



Sunnyside School District  
1110 S. Sixth Street  
Sunnyside, WA 98944

# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK 2023-2024

LEARNING TODAY FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW



# TOGETHER WE WILL

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## *A Message from the Superintendent:*

Hello and welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! In starting my second year as Superintendent of the Sunnyside School District, I excited to see the work and effort that has defined our district continue.

With the launch of the new SSD Strategic Plan, focusing on our five priorities of: Strong Start, Strong Classroom, Strong Sense of Belonging, Strong Future, and Strong Partnership, I am confident this will be a year of building connects and strengthening our work in what is best for kids.

Each one of you plays a critical role in the development of our students. The old adage "it takes a village" is the way we do business. From the minute students get on their buses, to the minute they enter each of your schools, students are cared for in our district.

Students need and deserve our best.

Thank you for taking the time to read through our Employee Handbook to ensure you have the knowledge to be successful in your jobs, provide a safe environment for our students, and know how to access resources for benefits, communications, and support.

Ryan Maxwell  
Superintendent

# STRONG START

*Together we will* prepare each Sunnyside Scholar with the foundational skills, habits and behaviors to actively learn every day.



*Together we will* design and implement rigorous learning environments to foster high levels of growth and achievement for all Sunnyside Scholars.

# STRONG CLASSROOMS



# STRONG SENSE OF BELONGING

*Together we will* include, accept, support and protect each member of the Sunnyside School District family.



*Together we will* nurture and inspire each Sunnyside Scholar to activate their highest potential and achieve their dreams.

# STRONG FUTURE



# STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

*Together we will* engage and empower our Sunnyside families and community to shape the direction of our district with us.

## TOGETHER WE WILL: STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2028



# OUR DISTRICT

## Sunnyside School District Fast Facts



- 6,000 Students
- 89% Graduation Rate (2022)
- 427 Certificated Staff
- 446 Classified Staff
- 12.1 Avg. Years of Teaching Experience
- 61.6% have a Masters Degree
- 46 National Board Certified Teachers
- Supportive Community
- Four-time School Board of Distinction
- State Recognized Teachers and Administrators
- Innovative Programs and Partnerships

## OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**STEPHEN BERG**  
**BOARD PRESIDENT**  
**DISTRICT 5**

**SILVIA RAMOS**  
**DISTRICT 1**

**LINDA ROBERTS**  
**DISTRICT 2**

**JILLIANN PATTERSON**  
**DISTRICT 4**

**SANDRA LINDE**  
**DISTRICT 3**

The Sunnyside School District Board of Directors consists of five citizens of the school district. Each is elected for a four-year term from the specific director district in which he or she resides. Any adult may run for election to the board if he or she can meet certain legal qualifications.

Five core principles The School Board Standards comprise five core principles:

- Responsible school district governance
- Communication of and commitment to high expectations for student learning
- Creating conditions district-wide for student and staff success
- Holding the district accountable for student learning
- Engagement of the community in education.

Meetings are held the last Thursday of the month starting at 6:30 p.m. in the Denny Blaine Board Room located at 810 E. Custer Ave.

# IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW

Sunnyside School District departments are housed in four different locations across the district.

**Administrative Offices**  
**1110 South 6th Street**

**Information Technology**  
**810 South Custer Ave.**

**Maintenance and Facilities**  
**1831 East Edison**

**Transportation and Bus Garage**  
**321 Barnard Blvd.**

## Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

All professional certificated school personnel, including teachers, administrators, counselors and nurses are required to report any incidents which give the employee the reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered physical abuse, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or negligent treatment. At the first opportunity (but no longer than 48 hours), the employee must make a report to a building administrator in writing with a follow-up report to the proper law enforcement agency: (Sunnyside Police: 837-2120; State Patrol: 837-3600; CPS: 839-2752).

Failure to make such a report is a gross misdemeanor and a violation of district policy and RCW 26.44.030. Anonymous reports do not satisfy the legal requirement. Although classified employees are not covered by the mandatory reporting law, it is district policy that all classified employee follow the same reporting procedure.

## Life Threatening Allergies

Life-threatening allergies and the incidence of anaphylactic shock seem to be on the rise. A food allergy involves the immune system. A person with food allergies has an immune system that is overly sensitive to a food's protein. The protein is recognized as a foreign invader, and the body releases histamine and other chemical mediators, which could result in a severe allergic reaction or anaphylactic shock. Milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish, soy and wheat are foods that cause the majority of allergic reactions.

Every child is different. Some students will have gastrointestinal symptoms long before any other symptoms develop: others have rash or hives and respiratory symptoms almost immediately. Approximately 5 percent of children in the United States are affected by food allergies. Most are not life-threatening. Some highly sensitized children will develop a rash or hives from just touching a surface that has traces of their offending food protein.

