NONDISCRIMINATION - SPECIAL UPDATE - POLICIES - FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION/APPROVAL

po2260

Special Update - Nondiscrimination - July 2026 Revised NONDISCRIMINATION AND ACCESS TO EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

ADOPTED Dec 15, 2005 · REVISED Sep 1, 2022

2260- **NONDISCRIMINATION AND ACCESS TO EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

The Board is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students in the District.

~~**[DRAFTING NOTE: Wisconsin and Federal law applicable to Wisconsin includes the concepts of gender identity and gender stereotypes/nonconformance within the definition of "sex". Whether the language is included expressly in policy or not, Districts are still required to investigate complaints alleging discriminatory treatment on the basis of gender identity and to remedy violations.]**~~

The Board does not discriminate on the basis of - sex ~~(including gender identity or gender stereotypes/nonconformance) - (-) [END OF OPTION]~~ , age, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability (Protected Classes) or any other characteristic protected by Federal or State civil rights laws ~~race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, sex, (including gender status, change of sex or gender identity), or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability (Protected Classes)~~ in any of its student program and activities. This policy is intended to support and promote nondiscriminatory practices in all District and school activities, particularly in the following areas:

1. use of objective bases for admission to any school, class, program, or activity;

2. prohibition of harassment towards students and procedures for the investigation of claims (see Policy 5517 - Student Anti-Harassment);

A. use of disciplinary authority, including suspension and expulsion authority;

B. administration of gifts, bequests, scholarships and other aids, benefits, or services to students from private agencies, organizations, or persons;

C. selection of instructional and library media materials in a nondiscriminatory manner and that reflect the cultural diversity and pluralistic nature of American society;

D. design and implementation of student evaluation practices, materials, and tools, but not at the exclusion of implementing techniques to meet students' individual needs;

E. design and configuration of facilities;

F. opportunity for participation in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities provided that separate programs for male and female students may be available provided comparable activities are made available to all in terms of type, scope, and District support; and

G. the school lunch program and other school-sponsored food service programs.

The Board is also committed to equal employment opportunity in its employment policies and practices as they relate to students. The Board's policies pertaining to employment practices can be found in Policy 1422, Policy 3122, and Policy 4122 - Nondiscrimination, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Anti-Harassment ~~Nondiscrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity~~ .

The District will identify, evaluate, and provide a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities who are determined eligible for special education and related services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504).

The District's educational programs include the academic and nonacademic setting. Each qualified student with a disability shall be educated with students without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate. In the nonacademic setting, a student with a disability shall participate with students without disabilities to the maximum extent appropriate.

Notice of the Board's policy on nondiscrimination and the identity of the District's Compliance Officer(s) (see below) will be published on the District's website, posted throughout the District, and included in the District's recruitment statements or general information publications.

Principal's Responsibilities

Each Principal shall verify that the procedures used with students and parents for selection of and participation in any part of the District's academic, co-curricular, or extra-curricular programs do not discriminate on the basis of the Protected Classes.

District Administrator's Responsibilities

In furtherance of the aforesaid goal, the District Administrator or designee shall:

A. Curriculum Content

1. review current and proposed courses of study and textbooks to detect any bias based upon the Protected Classes ascertaining whether or not supplemental materials, singly or taken as a whole, fairly depict those Protected Classestoward the development of human society;

2. provide that necessary programs are available for students with limited use of the English language;

B. Staff Training

develop an ongoing program of staff training and in-service training for school personnel designed to identify and solve problems of bias based upon the Protected Classes in all aspects of the program;

C. Student Access

1. review current and proposed programs, activities, facilities, and practices to ensure that all students have equal access thereto and are not segregated on the basis of the Protected Classes in any duty, work, play, classroom, or school practice, except as may be permitted under State regulations;

2. verify that facilities are made available in a non-discriminatory fashion, in accordance with Board Policy 7510 - Use of District Facilities, for non-curricular student activities that are initiated by parents or other members of the community, including but not limited to any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America or any other youth group listed in Title 36 of the United States Code as a patriotic society;

3. verify that the educational programs of this District are accessible to all students;

   All programs need to be designed and scheduled so the location or nature of the facility or area will not deny an otherwise qualified student with a disability the opportunity to participate in the academic or other school programs on the same basis as students without disabilities to the extent required by law.

4. require that service animals for students who require this type of assistance shall be permitted access to all facilities, programs, and events of the District.

D. District Support

require that like aspects of the District program receive like support as to staff size and compensation, purchase and maintenance of facilities and equipment, access to such facilities and equipment, and related matters;

E. Student Evaluation

verify that tests, procedures, and guidance and counseling materials, which are designed to evaluate student progress, rate aptitudes, analyze personality, or in any manner establish or tend to establish a category by which a student may be judged, are not differentiated or stereotyped on the basis of the Protected Classes.

