

Book

WV Policy Templates

Package

Section

2000 Program Templates

Title

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES

Code

po2266 - For Clients who have hearings only

Status

Active

2266 – NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX IN EDUCATION PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES

Introduction

The Board does not discriminate on the basis of sex (including sexual orientation or gender identity), in its education programs or activities, and is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, and its implementing regulations, not to discriminate in such a manner. The requirement not to discriminate in its education program or activity extends to admission and employment. **[DRAFTING NOTE: In the new Title IX regulations, the term “admission” refers to admission to postsecondary institutions (i.e., institutions of graduate higher education, institutions of undergraduate higher education, institutions of professional education, and institutions of vocational education); thus, if a K-12 school does not operate a vocational program (e.g., a school or institution that has as its primary purpose preparation of students to pursue a technical, skilled, or semiskilled occupation or trade, or to pursue study in a technical field, whether or not the school or institution offers certificates, diplomas, or degrees and whether or not it offers fulltime study), the K-12 school does not officially need to include “admission and” in the preceding sentence (and where that phrase is used throughout this policy); Neola, however, has elected to include it because all K-12 schools “enroll” students and often the term “enroll” is viewed as synonymous with the term “admit.” Since K-12 schools cannot discriminate when enrolling students in the education programs or activities that they operate, it seems appropriate to include the term “admission.”]** The Board is committed to maintaining an education and work environment that is free from discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment.

The Board prohibits sexual harassment that occurs within its education programs and activities. When the District has actual knowledge of sexual harassment in its education program or activity against a person in the United States, it shall promptly respond in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent.

Pursuant to its Title IX obligations, the Board is committed to eliminating sexual harassment and will take appropriate action when an individual is determined responsible for violating this policy. Members of the School District community who commit Sexual Harassment are subject to the full range of disciplinary sanctions set forth in this policy. Third parties who engage in sexual harassment are also subject to the disciplinary sanctions listed in this policy. The Board will provide persons who have experienced Sexual Harassment ongoing supportive measures as reasonably necessary to restore or preserve access to the District’s education programs and activities.

Coverage

This policy applies to sexual harassment that occurs within the District's education programs and activities and that is committed by a Board employee, student, third-party vendor or contractor, guest, or other members of the school community.

This policy does not apply to sexual harassment that occurs off school grounds, in a private setting, and outside the scope of the Board's education programs and activities; such sexual misconduct/sexual activity may be prohibited by the Student Code of Conduct if committed by a student, or by Board policies and administrative guidelines, applicable State and/or Federal laws () and/or Employee/Administrator Handbook(s) **[End of Option]** if committed by a Board employee.

Consistent with the U.S. Department of Education's implementing regulations for Title IX, this policy does not apply to sexual harassment that occurs outside the geographic boundaries of the United States, even if the sexual harassment occurs in the District's education programs or activities. Sexual harassment that occurs outside the geographic boundaries of the United States is governed by the Student Code of Conduct if committed by a student, or by other applicable Board policies and administrative guidelines, applicable State and/or Federal laws () and/or Employee/Administrator Handbook(s) **[End of Option]** if committed by a Board employee.

Complaints alleging sexual harassment and/or discrimination on the basis of sex are also covered by and subject to the investigation procedures in Board Policy 5517 - Student Anti-Harassment. Complaints not covered by this policy may still be governed by and subject to the procedures in Policy 5517 - Student Anti-Harassment.

Definitions

Terms used in this policy shall have those meanings defined herein; terms not defined herein shall be construed according to their plain and ordinary meanings.

Sexual Harassment: "Sexual Harassment" means conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

- A. A Board employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the District on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (often called "*quid pro quo*" harassment);
- B. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, **and** objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the District's education program or activity; or
- C. "Sexual assault" as defined in 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)A(v), or "dating violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10), "domestic violence" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), or "stalking" as defined in 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30).
 - 1. "Sexual assault" means any sexual act directed against another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent. Sexual assault includes rape, sodomy, sexual assault with an object, fondling, incest, and statutory rape.
 - a. *Rape* is the carnal knowledge of a person (i.e., penetration, no matter how slight, of the genital or anal opening of a person), without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of age or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.

- b. *Sodomy* is oral or anal sexual intercourse with another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of age or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.
- c. *Sexual Assault with an Object* is using an object or instrument to unlawfully penetrate, however slightly, the genital or anal opening of the body of another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of age or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity. An "object" or "instrument" is anything used by the offender other than the offender's genitalia.
- d. *Fondling* is the touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of age or because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity.
- e. *Incest* is sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by State law.
- f. *Statutory Rape* is sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent as defined by WV Code §§ 2-2-10 and 61-8B-2, or whose status as a student prohibits such sexual contact per WV Code § 61-8D-1 et seq.
- g. *Consent* refers to words or actions that a reasonable person would understand as agreement to engage in the sexual conduct at issue. Pursuant to WV Code 61-8B-2 lack of consent results from forcible compulsion, incapacity to consent, or if an offense charged is sexual abuse, any circumstances in addition to the forcible compulsion or incapacity to consent in which the victim does not expressly or impliedly acquiesce in the actor's conduct. A person is deemed incapable of consent when such person is: (1) less than sixteen years old; (2) mentally defective; (3) mentally incapacitated; (4) physically helpless; or (5) subject to confinement or supervision by a state or local government entity, when the actor is a person prohibited from having sexual intercourse, or causing sexual intrusion or sexual contact pursuant to WV Code 61-8B-10(a)(b). **DRAFTING NOTE: The Title IX regulations do not require the Board to adopt a particular definition of "consent," but it is advisable to adopt a definition because "consent" is an element of each of the first four terms listed above. The definition suggested above is pursuant to WV Code, the Board should consult its local legal counsel if they intend to modify or alter the definition of consent; the investigator(s) and decision-maker(s) will then uniformly apply the adopted definition.]**
- h. *Incapacitated* refers to the state where a person does not understand and/or appreciate the nature or fact of sexual activity due to the effect of drugs or alcohol consumption, medical condition, disability, or due to a state of unconsciousness or sleep. **[DRAFTING NOTE: Depending on the definition of "consent" that the Board adopts, it may be necessary to define "incapacitated" in the policy. If it is not defined in the policy, it should certainly be defined in the Administrative Guideline; even if defined in the policy, the Administrative Guideline provides an opportunity to expand on the concept of "consent" and what the Board means by the term "incapacitated."]**

2. "Domestic violence" includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by:
 - a. A current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim;
 - b. A person with whom the victim shares a child in common;
 - c. A person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner;
 - d. A person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime occurred; or
 - e. Any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime occurred.
3. "Dating violence" means violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
4. "Stalking" means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to – (1) fear for the person's safety or the safety of others; or (2) suffer substantial emotional distress.

Complainant: "Complainant" means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Respondent: "Respondent" means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Formal Complaint: "Formal complaint" means a document filed by a Complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a Respondent and requesting that the District investigate the allegation(s) of sexual harassment. At the time of filing a formal complaint with the District, a Complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the District's education program or activity. A "document filed by a complainant" means a document or electronic submission (such as by electronic mail or through an online portal that the Board provides for this purpose) that contains the Complainant's physical or digital signature, or otherwise indicates that the Complainant is the person filing the formal complaint. Where the Title IX Coordinator signs a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator is not a Complainant or a party to the formal complaint and must not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent.

