

Procedures for Implementing Board Policy: Harassment - Students

Section A - Introduction

It is the policy of the Board of Education of District #225 to prohibit harassment of any student for whatever reason. The Board has directed the superintendent to develop implementation procedures consistent with the Board's policy, which will be included in the student/parent handbooks. The procedures are outlined below.

Section B - Harassment Complaint Coordinators

Each school principal shall appoint two school harassment complaint coordinators, one of each sex. The school principals shall notify all employees, parents, and students of the names of the school harassment complaint coordinators.

The superintendent shall appoint two district harassment complaint coordinators, one of each sex. The superintendent shall notify all employees, parents, and students of the district of the names of the district harassment complaint coordinators.

At the superintendent's discretion, an independent harassment complaint coordinator may be appointed on an "as needed" basis, having jurisdiction as designated by the superintendent.

Section C - Complaint Procedures

Level 1 - Initial Complaints

1. Any student who alleges harassment, or any third person with knowledge of conduct which may constitute harassment, should report the alleged harassment promptly to one of the harassment complaint coordinators or an administrator at the building where the alleged harassment occurs. However, complainants may report an incident to any complaint coordinator or to any district administrator. As a general rule, complaints involving harassment among students will be referred by the complaint coordinator to dean's office personnel, and complaints involving harassment between a student and an employee will be referred to the building complaint coordinator.
2. The complaint coordinator or dean will require that the complaint be placed in writing. If the report is presented orally, the complaint coordinator or dean shall prepare a written report based on the complainant's oral report, which shall be signed by the complainant. A report alleging harassment should contain the following elements:
 - a. Names of individuals involved in the incident(s) including the names of any witnesses.
 - b. Date, time, and location of incident.
 - c. Description of the incident.
 - d. Submission date of the incident report.
3. If a dean receives the complaint, a copy will be forwarded to the building complaint coordinator.
4. The complaint coordinator or dean will attempt to resolve the complaint without resorting to the Level 2 procedures. The resolution of student complaints may include the use of peer mediation, discussion, investigation, referral to guidance counselors, social workers, police liaison officer, parents and/or community agencies. Prior to the final

resolution of the complaint, the dean and the building complaint coordinator will confer regarding the proposed resolution.

5. A complaint will only be deemed resolved if both complainant and respondent have signed a statement to the effect that the complaint has been resolved to their respective satisfactions.
6. If the complaint is resolved, a written summary of the resolution will be created and maintained by the building complaint coordinator. If handled by the dean, a copy will be forwarded to the building complaint coordinator.

Level 2 - Unresolved Complaints

1. The Dean's Office shall refer unresolved student complaints to a building coordinator. For unresolved Level 1 complaints, the complaint coordinator shall promptly begin a formal investigation to determine the validity and severity of the allegations. The complaint coordinator shall interview the individual filing the complaint, the individual being accused of harassment, and may interview other individuals having knowledge of the alleged harassment. The complaint coordinator shall keep written notes of the interviews.
2. As part of the investigation process, the complaint coordinator may consult with other members of the faculty or staff (to the extent that they may have relevant information), including the dean of students, the principal, the Director of Human Resources, the superintendent, and the school board attorney, as necessitated by the circumstances or severity of the allegations.
3. The complaint coordinator shall attempt to complete the investigation and inform the complainant of the coordinator's findings and recommendations for resolution within ten working days of receipt of the complaint.
4. The complaint coordinator shall provide a written response to the complainant of the disposition of the case and forward a copy to the district coordinator. A copy of same will be forwarded to the superintendent.

Section D - Appeal to a District Harassment Complaint Coordinator

If the complainant and/or respondent is not satisfied with the response from the school complaint coordinator, the complainant or respondent may file a written appeal to one of the district's complaint coordinators within ten working days of receipt of the response from the school complaint coordinator. If the district complaint coordinator is handling the case, the matter will be appealed to an independent complaint coordinator designated by the superintendent.

The complaint coordinator conducting the appeal shall conduct a hearing within ten working days after receipt of the notice of appeal at which time the complainant and respondent shall be given an opportunity to present testimony and documents relevant to the complaint. Detailed minutes of the hearing shall be maintained. The district complaint coordinator or independent complaint coordinator, if appointed, shall provide a written response to the complainant and respondent within fifteen working days following the completion of the hearing. The Board of Education shall be provided a copy of the written response and relevant supporting documentation.

The Board of Education may, at its discretion, bypass the complaint coordinator's appeal hearing and have the appeal brought directly to the Board or its appointed hearing officer for a hearing.

Upon a hearing, the Board of Education shall take such action as it deems appropriate.

Section E - Appeal to Board of Education

If the complainant or respondent is not satisfied with the district complaint coordinator's decision, or if the coordinator fails to provide the complainant and respondent with a written decision within the time limits specified in Section D above, the complainant or respondent may file a written appeal with the Board of Education.

The complainant or respondent must file a written appeal within ten working days of the receipt of the district complaint coordinator's or independent complaint coordinator's decision.

The Board may, at its discretion, convene a hearing to hear testimony regarding the complaint, or appoint a hearing officer to so act.

Within thirty working days of the filing of the appeal, or, in the case of a hearing officer, thirty working days from the receipt of the report, the Board shall provide the complainant and respondent with a written decision.

Upon a hearing, the Board of Education shall take such action as it deems appropriate.

Section F - Appeal to the Superintendent to the Educational Service Region

If the complainant is a student and the complainant or respondent is not satisfied with the final disposition of the complaint by the Board of Education, or if the Board fails to issue a timely decision, the complainant or respondent may appeal the decision to the superintendent of the Educational Service Region pursuant to Section 3-10 of the School Code. (105 ILCS 5/3-10)

Section G - Appeal to the State Superintendent of Education

If the complainant is a student and the complainant or respondent is not satisfied with the disposition of the complaint by the superintendent of the Educational Service Region, the complainant or respondent may appeal the decision to the state superintendent of education pursuant to Section 2-3.8 of the School Code. (105 ILCS 5/2-3.8)

Section H - Miscellaneous

Nothing in these procedures are intended to deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of relief as may be provided for in various state and federal statutes regarding harassment.

Section I - Harassment Complaint Coordinators and Dean's Office Personnel

The school administration will publish the names and office phone numbers of the designated harassment complaint coordinators and the Dean's office personnel at start of each school year. These names will be published in the Student/Parent Handbook and posted for access by students and employees.

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