



# **Policy on Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation; Response Procedures**

## *(In compliance with 105 ILCS 5/22-95)*

This policy establishes the commitment of Near North Montessori, an independent, nonpublic, nonsectarian school ("School"), to maintain an educational and work environment free from discrimination, harassment, and retaliation based on race, color, and national origin. This policy may be included within a broader anti-discrimination framework but is clearly designated in accordance with applicable law.

### **Prohibited Conduct**

The School strictly prohibits:

- **Discrimination** based on race, color, or national origin, including unequal treatment in admissions (where applicable), academic programs, discipline, employment, or access to School resources and activities.
- **Harassment** based on race, color, or national origin, including but not limited to:
  - Racial slurs, epithets, or derogatory comments
  - Offensive jokes or verbal abuse
  - Display or distribution of racially offensive materials
  - Physical intimidation, exclusion, or threats motivated by race, color, or national origin
- **Retaliation** against any individual for reporting a concern, filing a complaint, participating in an investigation, or assisting in the complaint process

### **Complaint Reporting Process**

The School maintains an internal process for reporting concerns or complaints regarding violations of this policy:

- Complaints may be made verbally or in writing to the Head of School, Division Director, Human Resources, or another designated administrator.
- The School will take reasonable steps to reduce or remove barriers to reporting, including providing multiple reporting options and, where appropriate, language support.
- Individuals reporting concerns may be accompanied by a support person of their choice, provided the individual complies with School policies.



- Anonymous reports are permitted; however, formal disciplinary action will not be based solely on anonymous information.

### **Investigation and Response Procedures**

- Reports will be addressed promptly and reviewed in a thorough, fair, and impartial manner.
- The School may offer, but will not require or unduly influence, an individual to pursue informal or direct resolution with the other party.
- Based on the findings, the School will determine appropriate remedial or disciplinary action on a case-by-case basis.
- The School will take steps to ensure that individuals who report concerns or participate in an investigation do not suffer adverse consequences as a result.

### **Prevention and Response Program**

The School maintains a prevention and response program designed to support a respectful and inclusive environment. This includes:

- Training for employees on recognizing, preventing, and responding to discrimination and harassment
- Age-appropriate education for students regarding respectful conduct and reporting options
- Ongoing review of School climate and response practices

### **Remedies and Corrective Actions**

If a violation of this policy is found, the School may implement appropriate remedies, which may include:

- Counseling or support services
- Educational or restorative interventions
- Disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion, or termination of employment
- Policy, supervision, or procedural changes to prevent recurrence

### **Anti-Retaliation Protection**

Retaliation is strictly prohibited. The School will take appropriate action against any individual who engages in retaliation. Protection against retaliation does not exempt any individual from accountability for separate misconduct unrelated to the reporting or investigation process.

### **External Legal Recourse**



If the School does not adequately address a reported concern, individuals may seek assistance or file a charge with external agencies, including:

- The Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR)
- Federal agencies such as the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights

**Illinois Department of Human Rights Contact Information:**

Website: <https://dhr.illinois.gov>

Phone: (312) 814-6200

**Posting and Distribution**

This policy will be:

- Posted in a prominent and accessible location within the School
- Published on the School's website and employee intranet, if available
- Distributed to all employees annually, beginning with the 2025-2026 school year

**Student and Parent Notification**

- This policy will be included in the student handbook.
- A summary of the policy will be provided annually to students and parents or guardians.
- The summary will be written in accessible, age-appropriate language and translated into the native language of parents or guardians, as needed.

**Review and Implementation**

The School will review this policy annually and revise it as necessary to ensure compliance with applicable law and alignment with best practices.