Actual Knowledge: "Actual knowledge" means notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment to the District's Title IX Coordinator, or any District official who has authority to institute corrective measures on behalf of the Board, or any Board employee. The mere ability or obligation to report Sexual Harassment or to inform a student about how to report sexual harassment, or having been trained to do so, does not qualify an individual as one who has authority to institute corrective measures on behalf of the District. "Notice" includes, but is not limited to, a report of sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator. This standard is not met when the only District official with actual knowledge is the

Respondent. Imputation of knowledge-based solely on vicarious liability or constructive notice is insufficient to constitute actual knowledge.

Supportive Measures: "Supportive measures" means non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the Complainant or the Respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed. Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the District's educational environment or deter sexual harassment. Supportive measures may include counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, school/campus escort services, mutual restrictions of contact between the parties, changes in work locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus (including school buildings and facilities), () referral to Employee Assistance Program **[End of Option]**, and other similar measures.

Education Program or Activity: "Education program or activity" refers to all operations of the District over which the Board exercises substantial control, including in-person and online educational instruction, employment, extra-curricular activities, athletics, performances, and community engagement, and outreach programs. The term applies to all activity that occurs on school grounds or on other property owned or occupied by the Board. It also includes events and circumstances that take place off-school property/grounds if the Board exercises substantial control over both the Respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs.

School District community: School District community refers to students and Board employees (i.e., administrators, and professional and service personnel), as well as Board members, agents, volunteers, contractors, or other persons subject to the control and supervision of the Board.

Third Parties: Third parties include, but are not limited to, guests and/or visitors on School District property (e.g., visiting speakers, participants on opposing athletic teams, parents), vendors doing business with, or seeking to do business with the Board, and other individuals who come in contact with members of the School District community at school-related events/activities (whether on or off District property).

Inculpatory Evidence: "Inculpatory evidence" is evidence that tends to establish a Respondent's responsibility for alleged sexual harassment.

Exculpatory Evidence: "Exculpatory evidence" is evidence that tends to clear or excuse a Respondent from allegations of sexual harassment.

Day(s): Unless expressly stated otherwise, the term "day" or "days" as used in this policy means business day(s) (i.e., a day(s) that the Board office is open for normal operating hours, Monday – Friday, excluding State-recognized holidays),

Eligible Student: "Eligible student" means a student who has reached eighteen (18) years of age or is attending an institution of postsecondary education.

Title IX Coordinator(s)

The Board designates and authorizes the following individual(s) to oversee and coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX and its implementing regulations: **[DRAFTING NOTE: Neola suggests the Board consider appointing both a male and a female Title IX Coordinator. The Board must list either the Name or Title of the Title IX Coordinator; while the Board may list both the Name and Title, Neola suggests that the Board consider only listing the Title in this policy (so it does not need to revise/amend its policy whenever there is a change in the actual person(s) holding the**

designated position(s)), but list both the Name *and* Title in the requisite postings (e.g., website) and publications (e.g., handbooks) () and in the Administrative Guideline.]

(Name)

(School District Title)

(Office Address)

(Telephone Number)

(District-issued E-mail Address)

(Name)

(School District Title)

(Office Address)

(Telephone Number)

(District-issued E-mail Address)

The Title IX Coordinator shall report directly to the Superintendent except when the Superintendent is a Respondent. In such matters, the Title IX Coordinator shall report directly to the ☐ Board Attorney ☐ Board President ☐ _____. Questions about this policy should be directed to the Title IX Coordinator.

The Superintendent shall notify applicants for admission and employment, students, parents or legal guardians of elementary and secondary school students, Board employees, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the Board of the following information:

The Board of the _____ School District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education program or activity and is required by Title IX and its implementing regulations not to discriminate in such a manner. The requirement not to discriminate in its education program or activity extends to admission and employment. The District's Title IX Coordinator(s) is/are:

NAME(S)

TITLE(S)

OFFICE ADDRESS(ES)

PHONE NUMBER(S)

EMAIL ADDRESS(ES)

Any inquiries about the application of Title IX and its implementing regulations to the District may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator(s), the Assistant Secretary for the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both.

*The Board has adopted a grievance process-that provides for the prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints alleging any action that is prohibited by Title IX and/or its implementing regulations. The grievance process is included in Policy 2266 – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities, which is available at: **[insert the web address at which Policy 2266 can be found, or insert a hyperlink tied to the title of the policy]** The grievance process-specifically addresses how to report or file a complaint of sex discrimination, how to report or file a formal complaint of Sexual Harassment, and how the District will respond. **.[DRAFTING NOTE: The above information could be utilized as the notice on the District's website, in each handbook, included on applications for admission, job applications, or any other place in which the Superintendent is required to prominently display a Title IX notification.]***

The Superintendent shall also prominently display the Title IX Coordinator's(s') contact information – including Name(s) and/or Title(s), Phone Number(s), Office Address(es), and Email Address(es) – and this policy on the District's website and in each handbook or catalog that the Board makes available to applicants for admission and employment, students, parents or legal guardians of elementary and secondary school students, Board employees, and all unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements.

Grievance Process

The Board is committed to promptly and equitably resolving student and employee complaints alleging Sexual Harassment. The District's response to allegations of sexual harassment will treat Complainants and Respondents equitably, including providing supportive measures to the Complainant and Respondent, as appropriate, and following this grievance process before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions, other than supportive measures, against the Respondent.

The Title IX Coordinator(s), along with any investigator(s), decision-maker(s), or any person(s) designated to facilitate an informal resolution process, shall not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent.

If a determination of responsibility for sexual harassment is made against the Respondent, the Board will provide remedies to the Complainant. The remedies will be designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity. Potential remedies include, but are not limited to, individualized services that constitute supportive measures. Remedies may also be disciplinary or punitive in nature and may burden the Respondent.

The Process described herein relates exclusively to complaints brought under this Policy. The District will continue to handle complaints subject to the District's other nondiscrimination and anti-harassment policies, including: Policy 5517 - Anti-Harassment and Violence; Policy 5517.01 - Bullying; 2260 - Nondiscrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunity; Policy 2260.01 - Section 504/ADA Prohibition Against Discrimination Based on Disability; 1422/3122/4122 - Nondiscrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity; and 1662/3362/4362 - Anti-Harassment and Violence.

Report of Sexual Discrimination/Harassment

Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment), in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail, using the Title IX Coordinator's(s') contact information listed above, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's oral or written report. Reports may be made at any time (including during non-business hours), by using the telephone number(s) or electronic mail address(es), or by mail to the office address(es), listed for the Title IX Coordinator(s). () Anonymous reports may be submitted using [] the online reporting form posted at **[insert the web address for the reporting form, or insert a hyperlink tied to the phrase "online reporting form"]** [or] [] the hotline reporting number ([insert phone number]). **[DRAFTING NOTE: Inclusion of this optional language is not recommended, however, it is recommended that the Title IX Coordinator(s) be trained on the evaluation of anonymous reports to determine if sufficient information is provided so as to proceed under either this Policy or another related policy.]**

Board employees are required, and other members of the School District community and Third Parties are encouraged, to report allegations of sex discrimination or sexual harassment promptly to the/a Title IX Coordinator or to any Board employee, who will, in turn, notify the/a Title IX Coordinator. **[DRAFTING NOTE: All Board employees are mandatory reporters pursuant to the Title IX regulations. Existing policy, however, also requires students and Board members to report any information they have concerning allegations of sex discrimination or sexual harassment. Neola suggests that the Board continue this additional requirement in this policy, along with the language encouraging other individuals to make such reports; this will coincide with similar requirements that are imposed on Board members and students in other nondiscrimination and anti-harassment policies. If the Board decides it does not want to go beyond the scope of the regulations for purposes of this policy, it should replace the first sentence of this paragraph with either of the following: "Board employees are required to report allegations of sex discrimination or sexual harassment promptly to the Title IX Coordinator." OR "Board employees are required, and other members of the School District community and Third Parties are encouraged, to report allegations of sex discrimination or sexual harassment promptly to the/a Title IX Coordinator or to any Board employee, who in turn will notify the/a Title IX Coordinator."]** Reports can be made orally or in writing and should be as specific as possible. The person making the report should, to the extent known, identify the alleged victim(s), perpetrator(s), and witness(es), and describe in detail what occurred, including date(s), time(s), and location(s).

