



# The New Title IX Team and Process for K-12 Districts

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**California Schools JPA  
September 24, 2020**

PRESENTED BY:  
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# Agenda

- Review New Title IX Regulations: Scope and Definitions
- Roles of New Title IX Team
- Intake Process for Reports of Sexual Harassment
- Title IX Grievance Process
- Retaliation
- Practical Application



aa/rr 1

# NEW TITLE IX SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

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## Federal Law - Title IX:

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

(Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. Section 1681 et seq.) and related regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 106).)

## New Title IX Regulations

### 1. Regulations and Guidance

- Text of regulations contained in **34 CFR Part 106** have the full force and effect of law

### 2. Overall Intent of Changes

- Strengthen/Clarify Title IX protections for survivors of sexual misconduct & provide due process protections to those facing accusations of sexual misconduct

### 3. New Scope Under Title IX Regulations

- Amended sexual harassment definitions, clarified jurisdiction, & confirmed that Title IX sex discrimination includes sexual harassment and other sexual misconduct

### 4. K-12 Educational Institutions

- February 2020 OCR Enforcement Initiative to combat sexual assault in K-12 schools

## *Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education* 526 U.S. 629 (1999)

- Ruling: For student-on-student sexual harassment, the educational institution will be liable for damages when:
  - The institution has “**actual notice**” of the harassment; and
  - The institution responded to the harassment with “deliberate indifference.”
  - Harassment must be “**severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive,**” and the institution’s indifference was “systemic” so that the victim is deprived of educational opportunities or services.
  - **Deliberate indifference** defined as a response that is “**clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.**”
- The New Regulations apply the *Davis* standard for OCR compliance reviews and for finding institutional liability

## Response to Sexual Harassment

According to **34 CFR §106.44(a)**: A recipient with **actual knowledge** of sexual harassment in an education program or activity of the recipient against a person in the United States must **respond promptly in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent** (e.g.; clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.)

## Actual Knowledge

- Actual knowledge for **K-12 Educational Institutions** occurs when **any employee** has notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment.
- Best practice to provide annual training to K-12 employees about reporting responsibilities to the Title IX Coordinator or other designated Title IX Team Member.

## Education Program or Activity

- Per **§ 106.44(a)**: An education program or activity includes locations, events, or circumstances over which the recipient exercised **substantial control over both the Respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs**, and also includes any building owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by a postsecondary institution.
- At time of filing the formal complaint, the Complainant must be participating or attempting to participate in recipient's education program or activity.

## Sexual Harassment Defined

According to **§ 106.30**, Sexual Harassment means conduct on the **basis of sex** under one or more of following:

### 1. Quid Pro Quo Harassment

- **Employee** conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on the Complainant's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct

### 2. Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment

- Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be **so severe, pervasive and objectively offensive** that it effectively denies Complainant equal access to the recipient's education program or activity

## Sexual Harassment Defined, Cont.

Conduct on the **basis of sex** under one of following:

### 3. Other Sexual Acts

- **Sexual assault** per 20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v): Includes Forcible and Nonforcible Sex Offenses
- **Dating violence** per 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10)
- **Domestic violence** per 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8)
- **Stalking** per 34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30)

## Other Sexual Acts as Sexual Harassment under Title IX

### 1. Sexual Assault

– **Forcible:**

- Any sexual act directed against Complainant, forcibly, against Complainant's will, or without consent, including rape, sodomy, sexual assault with an object, and fondling

– **Nonforcible:**

- Offenses that do not involve force where the Complainant is incapable of giving consent, including statutory rape and incest

## Other Sexual Acts

### 2. Dating Violence (34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(10))

- Violence (on the basis of sex) committed by Respondent:
  - who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the Complainant; and
  - where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
    - (i) The length of the relationship
    - (ii) The type of relationship
    - (iii) The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship

## Other Sexual Acts

### 3. Domestic Violence (34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8))

Felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence (on the basis of sex) committed by:

- A current or former spouse or intimate partner of the Complainant
- A person with whom the Complainant shares a child in common
- A person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the Complainant as a spouse or intimate partner
- A person similarly situated to a spouse of the Complainant under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or
- Any other person against an adult or youth Complainant who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.

