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DEI Initiatives and Programs Under Fire: What Institutions Can Do to Ensure Their Programs Comply with Relevant Laws

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Introduction

- DEI initiatives are being designed and implemented by institutions as a way to create a more diverse and inclusive workforce.
- However, these initiatives must be carefully drafted to avoid violating non-discrimination laws and the U.S. Constitution.
- This presentation will discuss DEI initiatives, the legal challenges these initiatives face, and provide practical guidance on minimizing those challenges.



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The Benefits of Diversity and Inclusion



Leads to better creativity and problem-solving



Institutions are better equipped to work with diverse populations



Leads to increased retention of diverse employees



Improvement in hiring of diverse and younger applicants as these applicants seek and expect a diverse workplace



Improvement in community relationships

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Supreme Court Strikes Down the Use of Race Conscious Efforts in Student Admissions

- SFFA filed lawsuits alleging that Harvard's and UNC's student admission policies were discriminatory in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act ("Title VI") and the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution.
- The Supreme Court agreed with SSFA, ruling that both universities' use of race in their student admissions decisions was unlawful violating Title VI and the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.



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Supreme Court's Rationale for Rejecting Race Conscious Measures in Student Admissions

- The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment provides that no state shall "deny to any person...the equal protection of the law." Interpreted by the Courts to require the doing away with all governmentally imposed discrimination based on race.
- According to the Court, Harvard and UNC's race conscious admission programs were not based upon a compelling government interest; and
- The diversity and inclusion goals of Harvard and UNC were "not sufficiently coherent" and measurable to survive a constitutional "strict scrutiny" analysis.
- "Societal discrimination" alone does is not a compelling reason under a strict scrutiny analysis for the use of race-based measures.



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Proponents of Race Conscious Measures See a Silver Lining in the Court's Rulings

- The author of the Court's Harvard Decision, Chief Justice Roberts, stated that "[n]othing in this opinion should be construed as prohibiting universities from considering an applicant's discussion (essay) of how race affected his or her life.
- Interesting that the Court appears to exempt from its ruling the United States military academies. The Court noted that the limited use of race in admitting cadets presents "potentially distinct interests" from colleges and universities.
- Does this mean that certain employers and/or positions of employment are more appropriate for the use of race conscious?



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Conservative group sues NYU, claiming law journal student staffing discriminates against straight, white applicants

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Arkansas lawmakers grill college leaders over DEI



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Morrison Foerster Changes DEI Fellowship Criteria Amid Lawsuit



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Kellogg's 'woke' workplace diversity programs are illegal, group claims



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The Legal Stakes

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Illinois Human Rights Act

A photograph of a row of law books on a wooden shelf. The spines of the books are visible, with some labeled "LAW REPORTS" and others with numbers like "173" and "174".

The logo for Robbins Schwartz, featuring a stylized blue square icon with a white 'S' and the text "Robbins Schwartz" and "One Team. Making Your Mission Ours." below it.

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Legal Complaint Mechanisms



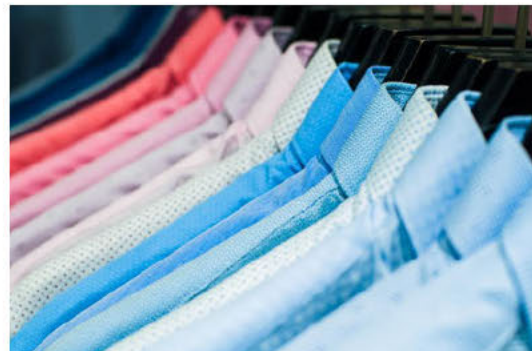
- Title VI – U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights
- Title VII – U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- IHRA – Illinois Department of Human Rights
- Internal Complaint Procedures



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Recruiting

- Expanding the budget for increased recruitment of diverse candidates
- Shift in overtly focusing on hiring underrepresented group to promoting access and eliminating barriers to employment
- Communications can focus on finding candidates best equipped to work with students in a particular community
- Stress importance of race-neutral factors such as courage, determination, or leadership abilities



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Hiring, Firing and Promotions



- Prohibition on hiring decisions based on race or protected categories long pre-dates Supreme Court decision
- Exercise caution with programs designed to serve only historically underrepresented groups
- Exercise caution when thinking expressly about race or demographic numbers, but can consider prior lived experiences as related to the position in question

Hiring, Firing and Promotions

- As always, focus on race-neutral factors
- Important to document non-race, non-protected category reasons for all personnel decisions, whether firing or hiring
- Train all hiring team members on non-discrimination law, institution policies, implicit bias
- Compile a trained and, whenever possible, a diverse hiring team



Affinity or Employee Resource Groups

- Bring together employees from historically underrepresented groups (ex. race, sexual orientation/gender identity, disability).
- Provide forum for discussing and uniting around shared experiences, issues and goals
- Promote sense of community and connection amongst colleagues.

