



# Baldwinsville

## Central School District

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## Baldwinsville Central School District Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Community Café Findings

January 18, 2024

*FINAL*

Provided to:

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## Executive Summary

On Wednesday evening, 12/6/23, the Baldwinsville Central School District (BCSD) held a town hall-style discussion group regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The purpose of the meeting was to provide a platform for the community-at-large to share its thoughts regarding DEI as it relates to the BCSD. The discussion was broken into sections and was interactive using the District's online tool, "ThoughtExchange." Participants responded to survey questions and were able to react to and rate other participants' thoughts and responses. The event was well attended, with participants representing students, parents, and BCSD staff. The discussion session lasted two (2) hours. A Moderator's Guide was used to direct the discussion topics. The Guide is included as an attachment to this report.

This discussion forum was one of several being held by the BCSD as it engages the community with implementing its 2023 – 2024 District-wide Strategic Plan.

The BCSD administrative project team {Danielle Nahorney, Director of Academic Services and Accountability, and Superintendent Joseph DeBarbieri} met with RMS in advance of the session and assisted with the development of the Moderator's Guide and the Participation Questions. Ultimately the Guide was broken down into: (1) Understanding the community's perception of DEI; (2) its importance as it relates to the BCSD's teaching and learning environment, (3) evaluating where the District is today in incorporating DEI and (4) brainstorming what can be done within the local Baldwinsville community to encourage greater DEI within the District that demonstrates DEI as a core institutional value.

**Questions regarding this report and the primary research can be directed to Patrick Fiorenza, Director of Research Analytics, at [PatrickF@rmsresults.com](mailto:PatrickF@rmsresults.com).**

## Findings

The Community Café was moderated by RMS staff, following a pre-approved script (see Appendix). RMS leveraged the “Thought Exchange” tool to make the sessions more interactive and engaging. The Community Café had three sections, each supported by a Thought Exchange or guided activity. RMS then used prompts and guided the discussion to explore themes, trends, and ideas as they emerged from the discussion. Overall, the participants seemed to enjoy using the Thought Exchange tool, and enhanced the richness of the conversation. The key findings are presented in order by Thought Exchanges.

### **Thought Exchange – Activity 1: Background & Introduction to DEI**

The first activity helped develop a baseline understanding of DEI and individuals perceptions and understanding of the term. This helped the moderator to better understand participants and more appropriately guide a discussion.

Participants were asked for words and phrases they would use to describe DEI. Thought Exchange automatically created a Word Cloud, using Artificial Intelligence to analyze the sentiment of each word. The popular words were “acceptance”, “welcoming”, “respect”, “access”, “belonging”, “cultural and open environment”. Several people also stated that DEI is complicated and difficult to achieve, particularly in today’s very divisive environment.

Participants agreed that all three of the words diversity, equity, and inclusion are linked together. Most felt that you “could not have one word without the others.” Most felt that diversity and inclusion are most important, and if these are present, it should lead to equity.

It was acknowledged that DEI is an evolving topic. Everyone has their own path to learning and understanding what DEI means. Many attendees (participants) said that they attended the session to listen to what others said on the topic. Many felt that DEI is an uncomfortable topic and needs to be further explored and discussed. A couple acknowledged that communities are embracing division and not looking to build cohesion. A new collaborative approach regarding DEI needs to be fostered. All felt that this was an appropriate topic for the school district to embrace.

Participants were asked to identify components of a good DEI program or approach that they might have been exposed to. What follows is a list of suggested activities and elements that should be incorporated into a DEI program shared by the participants:

- Having clear goals.
- Defining “actionable” items to follow.
- Obtain input from multiple stakeholder groups. With a school district, it is important to learn how students feel about DEI. Participants felt it was important to get a baseline regarding DEI from which to measure change.

