

## **School Board**

### **Uniform Grievance Procedure**<sup>1</sup>

A student, parent/guardian, employee, or community member should notify any District Complaint Manager if he or she believes that the School Board, its employees, or its agents have violated his or her rights guaranteed by the State or federal Constitution, State or federal statute, or Board policy<sup>2</sup>, or has a complaint regarding any one of the following:<sup>3</sup>

1. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §12101 et seq.<sup>4</sup>
2. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., excluding Title IX complaints governed by Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*
3. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. §791 et seq.<sup>5</sup>
4. Discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin prohibited by the Illinois Human Rights Act, 775 ILCS 5/; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000d

<sup>1</sup> State or federal law requires this subject matter be covered by policy and controls this policy's content. This policy contains an item on which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts upon wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right. Employee grievance procedures are a mandatory subject of bargaining and cannot be changed without the employee exclusive representative's consent. This policy and its companion sample policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, are in addition to, and not a substitute for, the employee grievance procedure contained in a collective bargaining agreement.

A grievance procedure is required by many civil rights acts and implementing regulations, including those listed. For the sake of consistency and ease of administration, this policy consolidates all board grievance procedures, excluding Title IX sexual harassment complaints (see sample policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*) into one policy, except those contained in collective bargaining agreements. See the cross references for the policies referring to this uniform grievance procedure policy.

<sup>2</sup> Including the phrase "guaranteed by the State or federal Constitution, State or federal statute, or Board policy" broadens the scope of this policy beyond the items listed. Consult the board attorney regarding whether to retain this phrase and/or to otherwise limit the scope of this policy.

<sup>3</sup> The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) (20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq.) is not included in the list of statutes that may serve as the basis of a grievance, and attorneys disagree whether it should be. Many believe that IDEA provides the exclusive remedy; others believe that including IDEA allows parents/guardians an opportunity to get their position before the board. Unique and specific complaint resolution mechanisms are expressly provided under IDEA, Article 14 of the School Code, and their respective implementing regulations. These mechanisms follow: (1) IDEA at 20 U.S.C. §1415 (procedural safeguards-mediation and due process); (2) IDEA regulations at 34 C.F.R. §§300.151-300.153 (state complaints), 300.506 (mediation), and 300.507 et seq. (due process); (3) 105 ILCS 5/14-8.02a (mediation and due process) and 5/14-8.02b (expedited due process); and (4) special education regulations at 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§226.560 (Mediation), 226.570 (State Complaint Procedures), and Subpart G (due process). A board that would like to include IDEA should consult the board attorney.

<sup>4</sup> The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) (Pub. L. 110-325), made significant changes to the Americans with Disabilities Act's definition of disability by broadening the scope of coverage. The ADAAA also overturned a series of U.S. Supreme Court decisions that interpreted the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 in a way that made it difficult to prove that impairments were a disability. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's (EEOC) regulations, 29 C.F.R. Part 1630, are at: [www.eeoc.gov/eeoc-disability-related-resources/laws-and-regulations-related-disability-discrimination](http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc-disability-related-resources/laws-and-regulations-related-disability-discrimination).

Boards should consult with their attorneys regarding how the ADAAA and its implementing regulations impact their districts.

Title II of the ADA of 1990 also includes website accessibility. The *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines* (WCAG) Version 2.1, Level AA is the formal federal legal standard for public accommodation websites, including school districts. The compliance date for districts is 4-24-26 or 4-26-27, depending upon the size of the population where the district is located. 28 C.F.R. §§35.104 and 35.200 et seq. See the U.S. Dept. of Justice's *Fact Sheet: New Rule on the Accessibility of Web Content and Mobile Apps Provided by State and Local Governments* (4-8-24), at: <https://www.ada.gov/resources/2024-03-08-web-rule/>. WCAG 2.1 is available at: [www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21](http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21). 105 ILCS 5/10-20.75 also requires school districts to ensure their *Internet websites or web services* comply with Level AA of the WCAG 2.1 or any revised version of those guidelines. *Internet website or web service* means "any third party online curriculum that is made available to enrolled students or the public by a school district through the Internet." *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> See f/n 4's discussion of website accessibility above. See also the discussion in f/n 2 of sample policy 8:70, *Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities*.

et seq.; and/or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000e et seq. (see Board policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*)<sup>6</sup>

5. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000e et seq. (see also number 4, above, for discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin)
6. Sexual harassment prohibited by the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act<sup>7</sup>, 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a); Illinois Human Rights Act, 775 ILCS 5/; and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000e et seq. (Title IX sexual harassment complaints are addressed under Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*)<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-95(b)(1)(B), added by P.A. 103-472, requires a district to have an internal process for filing a complaint regarding a violation of its policy (or policies) prohibiting discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, and retaliation. Sample policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*, utilizes this policy as an internal complaint process. See also sample administrative procedure 2:270-AP, *Prevention and Response Program for Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment Based on Race, Color, and National Origin*, which includes additional procedures to be followed when responding to complaints of discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, and national origin.

<sup>7</sup> 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a) requires governmental entities (including school districts) to adopt an ordinance or resolution establishing a policy to prohibit sexual harassment that contains certain prescribed elements. See sample policy 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*, at f/n 3 and subhead **Complaints of Sexual Harassment Made Against Board Members by Elected Officials** in sample policy 2:105, *Ethics and Gift Ban*, for further detail. Complaints of sexual harassment made against board members by fellow board members or other elected officials of governmental units must undergo an *independent review*, which is not a term defined in the statute. Unlike the powers granted by the Ill. General Assembly to municipalities to pass ordinances, school boards govern by rules referred to as *policies*. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.5. Further, school boards may only exercise powers given to them that are consistent with the School Code that may be requisite or proper for the maintenance, operation, and development of any school or schools under the jurisdiction of the board. 105 ILCS 5/10-20. School districts are also required to create, maintain, and implement an age-appropriate sexual harassment policy. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.69. See sample policy 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*, and its f/n 9 for further information.

50 ILCS 205/3c requires a school district to post on its website and make available to news media specific information about severance agreements that it enters into because an employee or contractor was “found to have engaged in sexual harassment or sexual discrimination, as defined by the Ill. Human Rights Act or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.” Consult the board attorney about the word *found*. It raises many practical application questions, e.g., when does the word *found* trigger a board’s compliance responsibility pursuant to this law. Such questions include, but are not limited to:

1. Must a school board make a *finding* to trigger this requirement? If the severance agreement is entered into post-termination, a record of board *findings* rarely exists.
2. Are charges for termination *findings*? Often superintendents submit charges for termination, but these are not technically *findings*.
3. Are charges based on a complaint manager’s report and determination(s) *findings* under the law when a board still has the ability to review and reject the complaint manager’s determination(s)?

Next, contrast the above publication law with the Government Severance Pay Act (GSPA), 5 ILCS 415/10(a)(2). GSPA prohibits an employee of a school district with contract provisions for severance pay from receiving any severance if he or she is fired for *misconduct* by the board. GSPA defines *misconduct* to include sexual harassment and/or discrimination. Id. at 415/5.

Consult the board attorney about how to reconcile whether sexual harassment and/or sexual discrimination is misconduct for which a severance would be prohibited under the GSPA, and therefore, not available to be published under 50 ILCS 205/3c. And for further discussion and other applicable transparency laws that apply to this issue, see also f/n 16 in sample policy 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*.

<sup>8</sup> Consult the board attorney regarding proper filing and storage of these investigation documents, including whether certain student-related investigation documents are *sole possession records*, a Family Policy Compliance Office (FPCO)-created an exemption to the Family Education Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. §1232g). See *Letter to Ruscio*, 115 LRP 18601 (FPCO 12-17-14).

7. Breastfeeding accommodations for students, 105 ILCS 5/10-20.60<sup>9</sup>
8. Bullying, 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7<sup>10</sup>
9. Misuse of funds received for services to improve educational opportunities for educationally disadvantaged or deprived children<sup>11</sup>
10. Curriculum, instructional materials, and/or programs
11. Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act, 820 ILCS 180/
12. Illinois Equal Pay Act of 2003, 820 ILCS 112/
13. Provision of services to homeless students
14. Illinois Whistleblower Act, 740 ILCS 174/<sup>12</sup>
15. Misuse of genetic information prohibited by the Illinois Genetic Information Privacy Act, 410 ILCS 513/; and Titles I and II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, 42 U.S.C. §2000ff et seq.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.60 requires schools to implement the Ill. sex equity grievance procedures when processing student complaints about breastfeeding accommodations. Complainants must be informed that the board's decision may be appealed to the Regional Superintendent (or appropriate Intermediate Service Center Executive Director) and, thereafter, to the State Superintendent. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §200.40. **Note:** Certain claims brought under 105 ILCS 5/10-20.60 may also be covered by the anti-discrimination protections of Title IX; consult the board attorney for further advice. Guidance from U.S. Dept. of Education on Title IX requirements for pregnant and parenting students (June 2013) is available at: [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/frontpage/pro-students/issues/sex-issue03.html](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/frontpage/pro-students/issues/sex-issue03.html).

<sup>10</sup> All districts must have a policy on bullying. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7. See sample policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*. The inclusion of *bullying* in the list of topics that may serve as the basis of a grievance furthers the obligation to communicate this policy to students and their parents/guardians.

<sup>11</sup> Parents/guardians of educationally disadvantaged children may sue a district for misuse of funds allocated by State law for the benefit of such children. Novola v. Bd. of Educ., 179 Ill.2d 121 (Ill. 1997) (affirming the appellate court's conclusion in Novola v. Bd. of Educ., 284 Ill.App.3d 128 (1st Dist. 1996) that parents/guardians may pursue a claim to enforce the requirements of the School Code but holding that the proper action for enforcement is by means of mandamus not an implied right of action).

<sup>12</sup> The Whistleblower Act (740 ILCS 174/), amended by P.A. 103-867, includes school districts in the definition of employer. It protects employees from employer retaliation for disclosing information to a government or law enforcement agency. 740 ILCS 174/15, amended by P.A. 103-867, contains language prohibiting employers from retaliating against employees who disclose information in a court, an administrative hearing, or in any other proceeding initiated by a public body where the employee has a good faith belief that an activity, policy, or practice of the employer: (1) violates a State or federal law, rule, or regulation; or (2) poses a substantial and specific danger to employees, public health, or safety. The Ill. False Claims Act (740 ILCS 175/) includes school districts in its definition of *State*. A strict interpretation of this language appears to allow school boards to collect civil penalties and costs against someone making a false claim. Before disciplining any employee, boards should thoroughly investigate the ramifications of these acts in consultation with their attorney and liability insurance carriers.

<sup>13</sup> The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) (42 U.S.C. §2000ff et seq.) is a federal law. Title I addresses the use of genetic information pertaining to health insurance. Title II protects job applicants, current and former employees, labor union members, and apprentices and trainees from discrimination based on their genetic information. GINA covers employers with 15 or more employees.

GINA broadly defines genetic information to include information about an individual's genetic tests, their family members, and, among other things, the manifestation of a disease or disorder in the individual or the individual's family members. Information about an individual's or family member's age or gender is excluded from genetic information. Its remedies mirror those available under a Title VII of the Civil Rights Act claim: back pay, reinstatement, attorneys' fees and compensatory and punitive damages. Retaliation against an individual who brings a claim under GINA is also prohibited. Federal regulations are available at 29 C.F.R. Part 1635, and background information on these regulations is available at: [www.eeoc.gov/genetic-information-discrimination](http://www.eeoc.gov/genetic-information-discrimination). An FAQ entitled *FAQs on the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act* is available at: [www.dol.gov/agencies/ebsa/laws-and-regulations/laws/gina](http://www.dol.gov/agencies/ebsa/laws-and-regulations/laws/gina).

The Ill. Genetic Information Protection Act (GIPA) (410 ILCS 513/) also prohibits employers from making employment decisions on the basis of any employee's genetic testing information and from penalizing employees who do not want to disclose their genetic information as part of a workplace wellness program. GIPA includes the federal GINA's definition of genetic information and creates more stringent obligations on Ill. employers. While the federal GINA exempts small employers (those with less than 15 employees), Illinois' GIPA covers all employers, even those with one employee. GIPA also provides penalties for negligent and intentional mishandling of genetic information. Note that Title II of GINA does not preempt GIPA's greater protections to Illinois employees.

## 16. Employee Credit Privacy Act, 820 ILCS 70/<sup>14</sup>

The Complaint Manager will first attempt to resolve complaints without resorting to this grievance procedure. If a formal complaint is filed under this policy, the Complaint Manager will address the complaint promptly and equitably. A student and/or parent/guardian filing a complaint under this policy may forego any informal suggestions and/or attempts to resolve it and may proceed directly to this grievance procedure. The Complaint Manager will not require a student or parent/guardian complaining of any form of harassment to attempt to resolve allegations directly with the accused (or the accused's parent(s)/guardian(s)); this includes mediation.

### Right to Pursue Other Remedies Not Impaired

The right of a person to prompt and equitable<sup>15</sup> resolution of a complaint filed under this policy shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies, e.g., criminal complaints, civil actions, etc. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies and use of this grievance procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to the pursuit of other remedies. If a person is pursuing another remedy subject to a complaint under this policy, the District will continue with a simultaneous investigation under this policy.

### Deadlines

All deadlines under this policy may be extended by the Complaint Manager as he or she deems appropriate. As used in this policy, *school business days* means days on which the District's main office is open.

### Filing a Complaint

A person (hereinafter Complainant) who wishes to avail him or herself of this grievance procedure may do so by filing a complaint with any District Complaint Manager. The Complainant shall not be required to file a complaint with a particular Complaint Manager and may request a Complaint Manager of the same gender.<sup>16</sup> The Complaint Manager may request the Complainant to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint or require a meeting with a student's parent(s)/guardian(s). The Complaint Manager shall assist the Complainant as needed.

For any complaint alleging bullying and/or cyberbullying of students, the Complaint Manager or designee shall process and review the complaint under Board policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*, in addition to any response required by this policy.

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Before using any sort of genetic information, consult the board attorney for guidance regarding GINA's and GIPA's specific applications to the district and how these laws integrate with other related federal laws, such as the Family and Medical Leave Act (29 U.S.C. §2612 *et seq.*) and the ADA, and State laws governing time off for sickness and workers' compensation.

<sup>14</sup> 820 ILCS 70/. Unless a satisfactory credit history is an *established bona fide occupational requirement* of a particular position, an employer may not: (1) refuse to hire, discharge, or otherwise discriminate against an individual with respect to employment because of the individual's credit history or credit report; (2) inquire about an applicant's or employee's credit history; or (3) order or obtain an applicant's or employee's credit report from a consumer reporting agency. The Act identifies circumstances that permit a satisfactory credit history to be a job requirement, such as, when the position's duties include custody of or unsupervised access to cash or marketable assets valued at \$2,500 or more. 820 ILCS 70/10(b). A person who is injured by a violation of this Act may bring a civil action to obtain injunctive relief and/or damages. 820 ILCS 70/25. The court must award costs and reasonable attorneys' fees to a prevailing plaintiff. *Id.*

<sup>15</sup> The phrase "prompt and equitable resolution" comes from Title IX implementing regulation 34 C.F.R. §106.8(c) which requires schools to "adopt and publish grievance procedures that provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints" of sex discrimination.

<sup>16</sup> This is a best practice.

For any complaint alleging sex discrimination that, if true, would implicate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*), the Title IX Coordinator or designee<sup>17</sup> shall process and review the complaint under Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*.

For any complaint alleging harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall process and review the complaint under Board policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*, in addition to any response required by this policy.

For any complaint alleging sexual harassment or other violation of Board policy 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall process and review the complaint according to that policy, in addition to any response required by this policy, and shall consider whether an investigation under Board policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*,<sup>18</sup> should be initiated.

### Investigation Process

The Complaint Manager will investigate the complaint or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation on his or her behalf.<sup>19</sup> The Complaint Manager shall ensure both parties have an equal opportunity to present evidence during an investigation. The complaint and identity of the Complainant will not be disclosed except: (1) as required by law, this policy, or any collective bargaining agreement, (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the Complainant.

The identity of any student witnesses will not be disclosed except: (1) as required by law, this policy, or any collective bargaining agreement, (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the parent/guardian of the student witness, or by the student if the student is 18 years of age or older.

The Complaint Manager will inform, at regular intervals, the person(s) filing a complaint under this policy about the status of the investigation. Within 30 school business days after the date the complaint was filed, the Complaint Manager shall file a written report of his or her findings with the Superintendent. The Complaint Manager may request an extension of time from the Superintendent.

The Superintendent will keep the Board informed of all complaints.

If a complaint contains allegations involving the Superintendent or Board member(s), the written report shall be filed directly with the Board, which will make a decision in accordance with paragraph four of the following section of this policy.

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<sup>17</sup> “Title IX Coordinator or designee” is used where Title IX is implicated. In contrast, if Title IX is not implicated, “Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee” is used (see the last paragraph under the **Filing a Complaint** subhead).

