

"Navigating the School System: When do I...?"



How do you approach a school official when your child has been a victim of prejudice or discrimination by a fellow student or staff member?

✓ **The first step is your child's teacher**

- Hopefully you have built a relationship with your child's teacher.
- You have let the teacher know your expectations about how your child will be treated.
- You have helped your child's teacher recognize his/her race as an asset.
- You have asked what types of professional development the staff has had to help them understand racial/cultural/ethnic differences.
- You know how the school addresses racial harassment and bullying.
- Bring the issue to the teacher. Don't ignore it! Ask what will be done about the issue.
- If you feel that the teacher will address the issue to your satisfaction, stay connected with the teacher and follow up.

✓ **If the ground work has not been laid with the teacher or school:**

- Bring the issue to the teacher. Don't ignore it! Ask what will be done about the issue.
- If you feel that the teacher will address the issue to your satisfaction, stay connected with the teacher and follow up.
- Drop into your child's school regularly.
- Volunteer or offer to help out when possible. You will learn a lot about the school culture/climate while you are there.

- If the issue continues, bring it to the attention of the principal or other administrator.
- Tell them that you expect the situation/issue will be taken care of. Ask what the plan is to remedy the situation.
- If you feel the situation is not being taken seriously, you should contact the USOE – Educational Equity Office (801) 538-7640 or your district Educational Equity department.



✓ **Don't:**

- Accept colorblind statements: “I don't see color”, “I treat all children the same”.
- Be afraid to talk about race issues with the teacher, ask questions in meetings, etc.
- Accept low expectations, deficit or patronizing comments.

Resource: Title VI of the Civil Rights Act:

TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964 PROHIBITS DISCRIMINATION BASED ON RACE, COLOR OR NATIONAL ORIGIN IN PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES, WHICH RECEIVE FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

Kathleen Christy
Salt Lake City School District
(801) 578-8251