- Most wanted the leadership group to look into DEI to ensure that there is diverse representation.
- Ensure psychological safety.
- Build trust, recognizing that sharing around the DEI topic exposes vulnerability.
- Have representation from diverse individuals/staff.
- Continuously keep learning what makes diversity.
- Have individuals look introspectively, analyze themselves, and assess any personal bias.
- Provide opportunities for advancement and achievement (growth).
- Build allyships so everyone is encouraged to be involved and engaged.

Several participants articulated their view that DEI is a belief or mindset and not simply an implementation of a program. One participant stated, **“DEI is not a program, but a foundational mindset of an individual and community.”** They elaborated that DEI is a way of thinking and goes beyond a school environment. Participants commented that DEI is more than a program or series of activities that are adopted. It is a core value that needs to be created as a foundation for an individual. It permeates an entire community and/or generation.

All participants felt that the community plays a critical role in creating strong DEI. It was acknowledged that community is “lifelong”, and that community is where DEI needs to begin and be cultivated.

Most see the school district as the hub of a community. Therefore, having a strong DEI program in the District and building it as a core value is critical to DEI adoption. One participant said, **“Our schools are the heartbeat of the community and have a powerful influence on DEI acceptance and adoption.”** DEI needs to be fostered within the schools but must be perpetuated throughout a community as well as be talked about in the home.

### Thought Exchange – Activity 2: DEI at BCSD

The second activity focused on DEI within the District and how to increase awareness and knowledge of BCSD, within BCSD schools and functions, and also the general community. To start the discussion, participants were asked about their familiarity with BCSD DEI activities and programs. The majority had some familiarity. Forty-two percent (42%) of the participants would rate themselves a 4 or 5 on a 1 to 5 scale. The average rating among the participants was a 3.23 on a 1 to 5 scale. This indicates a good basic awareness level overall.

Those with lower familiarity with BCSD’s DEI programs/activities wanted to become more familiar. They wanted to become level 4 or 5 with their familiarity rating. Activities suggested by participants focused primarily on increasing awareness of the BCSD’s current activities out to the community. Suggestions included:

- Having each school provide a direct link describing its DEI activities.
- Hold more events (like the Community Café) to teach and educate the community on DEI and serve as a catalyst in initiating DEI discussions.
- Put resources on the District’s website.

- Some wanted the District to create a “tool kit” so that families could have a conversation at home about DEI.
- Invite families to the campus (School) to learn more.
- Educate existing students about all the services that are available from the District.
- Use a multi- media approach (ParentSquare, Twitter, Facebook, website) including sending traditional flyers home with students.



Participants felt that those who were familiar with the District’s DEI activities could help by sharing what they know. They could “start the conversation,” and help engage the community in better understanding the importance of DEI.



Participants felt that it was important for parents to have a conversation about DEI with their children around the dinner table. Many recognized that it could be a tough discussion. Others thought any prompt to get the kids talking should be encouraged. Someone stated that “students have taught me so much about DEI.” This is a generational issue as well. Adults and DEI are sometimes the hardest part. Participants want the District to make it “easy” to obtain information about its (the District’s) DEI activities. This might mean incorporating a hyperlink on the website; creating paper packets; and using social media.

Overall, the participants felt that DEI starts with the home and the development of an individual’s core values. This focus then needs to be re-reinforced by both the community and school district. Both the District and the community-at-large are critical to developing and embracing appropriate DEI.

As part of a key participant exercise, participants were asked to rate eight factors/activities that are typically associated with a strong DEI program. Their rating ranged from a “1” “not at all important” to a “5” “very important. The table identifies the results based upon the percentage of participants that responded with either a 4 or 5.