## Other Sexual Acts

### 4. Stalking (34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(30))

The term “stalking” means engaging in a course of conduct (on the basis of sex) directed at Complainant that would cause a reasonable person to:

- **Fear** for their safety or the safety of others; or
- Suffer substantial **emotional distress**



## ROLES OF THE NEW TITLE IX TEAM

### Who's on the New Title IX Team?

1. Title IX Coordinator, per §106.8(a)
2. Investigator(s)
3. Decision Maker(s)
4. Appeal Officer(s)
5. Informal Resolution Process Facilitator(s)

- *All team members must be impartial, unbiased, and free from conflicts.*
- *All team members must be trained in the new Title IX Regulations.*

## Title IX Team: Title IX Coordinator

### Title IX Coordinator Duties:

- Coordinates Title IX compliance and training
- Conducts Intake meeting with Complainant
- Offers supportive measures to Complainant & Respondent
- Explains grievance process, accepts formal complaint & determines mandatory dismissal
- Evaluates emergency removal
- Evaluates use of informal resolution process
- Assigns unbiased investigator free from conflicts
- Sends notices (e.g., Notice of Allegations)
- Considers permissive dismissal of complaint

## Title IX Team: Title IX Coordinator

### Title IX Coordinator duties, continued:

- Reviews investigative reports, written decision, & appeal decision, but **does not make decision** about responsibility
- Drafts letter of outcome after written decision issued
- *Likely does not* determine sanctions
- If applicable, ensures effective implementation of remedies for Complainant, sanctions for Respondent, and overall corrective plan
- *May* investigate when needed
- *May* act as facilitator of an informal resolution process

## Title IX Team: Investigator(s)

### Investigator Role:

- Trained and Knowledgeable
- Impartial, unbiased, & free from general or specific conflicts of interest
  - Investigates formal complaint
    - Reviews complaint
    - Gathers, reviews, weighs, and synthesizes evidence
    - Interviews parties and witnesses
    - Assesses relevance and credibility
- Coordinates two review processes and assesses responses
- Prepares a written investigative report and compiles evidence
- Investigator does **not** make decision about whether Respondent is “responsible” for violation of sexual harassment policy

## Title IX Team: Decision Maker

### Decision Maker Role:

- Reviews Final Investigative Report with “fresh eyes” to see if any information is missing or incomplete
- Potentially conducts hearing (optional in k-12)
- Facilitates written “cross-examination” between parties
- Makes conclusions about whether alleged conduct occurred and the decision about responsibility
- Prepares written determination with findings of fact, conclusions, and rationale for the result as to each allegation
- If applicable, recommends sanctions for Respondent and remedies for Complainant

## Title IX Team: Appeals Officer

### Appeal Officer Role:

- Provides written notice of right to appeal to both parties based on three grounds for appeal
- If an appeal is filed, the Appeal Officer evaluates the appeal request(s) to determine if within the scope of appeal
- Provides a written Notice of Appeal to both parties
- Reviews both written statements and arguments from the parties
- Renders written decision on appeal and explains rationale for the result
- Provides the written decision to parties at same time

## Title IX Team: Informal Resolution Process Facilitator

### Informal Resolution Process Facilitator Role:

- Cannot require the parties to participate in informal process or to waive the right to an investigation
- Obtains voluntary, written consent of the parties to resolve the matter anytime before a determination of responsibility is made
- Process does not involve full investigation or adjudication, but includes a written notice to the parties disclosing the allegations, the requirements of the process, and notice that the parties can withdraw and resume the grievance process
- May consider the use of a trained mediator or trained restorative justice facilitator, if requested and appropriate
- Process cannot be used where an employee is alleged to have sexually harassed a student

## INTAKE PROCESS FOR REPORTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

### Meeting with Complainant

#### The Title IX Coordinator:

- Promptly schedules a meeting with Complainant and listens to allegations and concerns
- If Complainant describes sexual harassment allegations, the Title IX Coordinator explains the Title IX grievance process
- Informs Complainant of the right to file or **not** to file a formal complaint and the right to supportive measures even if a formal complaint is not filed
- If **no** formal complaint is filed, the Title IX Coordinator informs Complainant of right to file a formal complaint at a later time. The Title IX Coordinator also assesses, despite Complainant's decision, whether to independently initiate a complaint if the failure to initiate an investigation would be clearly unreasonable considering the circumstances (e.g. based on a safety threat)