The greatest risk for a life-threatening allergic reaction exists when the normal routine is broken. Examples are classroom parties, field trips, after school events and substitute teachers. Always have the Emergency Care Plan (ECP) available and think ahead to prevent possible exposures to a food allergen.

It is our responsibility to ensure that medications are accessible to staff and appropriately stored. Staff should

know where all ECP's are located. The cafeteria will label peanut and nut products and all sack meals ordered for students with known life-threatening allergies. Home-baked may not be distributed to students; they must be store-bought with all ingredients listed on the label.

## Communications and Social Media Guidelines

The Director of Communications is responsible for district-level communications including web, social media, and publications, community relations, and public records requests. Please read the Social Media Guidelines for employees. They are also located on page 16 of this document. If you are interested in creating a social media page for your school, classroom, club, athletic program, or activity, contact the Communications Department at 836-8703 for more information.

The Sunnyside School District uses ParentSquare for mass and two-way communication. To create your account, visit ParentSquare.com and create an account using your district email address. You will be asked to create a password. ParentSquare uses PowerSchool to sync student and parent contact information. If you need assistance, please contact Jessica Morgan, Director of Communications at jessica.morgan@sunnysideschools.org.

All media inquiries including requests during times of crisis response or requests for media coverage for activities or events, should be directed to Jessica Morgan at 836-8703 or by email at jessica.morgan@sunnysideschools.org.

## Snow Closures/Delays

When school is in session, the decision to delay or cancel school is determined through efforts by the Transportation Director and the Superintendent. Please read through the District's INCLEMENT WEATHER message to familiarize yourself with expectations, modes of communication, and considerations.

## Safety and Security

Become familiar with your building's safety and security procedures. The high school, both middle schools, and Outlook Elementary have security employees throughout the school day and for events and activities. The school district also contracts with the Sunnyside Police Department for two school resource officers (SROs). If you are experiencing a life-threatening situation, do not hesitate to dial 911. The district also established a **[Safety Tip Site](#)** to report important information.





# HUMAN RESOURCES

## Job Postings

The district posts all open positions electronically. Job postings can also be found on the District website.

## Bargaining Agreement Information

For those employees represented by a bargaining unit, work activities are subject to a collective bargaining agreement between the district and an employee organization. Administration establishes the work guidelines for those employees not represented by a bargaining unit. Employees receive a copy of the appropriate negotiated agreement or guidelines. These documents should be reviewed carefully.

## Change of Personal Information

Please notify your building principal and the payroll office if any of the following information changes: name, marital status, number of dependents, address or telephone number, or person to be contacted in case of emergency. You may review the contents of your personnel file by contacting the Human Resources office at 836-2274.

## E-Mail and Internet Use

Electronic mail (e-mail), voicemail and Internet access are provided as business communication tools. Therefore, messages are considered public record and computer activity may be reviewed. There is no presumption of privacy. These electronic resources are not appropriate for personal/confidential material.

## Reporting Work Related Injuries

Any employee who suffers an injury at work should report the incident to his/her supervisor as soon as possible. Each school office has accident report forms that will need to be completed. If you need to go to the doctor, please complete a claim form at the Human Resources Office. For more information, contact Laura Rice.

## Tuition Reimbursement

**Classified Staff:** Depending on what bargaining agreement you work under, you may be eligible for tuition reimbursement. Required documentation for classified staff is a copy of the registration form, indicating enrollment, proof of payment and the official transcript after the course is completed.

**Classified Staff:** Employees may be eligible for a maximum of \$750 per year for tuition reimbursement and/or tuition loan reimbursement. Required documentation for certificated staff is a Credit approval Form, copy of registration, proof of payment and an official transcript when course is complete.

# PAYROLL

**Pay Periods:** The majority of employees are paid in 12 equal pay periods September through August. Employee paystubs are available in Skyward/Employee Access.

**Additional Pay:** Extra pay is paid the following month worked. Example: Work done on August 21st would be paid on September 30th.

The exception to this rule would be:

- Timesheets turned in late.
- Timesheets incomplete.
- More hours turned in than approved.

All extra pay must have prior approval. All extra pay is turned in using the district's electronic timesheet system. Daily timesheets should be turned in as time is worked, and monthly timesheets must be submitted to the appropriate secretary by the third working day of the following month to be paid in that month. Example: The employee works for an after-school program on September 28, 2022, that time must be submitted to their building secretary by the 3rd working day of October (October 5, 2022) to be paid on October 31, 2022.