**Table 1.** How important do you think it is...

Ranking	Factor Description	Percentage rating of either 4 or 5	Mean Rating
1 	Emphasize showing respect for all students’ cultural beliefs and practices.	96.7%	4.83
2 	Provide instructional materials (e.g. textbooks, handouts) that reflect various cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, etc.	93.5%	4.71

Ranking	Factor Description	Percentage rating of either 4 or 5	Mean Rating
3 	Communicate its DEI policy to all district stakeholder groups.	93.3%	4.67
4 	Provide DEI training for all staff.	87.1%	4.55
5	Have a DEI committee that reviews policies and practices.	86.7%	4.43
5	Provide multi-level instructional courses (accelerated, honors, AP, etc.).	86.7%	4.43
7	Hire staff (instructional and non-instructional) that reflect various cultures and ethnicities.	83.3%	4.43
8	Apply rules equally to all students.	63%	4.00

Overall, the top “must have” factors that participants feel are needed for BCSD to have a strong DEI program are: (1) Providing DEI training to all staff and (2) demonstrating respect for all students’ cultural beliefs and practices.

It was also suggested that BCSD students can and should be taught how to bring the DEI discussion back to their homes and begin the discussion within the family unit, emulating appropriate acceptance and cultural sensitivity. One participant shared how much she has learned from her niece starting and encouraging a DEI discussion.

Several stated that the District should work with area nursery school programs to introduce DEI to younger children and their families. It was felt that DEI acceptance and sensitivity should be introduced to individuals as soon as possible. Participants indicated that this should be part of “brain development” which begins well before 5 years old when kids enter the District. It was suggested that the District should sponsor events, celebrations, and community partnerships with organizations where young families gather to be able to continually expose individuals to DEI.

**Thought Exchange – Activity 3: Assessment of DEI at BCSD & Next Steps**

The final section focused on assessing DEI activities within the District and asking participants to share ways to enhance DEI as a core value. Participants were asked to provide a grade to the District for its work thus far on implementing DEI. In essence, participants were asked to grade “How is it going so far?”

- Many respondents stated that they did not feel that they could give the District a grade because they were not fully familiar with what the District has done in this area.
- For those that provided a grade, the group was about 50/50 split between a grade of “B” and a grade of “C”.
- No one felt that the District should get a failing grade. Some mentioned that this forum was an example of the District trying to build greater awareness about the issue and that is to be commended.
- The group also stated that this particular exercise was difficult because this topic is continuing to evolve. They were not able to determine what an “A” grade should look like.

Most participants believe that the BCSD is on the right path to building greater awareness about DEI. Many encouraged the District to continue to be transparent in all that it does and not be afraid to “break tradition.” And do things in a new way. Most importantly, the District needs to present itself as being “proactive” on this issue and being a major contributor to fostering change.

The final exercise of the evening asked participants to identify what the next steps should be for the District as it further pursues this topic. What follows are verbatim comments ranked through the thought exchange process.

- *Keep trying to engage the community- Every time you engage someone new it is a success.*
- *Establish affinity groups for families. Create a safe space for participants to want to join in a conversation.*
- *More community outreach, targeting different groups, partnering with places that include town spaces and organizations. Several parents can't come to school for various reasons. Events held after school hardly ever get a big turnout.*
- *Informational nights. Help to educate the community of DEI efforts and actions of the school in a way that they feel welcome but don't have to commit to a task force*
- *Hiring diverse talent at all levels of the staff - to match %s of diverse in our community. Students need to see others like them in our community.*
- *A DEI panel/committee and community outreach, collaborative relationships w/ other community resources & agencies to hold events Bringing the community together, networking to further the goal.*
- *Expand on meaningful training for all staff. Not all staff have a baseline understanding of DEI*
- *Similar event but how do we get more people at the table.*
- *Celebrate and honor variety of traditions during the school day. Schools need both "big" events and small, daily, integrated into daily life curriculum. DEI is not just an event, but a way of being.*