<sup>18</sup> See sample administrative procedure 5:120-AP2, *Employee Conduct Standards*, and its exhibit 5:120-AP2, E, *Expectations and Guidelines for Employee-Student Boundaries*.

<sup>19</sup> This policy gives complaint managers the flexibility to appoint another individual to conduct an investigation, which may be appropriate in cases where the neutrality or efficacy of the complaint manager is an issue, and/or where the district wishes to have the expertise and related attorney-client and work product privileges that an in-house or outside attorney may afford an investigation. Such alternative appointments are often made in consultation with the superintendent or other district-level administrator (except in cases involving complaints about those individuals).

### Decision and Appeal

Within five school business days after receiving the Complaint Manager's report, the Superintendent shall provide his or her written decision to the Complainant and the accused<sup>20</sup> as well as to the Complaint Manager. All decisions shall be based upon the *preponderance of evidence* standard.<sup>21</sup>

Within 10 school business days after receiving the Superintendent's decision, the Complainant or the accused may appeal the decision to the Board by making a written request to the Complaint Manager. The Complaint Manager shall promptly forward all materials relative to the complaint and appeal to the Board.

Within 30 school business days after an appeal of the Superintendent's decision, the Board shall affirm, reverse, or amend the Superintendent's decision or direct the Superintendent to gather additional information. Within five school business days after the Board's decision, the Superintendent shall inform the Complainant and the accused of the Board's action.

For complaints containing allegations involving the Superintendent or Board member(s), within 30 school business days after receiving the Complaint Manager's or outside investigator's report, the Board shall provide its written decision to the Complainant and the accused,<sup>22</sup> as well as to the Complaint Manager.

This policy shall not be construed to create an independent right to a hearing before the Superintendent or Board. The failure to strictly follow the timelines in this grievance procedure shall not prejudice any party.<sup>23</sup>

### Appointing a Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and Complaint Managers<sup>24</sup>

The Superintendent shall appoint a Nondiscrimination Coordinator to manage the District's efforts to provide equal opportunity employment and educational opportunities and prohibit the harassment of employees, students, and others.

The Superintendent shall appoint a Title IX Coordinator to coordinate the District's efforts to comply with Title IX.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Using a consistent delivery method that allows the district to verify the date of receipt is a best practice, e.g., registered mail, return receipt requested, and/or personal delivery.

<sup>21</sup> *Preponderance of evidence* is a standard of proof used in civil cases. It means "the greater weight of the evidence, not necessarily established by the greater number of witnesses testifying to a fact but by evidence that has the most convincing force." See *Black's Law Dictionary*, 11th ed. 2019.

<sup>22</sup> See f/n 20, above.

<sup>23</sup> The Ill. sex equity regulations require districts to have "specific timelines for completion of each step and rendering of a written decision, and shall provide for final appeal of grievance decisions made at the system level to the system's governing board." 23 Ill.Admin.Code §200.40(c)(1). To avoid arguments over these timelines, this sample policy provides that the failure to strictly follow the timelines does not prejudice any party. The grievance procedure is worthless if complaints are not thoroughly and promptly investigated.

<sup>24</sup> While the names and contact information are required by law to be listed, they are not part of the adopted policy and do not require board action. This allows for additions and amendments to the names and contact information when necessary. It is important for updated names and contact information to be inserted into this policy and regularly monitored.

A district's Nondiscrimination Coordinator often also serves as its Title IX Coordinator. Best practice is that throughout the board policy manual, the same individual be named as Nondiscrimination Coordinator. In contrast, Complaint Managers identified in individual policies may vary depending upon local district needs.

<sup>25</sup> Title IX regulations require districts to designate and authorize an employee to coordinate efforts to comply with Title IX and to refer to that employee as the *Title IX Coordinator*. 34 C.F.R. §106.8(a). Districts must identify the Title IX Coordinator by name, office address, email address, and telephone number. *Id.* If a district has more than one Title IX Coordinator, it should designate one of its Title IX Coordinators to retain ultimate oversight to ensure the district's consistent compliance with its responsibilities under Title IX and its implementing regulations.

The Superintendent shall appoint at least one Complaint Manager to administer this policy. If possible, the Superintendent will appoint two Complaint Managers, each of a different gender. The District's Nondiscrimination Coordinator may be appointed as one of the Complaint Managers.

The Superintendent shall insert into this policy and keep current the names, office addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and the Complaint Managers.<sup>26</sup>

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A district must prominently display its Title IX nondiscrimination policies (this policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*) and contact information for its Title IX Coordinator on its website, if any, and in each handbook made available to students, applicants for employment, parents/guardians, employees, and collective bargaining units. 34 C.F.R. §106.8(a) and (b). Notifications must state that nondiscrimination extends to employment, and that inquiries about the application of Title IX and its regulations may be referred to the district's Title IX coordinator, to the U.S. Dept. of Education's Assistant Secretary of Education, or both. 34 C.F.R. §106.8(b). See sample exhibit 2:250-E2, *Immediately Available District Public Records and Web-Posted Reports and Records*.

<sup>26</sup> The board may include the following option to address publication of such contact information:

"The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that students, parents/guardians, employees, and members of the community are informed of the contact information for the District's Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and Complaint Managers on an annual basis."

Publicizing the contact information for the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers through personnel handbooks, student handbooks, and/or on the district's website is a best practice. The Ill. Principals Association (IPA) maintains a handbook service that coordinates with **PRESS** material, *Online Model Student Handbook (MSH)*, at: [www.ilprincipals.org/msh/](http://www.ilprincipals.org/msh/).

**Nondiscrimination Coordinator:**

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Name

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Address

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Email

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Telephone

**Title IX Coordinator:**

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Name

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Address

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Email

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Telephone

**Complaint Managers:**

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Name

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Telephone



- LEGAL REF.: 8 U.S.C. §1324a et seq., Immigration Reform and Control Act.  
 20 U.S.C. §1232g, Family Education Rights Privacy Act.  
 20 U.S.C. §1400, The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.  
 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., Title IX of the Education Amendments; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.  
 29 U.S.C. §206(d), Equal Pay Act.  
 29 U.S.C. §621 et seq., Age Discrimination in Employment Act.  
 29 U.S.C. §791 et seq., Rehabilitation Act of 1973.  
 29 U.S.C. §2612, Family and Medical Leave Act.  
 42 U.S.C. §2000d et seq., Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.  
 42 U.S.C. §2000e et seq., Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.  
 42 U.S.C. §2000ff et seq., Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act.  
 42 U.S.C. §11431 et seq., McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.  
 42 U.S.C. §12101 et seq., Americans With Disabilities Act; 28 C.F.R. Part 35.  
 105 ILCS 5/2-3.8, 5/3-10, 5/10-20, 5/10-20.5, 5/10-20.7a, 5/10-20.60, 5/10-20.69,  
 5/10-20.75, 5/10-22.5, 5/22-19, 5/22-95 (final citation pending), 5/24-4, 5/27-1,  
 5/27-23.7, and 45/1-15.  
 5 ILCS 415/10(a)(2), Government Severance Pay Act.  
 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a), State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.  
 410 ILCS 513/, Ill. Genetic Information Privacy Act.  
 740 ILCS 174/, Whistleblower Act.  
 740 ILCS 175/, Ill. False Claims Act.  
 775 ILCS 5/, Ill. Human Rights Act.  
 820 ILCS 70/, Employee Credit Privacy Act.  
 820 ILCS 112/, Equal Pay Act of 2003.  
 820 ILCS 180/, Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act; 56 Ill.Admin.Code Part 280.  
 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.240, 200.40, 226.50, and 226.570.
- CROSS REF.: 2:105 (Ethics and Gift Ban), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities), 6:140 (Education of Homeless Children), 6:170 (Title I Programs), 6:260 (Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:15 (Student and Family Privacy Rights), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools), 7:315 (Restrictions on Publications; High Schools), 8:70 (Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities), 8:95 (Parental Involvement), 8:110 (Public Suggestions and Concerns)

## **School Board**

### **Title IX Grievance Procedure** <sup>27</sup>

Sexual harassment affects a student's ability to learn and an employee's ability to work. Providing an educational and workplace environment free from sexual harassment is an important District goal. The District does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its education programs or activities, and it complies with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) and its implementing regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 106) concerning everyone in the District's education programs and activities, including applicants for employment, students, parents/guardians, employees, and third parties.

### **Title IX Sexual Harassment Prohibited**

Sexual harassment as defined in Title IX (Title IX Sexual Harassment) is prohibited. Any person, including a District employee or agent, or student, engages in Title IX Sexual Harassment when that person engages in conduct on the basis of an individual's sex that satisfies one or more of the following:<sup>28</sup>

1. A District employee conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;<sup>29</sup> or
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the District's educational program or activity; or

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<sup>27</sup> Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) (20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*) requires this subject matter be covered by policy and controls this policy's content. This policy contains items on which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts upon wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment, is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right. Employee grievance procedures are a mandatory subject of bargaining and cannot be changed without the employee exclusive representative's consent. This policy and its companion policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, are in addition to, and not a substitute for, the employee grievance procedure contained in a collective bargaining agreement.

For the sake of consistency and ease of administration, this policy addresses only Title IX sexual harassment grievances, except those contained in collective bargaining agreements. See the cross references for the policies referring to this Title IX sexual harassment grievance procedure policy.

A district must have at least one policy explicitly stating it does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its education programs or activities under Title IX and its implementation regulations (34 C.F.R. Part 106). 34 C.F.R. §106.8(b)(1). Title IX jurisdiction is geographically limited to discrimination against a person in the United States. 34 C.F.R. §106.8(d). While all complaints of sexual harassment may not constitute sexual harassment under Title IX, Title IX's reach is broad because an alleged complainant or alleged respondent may be *anyone* in the District's educational program or activity in the United States – including applicants for employment, students, parents/guardians, any employee, and third parties.

<sup>28</sup> 34 C.F.R. §106.30. The definition of *sexual harassment* in the policy and in Title IX includes *unwelcome* conduct. *Id.* However, case law does not always distinguish between *welcome* and *unwelcome* conduct. See Mary M. v. North Lawrence Community Sch. Corp., 131 F.3d 1220 (7th Cir. 1997) (8th grade student did not need to show that a school employee's sexual advances were *unwelcome* in order to prove sexual harassment).

<sup>29</sup> 34 C.F.R. §106.30. This behavior is commonly called *quid pro quo* sexual harassment. See 85 Fed. Reg. 30036, f/n 94. By using the term *individual*, Title IX regulations do not limit *quid pro quo* sexual harassment to situations where the provision of an aid, benefit or service by an employee is conditioned on a current *student's* participation in unwelcome sexual conduct. By way of example, *quid pro quo* Title IX sexual harassment involving an employee and an individual other than a current student may be implicated when: an employee tells a former student she can only get a letter of recommendation if she participates in unwelcome sexual conduct; an employee selects a volunteer for a coveted field trip chaperone position if he participates in unwelcome sexual conduct; or a supervisory employee subjects a subordinate employee to unwelcome sexual conduct in exchange for a promotion.

3. *Sexual assault* as defined in 20 U.S.C. §1092(f)(6)(A)(v), *dating violence* as defined in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(11), *domestic violence* as defined in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(12), or *stalking* as defined in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(36).<sup>30</sup>

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, touching, rape, sexual battery, sexual abuse, sexual coercion, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, teasing related to sexual characteristics, and spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities.

#### Definitions from 34 C.F.R. §106.30

*Complainant* means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.<sup>31</sup>

*Education program or activity* includes locations, events, or circumstances where the District has substantial control over both the *Respondent* and the context in which alleged sexual harassment occurs.<sup>32</sup>

*Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint* means a document filed by a *Complainant* or signed by the Title IX Coordinator<sup>33</sup> alleging sexual harassment against a *Respondent* and requesting that the District investigate the allegation.<sup>34</sup>

*Respondent* means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of the conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.<sup>35</sup>

*Supportive measures* mean non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the *Complainant* or the *Respondent* before or after the filing of a Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint or where no Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint has been filed.<sup>36</sup>

#### Title IX Sexual Harassment Prevention and Response

The Superintendent or designee will ensure that the District prevents and responds to allegations of Title IX Sexual Harassment as follows:

1. Ensures that the District's comprehensive health education program in Board policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*, incorporates (a) age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention programs in grades pre-K through 12,<sup>37</sup> and (b) age-appropriate education about the warning signs, recognition, dangers, and prevention of teen dating violence in grades 7-12.<sup>38</sup> This includes incorporating student social and emotional development into the District's educational program as required by State law and in alignment with Board policy 6:65, *Student Social and Emotional Development*.

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<sup>30</sup> See sample exhibit 2:265-E, *Title IX Glossary of Terms*, for these definitions and other definitions of italicized terms in this policy. Title IX regulations at 34 C.F.R. §106.30 contain pinpoint citations to the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) (34 U.S.C. §12291 *et seq.*) for the definitions of *dating violence*, *domestic violence*, and *stalking*. VAWA was reauthorized in 2022 and the citations changed; however, 34 C.F.R. §106.30 has not been updated. This policy uses the updated VAWA citations.

<sup>31</sup> 34 C.F.R. §106.30.

<sup>32</sup> 34 C.F.R. §106.44(a).

<sup>33</sup> See f/n 17 in sample policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

<sup>34</sup> 34 C.F.R. §106.30.

<sup>35</sup> *Id.*

<sup>36</sup> *Id.* See sample administrative procedure 2:265-AP1, *Title IX Response*, for further discussion of supportive measures.

<sup>37</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 110/3 and 105 ILCS 5/10-23.13 (*Erin's Law*).

<sup>38</sup> Required by *Id.* at 110/3.

2. Incorporates education and training for school staff as recommended by the Superintendent, Title IX Coordinator, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, or a Complaint Manager.<sup>39</sup>
3. Notifies applicants for employment,<sup>40</sup> students, parents/guardians, employees, and collective bargaining units of this policy and contact information for the Title IX Coordinator by, at a minimum, prominently displaying them on the District's website, if any, and in each handbook made available to such persons.<sup>41</sup>

### Making a Report

A person who wishes to make a report under this Title IX grievance procedure may make a report to the Title IX Coordinator, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, a Complaint Manager, or any employee with whom the person is comfortable speaking.<sup>42</sup>

School employees shall respond to incidents of sexual harassment by promptly making or forwarding the report to the Title IX Coordinator. An employee who fails to promptly make or forward a report may be disciplined, up to and including discharge.

The Superintendent shall insert into this policy and keep current the name, office address, email address, and telephone number of the Title IX Coordinator.<sup>43</sup>

### **Title IX Coordinator:**

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Name

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Address

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<sup>39</sup> 105 ILCS 110/3. Detailed training requirements exist for Title IX coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process. 34 C.F.R. §106.45(b)(1)(iii). Title IX rules “[leave districts] discretion to determine the kind of training to other employees that will best enable the [district], and its Title IX Coordinator, to meet Title IX obligations.” 85 Fed. Reg. 30114. Many attorneys agree the best practice is to train all district staff about the definition of sexual harassment, the scope of the district’s education program or activity, all relevant district policies and procedures, and the necessity to promptly forward all reports of sexual harassment to the Title IX coordinator. See sample administrative procedure 2:265-AP1, *Title IX Response*.

<sup>40</sup> If your district is covered by Subpart C of Title IX, which “applies only to institutions of vocational education, professional education, graduate higher education, and public institutions of undergraduate higher education,” amend this to state “applicants for admission or employment.” 34 C.F.R. §106.15(d).

<sup>41</sup> 34 C.F.R. §106.8. See sample exhibit 2:250-E2, *Immediately Available District Public Records and Web-Posted Reports and Records*.

<sup>42</sup> Using “or any employee with whom the Complainant is comfortable speaking” ensures Title IX compliance because Title IX deems “any employee” of an elementary or secondary school who has notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment to have *actual knowledge*. Therefore, a report to any employee triggers a district’s duty to respond. 34 C.F.R. §106.30. This policy contains an item upon which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right.

<sup>43</sup> Title IX regulations require districts to designate and authorize an employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX and to refer to that employee as the *Title IX Coordinator*. 34 C.F.R. §106.8(a). Districts must identify the Title IX Coordinator by name, office address, email address, and telephone number. Id. If a district has more than one Title IX Coordinator, it should designate one of its Title IX Coordinators to retain ultimate oversight to ensure the district’s consistent compliance with its responsibilities under Title IX and its implementing regulations. A district’s Nondiscrimination Coordinator often also serves as its Title IX Coordinator. See sample policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

The Title IX Coordinator with ultimate oversight should be listed in this policy. While the name and contact information is required by law to be listed, they are not part of the adopted policy and do not require board action. This allows for additions and amendments to the name and contact information when necessary. It is important for updated name and contact information to be inserted into this policy and regularly monitored.