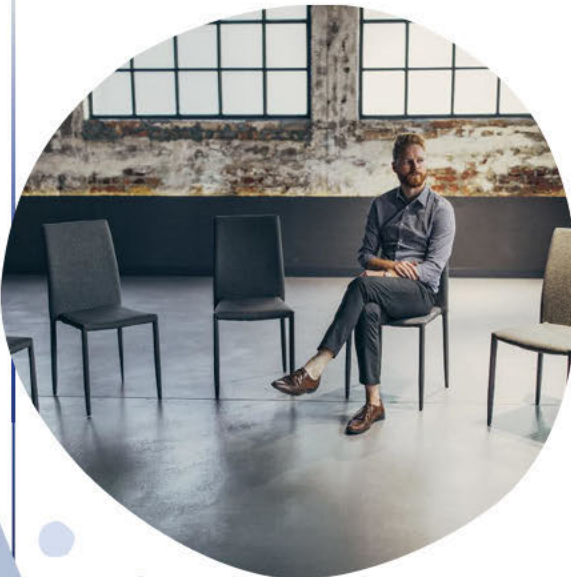


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Affinity or Employee Resource Groups

- Concerns with expanding group membership
- Groups that limit participation or membership are vulnerable to challenge
- Title VI – exclusion, denial of benefit, and/or discrimination by a recipient of federal funding based on race, color, national origin
- Title VII/IHRA – segregation/denial of benefits based on various protected categories



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Affinity or Employee Resource Groups

Compliance Efforts

- Name change
- Invite and open participation for all employees, or those committed to mission of the group
- Communication with group leaders
- Communication with staff



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DEI Mission Statements

- To the extent not already clear, stress commitment to treating all employees fairly
- Promote inclusion of all groups as part of larger workplace community
- Avoid language that states or indicates race, national origin or other protected categories will be used in any decision-making process



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Student DEI Matters

- Select Enrollment or Limited Opportunities
- Scholarships and Fellowships
- Access to Facilities and First Amendment Rights



The Legal Stakes

- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- A recipient shall not: “[o]n the basis of sex, provide different amount or types of such assistance, limit eligibility for such assistance which is of any particular type or source, apply different criteria, or otherwise discriminate.”
- Safe harbor provision for financial assistance established through legal instruments that require such assistance be sex-restricted.

The Legal Stakes

- The Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution – no state shall make or enforce any law which deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.
- State anti-discrimination laws.



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Coalition for T.J. v. Fairfax County School Board, 2023

- Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, a select enrollment public school updated its admissions standards.
- After implementing these changes, the acceptance percentage for Asian-American students dropped from 73% to 54%, while those for white, black, and Hispanic students increased.
- A group primarily composed of Asian-American parents from the Northern Virginia area, Coalition for T.J., initiated a lawsuit against the School Board.
- On March 10, 2021, they presented their case in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia.



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Fourth Circuit Analysis

Primary question: Do the new admission guidelines intentionally disadvantage Asian American students, thereby violating the Fourteenth Amendment's Equal Protection Clause?

- Does the policy have a biased effect on a specific racial group?
- Was the policy driven by discriminatory intent?

Holding:

- Fourth Circuit found in favor of the school district,
- Coalition failed to present compelling evidence that the new admission policy unfairly affected Asian Americans or that the Board implemented this policy to target Asian Americans.

Petition of Writ:

- In August of 2023, the Coalition petitioned the Supreme Court to hear its case.