- *DEI as a core value. Daily or weekly conversations/activities regarding the topic. Murals and boards regarding DEI throughout school buildings so everyone feels included, Safe, equal and their diversity is cherished and even admired.*
- *Hear from students. They are our key audience.*
- *Educate families. Families are a key driver of the development of different perspectives.*
- *Specific outreach to groups (single parents, special needs parents, culture groups, etc.) People may not feel that they identify with a larger, general group or that they have nothing in common with a bigger group*
- *Acknowledging other holidays/ethnicities. Celebrate diversity.*
- *Continue to involve this group. We are already engaged.*
- *Continuing this discussion. Tonight is just a starting point. Bring it down to a school level and have meetings like this take place at each school. Each age range at each school needs to be addressed differently.*
- *Cultural Festival. As a student, I didn't know about this event at all and I think that it would be such a great experience for all students.*
- *Focus less on the acronym and committees and focus more on what our community thinks these beliefs look like for students in our schools and action! We have been meeting and discussing for years and we need to focus on action for the students. Each year that goes by is missed opportunities for kids.*
- *Staff training & performance goals. Level setting what is expected out of all employees in the District in regards to reaching our DEI goal.*
- *Community education & discussion. The Bville community impacts the school community and the school community impacts the Bville community*
- *DEI training for all staff;; representation in hiring, activities and curriculum;; dinner questions and hive announcements, transparency and community We need to work on many different levels for this to succeed—staff, materials, community.*
- *Keeping families and community members involved. We all need to work together to do what is best for students to be successful in whatever they choose.*
- *More discussion and information given to the public. Greater public knowledge*
- *Sharing details of the DEI programming with parents. Parents don't know what the District is doing to promote the DEI statement.*
- *A cultural fair at each school, or a big one district wide. My kids never had an opportunity to participate in one and it sounds wonderful!*
- *I love the idea of talking points for parents- there is a ton of great literature available for children of all ages to understand DEI, maybe..... Share resources for parents?*
- *Providing resources for parents to use at home. Maybe twice a month. Bring the discussions into the homes.*
- *Guest speakers. Looking at resources that we can purchase children's books*
- *Help educate the community*
- *DEI becoming a clear core value DEI committee. Start planting the seeds in the community and students feel safer and included.*

- *Provide an environment where ideas, thoughts and opinions can be shared openly and in a welcoming manner. There are different ways that individuals perceive or feel about issues or topics that they should not feel intimidated about expressing.*
- *Spend more time and energy in getting the word out our stance on the issues surrounding DEI in our schools The more our community hears from us the more engagement we will have.*
- *Focus on academics. It's actually why the children are in school.*

Additional data and findings are available from the Thought Exchange platform. This document presents a synopsis of the event and key findings. The next section offers recommendations for BCSD to consider implementing to advance their work regarding DEI.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are based upon the insights and findings from the discussion session. Some of these recommendations may already be in place or underway at BCSD; if so, BCSD should feel confident that their efforts and strategies are valid as it is reflected in the data findings. RMS is providing these recommendations to encourage BCSD to act on items as appropriate and leverage the data from this study to work towards building an even stronger DEI program.

**1. Build Opportunities for DEI Discussion and Engagement**

Building alliances and creating opportunities to continue to foster a discussion related to the topic of DEI is critical. The District is viewed as the hub of the community and therefore there is an implied expectation that the District will take the lead with this topic within the community.

**2. Ensure that the District DEI Activities are Visible and Transparent**

The District should be very public and visible with its DEI involvement and facilitation. Awareness of the District's activities could be improved. Greater promotion should be encouraged.

**3. Create a “conversation Starter” Tool Kit**

Several participants stated that they believe that the District should create a “conversation starter” tool kit that can be used by families and the community-at-large to start having the DEI conversation in other settings, such as home at the dinner table, in churches, at community gatherings and other forum opportunities.

**4. Collaborate with Community Organizations**

The District should look to build partnerships and collaborate with community organizations to encourage DEI conversations and activities. This could take the form of creating space and events to encourage conversations and creating activities that can engage the entire community in better understanding the importance of DEI adoption.

**5. Foster DEI training and facilitation**

As an education institution, the District can work with community leaders to build a curriculum and training program around DEI activities.

**6. Create a Resource Directory**

The District should create a directory or repository for DEI related materials that can be accessed by the community-at-large and various stakeholder groups. It was suggested that this could be placed on the districts web-site with a dedicated tab and direct hyperlinks.