## Meeting with Complainant

### The Title IX Coordinator:

- If a formal complaint is filed, Title IX Coordinator gathers the signature of Complainant, parent/guardian and/or Title IX Coordinator
- Informs Complainant of right to request an informal resolution process after submission of a formal complaint and the right to exit informal resolution process at any time
- If a formal complaint is filed, Title IX Coordinator determines if the complaint falls within the scope of mandatory dismissal and informs Complainant and Respondent
- Best practice to provide a written summary of the meeting

## Supportive Measures

### 1. Requirement to Offer Supportive Measures per §106.30 & §106.44

- Must be offered to Complainant as soon as District has notice of possible Title IX issue and to Respondent after complaint filed

### 2. Avoid Burden on Parties

- Supportive Measures must be non-punitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the other party

### 3. Individualized

- Supportive Measures must ensure equal educational access, protect safety, and/or deter sexual harassment

### 4. Examples of Supportive Measures

- Counseling, course-related adjustments, modify schedule, extend deadlines, campus escort, increased security and monitoring, and/or mutual restrictions on contact between the parties

## Discuss Advisor of Choice

- The Title IX regulations provide the Complainant and Respondent with the same opportunities to have “others present” during any grievance proceeding
  - An advisor may be a parent, family member, attorney, or other person
  - The advisor may be present for any meeting, interview, and hearing and may inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation
  - The advisor may assist with a written cross-examination process and **shall** ask the cross-examination questions if recipient opts for a live hearing process
    - If a party does not have an advisor to conduct cross-examination at a live hearing, the institution must provide one to the party
  - The institution may establish restrictions on the extent of an advisor’s participation, if restrictions apply equally to both parties

## Emergency Removal Option for Students

1. Institution may remove Respondent per §106.44(c)
2. Institution must undertake individualized safety & risk analysis re Respondent
  - The analysis determines if there is an **immediate threat to the physical health or safety** of any student or other individual arising from the allegations to justify removal
3. Notice to Respondent of Emergency Removal
4. Opportunity for Respondent to challenge decision immediately following the removal
5. Process **cannot** modify Respondent rights under IDEA, Section 504, or ADA

## Administrative Leave Option

1. Institution may place a non-student employee Respondent on administrative leave, per §106.44(d) during the pendency of a grievance process that complies with §106.45
2. This administrative leave option cannot be construed to modify any rights under Section 504 or the Americans with Disabilities Act.

## TITLE IX GRIEVANCE PROCESS



## Grievance Process

1. Basic Requirements
2. Notice of Allegations
3. Dismissal of Formal Complaint
4. Consolidation Investigation
- 5.
6. Written Questions Between Parties
7. Determination of Responsibility
8. Appeals
9. Informal Resolution
10. Recordkeeping

## Basic Requirements

1. Per §106.45(b)(1)(i), treat Complainant and Respondent equitably in the grievance process and related to remedies and sanctions, if any
2. Require objective evaluation of all relevant evidence, including inculpatory and exculpatory evidence
3. Cannot make credibility decisions based on a person's status as Complainant, Respondent, or witness
4. Presume that Respondent is not responsible until a determination is made
5. Follow prompt time frames (estimate 60-90 days)
6. State a standard of evidence (preponderance or clear and convincing). Most K-12 use preponderance of evidence

## Notice of Allegations

- **Provide Notice of Allegations to Each Party**
  - **Notice of the institution's grievance process and informal resolution process**
    - Identification of relevant Board Policies & Administrative Regulations which contain the grievance process and informal resolution process
    - Identification of standard of evidence
    - Right to inspect and review evidence
  - **Notice of allegations with sufficient details, including:**
    - Identification of the parties
    - Description of alleged conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment and the date and location of alleged incident
  - **Review Sample Notice of Allegations**

