CIVIL RIGHTS POLICY

District complies with the Civil Rights Laws (Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) in assuring the students, parents, and employees of District that District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, religion, age, or veteran status. For complaints of sexual harassment, refer to District policy BH. The Superintendent is designated by the Board to coordinate District's efforts to comply with this assurance.

I. Definitions:

a. Complaint: A written complaint alleging that a policy, procedure, or practice of District discriminates on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, religion, age, or veteran status.

b. Complainant: A student, an employee, or any other person who submits a Complaint as defined above.

c. Compliance Officer: An employee designated to coordinate compliance efforts with the Civil Rights Laws listed above and to investigate complaints. Compliance Officers for students are a male and female program director appointed annually by the Board of Education and the Compliance Officer for staff is the Human Resources Director. Any of these Compliance Officers may be reached at 2610 Sam Noble Parkway, Ardmore, OK 7340, by telephone at (580) 223-2070, or by email at titleixcoord@sotech.edu or 504coord@sotech.edu.

d. Day: Day means a working day; the calculation of days in processing a complaint shall exclude Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

e. Respondent: The person alleged to be responsible for the violation alleged in the Complaint. The term may be used to designate persons with responsibility for a particular action or those persons with supervisory responsibility for procedures and policies in those areas covered in the Complaint.

II. Pre-filing Procedures:

Prior to the filing of a written complaint, the Complainant is encouraged to visit with the Compliance Officer and to make a reasonable effort to informally resolve the problem or complaint.

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III. Procedures for Filing Complaint:

A. If the Complainant desires to proceed with a Complaint, then, within ten (10) days of an alleged violation, the Complainant shall submit a written and signed Complaint to the Compliance Officer. The Complaint shall, at a minimum, state the Complainant's name, the nature of the alleged violation, the date of the alleged violation, the names of persons responsible, any witnesses, and the requested action or relief sought.

B. In addition to taking action with respect to a written complaint, the Compliance Officer may investigate allegations of discrimination without a written complaint according to the procedures set forth herein whenever the Compliance Officer deems such action to be appropriate.

C. Within ten (10) days of receiving the Complaint, the Compliance Officer shall notify the Respondent of the Complaint and provide a copy of the Complaint to the Superintendent, if the Superintendent is not the Respondent.

D. Within ten (10) days of notification, the Respondent shall submit to the Compliance Officer a written answer or response which shall confirm or deny the facts upon which the allegation is based, indicate acceptance or rejection of the Complainant's requested action, and/or outline alternatives. The Respondent may also identify witnesses who should be contacted to provide input during the investigation.

E. Within ten (10) days of receiving the Respondent's answer, the Compliance Officer shall initiate an appropriate investigation which may include, but is not limited to, interviewing both the Complainant and the Respondent and any witnesses identified by either party, identifying any documents or tangible evidence supporting or opposing the Complaint, and undertaking any further investigation deemed appropriate by the Compliance Officer. The investigation should be concluded within one hundred twenty (120) days, but the Compliance Officer may extend the period of time for an investigation by notifying the Complainant and the Respondent.

F. Within ten (10) days after completion of the investigation, the Compliance Officer shall render a written decision and shall provide a copy of the written decision to both the Complainant and the Respondent. The written decision shall be a summary report containing a synopsis of the evidence and findings of fact as well as the conclusion regarding the Complaint. Additionally, if the Compliance Officer determines that the allegations of the Complaint are substantiated, the decision shall be provided to the appropriate supervisor or administrator to take appropriate disciplinary action.

G. Within ten (10) days of receipt of the Compliance Officer's decision, if either the Complainant or the Respondent is not satisfied with the decision of the Compliance Officer, either may submit a written request to the Compliance Officer for a review by the Board.

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H. Within ten (10) days of receiving a request for a review by the Board, the Compliance Officer shall notify the Board of the request, shall place an agenda item for a review of the Complaint on the next regularly scheduled Board meeting, and shall notify the Complainant and the Respondent of the date of the Board's review.

I. The review by the Board shall involve a review of all documents submitted to the Compliance Officer and, if the Board desires, a statement from the Complainant or the Respondent or the representatives of either the Complainant or the Respondent. The Board shall render a decision which either modifies, affirms, or reverses the decision of the Compliance Officer.

J. Within ten (10) days of conducting the review, the Board or the Board's designee shall provide the Complainant and the Respondent with written notice of the Board's decision on the Complaint. The Board's decision shall be final and non-appealable.

IV. Extension of Time: Except as otherwise provided, any time limits established by this policy and these procedures may be extended by mutual consent of the parties involved.

V. Confidentiality of Records: All records, complaints, notes, documents, and statements made during or relating to allegations of discrimination shall be maintained on a confidential basis by the Compliance Officer, and no information concerning any Complaint shall be documented in an employee's personnel file. However, in the event official proceedings relating to such allegations are initiated by a party or District, such records may become public in accordance with law. District shall maintain information pertaining to Complaints under this policy for three (3) years after completion of the investigation.

VI. Discipline: The Compliance Officer may recommend to the appropriate supervisory personnel that students or employees who are found to have engaged in discrimination in violation of District's policies prohibiting discrimination be disciplined. An employee may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination or non-reemployment. A student may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension.

VII. Retaliation: No person shall take any retaliatory action against a Complainant or any person who participated in the investigation of alleged discrimination. Employees or students who engage in prohibited retaliation may be disciplined as set forth above.

Adopted: 7-1-98
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1-12-07
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Policy