**7. Emulate proper DEI Behavior**

As a major force within the community the District needs to ensure that its policies, practices, and staff emulate the proper behavior associated with DEI adoption and acceptance.

Overall, these recommendations present an opportunity for the District to build on its work with DEI. As many noted, the topic is constantly evolving, and the District should continue to view DEI as a core value of the District and integrate practices throughout all district activities.

# Appendix

## Baldwinsville Central School District – Diversity, Equity, Inclusion #3025 Discussion Guide DRAFT 12/5/2023 – FINAL

### Focus Group Overview:

Date	Location	Time
Wednesday, December 6, 2023	C.W. Baker High School - Cafeteria	Session 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

### Participant Qualifications:

- This work is part of an ongoing series of community forums (Community Café) whereby students, staff, parents, and community members are invited to discuss topics impacting the Baldwinsville Central School District.
- This session’s topic is **diversity, equity, and inclusion**.
- BCSD requests that registration for each forum is completed in advance.

### Research Objective:

- Obtain key stakeholder perceptions and opinions regarding the pertinent topic [For this session DEI will be discussed].
- Incorporate the fieldwork findings into the District’s overall planning process.
- DEI is a key topic of the BCSD 2003-2024 District Goals.
- Create a forum for dialogue and exchange of ideas and knowledge with the community at large.
- Prepare summary report with key findings and themes.

### Breakdown of Content:

- We will focus on the following content areas:
  - Understanding participant’s perceptions regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion.
  - Learning from the community any “best practices”
  - Brainstorm what school districts can do regarding DEI
  - Discussion regarding BCSD’s DEI Program – [What are the “must haves”] What must be done to encourage greater DEI within the District.
- “Open Mike” allowing participants to add their thoughts or comments regarding the topic

**Duration:** Approximately 2.0 hours (120-minutes)

1	Introduction	10 Minutes	6:00 PM
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**Till: 6:10 PM**

### A. Welcome and Approach

- Welcome everyone and thank them for joining us tonight. Introduce Pat Fiorenza, Research Director, and self as the moderator. Explain that today's session is known as a general discussion group and will be held in a "community forum" or "town hall" style meeting format. Everyone will be given an opportunity to share their thoughts. As the moderator I will introduce and oversee the discussion topics. This work is *qualitative* research (versus quantitative research), done to gather opinions and perceptions from attendees. There is no such thing as a wrong answer.
- Introduce Joe and Danielle and any other BCSD staff in attendance.
- Tonight's meeting will focus on the topic of "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion," often referred to as DEI.
- Pat and I work for a local, Baldwinsville-based market research firm, Research & Marketing Strategies, Inc. (RMS). Our firm has been hired by the Baldwinsville Central School District to conduct/moderate tonight's discussion session and gather your feedback. We will be summarizing everyone's comments and preparing an aggregate report that will be shared with the BCSD administrative team. We work with several area school districts as well as nationally across the county.
- The report findings are summarized in aggregate, meaning your individual responses will remain anonymous and your name won't be tied to anything we discuss. Please speak freely about your thoughts and opinions.
- As you may know, this meeting is one of several community café forums that have been held this fall and will be held into the new year to help engage the community in collaborative discussions and is a key component of building and implementing the District's strategic plan.
- Explain that the information collected through this process will be used to:
  - Understand the community's perceptions of DEI
  - Learn which DEI activities are most important
  - Brainstorm what can be done in the local B'ville community to encourage greater DEI within the school that demonstrate DEI as core institutional values."
- No one will try to sell or sign you up for anything; tonight's discussion is for research purposes only.
- Please turn off cell phones or place on vibrate/silent mode.
- Use the bathroom if necessary before we start. (Review any other general logistics, drinks, food, etc. as appropriate)