## Notice of Allegations

- **Provide Notice of Allegations to Each Party, continued**
  - **Additional Items in Notice of Allegations:**
    - Identification of potential policy violations (not just Title IX)
    - Identification of the range of possible disciplinary sanctions and remedies
    - Statement that Respondent is presumed not responsible
    - Notification that a determination of responsibility will be made at the conclusion of the grievance process
    - Notification that each party may have an advisor of choice, who may be an attorney
    - Prohibition against parties knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information

## Notice of Allegations

- **If additional allegations are discovered, provide written Notice of *Additional Allegations***
- **Provide written notice of any changes in the process, including:**
  - Delays
  - Meetings
  - Interviews
  - Hearings
  - Appeals
  - Decisions
  - Other

## Dismissal of Formal Complaint

- **Required Dismissal per §106.45(b)(3)**
  - Recipient **must** dismiss the formal complaint *if* the conduct alleged :
    - Would not constitute sexual harassment as defined in §106.30 even if proved
    - Did not occur in the recipient's education program or activity
    - Did not occur against a person in the United States
  - Such dismissal does **not** preclude action under another provision of recipient's Code of Conduct, Board Policy/Administrative Regulation or California law

## Dismissal of Formal Complaint

- **Permissive Dismissal per §106.45(b)(3)**
  - Recipient **may** dismiss the formal complaint or allegations any time during the investigation or hearing, *if* :
    - The Complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing to withdraw the complaint
    - The Respondent is no longer enrolled or employed
    - Special circumstances prevent the recipient from gathering evidence in order to reach a determination
- **All dismissals require written notice & reasons delivered to the parties at the same time**

## Consolidation of Formal Complaints

- **A recipient may consolidate formal complaints as to allegations of sexual harassment where the allegations arise out of the same facts or circumstances**
  - Against more than one Respondent;
  - By more than one complainant against one or more respondents; or
  - By one party against the other party (cross-claims)

## Investigation

### 1. Presumption

- The institution must presume Respondent is *not responsible* for the alleged conduct

### 2. Evidence Gathering

- Investigator for the educational institution has the burden to gather sufficient evidence; the burden to gather evidence is not on the Complainant or Respondent
- Investigator cannot gather privileged information without voluntary, written consent (e.g., physician or psychiatrist records, etc.)

### 3. Written Notice with Time to Prepare

- Provide written notice for all interviews with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate

## Investigation, continued

### 4. Equal Opportunity for Parties

- To present witnesses, including fact & expert witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence
- To have an advisor present for any meeting, interview or hearing

### 5. No “Gag” Orders or Directives

- Cannot restrict the ability of the Complainant or Respondent to discuss the allegations under investigation or to gather and present relevant evidence
- Likely can direct parties and witnesses not to tamper with evidence

## Investigation, continued

### 6. Equal Opportunity to Inspect and Review Evidence

- Provide parties with opportunity to meaningfully respond to the evidence *before* the conclusion of the investigation.
- Parties may review evidence that is directly related to the allegations, including evidence which the investigator does *not* intend to rely upon as well as inculpatory and exculpatory evidence regardless of where it was obtained

## Investigation, continued

### 7. Prepare and Share Draft Report of Evidence

- Before completing the Investigative Report, provide a ***Draft Report of Evidence and Attachments*** to both parties and their advisor, if any, via electronic format or a hard copy.
- Provide the parties and advisors, if any, with at least 10 days to review the Draft Report of Evidence and Attachments & submit written responses
- Share any new evidence with the parties and continue the investigation related to new information, if needed
- Consider and incorporate new information and responses in the ***Final Investigative Report***

## Investigation, continued

### 8. Investigator Prepares Final Investigative Report

- Fairly summarize relevant evidence
- Relevant evidence may include credibility assessments

### 9. Provide Investigative Report to Parties

- At least 10 days prior to a hearing or other time of determination regarding responsibility, send the investigative report to each party and the party's advisor, if any, in an electronic format or a hard copy, for their review and written response
- Review written response, revise if needed, and attach written response to the Investigative Report

## Written Questions Between Parties

**Before making a decision, the Decision-Maker will facilitate:**

### 1. Written Questions (e.g., Written Cross Examination)

- ***With or without a hearing***, after the investigator has sent the investigative report to the parties and before the decision-maker(s) has reached a determination regarding responsibility, the decision-maker(s) must 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 any decision to exclude questions as not relevant