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Email

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Telephone

### Processing and Reviewing a Report

Upon receipt of a report made under this Title IX grievance procedure, the Title IX Coordinator and/or designee will promptly contact the Complainant to: (1) discuss the availability of supportive measures, (2) consider the *Complainant's* wishes with respect to *supportive measures*, (3) inform the Complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint, and (4) explain to the Complainant the process for filing a Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint.<sup>44</sup>

Further, the Title IX Coordinator will analyze the report to identify and determine whether there is another or an additional appropriate method(s) for processing and reviewing it.<sup>45</sup> For any report received, the Title IX Coordinator shall review Board policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*; 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*; 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*;<sup>46</sup> 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*; 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*; 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*; and 7:190, *Student Behavior*, to determine if the allegations in the report require further action.

Reports of alleged sexual harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the District's duty to investigate and maintain an educational program or activity that is productive, respectful, and free of sexual harassment.

### Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Grievance Process

When a Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint is filed, the Title IX Coordinator will investigate it or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation.<sup>47</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall implement procedures to ensure that all Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaints are processed and reviewed according to a Title IX grievance process that fully complies with 34 C.F.R. §106.45.<sup>48</sup> The District's grievance process shall, at a minimum:<sup>49</sup>

1. Treat *Complainants* and *Respondents* equitably by providing remedies to a *Complainant* where the *Respondent* is determined to be responsible for sexual harassment, and by following a grievance process that complies with 34 C.F.R. §106.45 before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions against a *Respondent*.
2. Require an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence – including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence – and provide that credibility determinations may not be based on a person's status as a *Complainant*, *Respondent*, or witness.

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<sup>44</sup> Required by 34 C.F.R. §106.44(a) and (b) regardless of whether a formal Title IX sexual harassment complaint is filed.

<sup>45</sup> See sample exhibit 2:265-E, *Title IX Glossary of Terms*, for a discussion of Title IX sexual harassment and non-Title IX sexual harassment. Consult the board attorney for further guidance.

<sup>46</sup> See sample administrative procedure 5:120-AP2, *Employee Conduct Standards*.

<sup>47</sup> This policy gives Title IX coordinators the flexibility to appoint another qualified individual to conduct an investigation. This may be appropriate when the neutrality or efficacy of the Title IX coordinator is an issue, and/or where the district wishes to have the expertise that an in-house or outside attorney may afford to an investigation. Alternative appointments are often made in consultation with the superintendent or other district-level administrator (except in cases involving complaints about those individuals) and the board attorney. If a complaint involves the superintendent or other district-level administrator, alternative appointments are often made in consultation with the board and the board attorney.

<sup>48</sup> 34 C.F.R. §106.45(b). See sample administrative procedures 2:265-AP1, *Title IX Response*, and 2:265-AP2, *Formal Title IX Complaint Grievance Process*.

<sup>49</sup> 34 C.F.R. §106.45(b)(1) lists the basic requirements for a grievance process.

3. Require that any individual designated by the District as a Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, or any person designated by the District to facilitate an informal resolution process:
  - a. Not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual *Complainant* or *Respondent*.
  - b. Receive training on the definition of sexual harassment, the scope of the District's education program or activity, how to conduct an investigation and grievance process (including hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes, as applicable), and how to serve impartially.<sup>50</sup>
2. Require that any individual designated by the District as an investigator receiving training on issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence.
3. Require that any individual designated by the District as a decision-maker receive training<sup>51</sup> on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions and evidence about the *Complainant's* sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant.
4. Include a presumption that the *Respondent* is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
5. Include reasonably prompt timeframes for conclusion of the grievance process.
6. Describe the range of possible disciplinary sanctions and remedies the District may implement following any determination of responsibility.
7. Base all decisions upon the *preponderance of evidence* standard.<sup>52</sup>
8. Include the procedures and permissible bases for the *Complainant* and *Respondent* to appeal.
9. Describe the range of *supportive measures* available to *Complainants* and *Respondents*.
10. Not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use questions or evidence that constitute, or seek disclosure of, information protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the person holding such privilege has waived the privilege.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Aside from the general training requirements of 34 C.F.R. §106.45(b)(1)(iii), the DOE gives districts flexibility to determine certain training practices or techniques to best meet training requirements based upon their unique local conditions and resources within their educational community. 85 Fed. Reg. 30120. See also 85 Fed. Reg. 30084 (declining to specify that training of Title IX personnel must include implicit bias training, so long as training provides instruction on how to serve impartially and avoid prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias, and that training materials avoid sex stereotypes).

<sup>51</sup> While live hearings are only required for postsecondary institutions, elementary and secondary schools may choose to offer them as part of their grievance process. **Consult the board attorney if the board wants the district to use a live hearing in its grievance process.**

If using a live hearing during the grievance process, amend #5 by inserting the following underscored text: "Require that any individual designated by the District as a decision-maker receive training on any technology to be used at a live hearing and on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions and evidence about the *Complainant's* sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant."

<sup>52</sup> 34 C.F.R. §106.45(b)(1)(vii) requires the Title IX sexual harassment grievance process to state the standard of proof it will use to determine responsibility of the respondent. The standard of proof selected must be applied "consistently to formal complaints alleging Title IX sexual harassment regardless of whether the respondent is a student or an employee." 85 Fed. Reg. 30373. This sample policy uses the *preponderance of evidence* standard of proof, not the *clear and convincing evidence* standard of proof. *Preponderance of evidence* is a standard of proof used in civil cases. It means "the greater weight of the evidence, not necessarily established by the greater number of witnesses testifying to a fact but by evidence that has the most convincing force." See *Black's Law Dictionary*, 11th ed. 2019. *Preponderance of evidence* is the standard of proof used in sample policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. *Clear and convincing* is a higher standard of proof, requiring more than *preponderance of evidence* but less than proof beyond a reasonable doubt. It means "evidence indicating that the thing to be proved is highly probable or reasonably certain." See *Black's Law Dictionary*, 11th ed. 2019. **Consult the board attorney regarding the appropriate standard of proof for the district, as well as implications if a different standard of proof is used in this policy than in 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.** For boards that choose the *clear and convincing evidence* standard of proof, delete "~~preponderance of~~" and insert "clear and convincing." Ensure the same standard of proof is used in 2:265-AP2, *Formal Title IX Complaint Grievance Process*.

<sup>53</sup> Examples of legally recognized privileges include attorney-client privilege, doctor-patient privilege, and spousal privilege. See 85 Fed. Reg. 30277.

## Enforcement

Any District employee who is determined, at the conclusion of the grievance process, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any third party who is determined, at the conclusion of the grievance process, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the District, e.g., vendor, parent, invitee, etc. Any District student who is determined, at the conclusion of the grievance process, to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with student behavior policies.<sup>54</sup> Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding sexual harassment will likewise be subject to disciplinary action.

This policy does not increase or diminish the ability of the District or the parties to exercise any other rights under existing law.<sup>55</sup>

## Retaliation Prohibited<sup>56</sup>

The District prohibits any form of retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, has made a report or complaint, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in a proceeding under this policy. Any person should report claims of retaliation using Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.<sup>57</sup>

Any person who retaliates against others for reporting or complaining of violations of this policy or for participating in any manner under this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, with regard to employees, or suspension and expulsion, with regard to students.

LEGAL REF.: 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.

Davis v. Monroe County Bd. of Educ., 526 U.S. 629 (1999).

Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent Sch. Dist., 524 U.S. 274 (1998).

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence)

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<sup>54</sup> See sample policies 7:190, *Student Behavior*, and 7:230, *Misconduct by Students with Disabilities*. See also sample policies 7:200, *Suspension Procedures*, and 7:210, *Expulsion Procedures*, for due process requirements when student suspension or expulsion is recommended following a determination of responsibility for Title IX sexual harassment.

<sup>55</sup> Examples of rights the district or parties may exercise ancillary to this Title IX grievance procedure include, but are not limited to: disciplinary processes for suspensions and expulsions of students under 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6; tenured teacher dismissal proceedings under 105 ILCS 5/24-12; any other pre-termination process required by an applicable collective bargaining agreement, employment policy or procedure, or employment contract; and student appeal of a sex equity grievance decision under 23 Ill. Admin. Code §200.40 (see sample policy 7:10, *Equal Educational Opportunities*).

<sup>56</sup> 34 C.F.R. §106.71.

<sup>57</sup> Retaliation complaints must be processed under sample policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, because they are covered under the district's grievance procedure for resolving non-sexual harassment Title IX complaints. See 34 C.F.R. §106.8(c). Title IX sexual harassment regulations state that "[c]omplaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the grievance procedures for sex discrimination required to be adopted under §106.8(c)." 34 C.F.R. §106.71.

## Operational Services

### Identity Protection <sup>58</sup>

The collection, storage, use, and disclosure of social security numbers by the School District shall be consistent with State and federal laws. The goals for managing the District's collection, storage, use, and disclosure of social security numbers are to: <sup>59</sup>

1. Limit all activities involving social security numbers to those circumstances that are authorized by State or federal law.
2. Protect each social security number collected or maintained by the District from unauthorized disclosure.

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<sup>58</sup> **Consult the board attorney before adoption of this policy.** Districts may choose to provide or implement more protections than the statutory requirements outlined in this sample policy. While the laws that apply to this policy govern current management of sensitive information, best practices may outpace the law's ability to keep up. See also f/n 19 to sample policy 2:250, *Access to District Public Records*, detailing the preservation requirements of the Local Records Act (50 ILCS 205/3), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. §1232g), and the Ill. School Student Records Act (105 ILCS 10/), and litigation holds or document preservation requirements pursuant to Federal Rules of Civil Procedure (Rules 16 and 26).

The Identity Protection Act (IPA) (5 ILCS 179/) requires that this subject matter be covered in policy and controls its content. 5 ILCS 179/35. The Act places greater limits on the use of social security numbers (SSNs) than federal law. The IPA defines *identity-protection policy* as "any policy created to protect social security numbers from unauthorized disclosure." (*Social security number* is not capitalized in the IPA). 5 ILCS 179/5. Much of a district's collection, storage, use, and disclosure of SSNs applies to employee records only. But limited exceptions may exist where a school district may need to ask students or their parents/guardians to provide SSNs, and any collection and retention of students' SSNs must also be in accordance with this policy.

Another State law, the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) (815 ILCS 530/) requires *data collectors of personal information* to provide certain notice to Illinois residents, and in certain cases, the Ill. Attorney General, when the collector's system data is breached. 815 ILCS 530/10. Under PIPA, *data collector* is broadly defined to include government agencies and any entities that deal with nonpublic *personal information*. *Personal information* is defined as: (1) an individual's first name or first initial combined with an SSN, driver's license number or State identification card number, financial account information (including without limitation, credit or debit card numbers), medical or health insurance information or biometric data; or (2) a username or email address in combination with a password or security question and answer that would permit access to an online account. *Id.* at 530/5. Depending on whether the *data collector* owns or merely maintains or stores the information, additional notification requirements will also apply. Finally, PIPA requires *units of local governments* to dispose of personal information so that it may not be read or reconstructed. *Id.* at 530/40. It is unclear whether Section 530/40 applies to school districts because PIPA does not specifically identify school districts as *units of local governments* (Ill. Constitution Article VII, Sec. 1). However, the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) considers PIPA to apply to the handling of personally identifiable information under grant awards. See the ISBE *Checklist for Protection of Personally Identifiable Information Review*, referenced in f/n 9, below. **Consult the board attorney for advice on the applicability of PIPA's various mandates to your district.** See f/n 4, below for more information about options to include PIPA requirements in this sample policy.

The U.S. Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) recommends that K-12 districts have an *incident response plan* (IRP) that details what a district needs to do before, during, and after an actual or potential security incident. See [www.cisa.gov/online-toolkit-partnering-safeguard-k-12-organizations-cybersecurity-threats](https://www.cisa.gov/online-toolkit-partnering-safeguard-k-12-organizations-cybersecurity-threats). In the case of a data breach, it is critical for a district to have an IRP in place that is customized to local conditions and to practice the plan. Having an IRP may also be required for cyber liability insurance coverage. For resources and templates, see

<https://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/SpecialPublications/NIST.SP.800-61r2.pdf>,

[www.illinois.org/resources/k12-incident-response-plan-template-security-studio](https://www.illinois.org/resources/k12-incident-response-plan-template-security-studio),

<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/data-breach-scenario-trainings>, and [www.k12six.org/essentials-series](https://www.k12six.org/essentials-series).

<sup>59</sup> The list of goals is optional; it may be deleted, augmented, or otherwise amended.



The Superintendent is responsible for ensuring that the District complies with the Identity Protection Act, 5 ILCS 179/. Compliance measures shall include each of the following:<sup>60 61</sup>

1. All employees having access to social security numbers in the course of performing their duties shall be trained to protect the confidentiality of social security numbers. Training should include instructions on the proper handling of information containing social security numbers from the time of collection through the destruction of the information.
2. Only employees who are required to use or handle information or documents that contain social security numbers shall have access to such information or documents.
3. Social security numbers requested from an individual shall be provided in a manner that makes the social security number easily redacted if the record is required to be released as part of a public records request.
4. When collecting a social security number or upon request by an individual, a statement of the purpose(s) for which the District is collecting and using the social security number shall be provided. The stated reason for collection of the social security number must be relevant to the documented purpose.<sup>62</sup>
5. All employees must be advised of this policy's existence, and a copy of the policy must be made available to each employee. The policy must also be made available to any member of the public, upon request.<sup>63</sup>
6. If this policy is amended, employees will be advised of the existence of the amended policy and a copy of the amended policy will be made available to each employee.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> The IPA requires items #1-4 to be covered in a policy. 5 ILCS 179/35(a).

<sup>61</sup> For boards that want to include PIPA mandates in this Policy, insert the following option after the IPA items #1-4, or if the board includes items #5 and #6 (discussed in f/n 6, below), after items #1-6, and add "815 ILCS 530/, Personal Information Protection Act" to the Legal References:

The Superintendent is also responsible for ensuring the District complies with the Personal Information Protection Act, 815 ILCS 530/. Compliance measures shall include each of the following:

1. Written or electronic notification to an individual and, if applicable, the owner of the information, as required by 815 ILCS 530/10 whenever his or her personal information was acquired by an unauthorized person; *personal information* means either:
  - a. An individual's first name or first initial and last name in combination with any one or more of his or her (i) social security number, (ii) driver's license number or State identification card number, (iii) financial account information (with any required security codes or passwords), (iv) medical information, (v) health insurance information, and/or (vi) unique biometric data or other unique physical or digital representation of biometric data, when either the name or the data elements are not encrypted or redacted or are encrypted or redacted but the keys to unencrypt or unredact or otherwise read the name or data elements have been acquired through the breach of security; or
  - b. An individual's username or email address, in combination with a password or security question and answer that would permit access to an online account, when either the username or email address or password or security question and answer are not encrypted or redacted or are encrypted or redacted but the keys to unencrypt or unredact or otherwise read the data elements have been obtained through the breach of security.
2. Notification to the Ill. Attorney General as required by 815 ILCS 530/10, if a single breach of the security system requires the District to notify more than 500 Illinois residents.
3. Cooperation with the owner of the information in matters relating to the breach, if applicable, as required by 815 ILCS 530/10.
4. Disposal of materials containing personal information in a manner that renders the personal information unreadable, unusable, and undecipherable; personal information has the meaning stated in #1, above.

<sup>62</sup> See sample exhibit 4:15-E2, *Statement of Purpose for Collection of Social Security Numbers*.

<sup>63</sup> Items #5 and #6 are not required to be in policy but districts are required to perform the described action(s). 5 ILCS 179/35(b). These compliance measures are covered in sample administrative procedure 4:15-AP1, *Protecting the Privacy of Social Security Numbers*.

<sup>64</sup> Optional. See f/n 6 above.

No District employee shall collect, store, use, or disclose an individual's social security number unless specifically authorized by the Superintendent.<sup>65</sup> This policy shall not be interpreted as a guarantee of the confidentiality of social security numbers and/or other personal information. The District will use best efforts to comply with this policy, but this policy should not be construed to convey any rights to protection of information not otherwise afforded by law.

#### Treatment of Personally Identifiable Information Under Grant Awards <sup>66</sup>

The Superintendent ensures that the District takes reasonable cybersecurity and other measures to safeguard information including: (1) *protected personally identifiable information*,<sup>67</sup> (2) other types of information that a federal agency, pass-through entity, or State awarding agency designates as sensitive, such as *personally identifiable information* (PII)<sup>68</sup> and (3) information that the District considers to be sensitive consistent with applicable laws regarding privacy and confidentiality (collectively, *sensitive information*), when administering federal grant awards and State grant awards governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/).

The Superintendent shall establish procedures for the identification, handling, storage, access, disposal and overall confidentiality of sensitive information.<sup>69</sup> The Superintendent shall ensure that employees and contractors responsible for the administration of a federal or State award for the District receive regular

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<sup>65</sup> This sentence is optional. Its intent is to inform employees of the need to have proper authority before collecting, storing, using, or disclosing SSNs. A board may attach a sanction to the paragraph by adding the following option:

An employee who has substantially breached the confidentiality of social security numbers may be subject to disciplinary action or sanctions up to and including dismissal in accordance with District policy and procedures.

