membership to a marginalized group" (Sue, 2010).

Marginalized Group

Systematic, institutionalized oppression has led to some groups being oppressed due to an aspect of their identity. Aspects of a person's identity can include: race, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, (dis)ability, mental health, religion, geographical location, and language to name a few. Some may be marginalized due to an aspect of their identity, others may be further marginalized due to the intersection of multiple aspects of their identity (feministastic.com, 2016).

Power

Ability to control, coerce or influence people based on privilege identities. Power may be
positional and provide access to social, political, and economic resources.

Power-over

Used in discriminatory and oppressive way. Having power over others and therefore domination
and control over others (e.g. through coercion and violence)

Power-with

Shared with all people in struggles for liberation and equality. Using or exercising one's power
to work with others equitably, for example, in a social movement.

Privilege

A set of unearned benefits given to people who fit into a specific social group. Society grants
privilege to people because of certain aspects of their identity. Aspects of a person's
identity can include: race, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class,
(dis)ability, mental health, religion, geographical location, and language to name a few.
Privilege is invisible to those that have it. Everyone has privilege due to an aspect of their
identity, yet some have privilege on multiple aspects of their identity (feministastic.com,
2016).

Queerphobia

A fear or hatred of queers (https://www.yourdictionary.com/queerphobia, 2020)

Transphobia

An irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against transgender people. "Homophobia
and transphobia are still major issues among LGBTQ youth, who are at higher risk for verbal
harassment by classmates." - Erica Lenti

White Fragility

"White Fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable,
triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of
emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and
leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white
racial equilibrium "(Robin DiAngelo, 2011).

Support

To offer logistical, emotional, monetary, academic, etc resources in order to ensure the success of others (Dictionary.com).

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