### 2. Rape Shield Protections

- ***With or without a hearing***, evidence about Complainant's prior sexual behavior is ***irrelevant*** unless offered to prove someone else committed the conduct or if offered to prove consent

## Determination of Responsibility

### 1. Decision-Maker Determines Responsibility per §106.45(b)(7):

- Decision-maker must be trained to rule on relevance of questions and repetitive questions
- Must understand the “preponderance of the evidence” or “clear and convincing evidence” standard
- Reminder: The Title IX Coordinator or investigator cannot determine responsibility

### 2. Written Decision

- The written decision must include the findings of fact, conclusion, and the rationale.
- If the Decision-Maker finds responsibility, the written decision should include recommendations for disciplinary sanctions for Respondent, remedies to the Complainant, and how to file an appeal

## Appeals

### 1. Equal Opportunity for Appeal under §106.45(b)(8)

- Both parties must have opportunity to appeal
  - the determination of responsibility, or
  - the dismissal of a formal complaint or allegations

### 2. Bases for Appeal

- Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome;
- New evidence that was not reasonably available & could have affected outcome; or
- Conflict of interest or bias generally or specifically by Title IX Coordinator, investigator, and/or decision-maker that affected the outcome

Note: Institution may include other bases for appeal if both parties have equal right to use



## Informal Resolution Process

### 1. Optional Process per §106.45(b)(9)

- May use informal resolution process on a case-by-case basis after formal complaint is filed

### 2. Informed, Mutual Consent

- Both parties must give voluntary, informed, and written consent but cannot be required as a condition of enrollment/employment

### 3. Right to Withdraw from Informal Process

- Either party can withdraw from informal process at any time and resume formal process

### 4. Not Suitable for Student vs. Employee Matters

- No informal process for allegations that an **employee** harassed a student

## Recordkeeping

### 1. A recipient must maintain records for 7 years, including records of:

- Each sexual harassment investigation, including:
  - Determination regarding responsibility
  - Audio or audiovisual recording or transcript, if any, for K-12
  - Any disciplinary sanctions imposed on Respondent, if applicable
  - Any remedies provided to Complainant, if applicable

## Recordkeeping

### **2. A recipient must maintain records for 7 years, including records of:**

- Any appeal and the result of the appeal
- Any informal resolution and the result of the informal process
- All materials used to train Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, appeal officers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process
  - These training materials must be publicly available on the institution's website
  - If no website, training materials must be available upon request for inspection by the public

## Recordkeeping

### **3. For each response required under §106.44, a recipient must create and maintain records for 7 years, including records of:**

- Any actions, including supportive measures, taken in response to a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment.
  - If the recipient did not provide supportive measures, it must document why that decision was not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances
- In each instance, recipient must document
  - Why its response was not deliberately indifferent
  - The measures taken which were designed to restore or preserve equal access to the education program or activity

# RETALIATION

## Retaliation

### 1. Section 106.71(a) – Retaliation Prohibited

- No recipient or 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 or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing.

### 2. Avoiding the Title IX Process May Be Retaliation

- If the alleged behavior falls under Section 106.30 definitions, a recipient cannot use the student conduct process as a way to avoid the rigorous Title IX grievance procedures; such a decision may constitute retaliation.

### 3. Retaliation Complaints Filed Under Same Process

- Retaliation complaints must be filed under the Section 106.8 grievance process.

## Retaliation, Continued

### 4. Confidentiality Required by Recipient

- Recipient must keep identity of Complainant, Respondent, and witness(es) confidential unless required by law “or as necessary to carry out Title IX proceeding”
- Regulations imply that the improper release of this confidential information could be retaliation

### 5. First Amendment Rights

- Parties exercising their 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment rights does not constitute retaliation under Section 106.71(a)

### 6. False Statement Charge

- Recipient charging an individual with making a false statement in bad faith during Title IX process is **not** retaliation
- A responsibility determination (or no responsibility determination) is not sufficient evidence to conclude there was a bad faith false statement

## PRACTICAL APPLICATION

## Hypotheticals 1-3

- 1. Student A offers to name Student B the Vice President of the Chess Club if Student B kisses Student A.**
  - Is this sexual harassment under Title IX?
- 2. Teacher A offers Student B extra credit if the student buys the teacher groceries**
  - Is this sexual harassment under Title IX?
- 3. Coach A suggests Student Player B wear tight clothes to school and to practice because it will “help with the student’s future prospects”**
  - Is this sexual harassment under Title IX?

