



Book	Policy Manual
Section	Procedures
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PROCEDURE

SAFE AND RESPECTFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

PURPOSE

The Board believes that a working and learning environment that is safe and respectful is essential for all staff and students to achieve success. Any form of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination interferes with the ability of teachers to teach in the classroom and pupils to learn. This procedure and the associated governing documents shall establish the commitment by the Scranton School District to create a safe and respectful working and learning environment, and to investigate accusations of harassment, bullying, and discrimination.

GUIDELINES

1. The District shall provide an environment in which persons of differing beliefs, characteristics, and backgrounds can realize their full academic and personal potential.
2. All persons are entitled to maintain their own beliefs and to respectfully disagree without resorting or being subjected to harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination.
3. By declaring this goal, the Board is not advocating or requiring the acceptance of differing beliefs in a manner that would inhibit freedom of expression. The Board does require that any persons with differing beliefs be free from harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination.
4. All students, administrators, faculty, and other District staff shall demonstrate appropriate behavior by treating other persons, including students, with civility and respect and by refusing to tolerate harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination.
5. Use of the internet and other technology by staff and students shall be in a manner that is ethical, safe and secure in accordance with the District Acceptable Use Policy.
6. The Board ensures the aforementioned by enacting the following:
 - a. All members of the Board, administrators, teachers, support personnel, and other staff employed by the District are recommended to:
 - i. Participate in training regarding the appropriate methods to facilitate positive human relations among students and staff without the use of harassment, bullying

and/or discrimination as well as methods for reporting suspected violations. School administrators shall also receive training in:

1. Methods for recognizing harassment and bullying behaviors;
2. Effective intervention and remediation strategies regarding harassment and bullying;
3. The prevention of violence and suicide associated with harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination as well as the appropriate methods to respond to such incidents; and
4. Employing strategies to improve the climate of schools and the overall District environment in a manner that will facilitate respectful positive human relations among students, families and staff.

ii. Using positive behavioral interventions and supports to foster and guide student learning of skills to replace harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination;

iii. Reporting allegations of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination to school police and school administration immediately to ensure cases are investigated and harmful behavior stopped.

b. It is recommended that each school will establish a school safety team to help to support and promote safe school environments including investigation of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination in addition to the implementation of crisis management and emergency response duties and site support.

c. The District prohibits the active or passive support for acts of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination. Both students and staff are expected to support attempts to constructively prevent and/or stop such acts and, thereby, promote safe schools.

7. Notice

a. The District shall inform students, parents/guardians, faculty/staff, and other interested parties of the District's "Safe and Respectful Learning Environment" procedure and student complaint process. Such notice shall be included on the District's website (attached), the District's harassment reporting website and posting of anti-discrimination notices in all District buildings and the parent/student handbook.

b. Reports of student discrimination based on race, national origin, disability, sex or religion may also be filed with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.

8. The District prohibits the retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination, or against any person who has testified, assisted, or participated in the investigation of a report. Such retaliation is itself a violation of law and may lead to disciplinary or other appropriate action against the offender.

9. This procedure applies to harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination, by any individual on school district property, including a school bus, at a school-sponsored event, or while acting on school district business. This includes a member of a club or organization which uses a District facility, regardless of whether the club or organization has any connection to the District.

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this procedure, harassment shall consist of verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, national origin/ethnicity, sex, age, disability, sexual

orientation or religion when such conduct:

1. Is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it affects an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity or creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment.
2. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance.
3. Otherwise adversely affects an individual's learning opportunities.

For purposes of this procedure, sexual harassment shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; and other inappropriate verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's academic status.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for academic or work decisions affecting the individual.
3. Such conduct deprives a student of educational aid, benefits, services or treatment.
4. Such conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's school performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

Examples of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment include but are not limited to sexual flirtations, advances, touching or propositions; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's dress or body; sexually degrading words to describe an individual; jokes; pin-ups; calendars; objects; graffiti; vulgar statements; abusive language; innuendos; references to sexual activities; overt sexual conduct; or any conduct that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's ability to work or learn or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning or working environment.

DESIRED OUTCOMES

1. The District will implement consistent processes for the intervention and prevention of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination.
2. Training in the prevention and/or recognition of harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination will take place for all employees and, when appropriate, students.
3. This procedure and its accompanying regulations and operating procedures will align with the School Safety Teams.
4. Students, parents and staff will be empowered with information about District mechanisms to prevent and intervene related to harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination situations.

REPORT FORM FOR COMPLAINTS OF UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT.doc (30 KB)

Last Modified by Robert Gentilezza on November 2, 2018