### B. Community Forum Logistics and Rules

- The discussion will be broken down into three general topics that we will guide you through. We'll also be using an online tool called ThoughtExchange. Paper versions are also available if desired, but we encourage you to use the interactive tool.
- Explain that Patrick will assist with note taking and addressing any issues that may arise, including making sure you can access the online activities and questions about this Community Café. Feel free to flag him down if you have any questions or need assistance.
- I ask that you speak loudly and clearly and try not to interrupt when someone is talking. Remind folks that we will be summarizing the discussion into general themes. The final report is prepared from findings summarized in aggregate, meaning your individual responses will remain anonymous and your won't be tied to anything we discuss. Please speak freely about your thoughts and opinions.
- With a discussion group there are no wrong answers. I'll look to hear from everyone in the group. If you hear something and you agree, please let me know that. Also, should you disagree, let me know that too.

- Explain that we will be doing both individual and small group discussion tonight. We may be asking someone at your table to report back on the general discussion.
- This group should take approximately **120 minutes (2 hours)**. As we move through sections of the discussion, we will use a software platform known as ThoughtExchange. Some of you may already be familiar with this (as it has been used in the earlier Community Café and other school activities).

**C. Voluntary Participation**

- There is no guarantee that anything we discuss today will be implemented. However, we are looking to understand your thoughts and perceptions related to DEI. Ideas, suggestions, and recommendations are all welcome.
- We are audio recording tonight’s discussion so that we can go back and listen to the discussion. Please be assured that the audio tape will be destroyed once the research report has been prepared.
- Participation in this discussion group is strictly voluntary. If you feel the need to cease participation in the session, you may leave. However, we ask that once our discussion begins you stay until its completion. Your feedback is important to us.

2	Participant Warm-up	15 Minutes	6:10 PM
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**Till: 6:20 PM**

PP

RMS Moderator (Mark) I’d like to do a very quick warm-up for us all to get to know each other. Can you tell me, why did you come tonight? What are you looking to learn or share?

RMS to have printed frog image on tables. Also ask them to do the frog/horse image. Ask them to do the Frog/Horse activity and reinforce “no wrong answers.”

**Moderator:** Go around the room and see if anyone has any questions. The Moderator will make clear that there is no such thing as a wrong answer in a focus group.

Ensure that there are no additional questions before moving to the next section of the discussion.

3	Background – Introduction of DEI	20 Minutes	6:25 PM
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**Till: 6:45 PM**

As was mentioned earlier, the Baldwinsville Central School District is committed to building and maintaining a learning environment that promotes belonging *through the representation and participation of all*. Individuals of different races, ethnicities, abilities, disabilities, genders, religions, cultures, and sexual orientations. It is looking to create a sense of belonging for all students from all backgrounds. This goal is a vital part of the District’s 2023-2024 Strategic Plan. Further, DEI are core institutional values at BCSD.

To begin our discussion, I’d like to do our first activity using **ThoughtExchange**. Please scan the QR Code for Activity 1 and share your thoughts online: *What words or phrases would you use to define diversity, Equity, and Inclusion?* If you are not able to access the site, please let Pat know and he can assist.

Please be honest and forthright with your responses.

## Discussion Prompts: Thought Exchange – ACTIVITY 1

Ask participants to share words or phrases that they would use to define DEI, on ThoughtExchange, the moderator will guide a discussion about the words/phrases being used and rank. DISPLAY the ThoughtExchange responses.

To probe deeper on the results, the Moderator may ask:

- What does Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) mean to them? Ask participants if anyone wants to explain why they selected these words/phrases.
- Explore synonyms and offer words and phrases [e.g. *ethnic inclusiveness, cross-culturalism, ethnic mosaic, multiracialism, etc.*].
- See if there is consensus among the participants regarding the words and phrases highly rated. Are some features more important to the definition than others (e.g. fairness, equity versus having up to date materials addressing appropriateness, or the latest references (cisgendered, cultural appropriation), etc.)? If so, what features are most important?

Using ThoughtExchange as the main reference point, the Moderator will dive a bit deeper in the discussion. Is it possible to be diverse, but not be inclusive? Is it possible to be inclusive and not diverse? Do all three referenced words (diversity, equity, and inclusion) have to be administered with the same effort?