If a report involves allegations of sexual harassment by or involving the Title IX Coordinator, the person making the report should submit it to the [] **Superintendent** [] **other Title IX Coordinator** **[End of Option]**, or another Board employee who, in turn, will notify the [] **Superintendent** [] **other Title IX Coordinator** **[End of Option]** of the report. The [] **Superintendent** [] **other Title IX Coordinator** **[End of Option]** will then serve in place of the Title IX Coordinator for purposes of addressing that report of sexual harassment. **[DRAFTING NOTE: If the Superintendent is the Title IX Coordinator, substitute [] Board Attorney, [] Board President, [] _____ in place of Superintendent.]**

The Board does business with Third Parties who are not students or employees of the Board. Notwithstanding any rights that a given Third-Party Respondent may have under this policy, the Board retains the right to limit any Third-Party's access to school grounds for any reason. The Board further retains all rights it enjoys by contract or law to terminate its relationship with any Third-Party irrespective of any process or outcome under this policy.

A person may file criminal charges simultaneously with filing a formal complaint. A person does not need to wait until the Title IX investigation is completed before filing a criminal complaint. Likewise, questions or complaints relating to Title IX may be filed with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights at any time.

Any allegations of sexual misconduct/sexual activity not involving sexual harassment will be addressed through the procedures outlined in Board policies () and/or administrative guidelines, **[END of OPTION]** the applicable Student Code of Conduct, or Employee/Administrator Handbook(s).

Because the Board is considered to have actual knowledge of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment if any Board employee has such knowledge, and because the Board must take specific actions when it has notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment, a Board employee who has independent knowledge of or receives a report involving allegations of sex discrimination and/or sexual harassment must notify the/a Title IX Coordinator within two (2) days of learning the information or receiving the report. **DRAFTING NOTE: The regulations do not specify within how many days the Board employee must notify the Title IX Coordinator of receiving a report of sexual harassment; Neola suggests "two (2) days". Alternatively, the Board could make this language more open-ended – e.g., "** * * must immediately/promptly notify the/a Title IX Coordinator of such information or report."]** The Board employee must also comply with mandatory reporting responsibilities regarding suspected abuse, abandonment or neglect of a child pursuant to WV Code 49-2-803 and Policy 8462 – Student Abuse and Neglect, if applicable. If the Board employee's knowledge is based on another individual bringing the information to the Board employee's attention and the reporting individual submitted a written complaint to the Board employee, the Board employee must provide the written complaint to the Title IX Coordinator.

If a Board employee fails to report an incident of sexual harassment of which the Board employee is aware, the Board employee may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

When a report of sexual harassment is made, the Title IX Coordinator shall promptly (i.e., within two (2) days) **DRAFTING NOTE: The regulations do not define "promptly" or otherwise specify within how many days the contact has to be made; Neola suggests "two (2) days".]** of the Title IX Coordinator's receipt of the report of Sexual Harassment) contact the Complainant (including the parent/guardian if the Complainant is under eighteen (18) years of age or under guardianship) to discuss the availability of supportive measures, consider the Complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures, inform the Complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and explain to the Complainant the process for filing a formal complaint. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the effective implementation of supportive measures. Any supportive measures provided to the Complainant or Respondent shall be maintained as confidential, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality will not impair the ability of the District to provide the supportive measures.

Emergency Removal: Subject to limitations and/or procedures imposed by State and/or Federal law, the District may remove a student Respondent from its education program or activity on an emergency basis after conducting an individualized safety and risk analysis. The purposes of the individualized safety and risk analysis is to determine whether the student Respondent poses an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of Sexual Harassment that justifies removal. If the District determines the student Respondent poses such a threat, it will so notify the student Respondent and the student Respondent will have an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal. In determining whether to impose emergency removal measures, the Title IX Coordinator shall consult related District policies, including Policy 5120 - School Attendance Area; Policy 5605 - Suspension/Expulsion of Students with Disabilities, Policy 5610 – Suspension and Expulsion, and Policy 5611 – Due Process Rights. **[DRAFTING NOTE: The Board may substitute "Superintendent" or "Title IX Coordinator" in place of "District" in the first sentence. Alternatively, the Superintendent could designate, through the administrative guideline, one or more administrators, including the Title IX Coordinator, to make emergency removal decisions after conducting the individualized safety and risk analysis. In West Virginia, emergency removals must be conducted in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, as amended and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.]**

If the Respondent is a non-student employee, the District may place the Respondent on administrative leave during the pendency of the grievance process. Such leave will typically be paid leave unless circumstances justify unpaid leave in compliance with legal requirements.

For all other Respondents, including other members of the School District community and Third Parties, the Board retains broad discretion to prohibit such persons from entering onto its school grounds and other properties at any time and for any reason, whether after receiving a report of sexual harassment or otherwise.

Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment

A formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information set forth above () and by _____. **DRAFTING NOTE: The Board may set forth additional method(s) by which a formal complaint may be filed (e.g., online portal submission).** If a formal complaint involves allegations of sexual harassment by or involving the Title IX Coordinator, the Complainant should submit the formal complaint to the [] Superintendent, who will designate another person to serve in place of the Title IX Coordinator for the limited purpose of implementing the grievance process with respect to that formal complaint [] **the other Title IX Coordinator who will then proceed with the grievance process with respect to that formal complaint [End of Options]. [DRAFTING NOTE: If the Superintendent is the Title IX Coordinator, substitute [] Board Attorney [] Board President [] _____ in place of Superintendent.]**

The Complainant's wishes with respect to whether a formal complaint is filed will be respected unless the Title IX Coordinator determines that signing a formal complaint to initiate an investigation over the wishes of the complainant is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

When the Title IX Coordinator receives a formal complaint or signs a formal complaint, the District will follow its grievance process, as set forth herein. Specifically, the District will undertake an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence – including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence – and will not make credibility determinations based solely on a person's status as a Complainant, Respondent, or witness.

It is a violation of this policy for a Complainant(s), Respondent(s), and/or witness(es) to knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process, including intentionally making a false report of sexual harassment or submitting a false formal complaint. The Board will not tolerate such conduct, which is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct () and the Employee/Administrator Handbook. **[DRAFTING NOTE: The Board should confirm/verify that its Student Code of Conduct and any Employee/Administrator Handbook(s) include a prohibition against intentionally making a false report, submitting a false formal complaint, or making a false statement or submitting false information during a Title IX grievance process. Such misconduct should be a sanctionable offense pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct and Employee/Administrator Handbook(s).]**

The Respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.