Definitions

Words used in this policy shall have those meanings defined herein; words not defined herein shall be construed according to their plain and ordinary meanings.

Complainant: is the individual who alleges, or is alleged, to have been subjected to discrimination/retaliation, regardless of whether the person files a formal complaint or is pursuing an informal resolution to the alleged discrimination/retaliation.

Day(s): Unless expressly stated otherwise, the term “day” or “days” as used in this policy means business day(s) (i.e., a day(s) that the District office is open for normal operating hours, Monday – Friday, excluding State-recognized holidays).

Respondent: is the individual who has been alleged to have engaged in discrimination/retaliation, regardless of whether the Reporting Party files a formal complaint or is seeking an informal resolution to the alleged discrimination/retaliation.

School District community: means students and Board employees (i.e., administrators, and professional and support staff), as well as Board members, agents, volunteers, contractors, or other persons subject to the control and supervision of the Board.

Third Parties: include, but are not limited to, guests and/or visitors on School District property (e.g., visiting speakers, participants on opposing athletic teams, parents), vendors doing business with, or seeking to do business with, the Board, and other individuals who come in contact with members of the School District community at school-related events/activities (whether on or off District property).

The District Administrator shall publicize the name of the compliance officer(s) who is/are responsible for coordinating the District's efforts to comply with the applicable Federal and State laws and regulations, including the District's duty to address in a prompt and equitable manner any inquiries or complaints regarding discrimination or equal access. The Compliance Officer(s) also verify that proper notice of nondiscrimination for Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended), Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of

1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended), is provided to students, their parents, staff members, and the general public.

The District Administrator shall attempt annually to identify children with disabilities, ages 3 -21, who reside in the District but do not receive a public education.

In addition, the District Administrator shall establish procedures to identify students who are Limited English Proficient, including immigrant children and youth, to assess their ability to participate in District programs and develop and administer a program that meets the English language and academic needs of these students. This program shall include procedures for student placement, services, evaluation, and exit guidelines and shall be designed to provide students with effective instruction that leads to academic achievement and timely acquisition of proficiency in English. As a part of this program, the District will evaluate the progress of students in achieving English language proficiency in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing, on an annual basis.

Reporting Procedures

Students and District employees are required, and all other members of the District community and Third Parties are encouraged to promptly report suspected violations of this policy to an administrator, supervisor, or other District official so that the Board may address the conduct. Any teacher, administrator, supervisor, or other District employee or official who receives such a complaint shall file it with the District's Compliance Officer within two (2) days.

Members of the District community, which includes students or Third Parties, who believe they have been discriminated/retaliated against are entitled to utilize the complaint process set forth below. Initiating a complaint, whether formally or informally, will not adversely affect the Complainant's employment or participation in educational or extra-curricular programs. While there are no time limits for initiating complaints under this policy, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint as soon as possible after the conduct occurs, while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available.

If, during an investigation of alleged bullying, aggressive behavior, and/or harassment in accordance with Policy 5517.01 - Bullying, the Principal believes that the reported misconduct may constitute discrimination based on a Protected Class under this policy, the Principal shall report the act to one of the COs, who shall investigate the allegation in accordance with this policy. While the CO investigates the allegation, the Principal shall suspend the Policy 5517.01 investigation to await the CO's written report. The CO shall keep the Principal informed of the status of the Policy 2260 - Nondiscrimination and Access to Equal Educational Opportunit investigation and provide the Principal with a copy of the resulting written report. A complaint that is covered by Policy 2266 - Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities shall be reported and investigated pursuant to that policy.

The COs will be available during regular school/work hours to discuss concerns related to discrimination/retaliation. The COs shall accept reports of discrimination/retaliation directly from any member of the District community or a Third Party and reports that initially are made to another District employee. Upon receipt of a report of alleged discrimination/retaliation, the CO will contact the Complainant and begin either an informal or formal complaint process (depending on the Complainant's request and the nature of the alleged discrimination/retaliation) or designate a specific individual to conduct such a process.

The CO will provide a copy of this policy to the Complainant and the Respondent. In the case of a formal complaint, the CO will prepare recommendations for the District Administrator or oversee the preparation of such recommendations by a designee.

