

Valley Center USD262

Title IX Training

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TITLE IX

PROHIBITS DISCRIMINATION
BASED ON SEX IN EDUCATION
PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES
THAT RECEIVE FEDERAL
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

34 C.F.R. Part 106



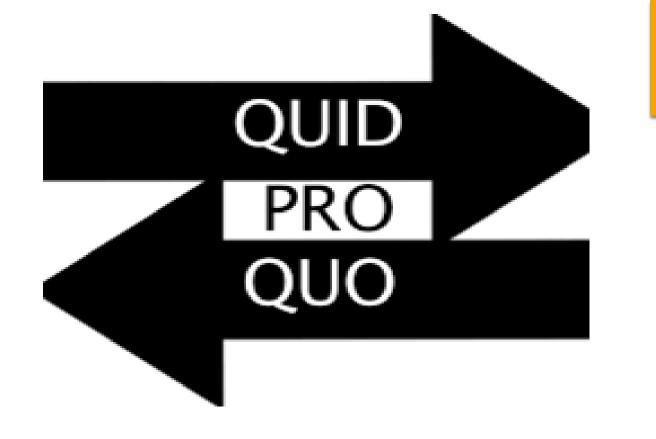
Title IX Final Rule

Emphasis on Due Process and Equitable Treatment of Complainants <u>and</u> Respondents

- 1) New definition of Sexual Harassment
- Key Players: Title IX Coordinator, Investigator, Decision-Maker
- 3) Notice Requirements
- Detailed procedures for how educational institutions must respond to allegations of sexual harassment (Investigation and Decision-making)
- 5) Training: definition of sexual harassment, conducting investigations, grievance process

New Definition of Sexual Harassment

- Employee quid pro quo
- Hostile environment (newly defined)
- Violence Against Women
 Act (VAWA) "big four" harassme



An <u>employee</u> of the District conditioning aid, service or benefit on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct

Hostile Environment

Unwelcome conduct

- Determined by a reasonable person
- ► To be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person's equal access to the recipient's education program or activity

Violence Against Woman Act "Big Four"

- Sexual Assault
- Domestic Violence
- Stalking
- <u>Dating</u> Violence



When must a school respond Under Title IX?

Response Required

- School must respond when:
 - the school has actual knowledge of sexual harassment;
 - 2) that occurred within the school's education program or activity;
 - 3) against a person in the United States.

"Actual Knowledge"

OLD (OCR Guidance)

Failure to respond promptly and effectively if a school knows or should have known about sexual harassment

NEW (Final Rule)

A school with actual knowledge of sexual harassment in a program or activity must respond promptly and in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent

"Actual Knowledge"

School's "actual knowledge" includes notice to any elementary or secondary school employee, and states that any person (e.g., the alleged victim or any third party) may report to a Title IX Coordinator in person or by e-mail, phone, or mail.

School must respond in a way that is not "Deliberately Indifferent"

Deliberate Indifference = Failure to respond to actual knowledge of sexual harassment reasonably in light of known circumstances

"Deliberate Indifference"

<u>OLD</u>

Failure to take immediate action to eliminate the sexual harassment or sexual violence, prevent its recurrence, and address its effects

<u>NEW</u>

Failure to respond to actual knowledge of sexual harassment reasonably in light of known circumstances



Scope of Education Program or Activity

Includes locations, events, or circumstances over which school exercises substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the harassment occurs

Scope of Education Program or Activity (cont'd)

- Not just on school campus, but not all places
- Must be in the United States
- At school, on the bus, at school sponsored activity, athletics
- Includes harassment by or against students <u>or</u> staff

Title IX Personnel Key Players



TITLE IX COORDINATOR



Reporting Sexual Harassment: Who, How and When?

- Any person may report
- By mail, telephone, or email using the contact information posted for the Title IX Coordinator
- Or by any means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the report
- Report may be made at any time, including during non-business hours



Initial/General Response

Initial Response – even if no formal complaint:

Title IX Coordinator must promptly:

- Contact complainant to discuss "supportive measures"
- Consider complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures
- Inform complainant of availability of supportive measures with or without filing of formal complaint
- Explain the process for filing formal complaint



34 CFR 106.30 (a), .44(a)

"Supportive Measures"

<u>OLD</u>

- Used terms such as "interim measures" or "interim steps" to describe measures to help a complainant maintain equal educational success
- Implied only available during pendency of investigation, did not mandate offering them, not clear if could be punitive or disciplinary, and did not clarify if available to respondents

<u>NEW</u>

- Non-Punitive, individualized services offered as appropriate and without charge to a complainant or a respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint, or where no complaint has been filed
- Should be designed to restore or preserve equal access to the education program or activity without "unreasonably" burdening the other party

Supportive Measures

<u>Fair and</u> <u>Balanced</u>

- Moving target, not one-time requirement – discuss, at initial meeting, but these measures may need to change over time
- Coordinator has a duty to continue to reassess – are they sufficient, or even warranted?