Timeline

The District will seek to conclude the grievance process, including resolving any appeals, within ninety (90) days of receipt of the Formal Complaint. **[DRAFTING NOTE: The Title IX regulations do not specify a deadline for completing the grievance process; Neola suggests 90 days (i.e., 12 weeks) based on the following considerations: (1) within two days of receipt of the Formal Complaint, the**

Title IX Coordinator sends requisite notice to parties; (2) two weeks (14 calendar days) to investigate (remember the need for advance written notice to a party and adequate time for the party to prepare before any interviews/hearings/meetings; time for parties to present witnesses (including expert witnesses) and other inculpatory or exculpatory evidence); (3) at the conclusion of the investigation and before finalizing the investigative report, two weeks (a minimum of 10 calendar days) for the parties to review the evidence and submit their feedback; (4) up to a week (i.e., 7 calendar days) for the investigator to consider such feedback and prepare the investigative report; (4) two week (a minimum of 10 calendar days) for the parties to review the investigative report and submit questions and receive answers to questions submitted to parties and witnesses (if the Board permits hearings, the hearing cannot occur until the Complainant and Respondent have had a minimum of 10 calendar days to review the investigative report); (5) a week (i.e., 7 calendar days) for the decision-maker(s) to prepare the decision; (6) up to a week (Neola suggests 3 calendar days) for the parties to review the decision and submit a notice of appeal; (7) a week (7 calendar days) for the parties to submit their written statements in support of or in opposition to the appeal; and (8) a week (7 calendar days) for the appeal decision-maker(s) to prepare a final decision. Any informal resolution process could impact this schedule. Given this fairly aggressive timeline, the Board may want to remove the appeal process from this timeline – i.e., delete the phrase “, including resolving any appeals,” from the sentence, which would allow more time for the potential use of the informal resolution process. Further, the preceding schedule does not provide time for a hearing that could further extend the timeline needed to complete the grievance process.]

If the Title IX Coordinator offers informal resolution processes, the informal resolution processes may not be used by the Complainant or Respondent to unduly delay the investigation and determination of responsibility. The timeline, however, may be subject to a temporary delay of the grievance process or a limited extension for good cause with written notice to the Complainant and the Respondent of the delay or extension and the reasons for the action, except that any complaint covered by Policy 5517 - Student Anti-Harassment as well must comply with the timelines in that Policy, however, an investigation may still proceed as required under this Policy. Good cause may include considerations such as: the absence of a party, a party's advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity; and the need for language assistance or an accommodation of disabilities. **[DRAFTING NOTE: The Board should consult with its local legal counsel on a case-by-case basis to determine whether there may be other reasons/good cause for a delay or extension of time – e.g., the complexity and severity of the matter, or school breaks.]** () The Title IX Coordinator will provide the parties with reasonable updates on the status of the grievance process.

Upon receipt of a formal complaint, the Title IX Coordinator will provide written notice of the following to the parties who are known:

- A. Notice of the Board's grievance process, including any informal resolution processes;
- B. Notice of the allegations of misconduct that potentially constitute sexual harassment as defined in this policy, including sufficient details known at the time and with sufficient time to prepare a response before any initial interview. Sufficient details include the identities of the parties involved in the incident if known, the conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment, and the date and location of the alleged incident, if known. The written notice must:
 - 1. include a statement that the Respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility will be made at the conclusion of the grievance process;

2. inform the parties that they may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney, and may inspect and review evidence.
3. inform the parties of any provision in the Student Code of Conduct (), this policy, () and/or Employee/Administrator Handbook(s) **[DRAFTING NOTE: While the Title IX regulations only reference "code of conduct" Neola suggests that the Board reference other applicable documents that expressly prohibit an individual from making false statements or knowingly submitting false information as part of the grievance process]** that prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

[DRAFTING NOTE: The Title IX regulations do not define upon receipt or otherwise specify within how many days the notice must be sent; Neola suggests the Title IX Coordinator send the notice within two (2) days of receipt of the formal complaint; this suggestion is memorialized in the corresponding administrative guideline. Please note, however, that it could be argued that the notice should be sent sooner. Regardless, the Title IX Coordinator should have a template notice form available that can be completed quickly with the requisite information after receipt of the formal complaint.]

If, during the course of the investigation, the investigator becomes aware of allegations about the Complainant or Respondent that are not included in the original notice provided to the parties, the investigator will notify the Title IX Coordinator and the Title IX Coordinator will decide whether the investigator should investigate the additional allegations; if the Title IX Coordinator decides to include the new allegations as part of the investigation, the Title IX Coordinator will provide notice of the additional allegations to the parties whose identities are known.

Dismissal of a Formal Complaint

The District shall investigate the allegations in a formal complaint *unless* the conduct alleged in the formal complaint:

- A. would not constitute sexual harassment (as defined in this policy) even if proved;
- B. did not occur in the District's education program or activity; or
- C. did not occur against a person in the United States.

If one of the preceding circumstances exist, the Title IX Coordinator *shall* dismiss the formal complaint. If the Title IX Coordinator dismisses the formal complaint due to one of the preceding reasons, the District may still investigate and take action with respect to such alleged misconduct pursuant to another provision of an applicable code of conduct, Board policy, and/or Employee/Administrator Handbook.

The Title IX Coordinator *may* dismiss a formal complaint, or any allegations therein, if at any time during the investigation () or hearing **[DRAFTING NOTE: The Board may, but need not, provide for a hearing before the decision-maker(s) reaches a determination of responsibility under this policy. Neola suggests that the Board does not provide for a hearing, but if the Board will permit hearings, they should select this option. See sub-heading *Determination of Responsibility* for more detail regarding hearings.]**

- A. a Complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the Complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein;
- B. the Respondent is no longer enrolled in the District or employed by the Board; or
- C. specific circumstances prevent the District from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.

If the Title IX Coordinator dismisses a formal complaint or allegations therein, the Title IX Coordinator must promptly send written notice of the dismissal and the reason(s) therefor simultaneously to the parties.

Consolidation of Formal Complaints

The Title IX Coordinator may consolidate formal complaints as to allegations of sexual harassment against more than one Respondent, or by more than one Complainant against one or more Respondents, or by one party against the other party, where the allegations of sexual harassment arise out of the same facts or circumstances.

Where a grievance process involves more than one Complainant or more than one Respondent, references in this policy to the singular "party," "Complainant," or "Respondent" include the plural, as applicable.

[DRAFTING NOTE: The Board may adopt provisions, rules, or practices other than those required by the Title IX regulations as part of its grievance process for handling formal complaints of sexual harassment, provided they apply equally to both parties and do not violate the language in the regulations. The Board should discuss this option with its local legal counsel.]

Informal Resolution Process

Under no circumstances shall a Complainant be required as a condition of enrollment or continuing enrollment, or employment or continuing employment, or enjoyment of any other right, to waive any right to an investigation and adjudication of a formal complaint of sexual harassment. Similarly, no party shall be required to participate in an informal resolution process.

If a formal complaint is filed, the Title IX Coordinator may offer to the parties an informal resolution process. If the parties mutually agree to participate in the informal resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator shall designate a trained individual to facilitate an informal resolution process, such as mediation, that does not involve a full investigation and adjudication. The informal resolution process may be used at any time prior to the decision-maker(s) reaching a determination regarding responsibility.

If the Title IX Coordinator is going to propose an informal resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator shall provide to the parties a written notice disclosing:

- A. the allegations;
- B. the requirements of the informal resolution process including the circumstances under which it precludes the parties from resuming a formal complaint arising from the same allegations; and
- C. any consequences resulting from participating in the informal resolution process, including the records that will be maintained or could be shared.

Any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process with respect to the Formal Complaint.

Before commencing the informal resolution process, the Title IX Coordinator shall obtain from the parties their voluntary, written consent to the informal resolution process.

During the pendency of the informal resolution process, the investigation and adjudication processes that otherwise would occur are stayed and all related deadlines are suspended.