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| • Assistance to understand your pay stub   | • Resignation packet                |
| • W-2 form (year-end)  | • Retirement packet                 |
| • Retirement system (For specific questions, contact the state Department of Retirement Systems at 1-800-547-6657) | • FMLA/PFML/Leave of Absence        |
| • Tax Sheltered Annuity (403(b) plan)/ 457 Plan  | • Shared sick leave                 |
| • Monthly deductions   | • Contract/Supplemental Pay         |
| • Life insurance   | • Medical/Dental/Vision             |
|  | • Participation in Section 125/Flex |

Questions regarding the following should be directed to the Payroll Office at 836-2274 or by filling out a [HELP DESK TICKET](#)

**Retirement Programs:** Retirement is mandatory for employees working in an eligible position. Retirement is through the Washington State Department of Retirement Systems. Questions about the programs may be directed to retirement systems at (1-800-547-6657). Booklets on each retirement system may be obtained online at: <http://www.drs.wa.gov> E-mail: [recep@drs.wa.gov](mailto:recep@drs.wa.gov)

Eligible employees have additional options available for saving for retirement by participating in a 457 Deferred Compensation plan with the Department of Retirement.

Employees can also participate in a 403B plan with the vendors approved in our plan document as listed below:

- |                        |                                    |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • AIG Valic            | • Security Benefit                 |
| • Horace Mann          | • Commonwealth Annuity             |
| • Aspire               | • Great American Advisors          |
| • Ameriprise Financial | • Thrivent Financial for Lutherans |



**Employee Benefits:** Medical Insurance programs administered by the School Employees Benefit Board (SEBB) are offered to eligible employees. Eligibility for medical, dental, vision, life, and disability is determined by SEBB and based upon anticipated work hours. You will receive notification of eligibility from the Payroll department.

The plan year for employee benefits begins January 1 each year, with an open enrollment period from October 30 - November 20. All employees must make their elections and changes in the My SEBB Account portal [myaccount.hca.wa.gov](https://myaccount.hca.wa.gov), more information on the plans is available on the [SEBB Website](#) - SEBB.

All eligible employees are offered medical, dental, vision, life, and disability. Vision, dental, basic life, and basic disability are all provided at no cost. There is a monthly cost for medical plans. Employees can add their verified dependents to their medical, dental, and vision plans. Employees are also able to purchase additional life insurance and disability insurance. Employees that don't make timely elections will be defaulted into medical, dental, vision, and disability.

Employees are eligible to participate in a Section 125 plan for unreimbursed medical costs and/or daycare costs through Navia/SEBB. Links to SEBB and additional information is also available on the district website under Human Resources and Payroll, Health Insurance.

**COBRA:** Federal law (COBRA) allows employees and their qualified beneficiaries to continue their existing health insurance coverage under the district's health plan for a period of time after the occurrence of a "qualifying event" which otherwise would result in the loss of coverage. Some common qualifying events are the termination of employment (whether by resignation, layoff, discharge, or even death); a substantial reduction in an employee's hours; an extended non-FMLA leave of absence; or legal separation or divorce of the employee and his/her spouse.

When such a qualifying event occurs, SEBB will notify the employee of the right to continue health insurance coverage under COBRA, as well as the time limits and triggering events, which are applicable in order to continue coverage. To continue coverage, the employee (or beneficiary) must timely elect to exercise their COBRA rights and must timely pay the total premiums required for coverage. SEBB also mails all employees their official rights under COBRA.

**Sick/Personal Leave:** Employee leave balances are available for viewing in Skyward/Employee Access. All employees will record their absences in Skyward/Employee Access. Leave requests should be entered in advance of the absence when possible. If this is not possible leave must be entered no later than the employee's first day of return from leave. Entering leave in Skyward/Employee Access does not remove the requirement for normal notifications to supervisors for an absence.

**Employee Extended Leave Use:** Occasionally, situations arise where an employee may need to take more than five days off of work. Please contact Laura Rice at (509) 836-8742 in the HR/Payroll office in addition to communicating with your supervisor for these absences.

**Unpaid Leave:** The District expects that all employees stay within their sick leave and personal leave allocations. Unpaid leave is not an automatic right of employment. Unpaid leave is allowed under qualifying FMLA, PFML or child care leaves. Any non-approved unpaid leave may be considered an unexcused absence and reflected on annual evaluations and maybe subject to pregressive discipline. Unpaid leave is processed from the 16th of the previous month to the 15th of the current month. For a 260 employee, unpaid leave is processed in the month it is used.

**FMLA:** The Federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) was signed into law in February 1993. The law took effect on August 5, 1993, and guarantees up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave each year to workers who need time off for birth or adoption of a child, to care for a spouse or immediate family member with a serious illness, or who are unable to work because of a serious health condition.

The FMLA is an employment law; it covers employers with 50 or more employees and affects many job-related rights of employees. Among other things, this law also affects the health benefit plans maintained

by employers who are required to comply. Employers are required by FMLA to continue to provide group health benefits at the same level and under the same conditions as if the employee had continued to be actively at work. A person who fails to return from an FMLA leave may be entitled to continuation of coverage under COBRA.

Employees are eligible for leave if they have worked for their employer at least 12 months, at least 1,250 hours over the past 12 months, and work at a location where the company employs 50 or more employees within 75 miles. Whether an employee has worked the minimum 1,250 hours of service is determined according to FLSA principles for determining compensable hours for work.

