

Harassment of Students

Section A - Introduction

It is the policy of the Board of Education to foster an environment that maximizes student learning, and a climate of civility among students in the district. Harassment by any student or employee of any student for whatever reason is inimical to the environment and climate desired by the Board and therefore will not be permitted.

No person, including a district employee, agent, or student, shall harass another student based upon a person's sex, color, race, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual or gender orientation, other legally protected group status, viewpoint or opinion, or, pertaining to students, based upon their academic status, activities, or affiliations.

Section B – Jurisdiction

The provisions of this policy shall be in force:

1. In any physical area attendant to school- or District-sponsored or related activities, whether or not such area is on school or District property (including but not limited to, school and District buildings, lands, and offices), or at any school-sponsored or related activities, performances, extracurricular or athletic events, or school-sponsored travel at other venues; and
2. On means of school-supplied or sanctioned transportation to or from any of the places noted in Section B.1. above; and
3. With respect to activities or events at other locations, including online, if the administration determines that the incident bears a nexus (i.e. impact or connection) to the school or safety at school, or disrupts the educational environment.

In addition to the above jurisdiction, the administration is authorized to establish a Code of Conduct that imposes progressive loss of privileges by reason of any conduct by a student in violation of this policy wherever the conduct or event occurs. Students who participate in extracurricular activities such as interscholastic athletic, drama, fine arts and other competitions or who participate in clubs and activities are representatives of our schools, and as such are expected to conform their behavior to this policy as a condition to continued enjoyment of these privileges.

Section C - Definition of Harassment

Harassment is defined as any unwelcome and personally offensive conduct (including, but not limited to, advances, gestures, or words of a sexual, intimidating, or threatening nature) which:

1. Unreasonably interferes with an individual's performance; or
2. Creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment; or
3. Denigrates the reputation of the individual or school district; or
4. Implies that submission to, or rejection of, such conduct will be used as a basis for decision-making affecting the individual.

Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to, name calling, using derogatory slurs, wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred, ridicule, or prejudice with respect to one of the characteristics or protected classes stated in Section A. For instances involving sexual harassment, see Board Policy 2:265 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure.

Section D - Complaint Procedure

All reports of violations of this policy will be processed in accordance with Board Policy 2:260 - Uniform Grievance. Sexual Harassment complaints will be processed through Board Policy 2:265 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure.

Section E - Education and Information Program

1. The superintendent is directed to develop and implement an education and information program for all students and employees that shall be intended to familiarize students and employees with the contents of this policy and the prevention of harassment within the district.
2. As part of the education and information program, the subject of harassment and its prevention shall be included in the curriculum of the district's required health education course.
3. The superintendent is directed to publish this policy in the district's policy manual and student and employee handbooks.
4. The district website shall include the names of the designated school and district harassment complaint coordinators.

Section F - Disciplinary Action

1. A student who violates the terms of this policy shall be considered guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct and shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Board Policy Procedures 7:191 - Disciplinary Action Relative to Student Misconduct.
2. An employee or agent who violates the terms of this policy shall be considered guilty of misconduct and in violation of Board Policy and Procedures 5:120 - Employee Ethics and Conduct.
3. The superintendent, or designee, shall be informed by the building and district complaint coordinators of any activity that may constitute criminal conduct, and if the superintendent, or designee, concurs that such conduct may constitute criminal conduct, the superintendent shall report that conduct to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

Section G - Responsibilities of District Employees

All district employees who receive complaints of harassment from students or staff members are required to notify the building complaint coordinator regarding such complaints.

Section H - Miscellaneous

1. False Reports. Any individual who makes a report of alleged harassment that is later found upon investigation to be completely lacking credible evidence, shall be subject to disciplinary measures under the provisions of this policy.
2. Confidentiality. The rights of confidentiality of both the complainant and the respondent shall be respected consistent with the district's legal obligations, with the necessity to investigate allegations, and to take corrective action. In all cases, however, only those individuals who have a "need to know" shall be provided only that information required by the investigation and corrective action, or required by the individual's professional responsibilities.
3. Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. The district shall report instances of sexual harassment of students who are under eighteen years of age to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, under circumstances required by the provisions of the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.
4. Status of Complainant. Filing of a harassment complaint, except in those complaints found upon investigation to be completely lacking credible

evidence, shall not adversely affect the employment status of an employee filing the complaint, or the student status of a student filing a complaint.

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