Select Enrollment/Opportunity Factors

- *Christa McAuliffe v. de Blasio*, 2022, holding that there was no discriminatory effect where a school district considered income (both the student's and the sending school's economic needs rank)
- *Ass'n for Educ. Fairness v. Montgomery Cnty. Bd. of Educ.*, 2022, holding that a school district's admission process, which was changed, in part, to increase Black and Hispanic student enrollment, was not prohibited.
 - Including: ranking of the poverty level of student's schools of origin and norming of their performance on standardized tests by comparing their performance with students in the same "poverty band."
 - In the course of the appeal, the district changed its process to first universally screen all students for eligibility in a pool ("A" in the relevant subjects, performed above reading grade level in fourth grade, and received a locally normed minimum of 85th percentile on the MAP assessments) and then, second, used a lottery to choose from the pool to be admitted to the program, in order of lottery number until each magnet class reaches capacity.

Federal Guidance Pre and Post *Students for Fair Admissions*

- [January 2023 Fact Sheet](#)
- [June 2023 Fact Sheet](#)
- [August 2023 FAQ](#)
- [August 2023 Dear Colleague](#)
- [August 2023 Guidance](#)
- [September 2023 Guidance](#)



Guidance Highlights

- Assignment of reading materials, written assignments, and discussion groups, based on a protected status may violate the law.
- Institutions may hold assemblies, meetings, focus groups, or listening sessions to hear about students' experiences with their identities, including race, in the school or surrounding community, or to hear students' ideas about creating an inclusive school community with attention to race or other aspects of identity that affect students' experiences at the school or in the world.
- Title VI does not generally restrict sponsorship or recognizing extracurricular activities and spaces with race-related or other identity related themes.
- Efforts to assess or improve institutional climate, including through creation of student, staff, and/or parent teams, use of community focus groups, or use of climate surveys.
- Investing in targeted recruitment, outreach, and pathway programs, including with K–12 schools, community colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Minority-Serving Institutions.
- Giving meaningful consideration in admissions to the adversity students have faced, including a students' financial means, where a student grew up or attended high school, and personal experiences of hardship and discrimination, including racial discrimination, and ending practices that hinder socioeconomic and racial diversity.

Legal Requirements for Student DEI Initiatives

Required Components of the Student Equity Plans & Practice

- On June 7, 2022, Governor Pritzker signed into law, effective immediately, HB 5464 (P.A. 102-149), which amends the Illinois Board of Higher Education Act (“Act”).
- Institutions of higher education in Illinois must develop and submit to the Illinois Board of Higher Education (“IBHE”) an equity plan and practices
- This is to increase the access, retention, completion and student loan repayment rates of minorities, rural students, adult students, women, and individuals with disabilities who are traditionally underrepresented in education programs and activities.



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Development and Reporting on Student Equity Plans & Practice

IBHE, in collaboration with the Illinois Community College Board (“ICCB”), must:

1. require each covered institution to submit an equity plan and implement practices that, “at a minimum, close gaps in enrollment, retention, completion and student loan repayment rates for underrepresented groups and encourage all private institutions of higher education to develop and submit such equity plans and implement such practices”;
2. conduct studies of the effectiveness and outcomes of the institution’s methods and strategies outlined in an institution’s equity plan;
3. require components of an institution’s equity plan to include strategies to increase minority students student loan repayment rates;
4. require institutions to “establish campus climate and culture surveys”; and
5. continue to mandate all public institutions of higher education “and encourage all private institutions of higher education”, to submit data and information to determine compliance with these requirements.

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Expansion of DEI Initiatives in Illinois

ISBE Equity Journey Continuum

- In its 2020-2023 Strategic Plan ISBE announces its Equity Continuum Journey
- “Illinois has an urgent and collective responsibility to achieve educational equity by ensuring that all policies, programs, and practices affirm the strengths that each and every child brings within their diverse backgrounds and life experiences, and by delivering the comprehensive supports, programs, and educational opportunities they need to succeed.”
- The Strategic Plan offers a definition of “Equity” in Illinois education as “having high expectations for every learner and providing supports and resources so each learner can meet those expectations.”



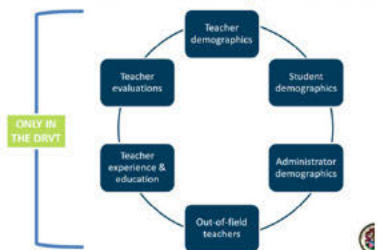
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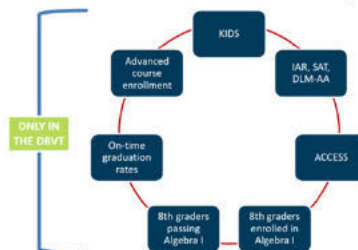
Equity Journey Continuum Measures