The Sunnyside School District has designated its FMLA year to be September 1 - August 31. For specific questions, contact the HR department or contact the Department of Labor for a copy of the FMLA law.

**Washington Paid Family Medical Leave - PFML:** The Washington State Paid Family & Medical Leave (PFML) program is a state of Washington program that provides partial wage replacement in the form of a weekly benefit paid by the Employee Security Department (ESD) while claiming this benefit.

To qualify to receive paid leave, you need to have worked a minimum of 820 hours in Washington during the qualifying period. The 820 hours can be at one job or combined from multiple jobs.

Qualified Washington workers are eligible for:

- Up to 12 weeks of paid family or medical leave.
- Up to 16 weeks of leave when family and medical leave are used in combination (e.g., birth parent pregnancy and parental leave).
- An additional two (2) weeks of leave is available as a result of pregnancy complications.

The weekly PFML benefit amount is calculated by ESD and is generally up to 90% of weekly wages, with a minimum of \$100 per week and a maximum of \$1,000 per week. ESD provides a [benefits calculator](#) on its website to estimate the amount. The minimum claim duration payment is for eight (8) consecutive hours of leave. Funding for the program comes from premiums paid by both the employee and the district.

Employees must provide at least 30-day notice to the district before the leave begins for a foreseeable event such as the birth or placement of a child or a planned surgery. If the need for leave is unforeseeable, like an accident or sudden illness, employees must provide notice as soon as practical. The employee must inform the district as soon as practical if dates of the leave change, are extended, or were initially unknown.

Filing a PFML claim is a separate process from applying for leave of absence from the district. When employees file a PFML claim, the employee must also request a leave of absence with the district or already be on an approved leave.

The Employment Security Department website has step-by-step directions for filing a claim. <https://paid-leave.wa.gov/get-ready-to-apply/>. All decisions about claims are made by the ESD.

The WA Cares Fund is a universal benefit you earn by contributing a small portion of each paycheck to the fund. This applies to both part-time and full-time workers.

Workers begin contributing to WA Cares Fund on July 1, 2023.

You contribute to the WA Cares Fund for as long as you're working in Washington State. As soon as you retire, you stop contributing. Similarly, if you become unemployed or leave the workforce to care for a child or

other loved one, contributions stop. If you access your WA Cares benefit early and return to the workforce, contributions resume.

All full-time, part-time, and temporary workers in Washington contribute to the WA Cares Fund unless they have an approved exemption. For more information please visit <https://wacaresfund.wa.gov/>

### Purchasing Procedures

Building principals or authorized supervisors must approve all purchasing decisions. Purchase Orders must have the proper signatures BEFORE they will be processed by the Business Office. Talk to your supervisor or call Kasey Evans at 836-8702 for more information.

### Travel

The district will reimburse approved travel costs based on the IRS published per diem rates. Mileage reimbursement is \$0.65 per mile. The authorized supervisor must sign all "Claim for Expense" forms BEFORE they are sent to the Business Office. Complete a transportation request online through the **SSD HELP DESK** BEFORE you travel.

### Technology Help Desk

The Information Technology is responsible for all network, hardware and software equipment in the district. If you need help with your equipment you can call the Technology Help Desk at 836-8411 or fill out an **Online Help Ticket**. Please note that the Help Desk cannot service personally owned devices.



# DISTRICT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The policies summarized in this section are brief explanations of selected policies and procedures related to employment with the Sunnyside School District. The policies are subject to change at any time. Any changes shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. For more information, employees may confer with their supervisor or access the [Sunnyside School District Policies webpage](#). Another good resource for employees in the [Washington State Code of Professional Conduct for Education Practitioners](#).

## Operating Principles Policy No. 1800

The Sunnyside School District Board of Directors recognizes that being positive and creating a positive working environment is essential for staff to work together. The Sunnyside School District will operate with honesty and integrity, encourage open communications and strive to solve all concerns quickly and constructively. The district is committed to continuing growth and success for all students, adults and the district in its entirety. In addition, the Board of Directors is committed to the process of making informed decisions.

## Dress Code Policy No. 3224

Personal tastes and styles may differ, but all staff should dress professionally. The district has adopted a student dress code procedure which may be helpful when choosing their attire. Keep in mind that staff members lead students by example. Please read the district dress code policy and procedure and dress accordingly. Building administrators are aware that a staff member's attire may vary based on his or her required duties. Administrators will set the tone of professionalism in their buildings by discussing their expectations with the staff at the beginning of the year.