The informal resolution process is not available to resolve allegations that a Board employee () or another adult member of the School District community or Third Party **[END of OPTION]** sexually harassed a student. **[DRAFTING NOTE: The Title IX regulations prohibit the use of an informal resolution process when the allegations involve a Board employee sexually harassing a student; Neola suggests that it also may not be appropriate to use informal resolution processes when a Third Party is alleged to have sexually harassed a student. Since this is not a requirement, it is offered as an option. If the optional language is not selected, the Board retains the discretion to use informal resolution processes as may be determined appropriate by the Title IX Coordinator on a case-by-case basis.]**

() The informal resolution process is not available to resolve allegations regarding a sexual assault involving a student Complainant and a student Respondent. **[DRAFTING NOTE: While this language is not required by the Title IX regulations, Neola suggests the Board selects this option because of the severity of this type of sexual harassment.]**

Investigation of a Formal Complaint of Sexual Harassment

In conducting the investigation of a formal complaint and throughout the grievance process, the burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility is on the District, not the parties.

In making the determination of responsibility, the decision-maker(s) is (are) directed to use the () preponderance of the evidence standard () clear and convincing evidence standard **[END OF OPTIONS]**. The decision-maker(s) is charged with considering the totality of all available evidence, from all relevant sources.

[DRAFTING NOTE: Neola suggests the Board adopts the “preponderance of the evidence standard.” The preponderance of the evidence standard is an equitable standard of proof and the legal standard by which most civil lawsuits, including civil rights claims, are adjudicated in the United States. This standard requires the decision-maker(s) to determine that there is a greater than fifty percent (50%) likelihood (i.e., it is more probable/likely than not) that the Respondent engaged in the alleged sexual harassment.

The “clear and convincing evidence standard,” on the other hand, is a higher standard of evidence, in which the District would need to show to the decision-maker(s) that the truth of the allegations is highly probable (i.e., that the contention is substantially more likely to be true than untrue). Some argue that using the clear and convincing standard may skew the playing field toward the Respondent by enhancing protection for the Respondent at the expense of the Complainant.

The same standard of evidence must be applied for formal complaints against students as is applied to formal complaints against employees, and the same standard of evidence must be used for all formal complaints of sexual harassment. The Board should discuss this option with its local legal counsel.]

The District is not permitted to access, consider, disclose, or otherwise use a party's records that are made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional acting in the professional's or paraprofessional's capacity or assisting in that capacity, and which are made and maintained in connection with the provision of treatment to the party, unless the party provides the District with voluntary, written consent to do so; if a student party is not an eligible student, the District must obtain the voluntary, written consent of a parent.

Similarly, the investigator(s) and decision-maker(s) may not require, allow, rely upon or otherwise use questions or evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege in writing.

As part of the investigation, the parties have the right to:

- A. present witnesses, including fact and expert witnesses, and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence; and
- B. have others present during any grievance proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by the advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney. The District may not limit the choice or presence of an advisor for either the Complainant or Respondent in any meeting or grievance proceeding.
- C. () The District establishes the following restrictions, which apply equally to both parties, regarding the extent to which an advisor may participate in the proceedings: **[DRAFTING NOTE: The Board should consult with its local legal counsel concerning any restrictions it may want to place on an advisor's participation in the proceedings, including rules of decorum. This topic is also addressed in Administrative Guideline 2266.]**
- D. () Whether a person is allowed to audio record or video record any meeting or grievance proceeding will be consistent with the procedures established in Board Policy 2461 – Recording of Board Meetings Involving Students and/or Parents.

Neither party shall be restricted in their ability to discuss the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence.

The District will provide to a party whose participation is invited or expected written notice of the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of all () hearings, **[DRAFTING NOTE: Select this option if the Board permits hearings.]** investigative interviews, or other meetings, with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate. () The investigator(s) and decision-maker(s) must provide a minimum of ____ days' notice with respect to investigative interviews and other meetings () and ____ days' notice with respect to hearings **[End of Option]. [DRAFTING NOTE: The Board should consult with its local legal counsel concerning whether to set a minimum amount of advance notice – i.e., define "sufficient time"; Neola suggests a minimum of three (3) days' advance notice for hearings and one (1) day's advanced notice for investigative interviews and other meetings.]**

Both parties shall have an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations raised in the formal complaint, including the evidence upon which the District does not intend to rely in reaching a determination regarding responsibility and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence whether obtained from a party or other source so that each party can meaningfully respond to the evidence prior to the conclusion of the investigation.

Prior to completion of the investigative report, the () investigator () Title IX Coordinator **[End of Option]** will send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy, and the parties will have at least ten (10) calendar days to submit a written response, which the investigator will consider prior to completion of the investigative report. **[DRAFTING NOTE: The Board should select the following option if it provides for a hearing before the decision-maker]** () The District will make all such evidence subject to the parties' inspection and review available at any hearing to give each party equal opportunity to refer to such evidence during the hearing, including for purposes of cross-examination. **[END OF OPTION]**

At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator shall create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence and send the report to each party and the party's advisor, if any, for their review and written response. The investigator will send the investigative report in an electronic format or a hard copy, at least ten (10) calendar days prior to: **[DRAFTING NOTE: Select one of the following two options. The Board should select the second option if it is providing a hearing or permitting the decision-maker(s) to decide whether to conduct a hearing on a case-by-case basis.]**

() the decision-maker(s) issuing a determination regarding responsibility.

() a hearing or the decision-maker(s) issuing a determination regarding responsibility.

Determination of Responsibility

The Title IX Coordinator shall appoint a decision-maker(s) to issue a determination of responsibility. The decision-maker(s) cannot be the same person(s) as the Title IX Coordinator(s) or the investigator(s).

[DRAFTING NOTE: The Board may, but need not, provide for a hearing before the decision-maker(s) reaches a determination of responsibility. Neola suggests that the Board not provide for a hearing. If the Board decides not to provide for a hearing, the Board should select OPTION 1; if the Board elects to provide a hearing or to provide the decision-maker(s) with the discretion to conduct a hearing on a case-by-case basis, the Board should select OPTION 2. Additionally, if the Board operates a vocational program (see the Drafting Note contained in the first paragraph for the definition of vocational program), Neola suggests that the Board consult its local legal counsel concerning whether it must provide for a live hearing related to formal complaints involving parties associated with the vocational program. If the Board determines with its legal counsel that it must provide for a live hearing it should select Option E of Option 2, at least with respect to formal complaints involving parties involved in the vocational program (i.e., it does not need to provide for a live hearing for its regular K-12 education programs and activities that it operates.)]

() [OPTION 1]

After the investigator sends the investigative report to the parties and the decision-maker(s), and before the decision-maker(s) reaches a determination regarding responsibility, the decision-maker(s) will afford each party the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party. The decision-maker(s) must explain to the party proposing the question of any decision to exclude a question as not relevant.

Questions and evidence about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant unless such questions and evidence about the Complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the conduct alleged by the Complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the Complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the Respondent and are offered to prove consent.

[END OF OPTION 1 - NOTE: If Option 1 is selected proceed to [END OF OPTION 2] and commence with *Determination Regarding Responsibility*

() [OPTION 2 - NOTE: Option 2 is inclusive of all Letter Options (A) - (E)]

After the investigator sends the investigative report to the parties and the decision-maker(s), and prior to the decision-maker(s) issuing a determination of responsibility, the decision-maker(s) () may () will **[END OF OPTIONS]** conduct a hearing.

[DRAFTING NOTE: Select Option A or Option B. If the Board selects “may,” it should select Option A; if it selects “will,” it should select Option B.]

