



Office of Equity and Inclusion

September 6, 2022

Dear Friends:

By now you may have received communication on social media or other media platforms relative to a letter to East Tennessee State University from the Tennessee House chairman of the Legislature's Joint Government Operations Committee informing the university to unilaterally suspend any policies making LGBTQ students a protected class amid federal litigation. In the letter, President Brian Noland was requested to immediately revoke and/or remove any publications, policies and website entries for which ETSU is responsible, that state or imply that LGBTQI+ students are a protected class under Title IX." He was further instructed to respond by September 2nd about completing any "required actions".

ETSU complies with federal and state laws and therefore, this does not have any impact on our commitment to supporting the safe inclusive environment for all of our students identified as LGBTQ+. To date, it appears that our policies and publications reflect our legal obligations.

ETSU is here to support and value all students, regardless of their sexual orientation. As I recite each month in the Office of Equity and Inclusion newsletter, ETSU is committed to the core values of people, relationships, diversity, excellence, efficiency, and honesty, as well as creating a university community committed to integrity, respect for diversity, engagement in the community, and non-violence.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Keith V. Johnson".

Dr. Keith V. Johnson
Vice President of Equity and Inclusion