## Non-Discrimination Policy No. 3210 and 5010

Sunnyside School District does not discriminate in any programs or activities on the basis of sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following employees have been designated to handle questions and complaints of alleged discrimination:

Title IX Coordinator:  
Kris Diddens  
1110 S. 6th Street,  
Sunnyside, WA 98944  
Phone: 509-836-8708  
[kristine.diddens@sunnysideschools.org](mailto:kristine.diddens@sunnysideschools.org)

Civil Rights Compliance Officer/Gender  
Inclusive Schools Coordinator:  
Doug Rogers  
1110 S. 6th Street,  
Sunnyside, WA 98944  
Phone: 509-836-8720  
[douglas.rogers@sunnysideschools.org](mailto:douglas.rogers@sunnysideschools.org)

Section 504/ADA Coordinator:  
Cody Gardiner  
1110 S. 6th Street,  
Sunnyside, WA 98944  
Phone: 509-836-8731  
[cody.gardiner@sunnysideschools.org](mailto:cody.gardiner@sunnysideschools.org)

Sunnyside School District policy 5010 Non Discrimination and Affirmative Action has been updated to include the following: "During lunches and break time, staff members are allowed to speak in their native language if they so choose." If you have any questions about this policy, you may contact the Human Resources Department at 509-836-2274. Please review the [Discrimination, Discriminatory Harassment, and Sexual Harassment Dispute Resolution](#) procedures available through OSPI.

You can report discrimination and discriminatory harassment to any school staff member or to the district's Civil Rights Coordinators who are listed above. You also have the right to file a complaint. A paper copy can also be obtained from any school/district office or view links: [3210/3210P](#) - [5010/5010P](#).



# Sexual Harassment of Students Prohibited

## Policy No. 3205 and No. 5011 Sexual Harassment

Students and staff are protected against sexual harassment by anyone in any school program or activity, including on the school campus, on the school bus, or off-campus during a school sponsored activity. Sexual harassment is unwelcome behavior or communication that is sexual in nature when:

A student or employee is led to believe that he or she must submit to unwelcome sexual conduct or communications in order to gain something in return, such as a grade, a promotion, a place on a sports team, or any educational or employment decision, or the conduct substantially interferes with a student's educational performance, or creates an intimidating or hostile educational or employment environment.

Examples of sexual harassment:

- Pressuring a person for sexual favors
- Unwelcome touching of a sexual nature
- Writing graffiti of a sexual nature
- Distributing sexually explicit texts, e-mails, or pictures
- Making sexual jokes, rumors, or suggestive remarks
- Physical violence, including rape and sexual assault

You can report sexual harassment to any school staff member or to the district's Title IX Officers who are listed above. You also have the right to file a complaint (see "Complaint Options" below). A paper copy can of [Policy 3205](#) and [Procedure 3205](#), and [Policy 5011](#) and [Procedure 5011](#) also be obtained from any school/district office.

### COMPLAINT OPTIONS: DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

If you believe that you or your child have experienced unlawful discrimination, discriminatory harassment, or sexual harassment at school, you have the right to file a complaint. Before filing a complaint, you can discuss your concerns with your child's principal or with the school district's Section 504 Coordinator, Title IX Officer, or Civil Rights Coordinator, who are listed at the top of this document. This is often the fastest way to resolve your concerns.

### Complaint to the School District

#### Step 1: Write Your Complaint

In most cases, complaints must be filed within one year from the date of the incident or conduct that is the subject of the complaint. A complaint must be in writing. Be sure to describe the conduct or incident, explain why you believe discrimination, discriminatory harassment, or sexual harassment has taken place, and describe what actions you believe the district should take to resolve the problem. Send your written complaint—by mail, fax, email, or hand delivery—to the district superintendent or civil rights compliance coordinator.



## Whistleblower Protection Policy No. 5271

The district encourages the reporting of improper actions by any district officers or employees and will protect employees against retaliatory actions for reporting the actions when the reports are made in compliance with this policy and related procedure. District officers and employees are prohibited from taking retaliatory action against an employee because the employee has in good faith reported alleged improper action in accordance with this policy and related procedure.

## Step 2: School District Investigates Your Complaint

Once the district receives your written complaint, the coordinator will give you a copy of the complaint procedure and make sure a prompt and thorough investigation takes place. The superintendent or designee will respond to you in writing within 30 calendar days—unless you agree on a different time period. If your complaint involves exceptional circumstances that demand a lengthier investigation, the district will notify you in writing to explain why staff need a time extension and the new date for their written response.

## Step 3: School District Responds to Your Complaint

In its written response, the district will include a summary of the results of the investigation, a determination of whether or not the district failed to comply with civil rights laws, notification that you can appeal this determination, and any measures necessary to bring the district into compliance with civil rights laws. Corrective measures will be put into effect within 30 calendar days after this written response—unless you agree to a different time period.