- Student Learning
- Learning Conditions
- Elevating Educators

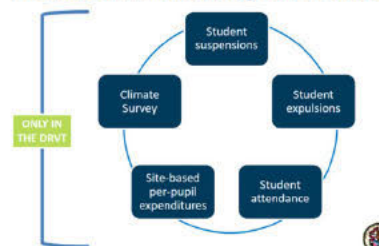
Focus area 3: Elevating Educators



Focus area 1: Student Learning



Focus area 2: Learning Conditions



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Common Student DEI Initiatives to Increase Diversity

- Reviewing admission requirements for specialized/limited enrollment programs with an eye toward promoting uniformity/consistency to the extent practicable.
- Tailoring recruitment efforts to be inclusive of historically underrepresented students.
- In support of retention, where analysis finds that all other factors (e.g., parental educational attainment, standardized test scores, grades, etc.) being equal, minoritized racial group membership or gender, statistically result in a lower success rate at the institution, engaging in focused efforts for students of the relevant race and gender, may be justifiable so long as programming is inclusive, with participation by other students who demonstrate need.
- Financial aid and scholarship offerings and requirements often advance institutional diversity goals associated with mission-driven aims and may also foster a more inclusive and broadly diverse student body.
- English Language Learner identification and support; access for students with disabilities and pregnant students.
- Inclusive teaching strategies and curricular coverage of areas related to diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Training of hiring team members on best practices to avoid discrimination and implicit bias.



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Diversity and Equity Scenarios

- Hudson College is a two-year institution enrolling students who have a high school degree or a GED and meet its minimum grade point average requirements. Additionally, Hudson provides selective enrollment programs in specialized fields. The College's selective programs require eligible students to apply by completing an application, including a written essay and successfully pass a program-focused standardized test. A selection committee will review the application and select which students will be enrolled.
- Hudson's mission statement references the importance of having equitable and diverse employment and educational environments.
- Hudson's legal counsel advised the Board of Trustees and College administration on the many challenges to diversity, equity and inclusion policies and practices given the recent Supreme Court decision on race in student admissions.



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Diversity and Equity Scenarios, contd.

- Hudson has reworked its student selection policies to eliminate the use of race or national origin as a factor in acceptance into the select enrollment programs. The selective programs admission process now uses a “holistic application review process” which allows the College to assess an individual student’s attributes and background, including those related to their race, racial discrimination or the racial composition of their neighborhood. Additionally, Hudson continues to consider a student’s membership in disadvantaged and/or historically underrepresented groups in its selection process. Hudson does not define “disadvantaged and/or historically represented groups”.
- Hudson previously offered a scholarship for first year college students who are members of a “diverse population that has historically been underrepresented at the institution including Black, Latinx, Native American and LGBTQ+ people.” After facing challenges from first year students excluded from this scholarship, Hudson re-framed the scholarship as recognizing exceptional first year students with “a demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion.”
 1. **Does Hudson’s “holistic” selection process comply with the Court’s prohibition on using race?**
 2. **Any concerns with Hudson’s scholarship for first year students?**



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Diversity and Equity Scenarios, contd.

- Hudson has not reviewed its employment DEI initiatives because employment policies and practices were not the subject of the Supreme Court’s decision. Hudson’s employment practices aggressively recruit and target Black and Latinx employee applicants and the College spends a larger percentage of its recruitment dollars on trying to reach these two groups. Current data reveals that both Latinx and Blacks are significantly underrepresented in the College’s workplace.
 1. **Should Hudson review its diversity and equity employment policies?**
 2. **Is there any concern with Hudson’s aggressive and costly recruitment of Black and Latinx?**
- As part of its efforts to retain diverse and inclusive students and employees, and to provide a sense of belonging and support to underrepresented groups on campus, Hudson instituted an office of diversity, campus cultural centers and supports the creation of affinity groups. Some of the campus affinity groups have a race or national origin related theme. The employee and student affinity groups, in line with Hudson’s attempt to foster a sense of belonging and safety, are open only to members of the specific race or national origin of the group in question. These affinity groups occasionally host campus events and speakers which are advertised campus wide and open to everyone.
 1. **Should Hudson continue with its diversity office and cultural centers in light of recent challenges?**
 2. **Any concerns with Hudson’s affinity group membership limitation?**



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Additional Diversity and Equity Scenario

- In Pleasantville, Illinois, the computer science and engineering workforce is disproportionately male. Computer science and engineering is a substantial industry and Orange Technology Company, which is headquartered in Pleasantville, is the greatest employer in the greater Pleasantville region. Resultingly, the average income earned by males is 2.5 times more than the average income of females in the Pleasantville region.
- Pleasantville municipality has supported local government agency partnership to increase opportunities for women in computer science and engineering. An intergovernmental MOU has been created to support these efforts.