Any District employee who directly observes discrimination/retaliation of a student is obligated, in accordance with this policy, to report such observations to one (1) of the COs within two (2) days. Additionally, any District employee who observes an act of discrimination/retaliation is expected to intervene to stop the misconduct unless circumstances make such an intervention dangerous, in which case the staff member should immediately notify other District employees and/or local law enforcement officials, as necessary, to stop the misconduct. Thereafter, the CO/designee must contact the Complainant if age eighteen (18) or older, or the Complainant's parents/guardians if the student is under the age of eighteen (18) within two (2) days to advise of the Board's intent to investigate the alleged wrongdoing.

District Compliance Officers (hereinafter referred to as the COs)

The Board designates the following individuals to serve as the District's COs:

~~Dr. Paul Skofronick~~
~~Director of Pupil Services~~
~~608-374-7007~~
~~1310 Townline Rd.~~
~~Tomah, WI 54660~~
~~paulskofronick@tomah.k12.wi.us~~

Jeff Adams
Director of Multi-Level Systems and Support/RKLC Principal
608-374-7007
129 W. Clifton St.

608-374-7004
Tomah, WI 54660
jeffreyAdams@tomah.education

Ms. Angela Plueger
Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
608-374-7022
129 W. Clifton St.
Tomah, WI 54660
angelaplueger@tomah.education

The names, titles, and contact information of these individuals will be published annually on the School District's website and on each individual school's website.

A CO will be available during regular school/work hours to discuss concerns related to student discrimination in educational opportunities under this policy.

Investigation and Complaint Procedure

The CO shall investigate any complaints brought under this policy. Throughout the course of the process as described herein, the CO should keep the parties reasonably informed of the status of the investigation and the decision-making process.

In cases where no District CO is able to investigate a complaint due to concerns regarding conflicts, bias or partiality, or for other reasons that impair the CO's ability to conduct an investigation, the CO may in consultation with the District Administrator or Board President, if the matter involves the District Administrator, engage outside legal counsel to conduct the investigation consistent with this policy.

All complaints must include the following information to the extent known: a description of the alleged violation, the identity of the Respondent; a detailed description of the facts upon which the complaint is based (i.e., when, where, and what occurred); a list of potential witnesses; and the resolution sought by the Complainant.

If the Complainant is unwilling or unable to provide a written statement including the information set forth above, the CO shall ask for such details in an oral interview. Thereafter the CO will prepare a written summary of the oral interview, and the Complainant will be asked to verify the accuracy of the reported charge by signing the document.

Upon receiving a complaint, the CO will consider whether any action should be taken during the investigatory phase to protect the Complainant from further loss of educational opportunity, including, but not limited to, a change of work assignment or class schedule for the Complainant, tentative enrollment in a program, or other appropriate action. In making such a determination, the CO should consult the Complainant to assess whether

the individual agrees with the proposed action. If the Complainant is unwilling to consent to the proposed change, the CO still may take whatever actions are deemed appropriate in consultation with the District Administrator.

As soon as appropriate in the investigation process, the CO will inform the Respondent, that a complaint has been received. The person(s) must also be provided an opportunity to respond to the complaint.

All investigations shall be commenced as soon as practicable upon receipt of a complaint and concluded as expeditiously as feasible, in consideration of the circumstances, while taking measures to complete a thorough investigation. The Complainant shall be notified in writing of receipt of the complaint within forty-five (45) days of the complaint and shall reach a determination concerning the complaint within ninety (90) days of receipt unless additional time is agreed to by the Complainant.

The investigation will generally include:

A. interviews with the Complainant;

B. interviews with the Respondent;

C. interviews with any other witnesses who reasonably may be expected to have any information relevant to the allegations, as determined by the CO;

D. consideration of any documentation or other evidence presented by the Complainant, Respondent, or any other witness which is reasonably believed to be relevant to the allegations, as determined by the CO.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the CO or designee shall prepare and deliver a written report to the District Administrator which summarizes the evidence gathered during the investigation and provides recommendations based on the evidence and the definitions in this Policy, as well as in State and Federal law as to whether the Complainant has been denied access to educational opportunities on the basis of one of the protected classifications, based on a preponderance of evidence standard. The CO's recommendations must be based upon the totality of the circumstances, including the ages and maturity levels of those involved.

The CO may consult with the Board's attorney during the course of the investigatory process and/or before finalizing the report to the District Administrator.

Generally, within five (5) days of receiving the report of the CO or designee, the District Administrator either must issue a written decision regarding whether the charges have been substantiated or request further investigation. A copy of the District Administrator's final decision will be delivered to both the Complainant and Respondent. The District Administrator may redact information from the decision consistent with applicable law.

The Board authorizes the District Administrator to consult with legal counsel to determine the extent to which information in an investigation report must be provided to either the Complainant or Respondent.

