

Board Minute – Title IX 2026

Title IX is a federal civil rights law that says no one can be treated differently because of their sex in any school program that receives federal funding. This includes public schools like ours. “Sex discrimination” means unfair treatment because of someone’s sex. This can include harassment, unequal access to programs, unequal athletic opportunities, pregnancy discrimination, and retaliation for raising concerns. Federal interpretation of Title IX has changed over time and may continue to evolve regarding gender identity and sexual orientation. Regardless of federal interpretation, Minnesota state law prohibits harassment and discrimination based on these characteristics. School districts are required to follow applicable federal and state laws.

Under Title IX, schools must respond quickly and fairly to reports of sex discrimination. This starts when someone with “actual knowledge” of a possible violation reports it to the designated Title IX Coordinator. Schools must then take steps to stop discrimination, prevent it from happening again, and support anyone affected during the process. Support can include counseling, safety planning, schedule changes, or academic help while an investigation is underway.

A common part of Title IX is the requirement to address sexual harassment and assault. Harassment includes unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that creates a hostile environment and makes it hard for a student to participate in school activities. If a complaint is made, the school must investigate fairly and promptly. Neutral investigators gather facts without bias, treat all parties with respect, and follow a written grievance process. Even a verbal complaint must be taken seriously and investigated.

Title IX also requires schools to provide equitable athletic opportunities. Schools must offer comparable benefits and opportunities in athletics, including equipment, coaching, practice time, travel, facilities, and other supports. Equality does not mean every team must receive identical treatment, but the overall athletic program must provide fair opportunities for participation. Compliance is evaluated by looking at factors such as the number of athletic opportunities offered, levels of student participation, and whether the district has a history of expanding opportunities when interest is demonstrated.

Title IX also addresses equal pay and fair treatment for employees regardless of sex. While compensation does not need to be identical for different positions, pay decisions must be based on experience, responsibilities, and qualifications. This is one reason districts complete regular pay equity reports.

Title IX is a broad law that affects many parts of education, not just sports and harassment. It also covers access to classes, counseling services, science and math programs, dress codes, parent-student protections, and more.

This summary is only a surface overview. More detailed information is found in our District Title IX policy. As a school system that receives federal funds, we are required to maintain a safe, fair, and nondiscriminatory environment for all students and staff. If you have questions or need clarification, please contact our Title IX Coordinator.