

**Board of Education Guidance on Cultural
Competency Training for Teachers and Other
Licensed School Board Employees in Virginia
Public Schools**



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GUIDANCE ON CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAINING FOR TEACHERS AND OTHER LICENSED SCHOOL BOARD EMPLOYEES IN VIRGINIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Introduction

Pursuant to Code of Virginia § [22.1-298.7](#), this Guidance document is designed to provide assistance to local school boards in the Commonwealth regarding the adoption and implementation of policies that require every school board employee licensed by the Virginia Board of Education (Board), including teachers, leaders, and other licensed staff, to complete cultural competency training or professional learning at least every two years.

In 2021 Virginia policymakers established new requirements to support culturally competent educators in the Commonwealth. The *Guidance on Cultural Competency Training for Teachers and Other Licensed School Board Employees in Virginia Public Schools* (Guidance) was developed in response to House Bill 1904 and Senate Bill 1196, enacted by the Virginia General Assembly, which establish the following new requirements:

Evaluations shall include an evaluation of cultural competency;

Every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license shall complete instruction or training in cultural competency;

Every person seeking initial licensure or renewal of a license with an endorsement in history and social sciences shall complete instruction in African American history, as prescribed by the Board; and

Each school board shall adopt and implement policies that require each teacher and any other school board employee holding a license issued by the Board to complete cultural competency training, in accordance with guidance issued by the Board, at least every two years.

Additionally, the enactment clause states:

2. That no later than December 31, 2021, the Board of Education shall issue guidance that establishes minimum standards for the cultural competency training required pursuant to § 22.1-298.7 of the Code of Virginia, as created by this act.

To comply with HB 1904 (2021) and SB 1196 (2021), local school boards shall adopt policies that require their employees holding a license issued by the Board to complete cultural competency training, in accordance with this guidance document. This training must occur for the first time prior to the start of the 2022-2023 school year.

The purpose of this document, in fulfillment of the statutory requirement, is to present minimum standards for the content covered in the required local training, including standardized definitions and understandings of cultural competency.

Key Considerations in Establishing a Virginia Framework

Alignment with Uniform Performance Standards for Evaluation of Teachers

This Guidance was developed in alignment with the Board’s *Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards for Evaluation of Teachers*, which set the statewide minimum criteria for the local evaluation practices. This Board responsibility to establish performance standards for teachers, principals, and superintendents that ultimately contribute to quality classroom experiences is set forth in the Virginia Standards of Quality. At the time this guidance was developed, the Board had adopted a new cultural competency standard in the *Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards for Evaluation of Teachers*, and is in the process of providing similar amendments to the Principal and Superintendent standards. It is the intention of the Board that this guidance support the development of teachers in successfully meeting the associated evaluation standard.

Academic Scholarship on Cultural Competency Professional Learning

The academic literature on cultural competency has informed the development of a Virginia Framework for Cultural Competency that includes four domains of cultural competency (Mayfield, 2020). This guidance also includes a number of micro-competencies within those domains which are the minimum standards for any training to comply with the local policy statutory requirements.

Continuously reflect on one's own beliefs, behaviors, lived experiences, and practices and their impact on one's educational decision making, and on one's interactions with others generally.

Domain II: Culturally Competent Pedagogy and Practice

Table 3 describes micro-competencies supporting culturally competent pedagogy and practice. In this domain, educators recognize the relevance of culture and adapt professional practices to meet the needs of students from all backgrounds.

Table 3. Culturally Competent Pedagogy and Practice

<i>Culturally Competent Pedagogy and Practice</i>
Micro-Competencies for All Licensed Professionals
Establish a classroom and school culture in which all dimensions of diversity are respected and valued.
Provide ongoing opportunities for student reflection and interpersonal interactions with diverse peers; support the development of self-regulation strategies, empathy, and civil discourse.
Build positive relationships with students and families and provide instruction to students on building and maintaining positive peer relationships in the educational learning setting.
Communicate with students, staff, families, and the community in linguistically and culturally responsive ways.

school year with the expectation of intentional and ongoing follow-up. Divisions