() [Option A]

If the decision-maker(s) decides not to conduct a hearing, the decision-maker(s) will state in writing the reason for not conducting a hearing and provide that explanation to the parties. Additionally, before the decision-maker(s) reaches a determination regarding responsibility, the decision-maker(s) will afford each party the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants to be asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party. The decision-maker(s) must explain to the party proposing the questions any decision to exclude a question as not relevant.

If the decision-maker(s) elects to conduct a hearing, the hearing will proceed as follows:

[End of Option A]

() [Option B]

The hearing will proceed as follows:

[End of Option B]

[DRAFTING NOTE: Select Option C or Option D or Option E; Neola suggests Option C. The Board should discuss this option with its local legal counsel.]

() [Option C]

At the hearing, the decision-maker(s) will allow each party or each party’s advisor to submit relevant questions to the decision-maker(s) who will ask the questions to the other party and any witnesses. Before a Complainant, Respondent, or witness answers a cross-examination or other question, the decision-maker(s) must first determine whether the question is relevant and explain any decision to exclude a question as not relevant. Only relevant cross-examination and other questions, including follow-up questions and questions challenging credibility, will be permitted. Such cross-examination and questioning at the live hearing shall be conducted orally and in real-time.

() If a party does not have an advisor present at the live hearing, the District will provide, without fee or charge to that party, an advisor of the District’s choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney, to submit questions on behalf of that party.

[End of Option C]

() [Option D]

Prior to commencing the hearing, the decision-maker(s) will decide whether to allow each party's advisor to ask questions directly of the other party and any witnesses, or instead to have the questions submitted to the decision-maker(s) who will ask the other party and any witnesses the questions.

If the decision-maker(s) permits each party's advisor to ask the other party and any witnesses relevant questions and follow-up questions, including questions challenging credibility, such cross-examination at the live hearing will be conducted directly, orally, and in real-time by the party's advisor of choice and never by a party personally. If the decision-maker(s) permit each party's advisor to ask questions directly to the other party and any witnesses, the decision-maker(s) shall not restrict the extent to which advisors may participate in the hearing.

If, on the other hand, the decision-maker(s) decides to have each party's advisor (or the party, if the party does not have an advisor) submit relevant questions to the decision-maker(s), the decision-maker will ask the questions to the other party and any witnesses. Such cross-examination at the hearing will be conducted orally and in real-time by the decision-maker(s) based upon questions submitted by a party's advisor or the party.

Only relevant cross-examination and other questions may be asked of a party or witness. Before a Complainant, Respondent, or witness answers a cross-examination or other question, the decision-maker(s) must first determine whether the question is relevant and explain any decision to exclude a question as not relevant.

If the decision-maker(s) permits the parties' advisors to ask the questions directly, and a party does not have an advisor present at the live hearing, the District will provide, without fee or charge to that party, an advisor of the District's choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney, to conduct cross-examination on behalf of that party.

() If the decision-maker(s) decides not to have the parties' advisors ask the questions directly, and a party does not have an advisor present at the hearing, the District will provide, without fee or charge to that party, an advisor of the District's choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney, to submit questions on behalf of that party.

[End of Option D]

() [Option E]

At the live hearing, the decision-maker(s) shall permit each party's advisor to ask the other party and any witnesses all relevant questions and follow-up questions, including those challenging credibility. Such cross-examination at the live hearing must be conducted directly, orally, and in real-time by the party's advisor of choice and never by a party personally; notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this policy, the decision-maker shall not restrict the extent to which advisors may participate in the hearing.

Only relevant cross-examination and other questions may be asked of a party or witness. Before a Complainant, Respondent, or witness answers a cross-examination or other question, the decision-maker(s) must first determine whether the question is relevant and explain any decision to exclude a question as not relevant.

() If a party does not have an advisor present at the live hearing, the District will provide, without fee or charge to that party, an advisor of the District's choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney, to conduct cross-examination on behalf of that party.

[End of Option E]

Questions and evidence about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless such questions and evidence about the Complainant's prior sexual behavior are offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the conduct alleged by the Complainant, or if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the Complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the Respondent and are offered to prove consent.

Hearings may be conducted with all parties physically present in the same geographic location or, at the discretion of the () decision-maker(s) () Title IX Coordinator(s) **[END OF OPTIONS]**, any or all parties, witnesses, and other participants may appear at the hearing virtually, with technology enabling participants simultaneously to see and hear each other. At the request of either party, the decision-maker shall provide for the hearing to occur with the parties located in separate rooms with technology enabling the decision-maker(s) and parties to simultaneously see and hear the party or witness answering questions. The District will create audio or audiovisual recording, or transcript, of any hearing and make it available to the parties for inspection and review.

[END OF OPTION 2]

Determination regarding responsibility: The decision-maker(s) will issue a written determination regarding responsibility. To reach this determination, the decision-maker(s) must apply the () preponderance of the evidence standard () clear and convincing evidence standard **[End of Option]**. **[DRAFTING NOTE: Be sure to select the same evidence standard previously selected above.]**

The written determination will include the following content:

- A. Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment pursuant to this policy;
- B. A description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including any notifications to the parties, interviews with parties and witnesses, site visits, [and] methods used to gather other evidence, () and hearings held; **[DRAFTING NOTE: The Board should only select this option if it permits hearings.]**
- C. Findings of fact supporting the determination;
- D. Conclusions regarding the application of the applicable code of conduct to the facts;
- E. A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including a determination regarding responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions the decision-maker(s) is recommending that the District impose on the Respondent(s) and whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District's education program or activity should be provided by the District to the Complainant(s); and
- F. The procedures and permissible bases for the Complainant(s) and Respondent(s) to appeal.

() [OPTION 1]

Informal or formal disciplinary sanctions/consequences may be imposed on a student Respondent who is determined responsible for violating this policy (i.e., engaging in sexual harassment).

[END OF OPTION]

() [OPTION 2]

Disciplinary sanctions/consequences may be imposed on a student Respondent who is determined responsible for violating this policy (i.e., engaging in sexual harassment) including but not limited to:

A. Informal Discipline

1. ☐ writing assignments;
2. ☐ changing of seating or location;
3. ☐ before-school, ☐ lunchtime, ☐ after-school detention;
4. ☐ in-school discipline (in accordance with Policy 5610.02 and West Virginia State Board policies 2419 and 4373);
5. ☐ Saturday school

B. Formal Discipline

1. ☐ suspension or exclusion from bus riding/transportation privileges;
2. ☐ removal from co-curricular and/or extra-curricular activity(ies), including athletics;
3. ☐ emergency removal;
4. ☐ suspension pursuant to State Board Policy 4373
5. ☐ exclusion by a teacher or bus operator;
6. ☐ disciplinary removal or out-of school suspension for each incident if the student is eligible for special education services under West Virginia State Board policy 2419;
7. ☐ expulsion pursuant to State Board Policy 4373;
8. ☐ exclusion from co-curricular and/or extra-curricular activity(ies), including athletics or current class enrollment; and
9. ☐ any other sanction authorized by the Student Code of Conduct.

[END OF OPTION]

If the decision-maker(s) determines the student Respondent is responsible for violating this policy (i.e., engaging in Sexual Harassment), the decision-maker(s) will recommend appropriate remedies, including disciplinary sanctions/consequences. The Title IX Coordinator will notify the Superintendent of the recommended remedies, so an authorized administrator can consider the recommendation(s) and implement an appropriate remedy(ies) in compliance with Policy 5605 – Discipline for Special Education Students, Policy 5610 – Exclusion from Classroom or School Bus, Suspension and Expulsion of Students, Policy 5610.02 – In-School Suspension, Policy 5610.04 – Suspension of School Transportation Privileges

and Exclusion from School Bus, and Policy 5611 – Discipline - Student Due Process Rights. The discipline of a student Respondent must comply with the applicable provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, as amended (IDEA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1972, and their respective implementing regulations.