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Additional Diversity and Equity Scenario, cont'd

- As part of these efforts, the local elementary school has a school sponsored extracurricular club that it organizes for seventh and eighth graders called girls who code. It is open to only female students and includes use of school facilities for fundraising efforts in support of the program.
- After successful participation during the school year, female students may utilize the fundraising moneys to attend a girls who code summer camp at the local park district.
- The park district partners with the local community college's math and science department to recruit female college students as summer camp facilitators. The summer position is paid for by a donor scholarship bequeathed to the college.
- **Each organization receives roughly 90% female applicants and 10% male applicants. What factors must be considered for selection?**



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DEI in State Contracts and Construction

The Business Enterprise Act

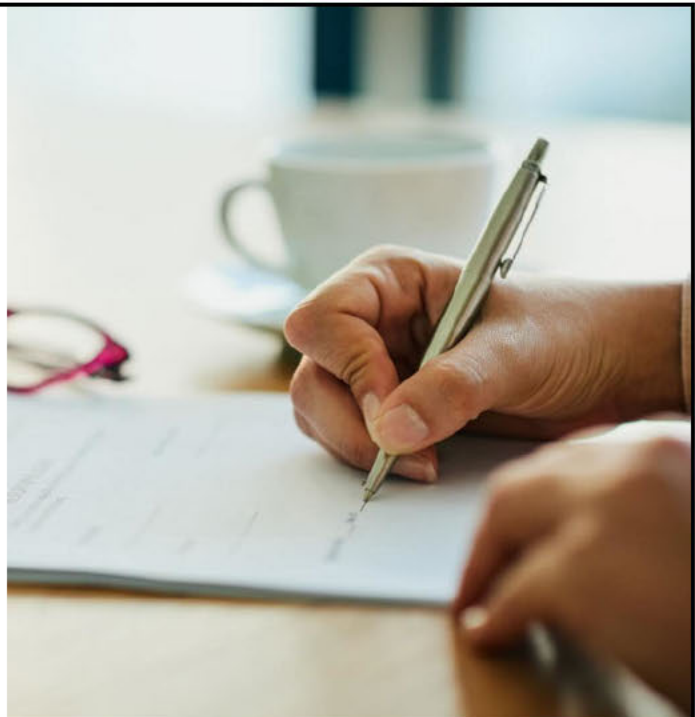
- The Business Enterprise for Minorities, Females, and Persons with Disabilities Act, or “the Business Enterprise Act”, requires state agencies and public institutions of higher education to:
 - (1) Set aspirational goals for the awarding of contracts to qualifying businesses;
 - (2) Increase the diversity of the vendors it engages with; and
 - (3) Comply with reporting requirements of the Commission on Equity and Inclusion.



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Contracts Subject to the Act

- **Construction Contracts** – “all State contracts entered into by a ... public institution of higher education for the repair, remodeling, renovation or construction of a building or structure ”
- **Professional Service Contracts** – contracts for insurance services, investment services, information technology services, accounting services, architectural and engineering services, and legal services
- **State Contracts** – “all contracts entered into by ... any public institution of higher education including community college districts, regardless of the source of the funds with which the contracts are paid ”



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Reporting Requirements Under the Act

- All annual reports submitted in accordance with the Business Enterprise Act must include:
 - A description of a college's utilization of businesses owned by minorities, females, and persons with disabilities during the preceding fiscal year,
 - A mid-fiscal year report on the utilization to date for the current fiscal year; and
 - A self-evaluation of the college's efforts to meet its goals.