<sup>66</sup> While the federal regulations on procurement standards in 2 C.F.R. Part 200 do not specifically require a written policy on the treatment of *personally identifiable information* (PII) under grant-funded programs, the Ill. State Board of Education's (ISBE's) *Checklist for Protection of Personally Identifiable Information Review* (ISBE Checklist), at [www.isbe.net/Pages/Federal-and-State-Monitoring.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Federal-and-State-Monitoring.aspx), requires an approved policy or policies related to the identification, handling, storage, access, disposal, and overall protection of PII as evidence of legal compliance with the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) (30 ILCS 708/) and federal regulations. At the time of **PRESS** Issue 118's publication (Apr. 2025), ISBE had not updated this Checklist with the 2024 revisions to the definitions of PII and *protected personally identifiable information* (Protected PII) at 2 C.F.R. §200.1. The ISBE Checklist is specific to PII handled by districts in connection with their administration of grants. The uniform federal rules on procurement standards in 2 C.F.R. Part 200 apply to eligible State grants through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) (30 ILCS 708/). This sample policy and accompanying sample administrative procedure 4:15-AP2, *Treatment of Personally Identifiable Information Under Grant Awards*, are designed to help districts meet the standard set forth in 2 C.F.R. §200.303(e) and the documentation items on the ISBE Checklist.

<sup>67</sup> Protected PII means PII (see definition at f/n 11), except for certain types of PII that must be disclosed by law. 2024 revisions to 2 C.F.R. Part 200 eliminated examples of Protected PII and instead only list examples of PII within the definition of Protected PII at 2 C.F.R. §200.1, which may indicate broadening of the definition of Protected PII. See 89 Fed. Reg. 79732. Before the 2024 revisions, examples of Protected PII contained in the regulation included, but were not limited to, social security number, passport number, credit card numbers, clearances, bank numbers, biometrics, date and place of birth, mother's maiden name, criminal records, medical records, financial records, and educational transcripts. 2 C.F.R. §200.1. Consult the board attorney for guidance in this area. See sample administrative procedure 4:15-AP2, *Treatment of Personally Identifiable Information Under Grant Awards*. Protected PII is similar to, but broader than, the definition of *personal information* under PIPA.

<sup>68</sup> PII is a broader concept than Protected PII. Said another way, Protected PII is a subset of PII.

PII means information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity, either alone or when combined with other personal or identifying information that is linked or linkable to a specific individual. Some PII is available in public sources such as telephone books and websites. This was previously defined as *public personally identifiable information* (Public PII), but 2024 revisions to 2 C.F.R. Part 200 have deleted Public PII as a definition. The definition of PII is not attached to any single category of information or technology. Instead, it requires a case-by-case assessment of the specific risk that an individual can be identified. Non-PII can become PII whenever additional information is made publicly available, in any medium and from any source, that could be used to identify an individual when combined with other available information. 2 C.F.R. §200.1.

In addition to 2 C.F.R. §200.303(e), depending upon the type of record being created or used in connection with a grant-funded program, multiple laws may govern the treatment of PII under a grant, including the IPA (5 ILCS 179/), PIPA (815 ILCS 530/), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, (20 U.S.C. §1232g), Ill. School Student Records Act (105 ILCS 10/), Student Online Personal Protection Act, (105 ILCS 85/), Personnel Record Review Act (820 ILCS 40/), and Local Records Act (50 ILCS 205/3).

<sup>69</sup> See sample administrative procedure 4:15-AP2, *Treatment of Personally Identifiable Information Under Grant Awards*.

training in the safeguarding of sensitive information.<sup>70</sup> Employees mishandling sensitive information are subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

LEGAL REF.: 2 C.F.R. §200.303(e).

5 ILCS 179/, Identity Protection Act.

30 ILCS 708/, Grant Accountability and Transparency Act.

50 ILCS 205/3, Local Records Act.

105 ILCS 10/, Illinois School Student Records Act.

CROSS REF: 2:250 (Access to District Public Records), 5:150 (Personnel Records), 7:340 (Student Records), 7:345 (Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security)

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<sup>70</sup> The ISBE Checklist requires districts to maintain documentation of training of all employees/contractors on the handling of PII, including evidence of the date(s) of the training and attendance/completion of the training. See [www.isbe.net/Pages/Federal-and-State-Monitoring.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Federal-and-State-Monitoring.aspx). Because many individuals in a district can be involved in day-to-day administration of activities supported by a federal or State grant, best practice is to regularly train all employees on the safeguarding of such sensitive information, e.g., upon hire and then annually or semi-annually.

## **Operational Services**

### **Accounting and Audits** <sup>71</sup>

The School District's accounting and audit services shall comply with the *Requirements for Accounting, Budgeting, Financial Reporting, and Auditing*, as adopted by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE), State and federal laws and regulations, and generally accepted accounting principles. Determination of liabilities and assets, prioritization of expenditures of governmental funds, and provisions for accounting disclosures shall be made in accordance with government accounting standards as directed by the auditor designated by the Board. The Superintendent, in addition to other assigned financial responsibilities, shall report monthly on the District's financial performance, both income and expense, in relation to the financial plan represented in the budget.

### **Annual Audit** <sup>72</sup>

At the close of each fiscal year, the Superintendent shall arrange an audit of the District funds, accounts, statements, and other financial matters. The audit shall be performed by an independent certified public accountant designated by the Board and be conducted in conformance with prescribed standards and legal requirements. A complete and detailed written audit report shall be provided to each Board member and to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall annually, on or before October 15, submit an original and one copy of the audit to the Regional Superintendent of Schools.

### **Annual Financial Report** <sup>73</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall annually prepare and submit the Annual Financial Report on a timely basis using the form adopted by the ISBE. The Superintendent shall review and discuss the Annual Financial Report with the Board before it is submitted.

### **Inventories** <sup>74</sup>

The Superintendent or designee is responsible for establishing and maintaining accurate inventory records. The inventory record of supplies and equipment shall include a description of each item, quantity, location, purchase date, and cost or estimated replacement cost, unless the supplies and equipment are acquired by the

<sup>71</sup> State or federal law controls this policy's content. A board policy or resolution is required concerning revolving funds and petty cash. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §100.70. This policy is intended to facilitate the board's fiscal oversight role. The last sentence of the first paragraph should be modified to align with local conditions.

<sup>72</sup> Audit requirements are found in 105 ILCS 5/3-7 and 5/3-15.1, and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §100.110. The federal Single Audit Act adds audit requirements for federal programs. 31 U.S.C. §7501 *et seq.* Grant Accountability Transparency Act (GATA) (30 ILCS 708/) rules also require districts that receive federal pass-through and State-issued awards to have a financial statement audit conducted in accordance with 23 Ill.Admin.Code §100.110, regardless of the amount of award expenditures. 44 Ill.Admin.Code §7000.90(c)(3). See f/n 5, below, for additional information regarding GATA.

For districts in suburban Cook County, replace "Regional Superintendent of Schools" with "appropriate Intermediate Service Center Executive Director."

The following optional sentence establishes an audit committee: "The Board will annually establish an audit committee to help the Board select an external auditor, confer with the auditor regarding the audit's scope, and oversee the audit process." **Note:** All board committees are subject to the Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/).

The following optional sentence establishes a competitive process for selecting the external auditor; it prevents a long-term relationship with an auditor and reduces the possibility of audits being too routine or friendly: "The Board will annually advertise a request for proposals to perform the external audit." Substitute "periodically" for "annually" if desired.

<sup>73</sup> Requirements for the annual financial report are found in 105 ILCS 5/2-3.27 and 5/3-15.1; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §100.100. The last sentence of this section should be modified to align with local conditions.

<sup>74</sup> The content of inventory records is at the district's discretion, with the exception of supplies and equipment that are governed by 2 C.F.R. §200.313. See f/n 5, below.

District pursuant to a federal or State grant award, in which case the inventory record shall also include the information required by 2 C.F.R. §200.313, if applicable.<sup>75</sup> The Superintendent shall establish procedures for the management of property acquired by the District under grant awards that comply with federal and State law.<sup>76</sup>

#### Capitalization Threshold<sup>77</sup>

To be considered a capital asset for financial reporting purposes, a capital item must be at or above a capitalization threshold of \$10,000 and have an estimated useful life greater than one year.

#### Disposition of District Property<sup>78</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall notify the Board, as necessary, of the following so that the Board may consider its disposition: (1) District personal property (property other than buildings and land) that is no longer needed for school purposes, and (2) school site, building, or other real estate that is unnecessary, unsuitable, or inconvenient. Notwithstanding the above, the Superintendent or designee may unilaterally dispose of personal property of a diminutive value. The Superintendent shall establish procedures for the disposition and, when permitted by the terms and conditions of the award, the retention of property acquired by the District under grant awards that comply with federal and State law.

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<sup>75</sup> 2 C.F.R. §200.313. The uniform federal rules that govern federal grant awards in 2 C.F.R. Part 200 apply to State-issued awards through the Grant Accountability Transparency Act (GATA) (30 ILCS 708/), unless exempted in whole or in part by the Governor's Office of Management of Budget. 30 ILCS 708/55. See [www.isbe.net/gata](http://www.isbe.net/gata) for further information about the scope of GATA's application to federal awards and State-funded grant programs administered by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE). See sample administrative procedure 4:80-AP3, *Inventory Management for Federal and State Awards*. ISBE guidance is available at: [www.isbe.net/Documents/fiscal\\_procedure\\_handbk.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/fiscal_procedure_handbk.pdf) and [www.isbe.net/Pages/Federal-and-State-Monitoring.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Federal-and-State-Monitoring.aspx).

<sup>76</sup> *Id.* In connection with ISBE's grant monitoring function, ISBE published a *Checklist for Equipment and Inventory Review* which requires an approved policy (or procedure) related to the management of equipment at:

[www.isbe.net/Pages/Federal-and-State-Monitoring.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Federal-and-State-Monitoring.aspx). At the time of **PRESS** Issue 118's publication (Apr.2025), ISBE had not updated its Checklist to incorporate 2024 amendments made to 2 C.F.R. Part 200, including the increase in the capitalization threshold from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

<sup>77</sup> Optional. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §100.60 requires school boards to adopt a capitalization threshold, which can be done through policy. The capitalization threshold is a dollar figure above which the cost of an item will be included on financial statements and depreciated. A minimum threshold of \$10,000, or a lesser amount established by the board, and useful life greater than one year complies with the definition of *equipment* under federal grant rules. 2 C.F.R. §§200.1 and 200.313(e). Multiple thresholds can be established for different categories of capital assets. *Id.* The Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 34 at para. 115(e) states that a government should disclose its policy "for capitalizing assets and for estimating the useful lives of those assets." See GASB Statement 34 and Implementation Guide No. 2015-1 both available at: [www.gasb.org](http://www.gasb.org). District auditors may require or recommend a district have a more comprehensive capitalization policy and/or procedure. Such an accounting policy or procedure should be developed in consultation with the district's accounting professional(s) and tailored to reflect local conditions.

<sup>78</sup> The requirements in this section are specified in 105 ILCS 5/5-22 (allowing property constructed or renovated by students as part of a curricular program to be sold through the services of a licensed real estate broker subject to certain requirements), 5/10-22.8 (sale of personal property); and 2 C.F.R. §200.313(e) and (f) for federal awards and State awards governed by GATA. See f/n 5, above, regarding grant award requirements. A board that desires to act on the disposition of property having *any* value should use the following alternative to this section's last sentence: "Notwithstanding the above, the Superintendent or designee may unilaterally dispose of worthless personal property."

The recipient (through either sale or donation) of any discarded school bus must immediately: (1) remove, cover, or conceal the "SCHOOL BUS" signs and any other insignia or words indicating the vehicle is a school bus; (2) render inoperable or remove entirely the stop signal arm and flashing signal system; and (3) paint the school bus a different color from those under 625 ILCS 5/12-801. 625 ILCS 5/12-806(b).

### Taxable Fringe Benefits <sup>79</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall: (1) require that all use of District property or equipment by employees is for the District's convenience and best interests unless it is a Board-approved fringe benefit, and (2) ensure compliance with the Internal Revenue Service regulations regarding when to report an employee's personal use of District property or equipment as taxable compensation.

### Controls for Revolving Funds and Petty Cash <sup>80</sup>

Revolving funds and the petty cash system are established in Board policy 4:50, *Payment Procedures*. The Superintendent shall: (1) designate a custodian for each revolving fund and petty cash fund, (2) obtain a bond for each fund custodian, and (3) maintain the funds in compliance with this policy, State law, and ISBE rules. A check for the petty cash fund may be drawn payable to the designated petty cash custodian. Bank accounts for revolving funds are limited to a maximum balance of \$1,000. All expenditures from these bank accounts must be directly related to the purpose for which the account was established and supported with documentation, including signed invoices or receipts. All deposits into these bank accounts must be accompanied with a clear description of their intended purpose. The Superintendent or designee shall include checks written to reimburse revolving funds on the Board's monthly listing of bills indicating the recipient and including an explanation.

### Control Requirements for Checks <sup>81</sup>

The Board must approve all bank accounts opened or established in the District's or a District school's name or with the District's Federal Employer Identification Number. All checks issued by the School District must be signed by either the Treasurer or Board President, except that checks from accounts containing student activity funds or fiduciary funds and checks from revolving accounts may be signed by their respective account custodians.

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<sup>79</sup> The intent of this optional section is twofold: (1) to control personal use of district property and equipment; and (2) to ensure compliance with IRS rules. As to the first point, allowing personal use of district property or equipment is arguably prohibited by the Ill. Constitution, Art. VIII, Sec. 1 which states: "Public funds, property or credit shall be used only for public purposes." As to the second point, any fringe benefit an employer provides is taxable and must be included in the recipient's pay unless the law specifically excludes it. See Publication 15-B (2025), *Employer's Tax Guide to Fringe Benefits*, at: [www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p15b.pdf](https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p15b.pdf).

<sup>80</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.19(2); 23 Ill.Admin.Code §100.70. This paragraph's contents are mandatory, except for the \$1,000 cap on the maximum balance of revolving funds. The cap amount may be changed or the following alternative used: "Each revolving fund shall be maintained in a bank that has been approved by the Board and established in an amount approved by the Superintendent consistent with the annual budget."

The School Code defines petty cash as a type of revolving fund. *Id.* It and other revolving funds carry a standard balance and are regularly reimbursed to maintain the standard balance amount (generally referred to as an *imprest system* of financial accounting). In practice, petty cash is paid out of a *de minimis* cash amount maintained by a fund custodian. Disbursement from a revolving fund other than petty cash is typically made against an imprest checking account, by an authorized signor who is readily available in the district, e.g., a superintendent or building principal. The authorized signor manages the revolving fund and requests the board to reimburse the fund for expenses incurred to bring the imprest account back to its standard balance.

<sup>81</sup> This section is largely up to the local board's discretion; additional controls may be added. The following alternative to the second sentence will mandate two signatories for checks:

Two of the following individuals: the Treasurer, Board President, and/or Board Vice President, shall sign all checks issued by the School District, except that checks from accounts containing student activity funds or fiduciary funds and checks from revolving accounts may be signed by their respective account custodians.

See sample policy 4:90, *Student Activity and Fiduciary Funds*, for more information about a board's responsibilities for *student activity funds* and *fiduciary funds*. A board must comply with State law requirements concerning the use of facsimile or electronic signatures on checks. The Secretary of State, Index Department, maintains certified manual signatures of officers authorized to sign checks. Uniform Facsimile Signature of Public Officials Act, 30 ILCS 320/. Electronic records and signatures are governed by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act. 815 ILCS 333/. Attorneys disagree about the applicability of these laws to school districts.

## Internal Controls <sup>82</sup>

The Superintendent is primarily responsible for establishing and implementing a system of internal controls for safeguarding the District's financial condition; the Board, however, will oversee these safeguards. The control objectives are to ensure efficient business and financial practices, reliable financial reporting, and compliance with State law and Board policies, and to prevent losses from fraud, waste, and abuse,<sup>83</sup> as well as employee error, misrepresentation by third parties, or other imprudent employee action.

The Superintendent or designee shall annually audit the District's financial and business operations for compliance with established internal controls and provide the results to the Board. The Board may from time-to-time engage a third party to audit internal controls in addition to the annual audit.