Disciplinary sanctions/consequences may be imposed on an employee Respondent who is determined responsible for violating this policy including but not limited to (i.e., engaging in Sexual Harassment):

- A. ☐ oral or written warning;
- B. ☐ written reprimands;
- C. ☐ performance improvement plan, if applicable pursuant to relevant West Virginia law and State Board policy;
- D. ☐ required counseling;
- E. ☐ required training or education;
- F. ☐ suspension with pay;
- G. ☐ suspension without pay;
- H. ☐ termination;
- I. ☐ any other sanction authorized by West Virginia law or State Board policy.

If the decision-maker(s) determines the employee Respondent is responsible for violating this policy (i.e., engaging in sexual harassment), the decision-maker(s) will recommend appropriate remedies, including disciplinary sanctions/consequences. The Title IX Coordinator will notify the Superintendent of the recommended remedies, so an authorized administrator, or the Board if required by law, can consider the recommendation(s) and implement an appropriate remedy(ies) in compliance with applicable due process procedures, pursuant to applicable West Virginia law. If the Superintendent is the Respondent, the Title IX Coordinator will notify the ☐ **Board Attorney** ☐ **Board President** **[End of Options]** of the recommended remedies for consideration and, if necessary and appropriate, implementation in compliance with applicable due process procedures, whether statutory or contractual. **[DRAFTING NOTE: The Board should review applicable policy(ies)/administrative guidelines/employee handbooks to determine whether changes are needed to stated timelines related to the imposition of discipline as a result of possible delays caused by the Board's obligation to follow this grievance process.]**

The discipline of an employee will be implemented in accordance with Federal and State law, and Board policy.

The following disciplinary sanctions/consequences may be imposed on a non-student/non-employee member of the School District community or Third Party determined responsible for violating this policy (i.e., engaging in sexual harassment):

- A. ☐ oral or written warning;

- B. ☐ suspension or termination/ cancellation of the Board's contract with the third-party vendor or contractor;
- C. ☐ mandatory monitoring of the third-party while on school property and/or while working/interacting with students;
- D. ☐ restriction/prohibition on the third-party's ability to be on school property; and
- E. ☐ any combination of the same.

If the decision-maker(s) determines the third-party Respondent is responsible for violating this policy (i.e., engaging in sexual harassment), the decision-maker(s) will recommend appropriate remedies, including the imposition of sanctions. The Title IX Coordinator will notify the Superintendent of the recommended remedies, so appropriate action can be taken.

The decision-maker(s) will provide the written determination to the Title IX Coordinator who will provide the written determination to the parties simultaneously.

In ultimately, imposing a disciplinary sanction/consequence, the Superintendent (or the Board when the Superintendent is the Respondent) will consider the severity of the incident, previous disciplinary violations (if any), and any mitigating circumstances. If the Respondent is a member of the Board, s/he shall be excluded from any determination regarding the imposition of a disciplinary sanction/consequence by the remaining Board members.

The District's resolution of a formal complaint ordinarily will not be impacted by the fact that criminal charges involving the same incident have been filed or that charges have been dismissed or reduced.

At any point in the grievance process, the Superintendent **(or the Title IX Coordinator if the Superintendent is the Respondent)** may involve local law enforcement and/or file criminal charges related to allegations of sexual harassment that involve a sexual assault.

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for the effective implementation of any remedies.

Appeal

Both parties have the right to file an appeal from a determination regarding responsibility or from the Title IX Coordinator's dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations therein, on the following bases:

- A. Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter (e.g., material deviation from established procedures);
- B. New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter; and
- C. The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or the individual Complainant(s) or Respondent(s) that affected the outcome of the matter.

[DRAFTING NOTE: The Board may insert additional grounds on which an appeal may be filed.]

- D. ☐ The recommended remedies (including disciplinary sanctions/consequences) are unreasonable in light of the findings of fact (i.e., the nature and severity of the sexual harassment);
- E. ☐ _____

If formal discipline has been imposed upon any employee or student as a result of an investigation pursuant to this policy, the employee/student may pursue any available legal remedies to challenge the disciplinary decision, including any applicable board of education hearing or proceeding, grievance, citizen's appeal, or another available legal remedy.

Any party wishing to appeal the decision-maker(s)'s determination of responsibility, or the Title IX Coordinator's dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations therein, must submit a written appeal to the Title IX Coordinator within ____ (____) days after receipt of the decision-maker(s)'s determination of responsibility or the Title IX Coordinator's dismissal of a formal complaint or any allegations therein. **DRAFTING NOTE: If the Board indicated above an intent to ordinarily complete the grievance process, including any appeal, within ninety (90) days of receipt of the Formal Complaint, Neola suggests that the deadline for submitting a written appeal be set at "within five (5) days" of the appealing party's receipt of the decision-maker's(s') determination of responsibility.**

Nothing herein shall prevent the Superintendent or Board of Education **(or the Board when the Superintendent is the Respondent)** from implementing appropriate remedies while the appeal is pending; this, however, excludes the imposition of disciplinary sanction.

As to all appeals, the Title IX Coordinator will notify the other party in writing when an appeal is filed and implement appeal procedures equally for both parties.

The decision-maker(s) for the appeal shall not be the same person(s) as the decision-maker(s) that reached the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal, the investigator(s), or the Title IX Coordinator(s). The decision-maker(s) for the appeal shall not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against Complainants or Respondents generally or an individual Complainant(s) or Respondent(s) and shall receive the same training as required of other decision-makers.

Both parties shall have a reasonable, equal opportunity to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome. **[DRAFTING NOTE: Select OPTION 1, OPTION 2, OPTION 3, or OPTION 4.]**

() [OPTION 1] The decision-maker(s) for the appeal shall determine when each party's written statement is due. **[END OF OPTION 1]**

() [OPTION 2] The parties' written statements in support of, or challenging, the determination of responsibility must be submitted within ____ days after the Title IX Coordinator provides notice to the non-appealing party of the appeal. **[END OF OPTION 2]**

() [OPTION 3] The appealing party's written statement must be submitted within ____ days after the Title IX Coordinator receives notice of the appeal. The other party's written statement must be submitted within ____ days after the Title IX Coordinator provides that party a copy of the appealing party's written statement. **()** The appealing party will have ____ days to submit a rebuttal to the other party's written statement. **[DRAFTING NOTE: Neola does not suggest that the Board select this extra option.] [END OF OPTION 3]**

() **[OPTION 4]** Specifically, the appealing party must submit with the notice of appeal a written statement challenging the determination of responsibility. The nonappealing party shall have up to _____ days after receipt of the appealing party's written statement to submit his/her written statement in support of the determination of responsibility. **[END OF OPTION 4]**

DRAFTING NOTE: If the Board indicated above an intent to ordinarily complete the grievance process, including any appeal, within ninety (90) days of receipt of the Formal Complaint, Neola suggests that the deadline for both parties to submit a written statement pursuant to OPTION 2 be set at "within five (5) days" of the Title IX Coordinator providing notice to the non-appealing party of the appeal.