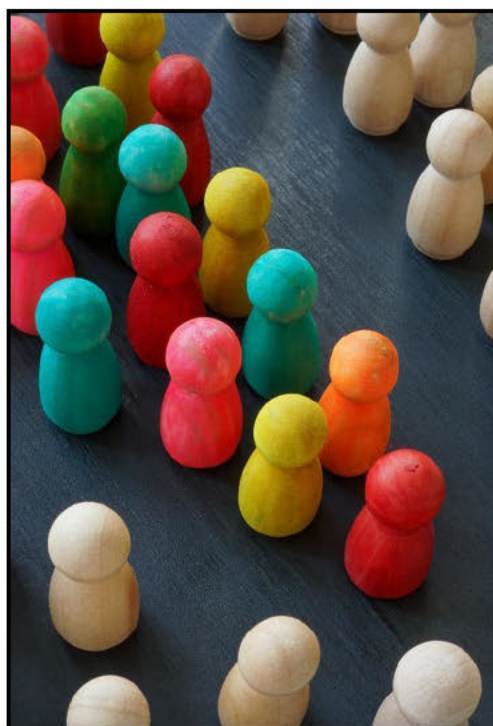
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Requirement to Collect and Publish Diversity Data

- As public taxing districts enter into contracts with vendors for goods, materials, services, programs, and other items, they should be mindful of the Illinois Property Tax Code, 35 ILCS 200/18-50.2, which requires public taxing districts to collect and publish data on whether their vendor or subcontracts are:
 - 1. Minority, woman-owned or veteran-owned businesses, and**
 - 2. Whether these vendors or subcontractors hold any certificates for the above categories or if they are self-certifying.**
- These requirements are only applicable to taxing bodies with annual aggregate levies exceeding \$5,000,000.



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Final Thoughts on Assessing Diversity and Equity Plans

Creating Legally Sound DEI Initiatives

- What is the current reality at the school district? Examine demographics, past history, hiring, promotion data, student enrollment, achievement and discipline data;
- Evaluate the success, or lack thereof, of current DEI initiatives. Where are the gaps between your goals and the results;
- Communicate with all stakeholders the benefits of diversity, equity and inclusion to obtain more "buy-in" and support for the initiatives;
- Targeted recruitment and outreach of diverse candidates is still acceptable;
- Carefully review and analyze employee and student data used to support your DEI initiatives. Make sure your metrics support your initiatives;
- Understand and be aware of the legal constraints on DEI initiatives;
- Remember, "race neutral" DEI policies and practices such as financial means, socioeconomic status, parental education history and where an applicant lives are more likely to withstand legal challenge;
- Engage in a legal review and audit of all plans and policies related to diversity, equity and inclusion;
- Establish end date(s) for your DEI initiatives



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Frank B. Garrett III represents and counsels public and private employers in all aspects of employment law, including litigation defense of workplace complaints and charges. Frank also reviews, audits and trains organizations on their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives. Frank is often called upon to investigate workplace complaints of harassment, discrimination, violation of employer leave policies and employee discipline incidents.

Frank practices regularly in both state and federal courts at both the trial and appellate levels. Frank is a regular presenter on employment law and workplace issues at both the state and national levels. He is continually recognized as an Illinois Leading Lawyer.

AWARDS

Illinois Leading Lawyer, Government and Regulatory-Related

Illinois Leading Lawyer, Employment and School Law

Illinois Super Lawyers

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Contributing Author, "Employment Discrimination" *School Law: Personnel and Student Issues*, IICLE (1996, 1999, Supp. 2001, 2005, 2010, 2012, 2015, and 2021)

"Extended Medical Leave Under ADA Soundly Rejected by 7th Circuit," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2017)

"First Amendment Protections Get Broader for Government Employees," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2016)

"Big-box Employee's Attempt to 'Scam' Company Undercuts FMLA Claims," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2015)

Employers Must Rethink Employee 'Look' Policies After High Court Decision," *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin* (2015)

"Using Social Network Screening as Part of the Hiring Process: Employers Should Proceed with Caution," *Inquiry & Analysis*, National School Boards Association's Council of School Attorneys (2013)

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

School District Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Guidance, Northwest Personnel Administrators Group Meeting (September 2022)



PRACTICE AREAS

Employment Law
Diversity, Equity and
Inclusion Review, Audits
and Training
Education Law Litigation

EDUCATION

J.D., DePaul University
College of Law

B.A., Oberlin College

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

Supreme Court of the
United States

U.S. Court of Appeals for
the Seventh Circuit

Trial Bar of the U.S.
District Court for the
Northern District of Illinois

U.S. District Court for the
Northern District of Illinois

U.S. District Court for the
Central District of Illinois

U.S. District Court for the
Southern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

Safeguarding School District's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiatives from Unlawful Discrimination Challenges, American Association of School Personnel Administrators (April 2022)