If the District Administrator requests additional investigation, the District Administrator must specify the additional information that is to be gathered, and such additional investigation must generally be completed within five (5) days. At the conclusion of the additional investigation, the District Administrator must issue a final written decision as described above. The decision of the District Administrator willbe reviewed by the Board upon request.

If the Complainant feels that the decision does not adequately address the complaint the Complainant ~~s/he~~ may appeal the decision to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction by submitting a written request , within thirty (30) calendar days of the decision, to the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), Pupil Nondiscrimination Program, or by contacting the DPI Pupil Nondiscrimination Program at (608) 267-9157. Any person, including the Respondent in a complaint, who is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination as a result of a complaint may choose to file a grievance utilizing the District's grievance procedure as outlined in Policy 3340 - Grievance Procedure or Policy 4340 - Grievance Procedure.

The Board reserves the right to investigate and resolve a complaint or report regardless of whether the member of the School District community or third party chooses to pursue the complaint. The Board also reserves the right to have the complaint investigation conducted by an external person in accordance with this policy or in such other manner as deemed appropriate by the Board.

To the extent required by law or permitted by the District, the parties may be represented, at their own cost, at any of the above-described meetings/hearings.

The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights, Denver Office, U.S. Department of Education, Cesar E. Chavez Memorial Building, 1244 Speer Boulevard, Suite 310, Denver, CO 80204-3582, Telephone: (303) 844-5695, FAX: (303) 844-4303, E-mail: OCR.Denver@ed.gov, Web: https://www.ed.gov/about/ed-offices/ocr ~~Office for Civil Rights~~, the filing of charges with local law enforcement, or the filing of a civil action in court. Use of this internal complaint process is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.

Additional School District Action

If the evidence suggests that any conduct at issue violates any other policies of the Board, is a crime, or requires mandatory reporting under the Children's Code (48.981, Wis. Stats.) ~~(Sec. 48.981, Wis. Stat.)~~ (Policy 8462 - Child Abuse and Neglect), or threats of violence (Policy 8462.01 - Threats of Violence), the CO or District Administrator shall take such

additional actions as necessary and appropriate under the circumstances, which may include a report to the appropriate social service and/or law enforcement agency charged with responsibility for handling such investigations.

Privacy/Confidentiality

The District will employ all reasonable efforts to protect the rights of the Complainant, the Respondent(s), and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the District's legal obligations to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any discovery or disclosure obligations. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, however. All Complainants proceeding through the investigation process should be advised that as a result of the investigation, allegations against individuals may become known to those individuals, including the Complainant's identity.

All records generated under the terms of this policy shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law. Confidentiality, however, cannot be guaranteed. Respondents must be provided an opportunity to meaningfully respond to allegations, which may include disclosure of the Complainant's identity

During the course of an investigation, the CO or designee will instruct each person who is interviewed about the importance of maintaining confidentiality. Any individual who is interviewed as part of an investigation is expected not to disclose to third parties any information that is learned or provided during the course of the investigation.

Directives During Investigation

The CO may recommend to the District Administrator placing any employee involved in an investigation under this Policy on administrative leave pending resolution of the matter. If the District Administrator is the Respondent, the CO shall make such recommendation to the Board. For example, administrative leave may be appropriate in situations in which protecting the safety of any individual or the integrity of the investigation necessitates such action.

The CO shall determine whether any witnesses in the course of an investigation should be provided a Garrity warning apprising the person of his/her obligations to answer questions truthfully and honestly while preserving the right against self-incrimination in the context of any resulting criminal investigation or prosecution.

Every employee interviewed in the course of an investigation is required to provide truthful responses to all questions. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

Remedial Action and Monitoring

If warranted, appropriate remedial action shall be determined and implemented on behalf of the Complainant, including but not limited to counseling services, reinstatement of leave

taken because of the discrimination, the opportunity to complete assignments missed due to absences related to the discrimination, or other appropriate action.

Sanctions and Disciplinary Action

The Board shall vigorously enforce its prohibitions against discrimination/retaliation by taking appropriate action reasonably calculated to stop and prevent further misconduct.

While observing the principles of due process, a violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including the discharge of an employee or the suspension/expulsion of a student. All disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with applicable State law and the terms of any relevant codes of conduct.

When imposing discipline, the District Administrator shall consider the totality of the circumstances involved in the matter, including the ages and maturity level of any student involved. In those cases where discrimination/retaliation is not substantiated, the Board may consider whether the alleged conduct nevertheless warrants discipline in accordance with other Board policies.

Where the Board becomes aware that a prior disciplinary action has been taken against the Respondent, all subsequent sanctions imposed by the Board and/or District Administrator shall be reasonably calculated to end such conduct, prevent its reoccurrence, and remedy its effects.

Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who makes a report or files a complaint alleging harassment/retaliation, or participates as a witness in an investigation, is prohibited. Neither the Board nor any other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce or interfere with any individual because the person opposed any act or practice made by any Federal or State civil rights law, or because that individual made a report, formal complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under those laws and/or this policy, or because that individual exercised, enjoyed, aided, or encouraged any other person in the exercise or enjoyment of any right granted or protected by those laws and/or this policy.

Retaliation against a person for making a report of discrimination, filing a formal complaint, or participating in an investigation or meeting is a serious violation of this policy that can result in the imposition of disciplinary sanctions/consequences and/or other appropriate remedies.

Formal complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the internal complaint process set forth above.

The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution does not constitute retaliation prohibited under this policy.

Education and Training

In support of this policy, the Board promotes preventative educational measures to create greater awareness of discriminatory practices. The District Administrator shall provide appropriate information to all members of the School District community related to the implementation of this policy and shall provide training for District students and staff where appropriate. All training, as well as all information, provided regarding the Board's policy and discrimination in general, will be age and content appropriate.

Retention of Investigatory Records and Materials

The Compliance Officer(s) is responsible for overseeing retention of all records that must be maintained pursuant to this policy. All individuals charged with conducting investigations under this policy shall retain all information, documents, electronically stored information ("ESI"), and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315 - Information Management) created and received as part of an investigation, which may include but are not limited to:

A. all written reports/allegations/complaints/statements;

B. narratives of all verbal reports, allegations, complaints, and statements collected;

C. a narrative of all actions taken by District personnel;

D. any written documentation of actions taken by District personnel or individuals contracted or appointed by the Board to fulfill its responsibilities;

E. narratives of, notes from, or audio, video, or digital recordings of witness statements;

F. all documentary evidence;

G. e-mails, texts, or social media posts related to the investigation;

H. contemporaneous notes in whatever form made (e.g., handwritten, keyed into a computer or tablet, etc.) pertaining to the investigation;

I. written disciplinary sanctions issued to students or employees and a narrative of verbal disciplinary sanctions issued to students or employees for violations of the policies and procedures prohibiting discrimination or harassment;

J. dated written determinations to the parties;

K. dated written descriptions of verbal notifications to the parties;

L. written documentation of any supportive measures offered and/or provided to Complainant and/or the Respondent, including no contact orders issued to both parties, the dates issued, and the dates the parties acknowledged receipt;

M. documentation of all actions, both individual and systemic, taken to stop the discrimination or harassment, prevent its recurrence, eliminate any hostile environment, and remedy its discriminatory effects;

N. copies of the Board policy and/or procedures/guidelines used by the District to conduct the investigation, and any documents used by the District at the time of the alleged violation to communicate the Board's expectations to students and staff with respect to the subject of this policy (e.g., Student Code of Conduct and/or Employee Handbooks);

O. copies of any documentation that memorializes any formal or informal resolutions to the alleged discrimination or harassment; and

P. documentation of any training provided to District personnel related to this policy, including but not limited to, notification of the prohibitions and expectations of staff set forth in this policy and the role and responsibility of all District personnel involved in enforcing this policy, including their duty to report alleged violations of this policy and/or conducting an investigation of an alleged violation of this policy.

The documents, ESI, and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) retained may include public records and records exempt from disclosure under Federal and/or State law (e.g., student records).

The documents, ESI, and electronic media (as defined in Policy 8315) created or received as part of an investigation shall be retained in accordance with Policy 8310, Policy 8315, Policy 8320, Policy 8330 for not less than three (3) years, but longer if required by the District's records retention schedule.

Revised 10/15/09
Revised 3/18/10
Revised 11/19/12
Revised 3/21/13
Revised 9/15/14
Revised 9/18/17
Revised 4/15/19
Revised 9/5/19
Revised 3/3/20
Revised 12/20/21
T.C. 9/1/22

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Legal

118.13 Wis. Stats.
P.I. 9, Wis. Adm. Code
P.I. 41, Wis. Adm. Code
Fourteenth Amendment, U.S. Constitution
20 U.S.C. 1701 et seq., Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974
20 U.S.C. 7905, Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act
29 U.S.C. 794, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended
42 U.S.C. 6101 et seq., Age Discrimination Act of 1975
42 U.S.C. 2000 et seq., Civil Rights Act of 1964
42 U.S.C. 2000ff et seq., The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act
42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq., The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended
29 C.F.R. Part 1635, The GINA Regulations
34 C.F.R. Part 110, The Age Discrimination Act Regulations
Guidelines for Vocational Education Programs, Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, March 21, 1979