The Moderator will then move to the next section and dive a bit deeper into the discussion. Based on the ThoughtExchange, the moderator will thank everyone for their contributions and guide the conversation toward: how do organizations make DEI part of their culture and implement?

- (1) What are the characteristics of an organization that embraces a DEI policy/program? What activities, if any, do DEI focused organizations provide? Moderator will board responses. Is there ever a concern that organizations do not follow a stated policy or write one thing in a policy and then practice something different? How can this be minimized or alleviated? What do participants look for to make sure that DEI policies/programs are being followed?
- (2) What is the role of the community at large regarding DEI? Is there a key role? Does the community matter with regard to impacting DEI? Why or why not?

Explain to participants that they have done an excellent job on this section of the discussion.

4	DEI at Baldwinsville	25 Minutes	6:45 PM	Till: 7:10 PM
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We'd now like to talk about activities BCSD is doing to make DEI a core value. I'd like to ask you a few questions on ThoughtExchange, and we will then review the answers together. Rather than asking you to rate comments, this time we will ask you a few survey questions. Please scan the QR Code to access the survey questions (ACTIVITY 2). If you have any trouble, let Pat know.



Question 1. Using a scale from 1 to 5 with 1 being “not at all” and 5 being “very,” how familiar are you with DEI programs implemented by the Baldwinsville Central School District? (**Circle a rating**)

<i>Not at All</i>					<i>Very</i>
1	2	3	4	5	

Question 2. Please review the factors listed and indicate on the far right, how important you believe the factor to be in building a strong DEI program (1 = not at all, 5 = very).

1.	How important do you feel it is for the District to provide DEI training for all staff?	1	2	3	4	5
2.	How important is it that the District to provide instructional materials (e.g. textbooks, handouts) that reflect various cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, etc.?	1	2	3	4	5
3.	How important do you feel it is for the District to hire staff (instructional and non-instructional) that reflect various cultures and ethnicities?	1	2	3	4	5
4.	How important do you feel it is for the District to apply rules equally to all students?	1	2	3	4	5
5.	How important do you feel it is for the District to emphasize showing respect for all students' cultural beliefs and practices?	1	2	3	4	5
6.	How important do you feel it is for the District to have a DEI committee that reviews policies and practices?	1	2	3	4	5
7.	How important do you feel it is for the District to provide multi-level instructional courses (accelerated, honors, AP)?	1	2	3	4	5
8.	The District communicates its DEI policy to all district stakeholder groups.	1	2	3	4	5

3. What do you believe to be the **MUST HAVE** factor for building a strong DEI program within the District. (Please select only one.)

- Provide DEI training to all district staff
- Ensure that Instructional materials reflect cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, etc.
- Hire multi-cultural and ethnic staff
- Apply rules equally to all students
- Respect all students’ cultural beliefs and practices
- Establish a DEI Committee
- Provide multi-level DEI instructional courses
- Engage parents and the community with DEI policy and practices

**BREAK – 5 minutes [Stretch]**

**Discussion Prompts: Thought Exchange – ACTIVITY 2**

Question 1. Understanding of DEI at BCSD

Moderator to review results and begin a group discussion.

- For those that scored BCSD knowledge of DEI as a 4 or 5, can you share why? How did you become knowledgeable?
- For those who scored a 3, tell me more why you shared this ranking?
- For those who scored a 1 or 2, what can BCSD do to improve your knowledge?
- Overall do participants want to be more informed about a school district’s DEI policy/program? Why or why not? If they wanted to learn more, where would they turn? What resources would they use? Is there anything specific that they are looking for? If so, what is it?
- Overall, do participants wish they were more informed about the District’s DEI activities? Ask participants what modalities are best for the District to get the word out to the community stakeholders regarding DEI activities. Should more be done on the District’s website? Social media?