Provide to Both Parties

- Don't favor one over the other
- Look at each party as a student – their right to an education is paramount

Emergency Removal/Administrative Leave

Student Immediate Emergency Removal

Employee Administrative Leave

- Based on individual and safety risk analysis
- Necessary to protect student or person from immediate threat to physical health or safety
- Immediate notice and opportunity to challenge removal

Not prohibited



Once formal complaint is filed:

DISMISS if:

- 1) conduct could not constitute sexual harassment (under new definition) even if proved; or
- 2) conduct did not occur in educational program or activity;
- 3) conduct did not occur in the United States.

Once formal complaint is filed:

May Dismiss if:

- complainant notifies Title IX Coordinator in writing they wish to withdraw the formal complaint; or
- Respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by District; or
- 3) specific circumstances prevent the District from gathering evidence sufficient to make a determination as to complaint or allegations.

Grievance Process Must

- Treat parties equitably
- Objectively evaluate evidence
- Ensure no conflict of interest for Title IX Coordinator, investigator or decision-maker
- Presumption that respondent is not responsible
- Reasonably prompt time frames
- Inform all parties of critical information about grievance procedures, including range of remedies and disciplinary sanctions

- Inform parties of standard of evidence (POE or C&C)
- Inform parties of Appeal procedures
- Inform parties of the range of supportive measures available
- Protect any legally recognized privilege

Section 106.45(b)(1)(i)-(x)

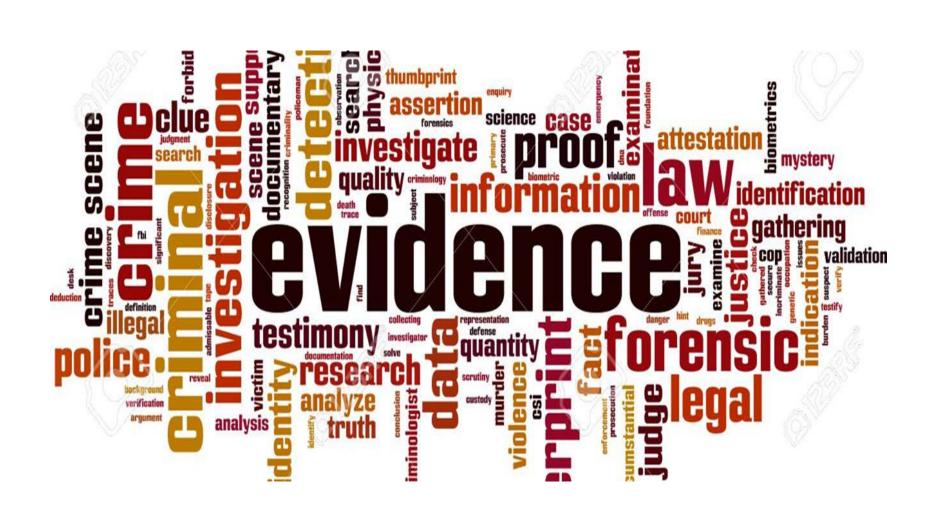
Notice Requirements §106.45(b)(2)

- Written Notice to both parties with notice of allegations in sufficient detail to allow Respondent to Prepare a response (name, conduct alleged, date, location, witnesses)
- Sufficient time for Respondent to Prepare a response before any Initial Interview
- Statement that Respondent is presumed not responsible and that responsibility is determined at conclusion of grievance process
- Notice of Grievance Process
- Notice of parties' rights to have an attorney or non-attorney advisor;
- Notice of parties' right to have advisor review evidence;
- Notice of any scheduled investigative interviews, meetings, hearings
- Must send evidence related to the allegations to the parties and allow them 10 days to review and respond

Informal Resolution Process 34 CFR § 106.45(b)(9)

- Not offered unless a formal complaint is filed
- Both parties must enter voluntarily and consent in writing
- Either party has the right to withdraw from informal resolution and resume the formal grievance process
- NOT permitted where allegation is that an employee sexually harassed a student (i.e. never for allegation of quid pro quo)

Investigations



Investigation

34 CFR §106.45(b) (5)(i) –(vii) 1/2

- Burden of proof and gathering of evidence rests on recipient/school rather than parties;
- 2) Provide equal opportunity for parties to present witnesses and evidence;
- 3) Cannot restrict either party's ability to discuss, gather or present evidence;
- 4) Provide parties with equal opportunity to select advisor of party's choice;
- 5) Provide written notice to party of date, time, location, participants, and purpose of any investigative interview, hearing, meeting with enough time to allow them to prepare and participate;

Investigation

34 CFR §106.45(b) (5)(i) –(vii) 2/2

- evidence directly related to the allegations in formal complaint (including exculpatory or inculpatory evidence from any source) must be provided before completion of final investigation report and give parties at least 10 days to respond before final report;
- 7) Prepare written investigation report that fairly summarizes evidence, provide to parties and advisors for their review and written response at least 10 days before hearing or other determination of responsibility.