If the Board selects OPTION 3, Neola suggests that the party's respective written statements be submitted within three (3) days of the triggering event (i.e., submission of the notice of appeal for the appealing party, and receipt of the appealing party's written statement for the nonappealing party), and if the Board selects the extra option in OPTION 3, Neola suggests the appealing party have only two (2) days after receipt of the non-appealing party's written statement to submit the rebuttal. Alternatively, in order to expedite the appeal, the Board could select OPTION 4 and require the appealing party to submit his/her written statement challenging the determination of responsibility at the same time s/he submits his/her notice of appeal. The nonappealing party would be permitted to submit a written statement in support of the determination of responsibility within the same number of days that the appealing party had to submit the notice of appeal/statement challenging the determination of responsibility (e.g. three or five days, depending on the appeal deadline selected above).]

The decision-maker(s) for the appeal shall issue a written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result. The original decision-maker's(s') determination of responsibility will stand if the appeal request is not filed in a timely manner or the appealing party fails to show clear error and/or a compelling rationale for overturning or modifying the original determination. The written decision will be provided to the Title IX Coordinator who will provide it simultaneously to both parties. The written decision will be issued within _____ days of when the parties' written statements were submitted. **DRAFTING NOTE: If the Board indicated above an intent to ordinarily complete the grievance process, including any appeal, within ninety (90) days of receipt of the Formal Complaint, Neola suggests that the deadline for the decision-maker(s) of the appeal to issue the final decision be set at "within five (5) days" of the date the parties submitted their written statements or the date a last written statement is submitted pursuant to Option 3 or Option 4.]**

The determination of responsibility associated with a formal complaint, including any recommendations for remedies/disciplinary sanctions, becomes final when the time for filing an appeal has passed or, if an appeal is filed, at the point when the decision-maker(s) for the appeal's decision is delivered to the Complainant and the Respondent. () No further review beyond the appeal is permitted. **[END OF OPTION]**

Retaliation

Neither the Board nor any other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, its implementing regulations, or this policy, or because the individual made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this policy. Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, its implementing regulations, or this policy, constitute(s) retaliation. Retaliation against a person for making a report of sexual harassment, filing a formal complaint, or participating in an investigation () and/or

hearing **[DRAFTING NOTE: Select this option if the Board permits hearings.], [End of Option]** is a serious violation of this policy that can result in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions/consequences and/or other appropriate remedies.

Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the grievance process set forth above.

The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution does not constitute retaliation prohibited under this policy.

Charging an individual with a code of conduct violation for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of a grievance proceeding under this policy shall not constitute retaliation, provided, however, that a determination regarding responsibility, alone, is not sufficient to conclude that any party made a materially false statement in bad faith.

Confidentiality

The District will keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any Complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any Respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232g, or FERPA's regulations, and West Virginia State Board policy 4350, 34 CFR part 99, or as required by law, or to carry out the purposes of 34 CFR part 106, including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising thereunder (i.e., the District's obligation to maintain confidentiality shall not impair or otherwise affect the Complainant's and Respondent's receipt of the information to which they are entitled with respect to the investigative record and determination of responsibility).

Application of the First Amendment

The Board will construe and apply this policy consistent with the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. In no case will a Respondent be found to have committed Sexual Harassment based on expressive conduct that is protected by the First Amendment.

Training

The District's Title IX Coordinator, along with any investigator(s), decision-maker(s), or person(s) designated to facilitate an informal resolution process, must receive training on:

- A. the definition of sexual harassment (as that term is used in this policy);
- B. the scope of the District's education program or activity;
- C. how to conduct an investigation and implement the grievance process () that includes hearings, **[DRAFTING NOTE: Select this option if the Board permits hearings.]** appeals and informal resolution processes, as applicable; and
- D. how to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interests, and bias.

() All Board employees will be trained concerning their legal obligation to report sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator. This training will include practical information about how to identify and report sexual

harassment. **[DRAFTING NOTE: While the Title IX regulations do not specifically require this training, it is critical that the Board train all employees concerning this legal obligation since the Board will be considered to have “actual knowledge” of Sexual Harassment if any Board employee has notice of such conduct.]**

Recordkeeping

As part of its response to alleged violations of this policy, the District shall create, and maintain for a period of seven (7) calendar years, records of any actions, including any supportive measures, taken in response to a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment. In each instance, the District shall document the basis for its conclusion that its response was not deliberately indifferent, and document that it has taken measures designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District’s education program or activity. If the District does not provide a Complainant with supportive measures, then the District will document the reasons why such a response was not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances. The documentation of certain bases or measures does not limit the District in the future from providing additional explanations or detailing additional measures taken.

The District shall maintain for a period of _____ the following records **[DRAFTING NOTE: There is no specific state law or policy which would require any specific retention of records obtained under this policy; however, it is likely recommended that each board establish some minimum time period for retaining the records, such as five years]:**

- A. Each sexual harassment investigation including any determination regarding responsibility () and any audio or audio-visual recording or transcript that is made of any hearing **[DRAFTING NOTE: Select this option if the Board permits live hearings.]**, any disciplinary sanctions recommended and/or imposed on the Respondent(s), and any remedies provided to the Complainant(s) designed to restore or preserve equal access to the District’s education program or activity;
- B. Any appeal and the result therefrom;
- C. Any informal resolution and the result therefrom; and
- D. All materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process.

The District will make its training materials publicly available on its website. () If a person is unable to access the District’s website, the Title IX Coordinator will make the training materials available upon request for inspection by members of the public.

Outside Appointments, Dual Appointments, and Delegations

The Board retains the discretion to appoint suitably qualified persons who are not Board employees to fulfill any function of the Board under this policy, including, but not limited to, Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, decision-maker for appeals, facilitator of informal resolution processes, and advisor.

The Board also retains the discretion to appoint two (2) or more persons to jointly fulfill the role of Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, decision-maker for appeals, facilitator of informal resolution processes, and advisor.

The Superintendent may delegate functions assigned to a specific Board employee under this policy, including but not limited to the functions assigned to the Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, decision-maker for appeals, facilitator of informal resolution processes, and advisor, to any suitably qualified individual, and such delegation may be rescinded by the Superintendent at any time.

[DRAFTING NOTE: The following option expressly sets forth authority that the Board has regardless of whether it is included in this policy, but is offered for those boards that may want to affirmatively communicate to / address these issues for readers of this policy.]

() Discretion in Application

The Board retains the discretion to interpret and apply this policy in a manner that is not clearly unreasonable, even if the Board's interpretation or application differs from the interpretation of any specific Complainant and/or Respondent.

Despite the Board's reasonable efforts to anticipate all eventualities in drafting this policy, it is possible unanticipated or extraordinary circumstances may not be specifically or reasonably addressed by the express policy language, in which case the Board retains the discretion to respond to the unanticipated or extraordinary circumstance in a way that is not clearly unreasonable.

The provisions of this policy are not contractual in nature, whether in their own right or as part of any other express or implied contract. Accordingly, the Board retains the discretion to revise this policy at any time, and for any reason. The Board may apply policy revisions to an active case provided that doing so is not clearly unreasonable.

August 24, 2021 OCR Letter (<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/202108-titleix-VRLC.pdf>)

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Legal References

- 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq., Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX)
- 20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq., The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA), as amended
- 42 U.S.C. 2000c et seq., Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- 42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.
- 42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.
- 42 U.S.C. 1983
- 34 C.F.R. Part 106
- OCR's Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance (2001)
- 20 U.S.C. 1092(F)(6)(A)(v)
- 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10)
- 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8)
- 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30)
- WV Code 29B-1-3
- WV Code 49-2-801
- WV Code 2-2-10
- WV Code 61-8B-2
- WV Code 61-8B-10(a), (b)
- WVBE policy 2419
- WVBE policy 4373