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<sup>82</sup> This section is largely up to the local board's discretion. The annual audit must include a "review and testing of the internal control structure." 23 Ill.Admin.Code §100.110. This review's limited scope means that boards should not rely on it to reveal uncontrolled financial risks. The board's responsibility is to establish policy to safeguard the district's financial condition. Indeed, the oath of office includes this promise: "I shall respect taxpayer interests by serving as a faithful protector of the school district's assets." In this sample policy, the board sets the control objectives and the superintendent is responsible for developing an internal controls system. In addition, ISBE has issued guidance on internal controls pursuant to its administration of the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA), 30 ILCS 708/. See ISBE's *State and Federal Grant Administration Policy, Fiscal Requirements, and Procedures*, at: [www.isbe.net/Documents/fiscal\\_procedure\\_handbk.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/fiscal_procedure_handbk.pdf), which states that "to establish a strong control environment, grantees must...[d]esign internal controls that are in compliance with guidance in *Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States" (a free resource, available at: [www.gao.gov/assets/670/665712.pdf](http://www.gao.gov/assets/670/665712.pdf)) or the *Internal Control Integrated Framework* issued by the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission (a fee-based resource, available at: [www.coso.org/guidance-on-ic](http://www.coso.org/guidance-on-ic)). Boards that wish to take a larger oversight role regarding internal controls may list the numbered sentences in the IASB sample administrative procedure 4:80-AP1, *Checklist for Internal Controls*, as required inclusions in the superintendent's program for internal controls. This alternative, for insertion at the end of this section's first paragraph, follows:

The District's system of internal controls shall include the following:

1. All financial transactions must be properly authorized and documented.
2. Financial records and data must be accurate and complete.
3. Accounts payable must be accurate and punctual.
4. District assets must be protected from loss or misuse.
5. Incompatible duties should be segregated, if possible.
6. Accounting records must be periodically reconciled.
7. Equipment and supplies must be safeguarded.
8. Staff members with financial or business responsibilities must be properly trained and supervised, and must perform their responsibilities with utmost care and competence.
9. Any unnecessary weaknesses or financial risks must be promptly corrected.

<sup>83</sup> Unless specifically exempted, grantees receiving funds from any State agency, including ISBE, must comply with GATA and annually complete a *Fiscal and Administrative Internal Controls Questionnaire* (ICQ). The ICQ covers a number of different topics related to internal controls. Districts that are identified as having one or more areas of elevated risk based on their answers to the ICQ, are required to develop and implement corrective action to address the area(s). Districts that fail to take necessary corrective action to address weak areas of internal control put their grant funding at risk. One of the sections of the ICQ may address a grantee's internal controls for fraud, waste, and abuse, including whether the grantee has a *fraud awareness program*. See sample administrative procedures 4:80-AP1, *Checklist for Internal Controls*, and 4:80-AP2, *Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Awareness Program*, which incorporate ISBE-recommended practices related to fraud, waste, and abuse.



LEGAL REF.: 2 C.F.R. §200 et seq.  
30 ILCS 708/, Grant Accountability and Transparency Act, implemented by 44 Ill.Admin.Code 7000 et seq.  
105 ILCS 5/2-3.27, 5/2-3.28, 5/3-7, 5/3-15.1, 5/5-22, 5/10-21.4, 5/10-20.19, 5/10-22.8, and 5/17-1 et seq.  
23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 100.

CROSS REF.: 4:10 (Fiscal and Business Management), 4:50 (Payment Procedures), 4:55 (Use of Credit and Procurement Cards), 4:90 (Student Activity and Fiduciary Funds)



## **Operational Services**

### **Food Services** <sup>84</sup>

Good nutrition shall be promoted in the District's meal programs and in other food and beverages that are sold to students during the school day. The Superintendent shall manage a food service program that complies with this policy and is in alignment with School Board policy 6:50, *School Wellness*.

Food or beverage items sold to students as part of a reimbursable meal under federal law must follow the nutrition standards specified in the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture rules that implement the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Acts. Schools being reimbursed for meals under these laws are *participating schools*. <sup>85</sup>

The food service program in participating schools shall comply with the nutrition standards specified in the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture's *Smart Snacks rules* when it offers competitive foods to students on the school campus during the school day.<sup>86</sup> *Competitive foods* are all food and beverages that are offered by any person, organization or entity for sale to students on the school campus during the school day that are not reimbursed under programs authorized by federal law.<sup>87</sup> The food service programs in participating schools shall also comply with any applicable mandates in the Illinois State Board of Education's School Food Service rules implementing these federal laws and the Ill. School Breakfast and Lunch Program Act. <sup>88</sup>

All revenue from the sale of any food or beverages sold in competition with the School Breakfast Program or National School Lunch Program to students in food service areas during the meal period shall accrue to the nonprofit school lunch program account. <sup>89</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> State or federal law controls this policy's content. Districts that participate in programs under the National School Lunch Act and Child Nutrition Acts must establish policies and procedures as are necessary to ensure compliance with 7 C.F.R. §210.1(b).

The Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) limits the sale of competitive food and beverages sold to students on the school campus of any school that participates in the School Breakfast Program or the National School Lunch Program. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §305.15(a).

This policy's first sentence provides an opportunity for a school board to consider goals for the food service program and, if appropriate, amend the sentence. For example, a board may want to address the role of parents, alignment with curriculum, or the purpose of vending machines.

Subject to funding by the General Assembly, 105 ILCS 5/2-3.204, added by P.A. 103-1076, requires ISBE to secure one or more statewide master contracts for Halal and Kosher meals so districts may purchase them. If ISBE secures a master contract, it must notify districts of prepackaged meal options available under the contract. Districts may then purchase the prepackaged meals under the master contract. Districts must establish procedures regarding ordering, preparing, and serving prepackaged meal options offered under a statewide contract. *Id.*

<sup>85</sup> 7 C.F.R. Parts 210 & 220.

<sup>86</sup> Russell B. National School Lunch Act, 42 U.S.C. §1751 *et seq.*, as amended by the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-296); 7 C.F.R. §210.11(c).

<sup>87</sup> 7 C.F.R. §210.11(a)(2); 23 Ill. Admin. Code §305.5.

<sup>88</sup> 105 ILCS 125/5.5 requires districts that participate in the National School Lunch Program to provide a plant-based school lunch option that complies with federal nutritional standards to those students who submit a prior request to the district for the option. Districts may, but are not required to, incorporate a plant-based option into their planned menu as a means of compliance. See ISBE's *Dietary Accommodations* guidance, at: [www.isbe.net/Documents/K-Accommodations.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/K-Accommodations.pdf).

<sup>89</sup> This paragraph addresses the federal *requirements for competitive food* in 7 C.F.R. §210.11(b). This rule requires state agencies (ISBE) and/or [school districts] to "establish such policies and procedures as are necessary to ensure compliance with [the federal rules]. State agencies and/or [school districts] may impose additional restrictions on competitive foods...." ISBE's implementing rule, 23 Ill.Admin.Code §305.15(d), imposes additional restrictions by requiring "the revenue from any food or beverage meeting the competitive food standards sold to students in food service areas during the meal period accrue to the nonprofit school lunch program account."

LEGAL REF.: 42 U.S.C. §1751 et seq., Russell B. National School Lunch Act.  
42 U.S.C. §1771 et seq., Child Nutrition Act of 1966.  
7 C.F.R. Parts 210 (National School Lunch Program) and 220 (School Breakfast Program).  
105 ILCS 125/, School Breakfast and Lunch Program Act.  
23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 305, School Food Service.

CROSS REF.: 4:130 (Free and Reduced-Price Food Services), 6:50 (School Wellness)

## **General Personnel**

### **Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment**<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Federal and State law (see the policy's Legal References) require that all districts have a policy on equal employment opportunities and control this policy's content. **This is a complex, confusing, and highly litigated area of the law; consult the board attorney for advice on the application of these laws to specific situations.**

The School District shall provide equal employment opportunities<sup>91</sup> to all persons regardless of their race;<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> *Equal employment opportunities* apply to virtually all terms and conditions of employment, e.g., discharge, hire, promotion, pay, demotion, and benefits (see the policy's Legal References). The Ill. Constitution protects the following categories from discrimination in employment: race, color, creed, national ancestry, sex, and handicap. Art. I, §§17, 18, and 19. The Ill. Human Rights Act (IHRA) protects the following categories from discrimination in employment, whether *actual* or *perceived*: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, order of protection status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, reproductive health decisions, unfavorable discharge from military service, arrest record, conviction record (unless authorized by law), citizenship status, work authorization status. 775 ILCS 5/1-102(A), amended by P.A. 103-785; 5/1-103, amended by P.A. 103-785; and 775 ILCS 5/2-103.1. The IHRA also prohibits employers from using artificial intelligence (AI) in a manner that subjects employees to unlawful discrimination, and it requires employers to provide notice to employees when it uses AI with respect to recruitment, hiring, promotion, renewal of employment, selection for training, discharge, discipline, tenure, or the terms, privileges, or conditions of employment. 775 ILCS 5/2-102(L), added by P.A. 103-804, eff. 1-1-26.

The IHRA requires employers to annually disclose to the Ill. Dept. of Human Rights (IDHR) certain information about adverse judgments and administrative rulings where there was a finding of sexual harassment or unlawful discrimination under any federal, State, or local law, as well as data regarding settlement agreements, if requested by an IDHR investigator. 775 ILCS 5/2-108 (scheduled to be repealed on 1-1-30).

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII) prohibits discrimination because of an individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. 42 U.S.C. §2000e *et seq.*, amended by The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 (LLFPA), Pub.L. 111-2.

Under the Workplace Transparency Act (820 ILCS 96/), employers may not, as a condition of employment or continued employment, prevent prospective or current employees from making truthful statements or disclosures about alleged unlawful employment practices, including discrimination. *Id.* at 96/1-25.

The LLFPA clarifies that a discriminatory compensation decision or other practice occurs each time an employee is paid or receives a last benefits check pursuant to the discriminatory compensation decision as opposed to only from the time when the discriminatory compensation decision or other practice occurred. The LLFPA has no legislative history available to define what the phrase *or other practice* might mean beyond a discriminatory compensation decision; however, in a guidance document, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) states that practices "may include employer decisions about base pay or wages, job classifications, career ladder or other noncompetitive promotion denials, tenure denials, and failure to respond to requests for raises." See *Equal Pay Act of 1963 and Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009* (2014), at: [www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/equal-pay-act-1963-and-lilly-ledbetter-fair-pay-act-2009](http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/equal-pay-act-1963-and-lilly-ledbetter-fair-pay-act-2009).

The Ill. Equal Pay Act of 2003 (EPA) offers additional protection by prohibiting the payment of wages to one sex less than the opposite sex or to an African-American less than a non-African-American *for the same or substantially similar work*. 820 ILCS 112/. The Ill. Dept. of Labor (IDOL) enforces the EPA. The EPA also prohibits employers from requesting or requiring applicants to disclose wage or salary history as a condition of being considered for employment or as a condition of employment. *Id.* at 112/10(b-5). If an applicant voluntarily offers such information without prompting, an employer still cannot use that information in making an offer or determining future pay. See sample administrative procedure 5:30-AP1, *Interview Questions*, for sample permissible inquiries on this topic. Employers may seek wage or salary history from an applicant's current or former employer if that information is a matter of public record under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA); however, districts that wish to undertake such searches should exercise caution; the fact a district seeks out publicly available wage information could still be used against it in a pay discrimination claim. *Id.* at 112/10(b-10). Consult the board attorney for further guidance.

While not exhaustive, other laws protecting these and additional classifications are named in subsequent footnotes.

<sup>92</sup> The IHRA defines race to include traits associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists. 775 ILCS 5/1-103(M-5). The law allows employers to implement dress codes or adopt grooming policies that include restrictions on attire, clothing, or facial hair to maintain workplace safety or food sanitation. 775 ILCS 5/2-102(E-5). Title VII does not have a definition of race, but EEOC guidance provides that "[r]ace discrimination includes discrimination on the basis of ancestry or physical or cultural characteristics associated with a certain race, such as skin color, hair texture or styles, or certain facial features." See the EEOC's *Questions and Answers about Race and Color Discrimination in Employment*, at: [www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/questions-and-answers-about-race-and-color-discrimination-employment](http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/questions-and-answers-about-race-and-color-discrimination-employment).

color; creed; religion;<sup>93</sup> national origin; sex;<sup>94</sup> sexual orientation;<sup>95</sup> age;<sup>96</sup> ancestry; marital status;<sup>97</sup> arrest record;<sup>98</sup> military status; order of protection status;<sup>99</sup> unfavorable military discharge;<sup>100</sup> citizenship status provided the individual is authorized to work in the United States;<sup>101</sup> work authorization status;<sup>102</sup> use of

<sup>93</sup> 775 ILCS 5/2-102 of the IHRA contains a *religious discrimination* subsection. It expressly prohibits employers from requiring a person to violate a sincerely held religious belief to obtain or retain employment unless, after engaging in a bona fide effort, the employer demonstrates that it is unable to reasonably accommodate the employee's or prospective employee's sincerely held religious belief, practice, or observance without undue hardship on the conduct of the employer's business. Religious beliefs include, but are not limited to: the wearing of any attire, clothing, or facial hair in accordance with the requirements of his/her religion. 775 ILCS 5/2-102(E-5). Employers may, however, enact a dress code or grooming policy that restricts attire, clothing, or facial hair to maintain workplace safety or food sanitation. *Id.*

Regarding accommodation of an employee's religious practice under Title VII, the U.S. Supreme Court held in the case *Groff v. DeJoy*, 600 U.S. 447 (2023), that *undue hardship* means a burden that is "substantial in the overall context of an employer's business", rather than a mere *de minimis* standard. *Id.* at 468. In addition to the IHRA and Title VII (also discussed in f/n 2), see 775 ILCS 35/, Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

<sup>94</sup> Discrimination on the basis of sex under Title VII includes discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or transgender status. *Bostock v. Clayton Cnty.*, 140 S.Ct. 1731 (2020); *Hively v. Ivy Tech*, 853 F.3d 339 (7th Cir. 2017). In addition to the IHRA and Title VII (discussed in f/n 2), see Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX). 20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*; 34 C.F.R. Part 106. See sample policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*. The federal Equal Pay Act prohibits an employer from paying persons of one sex less than the wage paid to persons of the opposite sex for equal work. 29 U.S.C. §206(d). See f/n 2 above for more information on State equal pay protections, including on the basis of sex. The LLFPA defines *date of underpayment* as each time wages are underpaid. Employees have one year from the time they become aware of the underpayment to file a complaint with the IDOL. 820 ILCS 112/15(b).

<sup>95</sup> *Sexual orientation* means actual or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, or gender-related identity; it does not include a physical or sexual attraction to a minor by an adult. 775 ILCS 5/1-103(O-1).

<sup>96</sup> Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) (29 U.S.C. §621 *et seq.*), amended by LLFPA (see f/n 2). 29 C.F.R. Part 1625, amended the EEOC regulations under ADEA to reflect the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *General Dynamic Systems, Inc. v. Cline*, 540 U.S. 581 (2004), holding the ADEA permits employers to favor older workers because of age. Thus, favoring an older person over a younger person is not unlawful discrimination, even when the younger person is at least 40 years old.

<sup>97</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.4 and 775 ILCS 5/1-103(Q). The term *marital status* means an individual's legal status of being married, single, separated, divorced, or widowed. 775 ILCS 5/1-103(J). This statutory definition does not encompass the identity of one's spouse. Thus, school districts may adopt no-spouse policies. *Boaden v. Dept. of Law Enforcement*, 171 Ill.2d 230 (Ill. 1996).

<sup>98</sup> Districts may not make employment decisions on the basis of arrest history, but may use job-disqualifying criminal convictions provided specific conditions are met. 775 ILCS 5/2-103 and 5/2-103.1. See f/n 21, below. The Job Opportunities for Qualified Applicants Act, 820 ILCS 75/15, prohibits an employer from asking about a criminal record until the employer determines that the applicant is qualified for the position; however, this does not apply when employers are required to exclude applicants with certain criminal convictions from employment. School employers should limit their requests for criminal convictions to *job-disqualifying* convictions, as permitted by the IHRA. 775 ILCS 5/2-103.1. See also the IDHR's guidance, *Conviction Record Protection – Frequently Asked Questions*, at: <https://dhr.illinois.gov/conviction-record-protection-frequently-asked-questions.html> and the EEOC's guidance, *Consideration of Arrest and Conviction Records in Employment Decisions* (2012), at: [www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/arrest\\_conviction.cfm](http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/arrest_conviction.cfm).

<sup>99</sup> 775 ILCS 5/1-103(Q). The term *order of protection status* means a person protected under an order of protection issued pursuant to the Ill. Domestic Violence Act of 1986 (750 ILCS 60/), Article 112A of the Code of Criminal Procedure of 1963 (725 ILCS 5/112A-1.5), the Stalking No Contact Order Act (740 ILCS 21/), the Civil No Contact Order Act (740 ILCS 22/), or an order of protection issued by a court of another state. 775 ILCS 5/1-103(K-5).