Question 2. Likert Scale Review

Moderator will review each DEI question listed in the survey (8 general activities). Go through each and understand the importance of a school district offering these factors as part of its DEI program. Which ones resonate? Which ones are “most” important, Which ones are least important? Is there anything missing? If so, what activity is this? Moderator will Board the activity and then ask for comment feedback from those in attendance.

- How does a DEI program look if you are a BCSD employee, student or a community member? Are the activities different (i.e., trainings, resources, communications, engagement opportunities)?
- What can BCSD do to ensure that a DEI program/policy is robust enough to cover all stakeholder needs? (Probe for a DEI committee, advisory group, etc.).
- What else should area school districts implement as part of their DEI programs (that is/are not listed as a factor(s), but should be)? Why is this (are these) important?

5	BCSD’s Current DEI Assessment	35 Minutes	7:10 PM
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**Till: 7:45 PM**

For this section of the discussion, we want to focus on the Baldwinsville Central School District and possible next steps for its DEI activities. The goal is to understand how you feel the District is currently addressing this DEI topic and learn if there is anything else the District should be doing. This time, I’d like to start with a general group discussion, and then we will close with a ThoughtExchange.

Group Discussion.

- By a show of hands, how many people would say the District gets an “A” for its DEI activities? Grade of B? Grade of C? Grade Below a C? Moderator will Board all of the scores/grades? Ask participants to share their thoughts as to why that grade was provided?
- For all with a Grade of B or lower, ask participants what it would take to raise the grade just one level? Is it reasonable for the District to raise this grade in the near term? Why or why not? See if there is consensus or a key theme that emerges.
- Do participants feel that the BCSD is ahead of the game (better than other districts); about the same; or behind what other districts are doing regarding DEI? For each response, probe as to why they feel this way.

- What is the best DEI activity that the District is undertaking? Why is this the best? Are there any activities that do not seem to be meeting expectations? If so, why do the participants feel this way? What would they do differently?
- What responsibilities do parents and the general community have regarding DEI?

Now, let's move toward completing our final **ThoughtExchange activity**. Please scan the QR Code to share your comments, and let Pat know if you have trouble accessing. Prompt: Based on tonight's discussions, what DEI related activities should the District consider moving forward?

### Discussion Prompts: Thought Exchange – ACTIVITY 3

Based on tonight's discussions, what DEI related activities should the District consider moving forward with next?

Using ThoughtExchange as the main reference point, the Moderator will dive a bit deeper in the discussion. Looking at the top response, what do you think are some of the barriers to implementing? What opportunities does the District have? What is the one thing the District should do next to advance DEI?

6	Conclusion and "Open Mike"	15 Minutes	7:45 PM
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**Till: 8:00 PM**

For this last section of the discussion, we want to offer an "Open Mike" format. This means that participants can offer their thoughts regarding the District and DEI unprompted. They can share experiences, expectations, observations, etc. The idea here is to capture what is on the community's mind regarding the topic of DEI. How relevant is this topic in today's society? What is the obligation of the BCSD? Is this a topic that first needs to be fostered at home? Should the schools prompt discussion about this topic at the "dinner table?" What more can be done to ensure that this becomes a core value for all?

Turn the floor over to the participants and ask them to share their thoughts.

As this sections wraps up, thank participants for their time and participation. Explain that they have done a wonderful job and have shared a great deal of information for the BCSD Team to review and ponder.

#### Conclusion:

1. Ask participants to reflect on their experience providing feedback today? Did the session meet their expectations?
2. Invite Joe and/or Daniel to wrap-up and say thank you.

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## Limiting Terms and Conditions

The information contained in this study has been obtained from primary data sources. All source materials and information gathered and presented herein are assumed to be accurate, but no implicit or expressed guarantee of data reliability can be assumed. This study has been prepared in the interest of a fair and accurate report. Therefore, all the information contained herein, and upon which opinions have been based, has been gathered from sources that Research & Marketing Strategies, Inc. (RMS) considers reliable.

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Certified by: 

Date: 1/18/2024

Mark Dengler  
President  
Research & Marketing Strategies, Inc.