

Personnel

SUBJECT: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL DISTRICT PERSONNEL

The Board of Education of the North Tonawanda City School District is committed to promoting an atmosphere of mutual respect and professionalism. This policy applies to all District staff, and is intended to include employees, Board of Education members, volunteers, visitors, students and supplemental staff employed through contract agencies.

All District staff are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate, responsible, and safe manner while on District property, and when representing the District at functions conducted off the premises. Students and staff have a right to an environment that is free of harassment, intimidation, or discrimination, and which promotes the educational mission of the District. This policy defines guidelines for behavior and conduct, by providing uniform expectations for all individuals involved in the daily operations of the District.

Definition

Harassment means:

- a) Any verbal or physical conduct that shows hostility towards an individual, that has the purpose or effect of:
 - 1. Creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment; causing another employee, contracted staff member or visitor embarrassment, loss of dignity or feelings of intimidation;
 - 2. Unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance;
 - 3. Adversely affecting an individual's employment opportunities without justification, or;
 - 4. Showing hostility or negativity toward that of his/her relatives, friends, or associates.
- b) Regarding sexual harassment, refer to Policy #6121 for detailed information.

Policy

General guidelines applicable to all District staff are:

- a) Students, visitors and staff will be treated with dignity and courtesy. The staff may not mistreat or intimidate other individuals physically or verbally.
- b) Physical violence will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to fighting, pushing or roughhousing.

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- c) All staff will speak in tones that are appropriate to a professional environment. Obscene and/or profane language is not acceptable. Raised voices are not acceptable in public or other work areas unless necessitated by an emergency situation.
- d) All staff are expected to demonstrate a courteous, positive and helpful demeanor when communicating with students, visitors, staff and the public in all of their verbal and written communications. If an employee cannot answer a question, he/she is to refer the individual to an office or individual who can help.
- e) All relationships among persons in the District should be business-like and free of bias, prejudice and harassment.
- f) All staff members are required to cooperate completely with legitimate investigations that may be conducted by regulatory bodies, law enforcement agencies and those authorized by the Board of Education. Information provided by employees during such investigations must be truthful and complete.

Reporting

Any individual who feels they have been subjected to harassment by any District employee, Board member, volunteer, student or contractor should:

- a) Directly inform the person engaging in the misconduct that the conduct or communication is offensive and/or intimidating and must stop, and/or
- b) Contact the building administrator for assistance, and/or
- c) If the previous steps have not resulted in immediate action to address the complaint, contact the District Complaint Officer to discuss filing a formal written complaint.
- d) Upon receipt of the formal complaint, the District will conduct a thorough investigation. All complaints will be treated as confidentially as possible, however, disclosure may be necessary to complete the investigation, and will be provided on a "need to know" basis.

Violations

Any findings of harassment or behavior constituting harassment or violation of this policy at the sole discretion of the District will be addressed through the corrective counseling and/or progressive discipline process in accordance with the collective bargaining agreements, New York State Civil Service Law or New York State Education Law, if applicable.

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SUBJECT: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL DISTRICT PERSONNEL (Cont'd.)**Retaliation**

It is expressly against District policy to retaliate against a person for filing either an informal or formal good-faith complaint of harassment, or other forms of discriminatory harassment, or for cooperating with an investigation of a complaint of such alleged harassment.

Distribution

A copy of this policy and its accompanying regulations will be available upon request and may be posted at various locations in each school building, as well as published in appropriate school publications such as teacher/employee handbooks.