A Review of Important New Laws Impacting Illinois School Districts, Illinois Association of School Boards (January 2022)

Sexual Violence and Harassment on Campus, Illinois Community College Trustee Association (June 2021)

ORGANIZATIONS

American Bar Association,
Section on Labor and
Employment

National Association of
Diversity Officers in
Higher Education

Chicago Bar Association

Illinois Council of School
Attorneys



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Zaria practices in the area of education law focusing in the areas of special education and students issues. Zaria counsels school districts with respect to IEP meetings, 504 accommodations, OCR, ISBE, and IDHR complaints, due process hearings, residency and homeless dispute hearings, student discipline matters, board policy and student handbook review, FOIA requests, student record compliance and contract review. Zaria also counsels community colleges on student related issues.

Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Zaria worked for the Chicago Public School District, where she represented the district as a special education attorney in due process matters and special education disputes.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

"Medical Cannabis at School Wins Legislative OK," Chicago Daily Law Bulletin (2018)



PRACTICE AREAS

Education Law
Special Education
Student Discipline

EDUCATION

J.D., DePaul University
College of Law

B.A., Yale University

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for the
Northern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

Supreme Court of the
Commonwealth of
Massachusetts

ORGANIZATIONS

Chicago Bar Association

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Aaron counsels employers on various aspects of labor and employment law, including internal investigations, employee discipline, labor relations, workplace policies, and state and federal labor and employment law matters under the Illinois Human Rights Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Family and Medical Leave Act, Occupational Safety and Health Act, Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, Title VII, and other laws. Aaron also represents employers in traditional labor law matters including labor arbitration and grievance proceedings and collective bargaining agreement negotiations.

Aaron represents employers in litigation and before administrative agencies including the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Illinois Department of Human Rights, the U.S. Department of Labor, and the Illinois Department of Labor.

Aaron provides training to employers on internal investigation best practices, avoiding charges of unlawful discrimination and harassment in the workplace, and awareness and management of implicit bias in various sectors.

Aaron is the Associate Representative to Robbins Schwartz's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Leadership Committee.

Prior to joining Robbins Schwartz, Aaron served as in-house employment law counsel for the Cook County Sheriff's Office. He has previously worked for the City of Chicago and a large, international law firm. During law school, he served as Managing Executive Editor of *the Northwestern Journal of Law & Social Policy* and President and Founder of the Northwestern Labor & Employment Law Society. He also served as a judicial extern for the Honorable Judge Joan B. Gottschall of the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

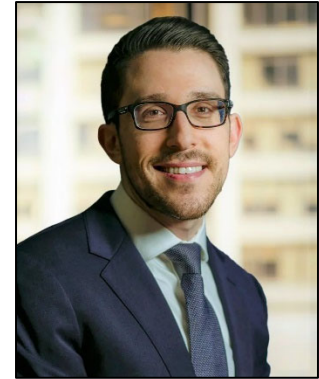
RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Co-Author, "Seventh Circuit Addresses Employer Liability for Coworker and Supervisor Harassment and Challenges in Establishing Claims For Retaliation, Defamation, and IIED," *Employment and Labor Law Flashpoints*, IICLE (2023)

"When It Happens to You: Responding to Reports of Harassment and Discrimination," Law Arts Blog, Lawyers for the Creative Arts (July 2022)

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

Navigating Payroll Laws: Wages and Record Keeping Requirements, Illinois Association of School Business Officials Bookkeepers Conference (March 2023)



PRACTICE AREAS

Labor & Employment

EDUCATION

J.D., Northwestern
University Pritzker School
of Law

B.A., Washington
University in St. Louis,
magna cum laude, high
distinction

ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

U.S. District Court for the
Northern District of Illinois

Supreme Court of Illinois

ORGANIZATIONS

Secretary, Associate
Board, Lawyers for the
Creative Arts

Chair, Labor and
Employment Committee,
Chicago Bar Association,
Young Lawyers Selection

Chair, Vice Chair,
Secretary, Board of
Directors, About Face
Theatre (2018-2021)

Co-Chair, LGBTQ+ Alumni
Affinity Group,
Northwestern Pritzker
School of Law

The Peanut Butter and Jelly Effect: Understanding Implicit Bias and Its Impact on Educators, Illinois Association of School Administrators Legal Workshop
(February 2023)

2022 Hot Topics in Labor and Employment Law, Chicago Bar Association
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