## Hypothetical 1 - Discussion

- 1. Student A offers to name Student B the Vice President of the Chess Club if Student B kisses Student A.**
  - Is this sexual harassment under Title IX?
    - This will not qualify as “quid pro quo” harassment under Title IX because the condition must be offered by **an employee**.
    - However, this may be evidence of hostile environment sexual harassment under Title IX and warrants more questions to determine if there was additional sex-based behavior from Student A towards Student B.
    - Even if this action does not rise to the level of Title IX’s definition of sexual harassment, this action may be a violation of the institution’s Board Policy/Administrative Regulations prohibiting sexual harassment under California law.
    - Thus, consider notifying the parties of all potential policy violations implicated by the complaint in the Notice of Allegations.

## Hypothetical 2 - Discussion

### 2. Teacher A offers Student B extra credit if the student buys the teacher groceries

- Is this sexual harassment under Title IX?
  - No. Under these facts alone, this is not enough to demonstrate “quid pro quo” sexual harassment because this alleged behavior is not “on the basis of sex.”
  - Similarly, this behavior, by itself, is not enough to demonstrate a hostile environment because it is not based on sex nor is it conduct of a sexual nature.
  - The teacher’s behavior may be addressed as unprofessional and/or inappropriate conduct based on the Board Policy regarding Professional Standards or the Code of Ethics
  - PRACTICE TIP: The administrator fielding this allegation must ask questions to understand the full context of the matter.

## Hypothetical 3 - Discussion

### 3. Coach A suggests Student Player B wear tight clothes to school and practice because it will “help with the student’s future prospects”

- Is this sexual harassment under Title IX?
  - This is likely an example of “quid pro quo” harassment. The conditioning behavior need not be explicit. The conditioning behavior can be implied.
  - May be unprofessional or inappropriate conduct under Professional Standards Policy or Code of Ethics
  - Query: Must the evidence demonstrate the conditioning behavior is “unwelcome” to the Complainant?
    - The Title IX definition describes an employee who “conditions” the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on an individual’s participation in the **unwelcome** sexual conduct. Prior legal analysis of “quid pro quo” indicates that “going along” with the condition does not necessarily mean it was welcome. Analyze on a case-by-case basis.

## Hypotheticals 4-5

**4. Student A enters your office and tells you that another student touched Student A's buttocks, which made Student A uncomfortable.**

- What do you need to know?
- What should you do?

**5. Student A enters your office and tells you that a teacher touched Student A's buttocks in the classroom and made a kissing sound, which scared Student A.**

- What do you need to know?
- What should you do?

## Hypothetical 4 - Discussion

• **Student A enters your office and tells you that Student B touched Student A's buttocks, which made Student A uncomfortable.**

- What do you need to know?
  - Where did it happen? Is it on campus or in a location where recipient exercised substantial control over Student B/Respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurred?
  - Was the conduct based on sex? What's the nature of the touch?
  - Was the conduct against Student A's will?
- What should you do?
  - Contact Title IX Coordinator as this may be sexual harassment or other sexual acts under Title IX
  - Likely contact parents
  - Explain Title IX complaint process and how to file a formal complaint
  - Offer Supportive Measures with or without a formal complaint
  - If formal complaint filed, begin the complaint process

## Hypotheticals 5 - Discussion

### **5. Student A enters your office and tells you that a teacher touched Student A's buttocks in the classroom and made a kissing sound, which scared Student A.**

- What do you need to know?
  - Gather additional information as soon as possible about whether the teacher's actions were based on sex or of a sexual nature and how it made the student feel
- What should you do?
  - Contact Title IX Coordinator as may be sexual harassment or other sexual acts under Title IX
  - Contact parents
  - Consider filing CPS/CWS report or contact local law enforcement
  - Consider Paid Administrative Leave
  - Initiate intake meeting, an investigation, and complaint process, but ok to delay a reasonable time if law enforcement has to gather any evidence