## Appeal to the School Board

If you disagree with the school district's decision, you may appeal to the school district's board of directors. You must file a notice of appeal in writing to the secretary of the school board within 10 calendar days after you received the school district's response to your complaint. The school board will schedule a hearing within 20 calendar days after they received your appeal, unless you agree on a different timeline. The school board will send you a written decision within 30 calendar days after the district received your notice of appeal. The school board's decision will include information about how to file a complaint with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

## Complaint to OSPI

If you do not agree with the school district's appeal decision, state law provides the option to file a formal complaint with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). This is a separate complaint process that can take place if one of these two conditions has occurred: (1) you have completed the district's complaint and appeal process, or (2) the district has not followed the complaint and appeal process correctly. You have 20 calendar days to file a complaint to OSPI from the day you received the decision on your appeal.

You can send your written complaint to the Equity and Civil Rights Office at OSPI:

Email: [equity@k12.wa.us](mailto:equity@k12.wa.us) | Fax: 360-664-2967

Mail or hand deliver: PO Box 47200, 600 Washington St. S.E., Olympia WA 98504-7200

For more information, visit the OSPI website <http://www.k12.wa.us/Equity/Complaints.aspx>, or contact OSPI's Equity and Civil Rights Office at 360-725-6162/TTY: 360-664-3631 or by e-mail at [equity@k12.wa.us](mailto:equity@k12.wa.us).

## Other Discrimination Complaint Options

Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education 206-607-1600 | TDD: 1-800-877-8339 [OCR.Seattle@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Seattle@ed.gov) Website: [www.ed.gov/ocr](http://www.ed.gov/ocr)

Washington State Human Rights Commission 1-800-233-3247 | TTY: 1-800-300-7525 | Website: [www.hum.wa.gov](http://www.hum.wa.gov)

# Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy No. 3207

Definition of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying: RCW 28A.600.477

"Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act including, but not limited to, one shown to be motivated by sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin,

honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability, or other distinguishing characteristics, when the intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student's property;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
- Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

There is no requirement that the affected student actually possess the characteristic that is the basis for the harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

How to prevent being a target:

- Learn how to speak out and stick up for yourself:
- If it feels safe, look the bully in the eye and say strongly and calmly, "Leave me alone."
- Walk (don't run) away from the bully. Running away may strengthen a feeling of power in the bully.
- Tell an adult about the experience. If you see another student being bullied, seek help from an adult right away.
- Stay near adults and other kids. Most bullying occurs when adults are not around.
- Stay away from places where bullying occurs.

What makes bullying different from other conflicts?

- There is an imbalance of power. People who bully use their power to control or harm, and the people being bullied may have a hard time defending themselves.
- Intent to cause harm. Actions done by accident are not bullying; the person bullying has a goal to cause harm.
- Repetition. Incidents of bullying happen to the same person over and over by the same person or group.

## Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is the repeated use of computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices to willfully harm, harass, humiliate, threaten, or damage the reputation and relationships of the intended target.

What happens after Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (HIB) is reported?

Each situation is different. Sometimes a report can be followed by quick intervention and resolution. These situations typically do not meet the definition of HIB. When an incident or series of incidents meets the definition of HIB, a designated school staff member conducts an investigation and follows a specific timeline described in Policy 3207 and 3207P.

The investigation includes interviews and notification of parents of both the alleged aggressor and the targeted student. If the outcome of the investigation indicates that HIB has occurred, consequences may be assigned and a plan may be developed which includes follow-up with the targeted student.

Targeted Student's Right to Appeal

If the targeted student or parent/guardian is dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, they may appeal to the superintendent or designee by filing a written notice of appeal within five (5) school days of receiving the written decision. The superintendent or designee will review the investigative report and issue a written decision on the merits of the appeal within ten (10) school days of receiving the notice of appeal. If the targeted student or parent/guardian remains dissatisfied after the initial appeal to the superintendent or designee, the student or parent/guardian may appeal to the school board by filing a written notice of

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appeal with the school board on or before the fifth (5th) school day following the date upon which the targeted student or parent/guardian received the superintendent's written decision. An appeal before the school board must be heard on or before the tenth (10th) school day following the filing of the written notice of appeal to the school board. The school board will review the record and render a written decision on the merits of the appeal on or before the tenth (10th) school day following the termination of the hearing, and will provide a copy to all parties involved. The board decision will be the final district decision.

**How to report Harassment, Intimidation Bullying (HIB) or Cyberbullying:** You can report HIB to any school staff member or the District Compliance Officer:

**Civil Right Compliance Officer/Gender Inclusive Schools Coordinator- Doug Rogers**

[douglas.rogers@sunnysideschools.org](mailto:douglas.rogers@sunnysideschools.org)

**1110 S. 6th Street Sunnyside WA 98944 509.836.8725**

Reports can be filed anonymously using the [HIB Incident Reporting Form in English](#) or the [HIB Incident Reporting Form in Spanish](#). It is also available online on the [Sunnyside School District website](#) or a paper copy can also be obtained from your school or the district office.

The complete 3207 & 3207P can be viewed on the district website at [Sunnyside Board Policies](#). A paper copy can also be obtained from your school or the district office.