<sup>100</sup> *Military status* means a person's status on active duty or in status as a veteran in the U.S. Armed Forces, veteran of any reserve component of U.S. Armed Forces, or current member or veteran of the Ill. Army National Guard or Ill. Air National Guard. 775 ILCS 5/1-103(J-1). *Unfavorable military discharge* does not include those characterized as RE-4 or *dishonorable*. 775 ILCS 5/1-103(P). The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 prohibits employers from discriminating or retaliating against any person for reasons related to past, present, or future service in a *uniformed service*. 38 U.S.C. §4301 *et seq.*

<sup>101</sup> 775 ILCS 5/1-102(C). According to the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, all employers must verify that employees are either U.S. citizens or authorized to work in the U.S. 8 U.S.C. §1324(a) *et seq.*

<sup>102</sup> 775 ILCS 5/2-102(A). *Work authorization status* means the status of being a person born outside of the United States, and not a U.S. citizen, who is authorized by the federal government to work in the United States. 775 ILCS 5/2-101(L). Under the IHRA, it is a civil rights violation for an employer to refuse to honor a legal work authorization; however, employers are not required to sponsor any applicant or employee to obtain or modify work authorization status, unless required by federal law. 775 ILCS 5/2-102(G); 775 ILCS 5/2-104(D).

lawful products while not at work;<sup>103</sup> being a victim of domestic violence, sexual violence, gender violence, or any other crime of violence;<sup>104</sup> genetic information;<sup>105</sup> physical or mental handicap or disability, if otherwise able to perform the essential functions of the job with reasonable accommodation;<sup>106</sup> pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions;<sup>107</sup> reproductive health decisions;<sup>108</sup> credit history, unless a

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<sup>103</sup> The Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act prohibits discrimination based on use of lawful products, e.g., alcohol, cannabis, and tobacco, off premises during non-working hours. 820 ILCS 55/5.

<sup>104</sup> 820 ILCS 180/30, Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA). *Gender violence* means: (1) one or more acts of violence or aggression that are a criminal offense under State law committed, at least in part, on the basis of a person's actual or perceived sex or gender, (2) a physical intrusion or invasion of a sexual nature under coercive conditions that is a criminal offense under State law, or (3) a threat to commit one of these acts. 820 ILCS 180/10(12.5). In certain circumstances, an employer can be held liable for gender-related violence that occurs in the workplace if the employer failed to investigate complaints or failed to supervise, train, or monitor an employee who engaged in the violence. 740 ILCS 82/11, added by P.A. 103-202, Gender Violence Act. *Other crime of violence* under VESSA means conduct prohibited by 720 ILCS 5/9 (homicide), 720 ILCS 5/11 (sex offenses), 720 ILCS 5/12 (bodily harm), 720 ILCS 5/26.5 (harassing and obscene communications), 720 ILCS 5/29D (terrorism), and 720 ILCS 5/33A (armed violence), or similar provision of the Criminal Code of 1961. 820 ILCS 180/10(2.5).

An employer is prohibited from discriminating against any individual, e.g., an applicant for employment, because he or she "is an employee whose employer is subject to Section 21 of the Workplace Violence Prevention Act." The Workplace Violence Prevention Act allows an employer to seek a *workplace protection restraining order* when there is a credible threat of violence at the workplace. 820 ILCS 275/. The law requires the employer seeking a *workplace protection restraining order* to notify the employee who is a victim of *unlawful violence*. 820 ILCS 275/21.

<sup>105</sup> Illinois' Genetic Information Privacy Act (GIPA) (410 ILCS 513/25) and Title II of Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA) (42 U.S.C. §2000ff *et seq.*). Both laws protect job applicants and current and former employees from discrimination based on their genetic information. Note that GIPA provides greater protections to Illinois employees than Title II of GINA. GIPA prohibits employers from penalizing employees who do not disclose genetic information or do not choose to participate in a program requiring disclosure of the employee's genetic information. See f/n 12 in sample policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, for the definition of genetic information and a detailed description of both statutes, including of Title I of GINA affecting the use of genetic information in health insurance. The EEOC vacated certain 2016 ADA and GINA wellness program regulations following an adverse court ruling. 83 Fed. Reg. 65296. Those rules provided guidance to employers on the extent to which they could use incentives (such as discounted health plan costs) to encourage employees to participate in wellness programs that asked for employee and family health information. Consult the board attorney for guidance regarding specific application of ADA and GINA and how they integrate with other related laws, e.g., the Family Medical Leave Act and other State laws governing time off for sickness and workers' compensation.

<sup>106</sup> Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) (42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq.*), amended by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) (Pub. L. 110-325) and modified by the LLFPA; Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. §701 *et seq.*).

<sup>107</sup> 775 ILCS 5/2-102(I). Employers must provide reasonable accommodations to employees with conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related conditions. 775 ILCS 5/2-102(J). Guidance from the IDHR is available at: <https://dhr.illinois.gov/publications/pregnancy-rights.html>. Employers are required to post a notice summarizing the right to be free from unlawful discrimination and the right to certain reasonable accommodations. 775 ILCS 5/2-102(K). The IDHR is required to prepare such a notice, retrievable from its website, which employers may use.

Federal law also prohibits employers from discriminating against employees and applicants on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. 42 U.S.C. §2000e(k). Similar to the IHRA, the federal Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) (42 U.S.C. §2000gg *et seq.*), added by Pub.L 117-328 and implemented by 29 C.F.R. Part 1636, requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations to an employee's known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions, unless the accommodation will cause the employer an undue hardship. For further information about implementation of the PWFA, see the EEOC's *Summary of Key Provisions of EEOC's Final Rule to Implement the PWFA*, at: [www.eeoc.gov/summary-key-provisions-eeocs-final-rule-implement-pregnant-workers-fairness-act-pwfa](http://www.eeoc.gov/summary-key-provisions-eeocs-final-rule-implement-pregnant-workers-fairness-act-pwfa). Pregnant workers with pregnancy-related impairments may also have disabilities for which they may be entitled to reasonable accommodation under the ADA. Guidance from the EEOC is available at: [www.eeoc.gov/pregnancy-discrimination](http://www.eeoc.gov/pregnancy-discrimination). State law also prohibits the State, which includes school districts, from interfering with or discriminating against an individual's fundamental right to continue a pregnancy or to have an abortion. 775 ILCS 55/.

<sup>108</sup> 775 ILCS 5/1-102(A) and 5/1-103(Q), amended by P.A. 103-785. *Reproductive health decisions* means a person's decisions regarding their use of: contraception; fertility or sterilization care; assisted reproductive technologies; miscarriage management care; healthcare related to the continuation or termination of pregnancy; or prenatal, intranatal, or postnatal care. *Id.* at 5/1-103(O-2).

satisfactory credit history is an established bona fide occupational requirement of a particular position;<sup>109</sup> conviction record, unless authorized by law;<sup>110</sup> family responsibilities;<sup>111</sup> or other legally protected categories.<sup>112 113 114 115</sup> No one will be penalized solely for his or her status as a registered qualifying patient

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<sup>109</sup> 820 ILCS 70/, Employee Credit Privacy Act. Unless a satisfactory credit history is an *established bona fide occupational requirement* of a particular position, an employer may not: (1) refuse to hire, discharge, or otherwise discriminate against an individual with respect to employment because of the individual's credit history or credit report; (2) inquire about an applicant's or employee's credit history; or (3) order or obtain an applicant's or employee's credit report from a consumer reporting agency. The Act identifies circumstances that permit a satisfactory credit history to be a job requirement, such as, the position's duties include custody of or unsupervised access to cash or marketable assets valued at \$2,500 or more. *Id.* at 70/10.

<sup>110</sup> 775 ILCS 5/2-103.1(A). The IHRA prohibits an employer from *disqualifying* or taking other *adverse action* against an applicant or employee based on a *conviction record* unless: (1) otherwise authorized by law; (2) there is a *substantial relationship* between the criminal offense and the employment sought; or (3) granting the employment would involve an unreasonable risk to property or to the safety or welfare of specific individuals or the general public. *Id.* Disqualification or adverse action includes refusal to hire, segregation, and actions with respect to recruitment, hiring, promotion, renewal of employment, selection for training or apprenticeship, discharge, discipline, tenure or terms, privileges, or conditions of employment. *Id.* If a board wants to terminate or take other adverse action against a *current* district employee based in whole or in part on a conviction record, it still must comply with all applicable statutory, policy, and bargaining agreement provisions. Boards should consult the board attorney to ensure all legal obligations are met.

Districts that wish to disqualify or take other adverse action against an applicant or employee based on a conviction record must first engage them in an *interactive assessment*, providing the individual with the opportunity to submit evidence in mitigation or to dispute the accuracy of the conviction record. See sample policy 5:30, *Hiring Process and Criteria*, at t/n 5, and sample administrative procedure 5:30-AP2, *Investigations*, for more information.

<sup>111</sup> 775 ILCS 5/2-102(A), amended by P.A. 103-797, prohibits an employer from refusing to hire, segregating, harassing, or making other employment-related decisions on the basis of an employee's family responsibilities. *Family responsibilities* means an employee's actual or perceived provision of *personal care* to a *covered family member*, as those terms are defined in the Employee Sick Leave Act, 820 ILCS 191/5.

<sup>112</sup> Insert the following optional sentence (775 ILCS 5/1-103(A) and 29 U.S.C. §631):

*Age*, as used in this policy, means the age of a person who is at least 40 years old.

<sup>113</sup> Insert the following optional provision (29 U.S.C. §705(10)(A)-(B), (20)(C)(v), (20)(D) and 42 U.S.C. §12114):

*Handicap* and *disability*, as used in this policy, excludes persons:

1. Currently using illegal drugs;
2. Having a currently contagious disease or infection and who, by reason of such disease or infection, would constitute a direct threat to the health or safety of other individuals or who, by reason of the currently contagious disease or infection, are unable to perform the duties of the job; or
3. Whose current alcohol use prevents them from performing the job's duties or constitutes a direct threat to the property or safety of others.

Persons who have successfully completed or are participating in a drug rehabilitation program are considered *disabled*.

<sup>114</sup> Districts may not make residency in the district a condition of employment for teachers or educational support personnel. 105 ILCS 5/24-4.1, 5/10-23.5. This ban on residency requirements for teachers applies only to instructional personnel, and not, for example, to assistant principals. *Owen v. Kankakee Sch. Dist.*, 261 Ill.App.3d 298 (3rd Dist. 1994). Districts also may not ask an applicant, or the applicant's previous employer, whether the applicant ever received, or filed a claim for, benefits under the Workers' Compensation Act or Workers' Occupational Diseases Act. 820 ILCS 55/10(a). Districts are also prohibited from requiring, requesting, or coercing an employee or potential employee to provide a username and password or any password or other related account information to gain or demand access to his or her personal online account. 820 ILCS 55/10(b). While the law does not prohibit employers from viewing public information, consult the board attorney before engaging in this practice.

<sup>115</sup> School districts must accommodate employees who choose to continue breastfeeding after returning to work. See 740 ILCS 137/, Right to Breastfeed Act; 820 ILCS 260/, Nursing Mothers in the Workplace Act (NMWA); and 29 U.S.C. §218d, added by Pub.L. 117-328. At least one court has ruled an implied private right of action may exist under the NMWA. *Spriesch v. City of Chicago*, 2017 WL 4864913 (N.D.Ill. 2017). See sample language for a personnel handbook in sample administrative procedure 5:10-AP, *Workplace Accommodations for Nursing Mothers*.



or a registered designated caregiver for purposes of the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act, 410 ILCS 130/.<sup>116</sup>

Persons who believe they have not received equal employment opportunities should report their claims to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and/or a Complaint Manager under Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, or in the case of denial of equal employment opportunities on the basis of race, color, or national origin, Board policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*. These individuals are listed below. No employee or applicant will be discriminated or retaliated against because he or she: (1) requested, attempted to request, used, or attempted to use a reasonable accommodation as allowed by the Illinois Human Rights Act, or (2) initiated a complaint, was a witness, supplied information, or otherwise participated in an investigation or proceeding involving an alleged violation of this policy or State or federal laws, rules or regulations, provided the employee or applicant did not make a knowingly false accusation nor provide knowingly false information.<sup>117</sup>

### Administrative Implementation

The Superintendent shall appoint a Nondiscrimination Coordinator for personnel who shall be responsible for coordinating the District's nondiscrimination efforts. The Nondiscrimination Coordinator may be the Superintendent or a Complaint Manager under Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

The Superintendent shall appoint a Title IX Coordinator to coordinate the District's efforts to comply with Title IX.<sup>118</sup>

The Superintendent shall insert into this policy the names, office addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of the District's current Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and Complaint Managers.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> 410 ILCS 130/40; 77 Ill.Admin.Code Part 946. To legally use medical cannabis, an individual must first become a *registered qualifying patient*. Their use of cannabis, e.g., permissible locations, is governed by the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act, 410 ILCS 130/. There are many situations in which no one, even a registered qualifying patient, may possess or use cannabis except as provided under *Ashley's Law* (105 ILCS 5/22-33), including in a school bus or on the grounds of any preschool, or primary or secondary school. 410 ILCS 130/30(a)(2) & (3). See sample policy 5:50, *Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition*, at f/n 9 for further discussion.

<sup>117</sup> 775 ILCS 5/6-101, amended by P.A. 103-472. Discrimination on the basis of a request for or use of a reasonable accommodation is a civil rights violation under the IHRA. *Id.* Most discrimination laws prohibit retaliation against employees who oppose practices made unlawful by those laws, including, for example, Title VII, Title IX, ADA, ADEA, VESSA, the EPA, and the Ill. Whistleblower Act (IWA).

The IWA prohibits employers from retaliating against employees who disclose or threaten to disclose information to a government or law enforcement agency about an employer's activity, policy, or practice that the employee believes, in good faith: (1) violates a State or federal law, rule, or regulation, or (2) poses a substantial and specific danger to employees, public health, or safety. 740 ILCS 174/15(b), amended by P.A. 103-867. See 740 ILCS 174/15, 20, 20.1, and 20.2, amended by P.A. 103-867, for other specific categories of retaliation prohibited by the IWA.

The Ill. False Claims Act defines *State* to include school districts. 740 ILCS 175/2(a). Thus, boards may seek a penalty from a person for making a false claim for money or property. 740 ILCS 175/4. For information regarding the IWA and the tort of retaliatory discharge, see *Thomas v. Guardsmark*, 487 F.3d 531 (7th Cir. 2007)(discussing the elements of retaliatory discharge and IWA); *Sherman v. Kraft General Foods, Inc.*, 272 Ill.App.3d 833 (4th Dist. 1995)(finding employee who reported asbestos hazard had a cause of action for retaliatory discharge).

<sup>118</sup> Title IX regulations require districts to designate and authorize at least one employee to coordinate efforts to comply with Title IX and to refer to that employee as the *Title IX Coordinator*. 34 C.F.R. §106.8(a). Districts must identify the Title IX Coordinator by name, office address, email address, and telephone number. *Id.* See f/ns 24 and 25 in sample policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. A district's Nondiscrimination Coordinator often also serves as its Title IX Coordinator.

<sup>119</sup> Best practice is that throughout the district's board policy manual, the same individual be named as Nondiscrimination Coordinator. In contrast, Complaint Managers identified in individual policies may vary depending upon local district needs. While the names and contact information are required by law to be listed, they are not part of the adopted policy and do not require board action. This allows for additions and amendments to the names and contact information when necessary. It is important for updated names and contact information to be inserted into this policy and regularly monitored.



**Nondiscrimination Coordinator:**

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Name

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Address

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Email

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Telephone**Complaint Managers:**

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Name

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Address

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Email

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Telephone**Title IX Coordinator:**

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Name

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Address

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Email

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Telephone

The Superintendent shall also use reasonable measures to inform staff members and applicants that the District is an equal opportunity employer, such as, by posting required notices and including this policy in the appropriate handbooks.<sup>120</sup>

**Minority Recruitment**<sup>121</sup>

The District will attempt to recruit and hire minority employees. The implementation of this policy may include advertising openings in minority publications, participating in minority job fairs, and recruiting at colleges and universities with significant minority enrollments. This policy, however, does not require or permit the District to give preferential treatment or special rights based on a protected status without evidence of past discrimination.

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<sup>120</sup> In addition to notifying employees of the Uniform Grievance Procedure, a district must notify them of the person(s) designated to coordinate the district's compliance with Title IX and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. 34 C.F.R. §§106.8(a), 104.8(a). A comprehensive faculty handbook can provide required notices, along with other important information, to recipients. The handbook can be developed by the building principal, but should be reviewed and approved by the superintendent and school board. Any *working conditions* contained in the handbook may be subject to mandatory collective bargaining.

<sup>121</sup> All districts must have a policy on minority recruitment. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.7a. Unlike minority recruitment efforts, affirmative action plans are subject to significant scrutiny because of the potential for reverse discrimination. The U.S. Constitution's guarantee of equal protection prohibits school districts from using racial hiring quotas without evidence of past discrimination. See 29 C.F.R. §1608.1 *et seq.* (EEOC's guidelines for affirmative action plans); Wygant v. Jackson Bd. of Ed., 476 U.S. 267 (1986) (The goal of remedying societal discrimination does not justify race-based layoffs.); City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co., 488 U.S. 469 (1989) (Minority contractor quota struck; quotas must be narrowly tailored to remedy past discrimination and the city failed to identify the need for remedial action and whether race-neutral alternatives existed.).