Question  
&  
Answer  
Session



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**SAMPLE K-12 NOTICE OF ALLEGATIONS FOR STUDENT RESPONDENT FROM DISTRICT TITLE IX COORDINATOR**

**California Schools JPA – Title IX Training, September 24, 2020**

**[LETTERHEAD]**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Sent Via email at [email address] and US mail

[Date]

[Student Name]

[Parent/Guardian Name(s)]

[Address]

Re: Notice of Allegations (“NOA”)

Dear [Names]:

On [date], the [District] (“District”) received a formal complaint against you, [Name of Respondent] (“Respondent”) alleging that you sexually harassed [Name of Complainant] (“Complainant”) on [date] at [describe location]. The purpose of this NOA is to notify you of the allegations against you, the relevant policies, supportive measures, your rights and responsibilities, and the District’s grievance/complaint process.

**Allegations.** The Complainant alleges that Respondent engaged in the following conduct: [Provide a description of the incident with enough detail to a meaningful summary of all the allegations. Below is a sample *for illustration purposes only.*]

*On or about August 21, 2020, Respondent tutored Complainant after school in the library. Respondent put a hand on Complainant’s knee, made comments about sexual acts, and then touched Complainant’s groin area. When Complainant moved away, Respondent moved towards Complainant. Complainant immediately left the library.*

As the Respondent, you are presumed *not* to be responsible for the alleged misconduct listed above unless and until a trained, impartial, non-biased decision-maker reaches a different determination. If additional allegations are revealed during the investigation, this office will provide Complainant and Respondent with an additional written notice.

**Potential Policy Violations, Corrective Action and/or Sanctions.** These allegations, if found to have occurred, may violate the policies listed below:

- Sexual harassment in the form of physical and verbal harassment of a sexual nature [Cite to District Title IX Policy]

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**SAMPLE K-12 NOTICE OF ALLEGATIONS FOR STUDENT RESPONDENT FROM DISTRICT TITLE IX COORDINATOR**

- An attempted or actual forcible sexual offense as defined under Title IX [Cite to District Title IX Policy]
- Sexual harassment as a cause for suspension and expulsion [Cite to District Student Discipline Policy]
- Sexual battery as a cause for suspension and expulsion [Cite to District Student Discipline Policy]

If found responsible for the alleged misconduct, Respondent may be subject to corrective action and sanctions up to and including a behavior contract, no contact orders, suspension, expulsion, involuntary transfer and/or other disciplinary or corrective measures. [List all potential corrective actions under District's policies and practices.]

**Supportive Measures.** As discussed, we agreed to provide you with the following supportive measures during the complaint process. [List and describe the supportive measures.] If at any time, these supportive measures need adjustment or you feel you need additional support, please contact my office as soon as possible.

**Rights and Responsibilities.** During this complaint process, the Respondent is presumed *not* to be responsible for the alleged misconduct unless and until a trained, impartial, non-biased decision-maker reaches a different determination. The decision-maker will not make a determination of responsibility until after an investigation where the Complainant and Respondent will be given an opportunity during the review and comment period to review all directly related and/or relevant evidence obtained during the investigation.

The Complainant and Respondent may each have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be an attorney. The advisor may be present for any meeting, interview, or hearing during this complaint process, and the advisor may inspect and review any evidence obtained as part of the investigation. The advisor may assist with any written question and/or written cross-examination process.

The District prohibits the Complainant, Respondent and any witness from knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the complaint process. [Cite to applicable District policy.]

**Investigation Process.** The District has assigned an Investigator, [Name of Investigator], to investigate the sexual harassment allegations reported by Complainant.

This investigation will be conducted in a timely, thorough and impartial manner. The Investigator intends to interview the Complainant, relevant witnesses, and Respondent in a discrete and confidential manner. Disclosure of facts and allegations by the Investigator to persons interviewed will be limited to what is reasonably necessary to complete a fair and thorough investigation. You may bring an advisor of your choice, such as a parent, support person, or attorney to your interview or related meetings. The Investigator will keep Complainant and Respondent informed of the progress of this investigation.