## Gender Inclusive Schools

The board believes in fostering an educational environment that is safe and free of discrimination for all students, regardless of gender identity, gender expression, or sex. To that end, the board recognizes the importance of an inclusive approach toward transgender and gender-expansive students with regard to key terms, communication and the use of names and pronouns, student records, confidential health and education information, communication, restroom and locker room use and accessibility, sports and physical education, dress codes, and other school activities, in order to provide these students with an equal opportunity for learning and achievement. This policy is a component of the district's responsibility to create and maintain a safe, civil, respectful and inclusive learning community and will be implemented in conjunction with comprehensive training of staff and volunteers.

**How to report concerns regarding gender inclusivity:** You can report concerns to any school staff member or the District Compliance Officer:

**Civil Right Compliance Officer/Gender Inclusive Schools Coordinator- Doug Rogers**

[douglas.rogers@sunnysideschools.org](mailto:douglas.rogers@sunnysideschools.org)

**1110 S. 6th Street Sunnyside WA 98944 509.836.8725**

Reports can be filed anonymously with the [HIB Incident Reporting Form](#). can be accessed on the SSD Families HIB Forms . It is also available in paper form at each school/district office.

The [Gender Inclusive Schools Policy 3211](#) & [Procedure 3211](#) can be accessed in paper form at each school/district office.

## Regulation of Dangerous Weapons on School Premises Policy No. 4210

It is a violation of district policy and state law for any person to carry a firearm or dangerous weapon on school premises, school-provided transportation or areas of other facilities being used exclusively for school activities. The district has a gun-free schools policy that includes one-year mandatory expulsion for firearms, mandatory notification of student violations to parents/guardians and law enforcement, and allows



the expulsion to be modified by the chief school district officer or designee on a case-by-case basis. Sec 4141(b)(1) and Sec 4141(h)(1).

## Drug Free Workplace Policy No. 5201

Employees are prohibited from the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of illicit drugs and alcohol on school premises or as a part of any school activity. Compliance is mandatory.

Disciplinary sanctions up to and including termination of employment and referral for prosecution will be imposed on employees who violate the above standards. As mandated by the federal government and board policy, employees required to possess a commercial driver's license (CDL) are subject to alcohol and controlled substance testing.

## Use of Tobacco on School Property Policy No.4215

Any use of tobacco products and delivery devices by staff, students, visitors and community members shall be prohibited on school district property. This shall include all district buildings, grounds and district-owned vehicles.

## Student Privacy and Searches Policy No. 3220

School officials have authority to maintain order and discipline in the schools and to protect students from exposure to illegal drugs, weapons, and contraband. The superintendent, the principal, and other staff designated by the superintendent will have the authority to conduct reasonable searches on school property as provided by board policy. Please read Policy No. 3220 to understand what reasonable grounds are to conduct a search and what constitutes a reasonable search, and who is or isn't allowed to conduct these searches.

All students possess the constitutional right to secure in their persons, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures. Staff will take particular care to respect students' privacy.

## Electronic Resources and Internet Safety Policy No. 2022

The superintendent or designee is authorized to develop procedures and acceptable use guidelines for staff and students as to use of district electronic resources, including those that access Internet and social media, and to regulate use of personal electronic resources on district property and related to district activities.

## Internet Safety

To help ensure student safety and citizenship with electronic resources, all students will be educated about Internet safety. This will include appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms, and cyber bullying awareness and response. As a component of district Internet safety measures all district-owned electronic resources, including computer networks and Wi-Fi in all district facilities capable of accessing the Internet must use filtering software to prevent access to obscene, racist, hateful or violent material. However, given the ever-changing nature of the Internet, the district cannot guarantee that a student will never be able to access objectionable material.

Further, when students use the Internet from school facilities for educational purposes, district staff will make a reasonable effort to supervise student access and use of the Internet. If material is accessed that violates district policies, procedures or student guidelines for electronic resources or acceptable use, district staff may instruct the person to cease using that material and/or implement sanctions consistent with district policies, procedures, guidelines, or student codes of conduct.

# Appearances of Impropriety

Sending or soliciting email, text messages or other electronic communications to the student, even when the communication relates to school business, except where the parent or guardian and building administrator/supervisor has consented to such communications and receives a copy of the communication. Staff should use school email addresses and phone numbers and the parent/guardian phone numbers for communications with students, except in emergency situations.

## Maintaining Professional Staff/Student Boundaries Policy No. 5253

Staff members are required to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, through consistently and fairly applied discipline and established and maintained professional boundaries.

The interactions and relationships between staff members and students should be based upon mutual respect and trust, an understanding of the appropriate boundaries between adults and students inside and outside of the educational setting, and consistency with the educational mission of the schools.

In a professional staff/student relationship, school employees maintain boundaries that are consistent with the legal and ethical duty of care that school personnel have for students.

A boundary invasion is an act or omission by a school employee that violates professional staff/student boundaries and has the potential to abuse the staff/student relationship.