The IHRA states that it shall not be construed as requiring any employer to give preferential treatment or special rights based on sexual orientation or to implement affirmative action policies or programs based on sexual orientation. 775 ILCS 5/1-101.1.

- LEGAL REF.: 8 U.S.C. §1324a et seq., Immigration Reform and Control Act.  
 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.  
 29 U.S.C. §206(d), Equal Pay Act.  
 29 U.S.C. §218d, Fair Labor Standards Act.  
 29 U.S.C. §621 et seq., Age Discrimination in Employment Act.  
 29 U.S.C. §701 et seq., Rehabilitation Act of 1973.  
 38 U.S.C. §4301 et seq., Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (1994).  
 42 U.S.C. §1981 et seq., Civil Rights Act of 1991.  
 42 U.S.C. §2000d et seq., Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 34 C.F.R. Part 100.  
 42 U.S.C. §2000e et seq., Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 29 C.F.R. Part 1601.  
 42 U.S.C. §2000ff et seq., Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008.  
 42 U.S.C. §2000gg et seq., Pregnant Workers Fairness Act; 29 C.F.R. Part 1636.  
 42 U.S.C. §2000e(k), Pregnancy Discrimination Act.  
 42 U.S.C. §12111 et seq., Americans with Disabilities Act, Title I.  
 Ill. Constitution, Art. I, §§17, 18, and 19.  
 105 ILCS 5/10-20.7, 5/10-20.7a, 5/10-21.1, 5/10-22.4, 5/10-23.5, 5/22-19, 5/24-4, 5/24-4.1, and 5/24-7.  
 410 ILCS 130/40, Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act.  
 410 ILCS 513/25, Genetic Information Privacy Act.  
 740 ILCS 174/, Ill. Whistleblower Act.  
 775 ILCS 5/1-103, 5/2-101, 5/2-102, 5/2-103, 5/2-103.1, 5/2-104(D) and 5/6-101, Ill. Human Rights Act.  
 775 ILCS 35/, Religious Freedom Restoration Act.  
 820 ILCS 55/10, Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act.  
 820 ILCS 70/, Employee Credit Privacy Act.  
 820 ILCS 75/, Job Opportunities for Qualified Applicants Act.  
 820 ILCS 112/, Ill. Equal Pay Act of 2003.  
 820 ILCS 180/30, Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act.  
 820 ILCS 260/, Nursing Mothers in the Workplace Act.
- CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:30 (Hiring Process and Criteria), 5:40 (Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease), 5:50 (Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition), 5:70 (Religious Holidays), 5:180 (Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity), 5:200 (Terms and Conditions of Employment and Dismissal), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence), 5:270 (Employment At-Will, Compensation, and Assignment), 5:300 (Schedules and Employment Year), 5:330 (Sick Days, Vacation, Holidays, and Leaves), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 8:70 (Accommodating Individuals with Disabilities)

## **General Personnel**

### **Workplace Harassment Prohibited** <sup>122</sup>

The School District expects the workplace environment to be productive, respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment. District employees shall not engage in harassment or abusive conduct on the basis of an individual's actual or perceived race<sup>123</sup>, color, religion<sup>124</sup>, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, citizenship status, work authorization status, disability, pregnancy, marital status,

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<sup>122</sup> State or federal law controls this policy's content. Federal law requires districts to take action to prevent sexual harassment and to disseminate a policy regarding its prohibition of sex discrimination. 29 C.F.R. §1604.11(f); 34 C.F.R. §106.8(b). State law requires districts to establish a policy to prohibit sexual harassment. 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a). See f/n 4 below. Harassment based on a protected status is a form of discrimination that violates many State and federal laws (see the policy's Legal References).

Workplace harassment policies have typically focused on *sexual* harassment since it receives the most attention. However, the broad prohibitions against discrimination in State and federal civil rights laws will cover harassing conduct that is motivated by animus against any protected status. See *Porter v. Erie Foods Int'l, Inc.*, 576 F.3d 629 (7th Cir. 2009) (recognizing a cause of action for race harassment). For a list of protected statuses, see sample policy 5:10, *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment*. This policy prohibiting harassment has a separate section on sexual harassment because of the extensive statutory and case law regarding it.

Under the Ill. Human Rights Act (IHRA), harassment is unlawful if it has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. 775 ILCS 5/2-101(E-1). *Working environment* is not limited to a physical location to which an employee is assigned. *Id.* Harassment is unlawful on the basis of the specifically-listed categories in this policy whether that status is *actual* or *perceived*. *Id.*

An employer is liable under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII) for an employee's harassment of a co-worker if the employer was negligent with respect to the offensive behavior by, for example, failing to take remedial action when it knew or should have known about the harassment. 42 U.S.C. §2000e *et seq.* An employer is liable under the IHRA for harassment by its nonmanagerial and nonsupervisory employees if it becomes aware of the conduct and fails to take reasonable corrective measures. 775 ILCS 5/2-102(A). However, when the perpetrator is the victim's supervisor, the employer will be vicariously liable for the supervisor's actions. Lack of knowledge of a supervisor's misconduct is no defense. *Burlington Indus. v. Ellerth*, 524 U.S. 742 (1998); *Faragher v. City of Boca Raton*, 524 U.S. 775 (1998). A *supervisor* is someone who has the authority to demote, discharge, or take other negative job action against the victim. *Vance v. Ball State Univ.*, 570 U.S. 421 (2013). Note that the IHRA (775 ILCS 5/2-102(D)) imposes strict liability on the employer when an employee has been sexually harassed by supervisory personnel regardless of whether the harasser has any authority over the complainant. *Sangamon Cnty. Sheriff's Dept. v. Ill. Human Rights Com'n*, 233 Ill.2d 125 (Ill. 2009). Additionally, under the IHRA, an employer is liable for the harassment of *nonemployees* by nonmanagerial and nonsupervisory employees if it becomes aware of the conduct and fails to take reasonable corrective measures. 775 ILCS 5/2-102(A-10) and (D-5). Nonemployees are those who are directly performing services for an employer pursuant to a contract, such as contractors or consultants. *Id.*

Not all harassing conduct is unlawful discrimination, even if it is disruptive and hurtful. If a board wants to include language in this policy prohibiting employees from engaging in intimidating or offensive conduct that is *not* a civil rights violation, it should consult the board attorney.

For additional resources, see the EEOC's *Enforcement Guidance on Harassment in the Workplace* at: [www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-harassment-workplace](http://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/enforcement-guidance-harassment-workplace) and its accompanying summary at: [www.eeoc.gov/summary-key-provisions-eeoc-enforcement-guidance-harassment-workplace](http://www.eeoc.gov/summary-key-provisions-eeoc-enforcement-guidance-harassment-workplace).

<sup>123</sup> See sample policy 5:10, *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment*, at f/n 3, for information about the definition of *race*.

<sup>124</sup> The IHRA contains a *religious discrimination* subsection. 775 ILCS 5/2-102(E-5). It expressly prohibits employers from requiring a person to violate a sincerely held religious belief to obtain or retain employment unless, after engaging in a bona fide effort, the employer demonstrates that it is unable to reasonably accommodate the employee's or prospective employee's sincerely held religious belief, practice, or observance without undue hardship on the conduct of the employer's business. See sample policy 5:10, *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment*, at f/n 4, for further discussion. Religious beliefs include, but are not limited to: the wearing of any attire, clothing, or facial hair in accordance with the requirements of his/her religion. *Id.* Employers may, however, enact a dress code or grooming policy that restricts attire, clothing, or facial hair to maintain workplace safety or food sanitation. *Id.*

family responsibilities,<sup>125</sup> reproductive health decisions,<sup>126</sup> order of protection status, military status, or unfavorable discharge from military service, nor shall they engage in harassment or abusive conduct on the basis of an individual's other protected status identified in Board policy 5:10, *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment*. Harassment of students, including, but not limited to, sexual harassment, is prohibited by Board policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*; 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*; 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*; 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*; 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*; and 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*.

The District will take remedial and corrective action to address unlawful workplace harassment, including sexual harassment.

### Sexual Harassment Prohibited<sup>127</sup>

The District shall provide a workplace environment free of verbal, physical, or other conduct or communications constituting harassment on the basis of sex as defined and otherwise prohibited by State and

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<sup>125</sup> 775 ILCS 5/2-101(E-1), amended by P.A. 103-797. See sample policy 5:10, *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment*, at f/n 22, for additional information.

<sup>126</sup> 775 ILCS 5/1-102(A) and 5/1-103(Q), amended by P.A. 103-785. See sample policy 5:10, *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment*, at f/n 19, for additional information.

<sup>127</sup> The IHRA (775 ILCS 5/2-102(D)) provides that sexual harassment is a civil rights violation:

For any employer, employee, agent of any employer, employment agency or labor organization to engage in sexual harassment; provided, that an employer shall be responsible for sexual harassment of the employer's employees by non-employees or non-managerial and non-supervisory employees only if the employer becomes aware of the conduct and fails to take reasonable corrective measures.

See sample policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, for the definition of Title IX sexual harassment (20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*), and see f/n 3 of it for examples of employee sexual harassment that may violate Title IX. Title IX's reach is broad because an alleged *complainant* or alleged *respondent* may be *anyone* in the district's educational program or activity. This includes applicants for employment, students, parents/guardians, any employee, and third parties. Districts are liable for Title IX sexual harassment when *any* district employee has actual knowledge of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment against anyone in the district (except when the only employee with knowledge is the perpetrator of the alleged sexual harassment). 34 C.F.R. §106.30.

The State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (SOEEA) (5 ILCS 430/70-5(a)) requires governmental entities (including school districts) to adopt an ordinance or resolution establishing a policy to prohibit sexual harassment. Unlike the powers granted by the Ill. General Assembly to municipalities to pass ordinances, school boards govern by rules referred to as *policies*. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.5. Further, school boards may only exercise powers given to them that are consistent with the School Code that may be requisite or proper for the maintenance, operation, and development of any school or schools under the jurisdiction of the board. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.

The policy must include, at a minimum: (1) a prohibition on sexual harassment; (2) details on how an individual can report an allegation of sexual harassment, including options for making a confidential report to a supervisor, ethics officer, Inspector General, or the Ill. Dept. of Human Rights (IDHR); (3) a prohibition on retaliation for reporting sexual harassment allegations, including availability of whistleblower protections under the SOEEA, the Whistleblower Act (740 ILCS 174/), and the IHRA (775 ILCS 5/); (4) the consequences: (a) of a violation of the prohibition on sexual harassment and (b) for knowingly making a false report; and (5) a mechanism for reporting and independent review of allegations of sexual harassment made against an elected official of the governmental unit by another elected official of a governmental unit. 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a). Sample policy 2:105, *Ethics and Gift Ban*, covers item (5) of this list.

federal law. The District provides annual sexual harassment prevention training in accordance with State law.  
128

District employees shall not make unwelcome sexual advances or request sexual favors or engage in any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.<sup>129</sup> Sexual harassment prohibited by this policy includes, but is not limited to, verbal, physical, or other conduct. The terms intimidating, hostile, or offensive include, but are not limited to, conduct that has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort. Sexual harassment will be evaluated in light of all the circumstances.

#### Making a Report or Complaint

Employees and *nonemployees*<sup>130</sup> (persons who are not otherwise employees and are directly performing services for the District pursuant to a contract with the District, including contractors, and consultants) are encouraged to promptly report information regarding violations of this policy. Individuals may choose to report to a person of the individual's same gender. Every effort should be made to file such reports or complaints as soon as possible, while facts are known and potential witnesses are available.

Aggrieved individuals, if they feel comfortable doing so, should directly inform the person engaging in the harassing conduct or communication that such conduct or communication is offensive and must stop.

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<sup>128</sup> 775 ILCS 5/2-109. Districts may use a free, online model program to be offered by the Ill. Dept. of Human Rights (IDHR), develop their own program, or utilize a combination of the two, as long as it includes the following, at a minimum: (1) an explanation of sexual harassment consistent with the IHRA, (2) examples of conduct that constitutes unlawful harassment, (3) a summary of relevant federal and State law concerning sexual harassment and remedies available to victims of sexual harassment, and (4) a summary of responsibilities of employers in the prevention, investigation, and corrective measures of sexual harassment. *Id.* at 5/2-109(B). For IDHR's online model program, see its *Model Sexual Harassment Prevention Training Program* page at: <https://www2.illinois.gov/dhr/Training/Pages/State-of-Illinois-Sexual-Harassment-Prevention-Training-Model.aspx>. Employers that fail to comply with this training requirement may face financial penalties. *Id.* Training on other types of workplace harassment is not required by law; however it is best practice.

<sup>129</sup> This definition is from State and federal law. 775 ILCS 5/2-101(E) and 29 C.F.R. §1604.11. *Working environment* is not limited to a physical location to which an employee is assigned. 775 ILCS 5/2-101(E). The harassing conduct must be severe or pervasive so as to alter the conditions of the employee's work environment by creating a hostile or abusive situation. *Williams v. Waste Mgmt.*, 361 F.3d 1021 (7th Cir. 2004). The surrounding circumstances, expectations, and relationships will distinguish between teasing or rough-housing and conduct that a reasonable person would find severely hostile or abusive. In addition, while same-sex gender harassment claims are actionable, the victim must show that s/he suffered disadvantageous employment conditions to which members of the other sex were not exposed. *Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Servs.*, 523 U.S. 75 (1998).

<sup>130</sup> 775 ILCS 5/2-102(A-10) and (D-5). See also f/n 1, above, for discussion regarding nonemployees.

### Whom to Contact with a Report or Complaint <sup>131</sup>

An employee should report claims of harassment, including making a confidential report, to any of the following: his/her immediate supervisor, the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager. <sup>132</sup>

An employee may also report claims using Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. If a claim is reported using Board policy 2:260, then the Complaint Manager shall process and review the claim according to that policy, in addition to any response required by this policy.

The Superintendent shall insert into this policy the names, office addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of the District's current Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, <sup>133</sup> and Complaint Managers.

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<sup>131</sup> While the names and contact information are required by law to be listed, they are not part of the adopted policy and do not require board action. This allows for additions and amendments to the names and contact information when necessary. It is important for updated names and contact information to be inserted into this policy and regularly monitored.

<sup>132</sup> 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a) requires that a school board policy prohibiting sexual harassment include details for reporting an allegation of sexual harassment, including options for making a confidential report to a supervisor and an ethics officer. 5 ILCS 430/20-23 defines ethics officers as being designated by State agencies under the jurisdiction of the Executive Ethics Commission. School districts are not State agencies (5 ILCS 430/1-5) and do not have ethics officers; thus, this sample policy substitutes Complaint Manager for ethics officer. Note also that the IDHR has established a Sexual Harassment Hotline Call Center and website to help the public find resources and assistance for the filing of sexual harassment complaints. The hotline can be reached Monday through Friday with the exception of State holidays, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., at 1-877-236-7703. See <https://shdh.illinois.gov/>. All communications received by the IDHR are exempt from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

<sup>133</sup> Title IX regulations require districts to identify the Title IX Coordinator by name, office address, email address, and telephone number. For further discussion of the Title IX Coordinator, see f/n 17 in sample policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*. A district's Nondiscrimination Coordinator often also serves as its Title IX Coordinator.

**Nondiscrimination Coordinator:**

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Name

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Address

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Email

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Telephone**Complaint Managers:**

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Name

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Address

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Email

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Telephone**Title IX Coordinator:**

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Name

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Address

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Email

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Telephone**Investigation Process**

Any District employee who receives a report or complaint of harassment must promptly forward the report or complaint to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, or a Complaint Manager. Any employee who fails to promptly forward a report or complaint may be disciplined, up to and including discharge.

Reports and complaints of harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the District's duty to investigate and maintain a workplace environment that is productive, respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment.

For any report or complaint alleging sexual harassment that, if true, would implicate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*), the Title IX Coordinator or designee shall consider whether action under Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, should be initiated.

For any report or complaint alleging harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall investigate under Board policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*.

For any other alleged workplace harassment that does not require action under Board policies 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, or 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall consider whether an investigation under Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and/or 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*,<sup>134</sup> should be initiated, regardless of whether a written report or complaint is filed.

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<sup>134</sup> See sample administrative procedure 5:120-AP2, *Employee Conduct Standards* and its exhibit 5:120-AP2, E, *Expectations and Guidelines for Employee-Student Boundaries*.

## Reports That Involve Alleged Incidents of Sexual Abuse of a Child by School Personnel <sup>135</sup>

An *alleged incident of sexual abuse* is an incident of sexual abuse of a child, as defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-9.1A(b), that is alleged to have been perpetrated by school personnel, including a school vendor or volunteer, that occurred: on school grounds during a school activity; or outside of school grounds or not during a school activity.