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COORDINATOR**

The Investigator will also review any documents and other information relevant to the allegations. If you have any materials that you believe may be relevant to this investigation that you have not already submitted to the District, please send those to me or give copies to the Investigator during your upcoming interview, (e.g., emails, texts, instant messages, photos, social media postings, videos, notes or other documents). However, if you have photos or videos involving nudity or sexual activity of minors, please do not forward those to us at this time. The District may need to take certain precautions before viewing such materials. The Investigator may, however, ask you to recount what you observed to be contained in the relevant photo or video material. During the investigation, Investigator will inspect the evidence and assess the relevance, weight and credibility of the information provided. Please note, you must not tamper with or alter any evidence, and you must not tamper with or attempt to alter any witness testimony.

Prior to completing the investigation report, the Investigator will send to the Complainant and Respondent (and their respective advisors, if any) the evidence that has been gathered, likely in the form of a confidential Draft Report of Evidence. You and your advisor may inspect and review evidence and will have at least 10 days to submit a written response.

After reviewing any written responses, the Investigator will prepare a confidential Investigative Report that fairly summarizes the relevant evidence, and the Investigative Report will be forwarded to the Complainant and Respondent (and their respective advisors, if any.) Complainant and Respondent will both have at least 10 days to submit another written response regarding the Investigative Report.

**Decision-Maker and Determination of Responsibility.** After the parties' review and comment period, the District will assign a trained, unbiased Decision-Maker, who is not the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator. Before the Decision-Maker reaches a determination regarding responsibility, the Complainant and Respondent will have the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants the Decision-Maker to ask of another party or witness. The Decision-Maker will provide Complainant and Respondent with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from Complainant and Respondent. The Decision-Maker must explain any decision to exclude a question as not relevant.

After considering the Investigative Report and the answers to the written questions, the Decision-Maker will issue a written determination regarding responsibility. The Decision-Maker will make findings of fact, reach conclusions, explain the rationale, and determine whether policy has been violated based on a preponderance of the evidence standard (i.e. "it is more likely than not the allegation occurred or did not occur"). The Decision-Maker may also make recommendations for any sanctions against the Respondent or remedies for the Complainant, if applicable. The District will send the Complainant and Respondent a written decision, sometimes called a Notice of Outcome. The Notice of Outcome will explain how each party can file an appeal. If a finding is made that Respondent has not violated the District's policies, then the investigation will be closed, but the Complainant may still receive Supportive Measures.

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If a finding is made that Respondent violated District policy, the matter will be referred to the applicable administrator, who will review any recommendations and determine and implement the appropriate disciplinary action for violation of the policy. Regardless of the outcome of the investigation, the District shall determine what occurred and whether any corrective actions or supportive measures are needed to prevent or address any issues discovered during the investigation. After exhausting any appeal procedure, the District will implement the sanctions for Respondent and remedies for Complainant, if any.

**Timelines.** The District endeavors to complete the investigation and complaint process within reasonably prompt time frames, typically within 60-90 calendar days of the time the formal complaint was filed. If the District has good cause to extend the time lines, the District will provide written notice to the Complainant and Respondent explaining the reasons for the delay and the needed extension.

**Informal Resolution Process.** You are not required to participate in an informal resolution process. However, at any time prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility, you may request an informal resolution process that does not involve a full investigation and adjudication. Please contact me to discuss informal resolution options. An informal resolution process will be initiated only upon written consent from all parties.

If the matter is resolved through an informal resolution process, then the complaint will be dismissed. At 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.

**Confidentiality.** The District will keep the identity of the Complainant, Respondent and witness(es) confidential unless required by law or as necessary to carry out this complaint process. As such the District will, to the extent possible, maintain the privacy and/or confidentiality during the complaint process. However, the Complainant and Respondent are not restricted from discussing the allegations under investigation or from gathering and presenting relevant evidence during the investigation process needed to support their case, unless each party has signed a written agreement restricting the release of confidential information.

**No Retaliation.** The District or other person may not intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing. If you believe you have been retaliated against, please contact this office immediately.

If you have any additional questions during the course of the investigation, please do not hesitate to contact me at [list contact information].

Very Truly Yours,

[Name]

Title IX Coordinator

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