Documentation

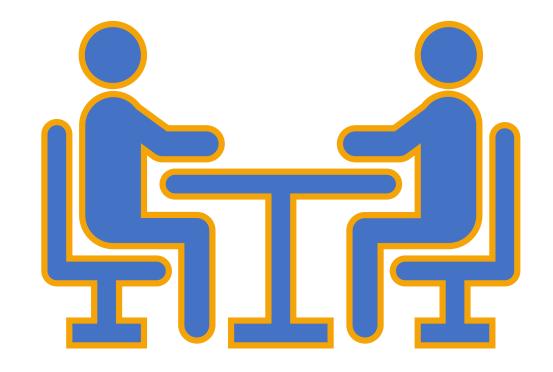
Investigation Files Content:

- ► Policies considered
- Interview notes (including outlines)
- ► Log of interviews
- Record of efforts to set up interviews
- Documents collected
- ► Report/recommendations
- **▶** Communications

After completion of Investigation...

MUST provide each party the opportunity to submit written questions the party wants asked of another party or witnesses, provide each party with the answers and allow for limited followup questions BEFORE a determination of responsibility

§106.45(b)(6)



Guidance Regarding <u>Cross-</u> <u>Examination</u> <u>Questions</u>

- Must be RELEVANT
- Questions about complainant's prior sexual behavior only allowed to the extent they establish that another person committed the alleged conduct or that the conduct was consensual (rape shield)

What is Relevant?

what are other words for relevant?



pertinent, germane, applicable, apposite, apropos, suitable, appropriate, apt, related, material



Determination of Responsibility

34 CFR §106.45(b)(7) 1/2 Decision-Maker (who cannot be the investigator or the Title IX Coordinator) must apply the standard of evidence and issue written determination of responsibility that:

- Identifies allegations that potentially constitute sexual harassment;
- Describes procedural steps taken from receipt of complaint to determination.

Determination of Responsibility

34 CFR §106.45(b)(7) 2/2

- Include findings of fact supporting the determination;
- Conclusion regarding application of code of conduct to facts;
- Statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation, including determination of responsibility, any disciplinary sanctions, whether remedies to restore or preserve equal access to education program will be provided.

Appeal

34 CFR §106.45(b)(8)

Must offer appeals equally to both parties on the bases that procedural deficiencies, newly discovered evidence, or bias or conflict of interest affected the outcome.

Recordkeeping **34 CFR** § 106.45(b)(10)

Must retain investigative files (into each sexual harassment investigation) for seven (7) years.

Retaliation Prohibited 34 CFR § 106.71

- Retaliation "for purposes of interfering with Title IX rights" or "because a person has participated or refused to participate in any manner in a proceeding under Title IX regulations" is prohibited.
- Charging an individual with code of conduct violations that do not involve sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts and circumstances as a report or complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX constitutes retaliation.

WHAT is being INVESTIGATED?

- What is the allegation?
 - (does it meet definition of sexual harassment under Title IX?)
 - (educational program or activity?)
- Who is the complainant?
- Who is the Respondent

- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- Who was present?

WHAT evidence needs to be collected?

Identify all possible sources of evidence

Record what you review

Retain what you review (regardless of the findings)

WHO will be interviewed?

Identify all relevant parties including complainant and respondent

Take notes of interviews (with date, time, location, attendees) and/or obtain statements from witnesses

Impartiality and Mandatory Training of Title IX Personnel

How to be impartial and unbiased

How to avoid prejudgment of facts at issue

How to avoid conflict of interests

How to avoid bias

34 CFR § 106.45(b)(1)(iii)

No person designated as a Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decisionmaker, nor any person designated by the District to facilitate an informal resolution process, may have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent.



What is Conflict of Interest?



CONFLICT OF INTEREST

noun 1. a situation in which the concerns or aims of two different parties are

incompatible.

"the conflict of interest between elected officials and corporate lobbyists"

What is Bias?



BIAS

noun

1.

prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.

"there was evidence of bias against foreign applicants"



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