

6121/Non-Discrimination in Instruction/Classroom

TRUMBULL PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
POLICY MANUAL

SECTION: 6000
CATEGORY: Instruction
POLICY CODE: 6121/Non-Discrimination in
Instruction/Classroom

NON-DISCRIMINATION IN INSTRUCTION/CLASSROOM

Policy Statement

The Trumbull Board of Education promotes non-discrimination and an environment free of harassment based upon an individual's race, color, religious creed, religion, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, present or past history of mental disability, intellectual disability, learning disability, or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut State and/or Federal non-discrimination laws in all of its programs. The Board provides equal access to the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and other designated youth groups.

The Board accepts responsibility for achieving and maintaining the objective of equity among its students. Each student, at the time he/she becomes eligible for participation, will be advised of his/her rights to an equal opportunity to participate in the activities, programs, and courses of students offered in the Trumbull Public Schools without discrimination on account of race, color, religious creed, religion, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut State and/or Federal non-discrimination laws.

In addition, the Trumbull Board of Education and the Superintendent affirm their commitment to the following:

1. The promotion of positive attitudes that respect the diversity of our society through curriculum development.
2. The development and encouragement of respect among students and within the school community.
3. The use of curriculum to teach students and staff programs which emphasize developing positive attitudes toward relations with people of diverse backgrounds or capability.
4. The use of educational materials and consulting sources to continue to promote learning and appreciation of people's similarities and differences through Cultural Diversity Education.
5. The provision of equal rights and opportunities for students and staff in the school community and total school program of the schools.
6. The provision of an appropriate learning environment for students, which includes:
 - a. adequate instructional books, supplies, materials, equipment, staffing, facilities, and technology;
 - b. equitable allocation of resources among District schools; and
 - c. a safe school setting.

6121/Non-Discrimination in Instruction/Classroom

The Superintendent will be responsible for evaluating the policies and practices related to instruction and the provision of overall school programs and District activities to align with the goals of non-discrimination and anti-harassment and may report his/her findings to the Board. The Superintendent will call upon the advice and counsel of members of the instructional staff and others to evaluate these instructional and school program policies and practices.

The Superintendent will adopt regulations to accompany this policy and will appoint and make known the individuals to contact on issues concerning Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974, Title VI, Title IX, and other civil rights or discrimination issues. The regulations shall contain student grievance procedures for the prompt and equitable resolution of student discrimination and/or harassment complaints.

The Superintendent will communicate to students, parents/guardians, and instructional personnel this policy and its attendant regulations.

Federal civil rights laws prohibit discrimination against an individual because he/she has opposed any discrimination act or practice or because that person has filed a charge, testified, assisted, or participated in any investigation, proceeding or hearing.

Adopted: 1/5/2016
Revised: 2/28/2017

References

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin)
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (prohibits discrimination based on handicap)
- United States Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (enforces Title VI, Title IX, 504, Age Discrimination Act, Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act)

- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 5131: Student Standard of Conduct
- Trumbull Board of Education Policy Code 6161.1: Selection of Instructional Material

Regulations

The Trumbull Board of Education affirms the right of all students to be protected in the school environment from intimidation, discrimination, physical harm, and/or harassment based upon a student's race, color, religious creed, religion, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, present or past history of mental disability, intellectual disability, learning disability, or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut State and/or Federal non-discrimination laws. If an indecent, vulgar, or abusive epithet is directed to a student's race, color, religious creed, religion, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut State and/or Federal non-discrimination laws, this shall be evidence that the victim was chosen because of that characteristic.

Incidents of discrimination/harassment involving students reported by students or their parents or otherwise observed by school or District personnel or administration will be addressed in accordance with the procedures contained herein.

I. Designation of Employees to Reply to Complaints of Discrimination

The Superintendent will designate individuals who will serve as civil rights coordinators for the District whose responsibilities will include oversight for the receipt, investigation, and resolution of complaints of discrimination/harassment. See Appendix of this Policy. The Superintendent will ensure that the name/title and contact information for all District civil rights coordinators, including a Title IX Coordinator and Section 504 Coordinator, is communicated annually to students and parents/guardians. This may occur through publication in District student handbooks and/or on District/school websites, as well as any other means deemed appropriate.

II. Complaint Resolution/Grievance Procedures

- A. Every staff member must promptly inform his/her building principal of any discrimination or harassment incident that comes to his/her attention and involves students as a target. The principal will report in writing any such incident to the appropriate civil rights coordinator for consideration of investigation and/or responsive action. Civil rights coordinators will promptly advise the Superintendent of such reports. A failure by a staff member to report an incident which comes to his/her attention may result in disciplinary action against that staff member.
- B. All complaints by student(s), parent(s), or other non-staff community members of discrimination or harassment involving student(s) as a target shall be made in writing to the appropriate civil rights coordinator, who will share it with the Superintendent for direction.
- C. All complaints received by civil rights coordinators shall be acknowledged in writing within three (3) business days. The complaint shall be investigated and the complainant informed in writing of findings and recommendations within twenty (20) business days of receipt. If dissatisfied with the results, a complainant may appeal in writing to the Board

6121/Non-Discrimination in Instruction/Classroom

of Education within twenty (20) business days of receipt of the final written findings and recommendations. The Board will consider the appeal and meet with the complainant within fifteen (15) days of receipt of a written appeal for the purpose of resolving the grievance. The decision of the Board shall be rendered within three (3) days of the meeting and communicated in writing to the complainant and appropriate school administrators.

- D. Confidentiality of complaints will be maintained except to the extent necessary to investigate. Documentation generated in the course of investigation shall be confidential in accordance with applicable State and Federal laws including the Family Education Rights and Privacy (FERPA) and Board policy.
- E. Counseling will be considered at all levels for involved students. If and when deemed appropriate, interim action may be taken to protect targeted student(s) and/or to prevent further harassment. When appropriate, disciplinary action may be taken against an offending student(s) in accordance with the student Standard of Conduct policy and other applicable Board policies. Offending student(s) may be disciplined even if discrimination or discriminatory harassment is not found to have occurred if the conduct otherwise violates Board policy, or disrupts the educational process or poses a danger to self or others. In determining responsive action, consideration may be given to the age of the students involved, their stages of development, and all attending circumstances, including the severity of the conduct, the repetitiveness of conduct, and any previous warnings given to offending students.
- F. At any time a complainant may, if desired or if dissatisfied with action taken at the local level, report the grievance directly to the United States Office of Civil Rights.

III. Selection of Instructional Materials

Selection of instructional material shall conform to Board Policy and keep in mind the District's commitment to promoting equity and diversity in its schools.

6121/Non-Discrimination in Instruction/Classroom

Civil Rights Coordinators for the Trumbull Public Schools

Title VI complaints (Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin) can be reported to the Assistant Superintendent, who will serve as the District's Title VI coordinator, at (203) 452-4348, Trumbull Public Schools, 6254 Main Street, Trumbull, CT, 06611.

Title IX complaints (Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities) can be reported to the Assistant Superintendent, who will serve as the District's Title IX coordinator, at (203) 452-4348, Trumbull Public Schools, 6254 Main Street, Trumbull, CT, 06611.

Section 504 complaints (Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination based on handicap) can be reported to the Director of Pupil Personnel and Special Services, who will serve as the District's 504 Coordinator, at (203) 452-4352, Trumbull Public Schools, 6254 Main Street, Trumbull, CT, 06611.

United States Department of Education Office of Civil Rights
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone (617) 289-0111
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