An inappropriate boundary invasion means an act, omission, or pattern of such behavior by a school employee that does not have an educational purpose. Which results in abuse of the staff/student professional relationship.

## Unacceptable Conduct

Examples of inappropriate boundary invasions by staff members include but are not limited to the following:

- Any type of inappropriate physical contact with a student or any other conduct that might be considered harassment under the Board's policy on Harassment and Sexual Harassment of students;
- Showing pornography to a student;
- Singling out a particular student or students for personal attention and friendship beyond the professional staff-student relationship;
- Socializing where students are consuming alcohol, drugs or tobacco,
- For non-guidance/counseling staff, encouraging students to confide their personal or family problems and/or relationships. If a student initiates such discussions, staff members are expected to refer the student to appropriate guidance/counseling staff. In either case, staff involvement should be limited to a direct connection to the student's school performance;
- Sending students on personal errands unrelated to any educational purpose;
- Banter, allusions, jokes or innuendos of a sexual nature with students;
- Disclosing personal, sexual, family, employment concerns, or other private matters to one or more students;
- Addressing students, or permitting students to address staff members with personalized terms of endearment, pet names, or otherwise in an overly familiar manner;
- Maintaining personal contact with a student outside of school by phone, e-mail, Instant Messenger or Internet chat rooms, social networking Web sites, or letters (beyond homework or other legitimate school business) without including the parent/guardian.
- Exchanging personal gifts, cards or letters with an individual student;
- Socializing or spending time with students (including but not limited to activities such as going out for beverages, meals or movies, shopping, traveling, and recreational activities) outside of school-sponsored events, except as participants in organized community activities;
- Giving a student a ride alone in a vehicle in a non-emergency situation; and/or
- Unnecessarily invading a student's privacy, (e.g. walking in on the student in the bathroom)

# NETWORK USE GUIDELINES

Use of the District's electronic communications system and Internet by staff of Sunnyside School District shall be in support of education, the mission of the District, or school related business and operations. Network use is limited to staff who have returned signed network contracts. Use will be in accordance with the District's Policy and Procedure 2022 on Electronic Communication Systems and Internet Safety.

## **Acceptable network use by district students and staff includes:**

1. Creation of files, projects, videos, web pages and podcasts using network resources in support of educational research;
2. Participation in blogs, wikis, social networking sites and groups and the creation of content for podcasts, e-mail and web pages that support educational research;
3. The online publication of original educational material, curriculum related materials and student work. Sources outside the classroom or school must be cited appropriately;
4. Staff use of the network for incidental personal use in accordance with all district policies and guidelines;
5. Students are responsible for their ethical and educational use of the technology resources of the Sunnyside School District.

## **Unacceptable network use by district students and staff includes but is not limited to:**

1. Any use of the District network for personal gain, commercial solicitation and compensation of any kind;
2. Any deliberate or intentional use of District technology that causes liability or costs incurred by the district including but not limited to: malware, ransomware or viruses that spread through the district network.
3. Downloading, installing and use of games, audio files, video files, games or other applications (including shareware or freeware) without permission or approval from the technology director or designee; Support or opposition for ballot measures, candidates and any other political activity;
4. Hacking, cracking, vandalizing, the introduction of viruses or malware and changes to hardware, software and monitoring tools or attempts to circumvent district monitoring tools;
5. Unauthorized access to other district computers, networks and information systems;
6. Cyberbullying, hate mail, defamation, harassment of any kind, discriminatory jokes and remarks;
7. Information posted, sent or stored online that could endanger others (e.g., bomb construction, drug manufacturing);
8. Accessing, uploading, downloading, storage and distribution of obscene, pornographic or sexually explicit material;
9. Transmission of any material that is in violation of any federal or state law is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to the following: confidential information, copyrighted material, threatening or obscene material, and computer viruses.
10. Any attempt to alter data, the configuration of a computer, or the files of another user, without the consent of the individual, campus administrator, or technology administrator, will be considered an act of vandalism and subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the student handbook and other applicable school policies.
11. Logging in to the system using another user's account or password.
12. Leaving an account open or unattended.
13. Violating any local, state, or federal regulation or statute.

**You will receive an electronic form from InformedK12 acknowledging your review and understanding of this handbook and your willingness to abide by the policies, procedures and guidelines outlined. The form must be received by the Human Resources Department no later than Sept. 8, 2023.**



Thank you for taking the time to read through this employee handbook. Any questions or concerns with the contents can be addressed to your immediate supervisor, or the Human Resources Department. This handbook is only a brief summary of the benefits and expectations for employees at the Sunnyside School District. These guidelines are designed to create a positive, safe and productive place to work and learn. If you are an employee who is represented by a union, the contents of the current bargaining contract will also apply to you. The policies and procedures referenced in the handbook have not been reproduced in their entirety. Complete policies are also available on our website: [www.sunnysideschools.org](http://www.sunnysideschools.org)