Any complaint alleging an incident of sexual abuse shall be processed and reviewed according to Board policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*. In addition to reporting the suspected abuse, the complaint shall also be processed under Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, or Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

## Enforcement <sup>136</sup>

A violation of this policy by an employee may result in discipline, up to and including discharge.<sup>137</sup> A violation of this policy by a third party will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the District, e.g., vendor, parent/guardian, invitee, etc. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding harassment will likewise be subject to disciplinary action, which for an employee that may be up to and including discharge.<sup>138</sup>

## Retaliation Prohibited

An employee's employment, compensation, or work assignment shall not be adversely affected by complaining or providing information about harassment. Retaliation against employees for bringing complaints or providing information about harassment is prohibited (see Board policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, and 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*), and depending upon the law governing the complaint,

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<sup>135</sup> Required for districts located within a county served by an accredited Children's Advocacy Center (CAC). Delete this subhead if your school district is within a county not served by an accredited CAC. 105 ILCS 5/22-85 (governing the investigation of an *alleged incident of sexual abuse* of any child within any Illinois counties served by a CAC). For further discussion see f/n 14 in sample policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*.

<sup>136</sup> See *Berry v. Delta Airlines*, 260 F.3d 803, 811 (7th Cir. 2001) ("If an employer takes reasonable steps to discover and rectify the harassment of its employees ... it has discharged its legal duty.")

In addition to violating other civil rights laws, a school district violates the *public accommodations* article in the IHRA if it fails to take corrective action to stop severe or pervasive harassment. 775 ILCS 5/5-102 and 5/5-102.2, amended by P.A. 103-472.

<sup>137</sup> 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a)(consequences of a violation of the prohibition on sexual harassment). When discharge is the penalty, examine 50 ILCS 205/3c. It requires a school district to post on its website and make available to news media specific information about severance agreements that it enters into because an employee or contractor was found to have engaged in sexual harassment or sexual discrimination, as defined by the IHRA or Title VII. *Id.* Additionally, under the Workplace Transparency Act (WTA), employers may not require confidentiality clauses in settlement or termination agreements involving alleged unlawful employment practices under federal or State civil rights laws, except under specific conditions. 820 ILCS 96/1-30.

Prior to the passage of 50 ILCS 205/3c and the WTA, members of the public could already access copies of severance agreements between school districts and their former employees under FOIA. The Ill. Atty. Gen. Public Access Counselor (PAC) directed a public body to release a settlement agreement that arose out of claims of sexual harassment. PAO 14-4. The PAC noted that the public body could not withhold the entire settlement agreement under 5 ILCS 140/7(1)(c), which exempts personal information that would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy. Instead, it could redact personal information from the agreement, such as the complainants' names in order to protect their privacy. *Id.* However, data regarding settlement agreements involving allegations of sexual harassment or other unlawful discrimination that an employer must report to IDHR under 775 ILCS 5/2-108 is categorically exempt from FOIA. 5 ILCS 140/7.5(ss). See f/n 7 in sample policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, for more discussion about reconciling 50 ILCS 205/3c with another new law, the Government Severance Pay Act (GSPA) (5 ILCS 415/10(a)(1)), which prohibits school district employees with contract provisions for severance pay to receive any severance pay if they are fired for *misconduct* by the board.

<sup>138</sup> 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a)(consequences for knowingly making a false report of sexual harassment).



whistleblower protection may be available under the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/), the Whistleblower Act (740 ILCS 174/), and/or the Ill. Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/).<sup>139</sup>

An employee should report allegations of retaliation to his/her immediate supervisor, the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager.

Employees who retaliate against others for reporting or complaining of violations of this policy or for participating in the reporting or complaint process will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

#### Recourse to State and Federal Fair Employment Practice Agencies<sup>140</sup>

The District encourages all employees who have information regarding violations of this policy to report the information pursuant to this policy. The following government agencies are available to assist employees: the Ill. Dept. of Human Rights and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

The Superintendent shall also use reasonable measures to inform staff members, applicants, and nonemployees of this policy, which shall include posting on the District website and/or making this policy available in the District's administrative office, and including this policy in the appropriate handbooks.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Id. (prohibition on retaliation for reporting sexual harassment allegations, including availability of whistleblower protections under the SOEEA, the Whistleblower Act (740 ILCS 174/), and the IHRA (775 ILCS 5/)).

Crawford v. Metro. Gov't of Nashville & Davidson Cnty., 555 U.S. 271 (2009) (holding the anti-retaliation provision in Title VII protects an employee who spoke out about harassment, not only on his or her own initiative, but also in answering questions during an employer's internal investigation).

<sup>140</sup> 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a)(how an individual can report an allegation of sexual harassment, including options for making a confidential report to the Inspector General or the IDHR). This sample policy does not reference the Inspector General because the Inspector General does not have jurisdiction over public school districts. See 5 ILCS 430/20 (executive inspectors general), 5 ILCS 430/25 (legislative inspector general). School districts must also annually disclose to IDHR certain data about *adverse judgment or administrative rulings* made against them where there was a finding of sexual harassment or unlawful discrimination under federal, State, or local laws. 775 ILCS 5/2-108 (scheduled to be repealed on 1-1-30). See IDHR's *FAQ for Employers under Section 5/2-108*, at: <https://dhr.illinois.gov/legal/report-adverse-judgments-and-administrative-rulings.html>.

<sup>141</sup> A district must notify employees of the grievance procedure and the person(s) designated to coordinate the district's compliance with Title IX. 34 C.F.R. §106.8. A comprehensive employee handbook can provide required notices, along with other important information to recipients. The handbook can be developed by the building principal, but should be reviewed and approved by the superintendent and board. Any *working conditions* contained in the handbook may be subject to mandatory collective bargaining.

Informing nonemployees is generally not required by law. However, given the potential for employer liability under the IHRA for harassment of nonemployees, best practice is to publicize this policy to those individuals as well.

LEGAL REF.: 42 U.S.C. §2000e et seq., Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 29 C.F.R. §1604.11.  
 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.  
 5 ILCS 430/70-5(a), State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.  
 775 ILCS 5/2-101(E) and (E-1), 5/2-102(A), (A-10), (D-5), 5/2-102(E-5), 5/2-109, 5/5-102, and 5/5-102.2, Ill. Human Rights Act.  
 56 Ill. Admin.Code Parts 2500, 2510, 5210, and 5220.  
Vance v. Ball State Univ., 570 U.S. 421 (2013).  
Crawford v. Metro. Gov't of Nashville & Davidson Cnty., 555 U.S. 271 (2009).  
Jackson v. Birmingham Bd. of Educ., 544 U.S. 167 (2005).  
Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Servs., 523 U.S. 75 (1998).  
Burlington Indus. v. Ellerth, 524 U.S. 742 (1998).  
Faragher v. City of Boca Raton, 524 U.S. 775 (1998).  
Harris v. Forklift Systems, 510 U.S. 17 (1993).  
Franklin v. Gwinnett Co. Public Schools, 503 U.S. 60 (1992).  
Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson, 477 U.S. 57 (1986).  
Porter v. Erie Foods Int. Inc., 576 F.3d 629 (7th Cir. 2009).  
Williams v. Waste Mgmt., 361 F.3d 1021 (7th Cir. 2004).  
Berry v. Delta Airlines, 260 F.3d 803 (7th Cir. 2001).  
Sangamon Cnty. Sheriff's Dept. v. Ill. Human Rights Com'n, 233 Ill.2d 125 (Ill. 2009).

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 4:60 (Purchases and Contracts), 5:10 (Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)

## General Personnel

### Expenses <sup>142</sup>

The Board regulates the reimbursement of all travel, meal, and lodging expenses by resolution.<sup>143</sup> Money shall not be advanced or reimbursed, or purchase orders issued for: (1) the expenses of any person except the employee,<sup>144</sup> (2) anyone's personal expenses,<sup>145</sup> or (3) entertainment expenses.<sup>146</sup> Entertainment includes, but is not limited to, shows, amusements, theaters, circuses, sporting events, or any other place of public or private entertainment or amusement, unless the entertainment is ancillary to the purpose of the program or event.<sup>147</sup> The District is not responsible for losses due to an employee's own negligence, losses due to normal wear, or losses due to theft, unless the theft was a result of the District's negligence.<sup>148</sup> Employees must submit the appropriate itemized, signed, standardized form(s) to support any requests for expense advancements, reimbursements, or purchase orders that show the following:<sup>149</sup>

1. The amount of the estimated or actual expense, with attached receipts for actual incurred expenses.

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<sup>142</sup> State law controls this policy's content. 105 ILCS 5/10-9, 5/10-10, and 5/22-1 (no compensation allowed, conflicts of interest prohibited); 105 ILCS 5/10-22.32 (expense advancements); 820 ILCS 115/9.5 (regulation of employee expenditures under the Ill. Wage Payment and Collection Act)(WPCA); the Local Government Travel Expense Control Act (ECA) 50 ILCS 150/10 (regulation of travel expenses); and the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA), 30 ILCS 708/130 (regulation of travel expenses under grants). See f/n 13 of sample policy 2:125, *Board Member Compensation; Expenses*.

<sup>143</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.32 states that "[t]he school board may advance to teachers and other certified employees the anticipated actual and necessary expenses incurred in attending meetings that are related to that employee's duties and will contribute to the professional development of that employee." This policy expands beyond those two categories (105 ILCS 5/10-20) of employees, and the limited purpose of attending meetings, to reimburse all employees for approved expenses necessary for the employee to perform his or her duties.

The WPCA, 820 ILCS 115/9.5 defines *necessary expenditures* as all reasonable expenditures or losses required of the employee in the discharge of employment duties and that inure to the primary benefit of the employer.

This policy contains an item on which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts upon wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment, is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right. If a local collective bargaining agreement contains a provision on expenses, consult the board attorney about how this policy may impact it.

<sup>144</sup> 50 ILCS 150/10. See f/ns 4 through 8 in sample policy 2:125, *Board Member Compensation; Expenses*, for more discussion.

For a sample resolution, see sample exhibit 2:125-E3, *Resolution to Regulate Expense Reimbursements*.

<sup>145</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.32. The final paragraph of this law prohibits money for expenses to be advanced or reimbursed to any person other than a board member or employee of the district.

<sup>146</sup> Optional. *Personal expenses* are not defined in 50 ILCS 150/5 or 105 ILCS 5/10-22.32. Consult the board attorney about this term and delete it only at the direction of the board attorney. Excluding personal expenses from advancements, reimbursements, and purchase orders is a generally-accepted best practice. The practice also aligns well with the State's widely-accepted transparency movement. Reimbursing personal expenses is also a magnet for the media.

<sup>147</sup> 50 ILCS 150/25.

<sup>148</sup> *Id.* at 150/5.

<sup>149</sup> Optional. 820 ILCS 115/9. The purpose of this sentence is to provide information to employees and the community about WPCA exclusions from reimbursable expenses.

<sup>150</sup> 50 ILCS 150/20. The School Code uses the term voucher for expense advancements (105 ILCS 5/10-22.32); the ECA requires submission of itemized, signed, standardized forms. Both sample exhibits 5:60-E1, *Employee Expense Reimbursement Form*, and 5:60-E2, *Employee Estimated Expense Approval Form*, incorporate voucher into the ECA's requirement to use standardized forms. See f/n 12 below, and see also f/n 20 of sample policy 2:125, *Board Member Compensation; Expenses*, for more discussion.

Additionally, while the WPCA (820 ILCS 115/9.5(a)) allows employees to submit a signed statement regarding any receipts when supporting documentation is nonexistent, missing, or lost, 820 ILCS 115/9.5(b) outlines that employers are not liable for expenditure amounts that exceed the specifications or guidelines the employer has established for necessary expenditures. The ECA requires districts to establish such specifications and guidelines. 50 ILCS 150/10 and 20 (regulation of travel expenses).

2. The name and title of the employee who is requesting the expense advancement or reimbursement. Receipts from group functions must include the names, offices, and job titles of all participants.<sup>150</sup>
3. The date(s) of the official business on which the expense advancement, reimbursement, or purchase order will be or was expended.<sup>151</sup>
4. The nature of the official business conducted when the expense advancement, reimbursement, or purchase order will be or was expended.<sup>152</sup>

### Advancements

The Superintendent may advance expenses to teachers and other licensed employees for the anticipated actual and necessary expenses to be incurred while attending meetings that are related to their duties and will contribute to their professional development,<sup>153</sup> provided they fall below the maximum allowed in the Board's expense regulations.<sup>154</sup>

Expense advancement requests must be submitted to the Superintendent or designee on the District's standardized estimated expense approval form for employees. After spending expense advancements, employees must use the District's standardized expense reimbursement form and submit to the Superintendent: (a) the itemized, signed advancement voucher that was issued, and (b) the amount of actual expenses by attaching receipts.<sup>155</sup> Any portion of an expense advancement not used must be returned to the District.<sup>156</sup> Expense advancements and vouchers shall be presented to the Board in its regular bill process.

### Reimbursements and Purchase Orders

Expense reimbursements and purchase orders may be issued by the Superintendent or designee to employees, along with other expenses necessary for the performance of their duties, provided the expenses fall below the maximum allowed in the Board's expense regulations.

Expense reimbursements and purchase order approvals are not guaranteed and, when possible, employees should seek pre-approval of expenses<sup>157</sup> by providing an estimation of expenses on the District's standardized estimated expense approval form for employees, except in situations when the expense is diminutive. When pre-approval is not sought, employees must seek reimbursement on the District's standardized expense

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<sup>150</sup> 50 ILCS 150/20(2) and (3). This sentence mirrors the statute. The term *offices* is not defined. Consult the board attorney about whether inserting *job titles* would be sufficient for this requirement.

<sup>151</sup> *Id.* at (4).

<sup>152</sup> *Id.*

<sup>153</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.32 authorizes advancements for the listed items. This statute addresses expense advancements for certain activities; its language pre-dates the ECA and is narrower than the ECA. This policy seeks to reconcile the differences by separating advancements into a separate subhead. See f/n 8 above, and see also f/n 20 of sample policy 2:125, *Board Member Compensation; Expenses*, for more discussion.

<sup>154</sup> 50 ILCS 150/10 and 20. This phrase recognizes that while advancements are allowed in these situations, they should remain below the maximum allowable reimbursement amount (MARA) set by the board.

<sup>155</sup> 50 ILCS 150/20.

<sup>156</sup> This paragraph's provisions are required by 105 ILCS 5/10-22.32.

<sup>157</sup> Optional. Consult the board attorney to determine whether a pre-approval process is appropriate for the district. Neither 105 ILCS 5/10-22.32 (expense advancements) nor 50 ILCS 150/ (expense reimbursements and estimates) address expense *pre-approvals*. 50 ILCS 150/20 states: "an *estimate* if expenses have not been incurred ..." or "a *receipt* ... if the expenses have already been incurred," suggesting no pre-approval is necessary. However, pre-approval is a best practice, and an employee who incurs expenses without pre-approval may run the risk that his or her expenses will not be approved. On the other hand, submitting estimated expenses for approval begs a pre-approval process, and some attorneys may read the law to require pre-approval of expenses. The pre-approval process also provides school officials with better information for financial planning.

Consult the board attorney to determine whether a pre-approval process is appropriate for the district. If it is required, ensure that exhibit 2:125-E3, *Resolution to Regulate Expense Reimbursements*, reflects the district's specific pre-approval requirements. For an example of a standardized *estimated* expense form that could be used as a form of pre-approval, see sample exhibit 5:60-E2, *Employee Estimated Expense Approval Form*. The form provides three methods for employees to submit estimated expenses: providing estimated expenses (50 ILCS 150/), expense advancements for the specific activities (105 ILCS 5/10-22.32), or a purchase order.

reimbursement form for employees. Expense reimbursements and purchase orders shall be presented to the Board in its regular bill process.

### Use of Credit and Procurement Cards

Credit and procurement card usage is governed by policy 4:55, *Use of Credit and Procurement Cards*.

### Exceeding the Maximum Allowable Expense Amount(s) <sup>158</sup>

All requests for expense advancements, reimbursements, and purchase orders exceeding the maximum allowed in the Board's expense regulations may only be approved when:

1. The Board's resolution to regulate expenses allows for such approval;
2. An emergency or other extraordinary circumstance exists; and
3. The request is approved by a roll call vote at an open Board meeting. <sup>159</sup>

### Registration <sup>160</sup>

When possible, registration fees will be paid by the District in advance.

### Travel

The least expensive method of travel will be used, provided that no hardship will be caused to the employee. Employees will be reimbursed for:

1. Air travel at the coach or economy class commercial airline rate. First class or business class air travel will be reimbursed only if emergency circumstances warrant. The emergency circumstances must be explained on the expense form and Board approval of the additional expense is required. Fees for the first checked bag will be reimbursed.<sup>161</sup> Copies of airline tickets and baggage receipts must be attached to the expense form.
2. Rail or bus travel at actual cost. Rail or bus travel costs may not exceed the cost of coach airfare. Copies of tickets must be attached to the expense form to substantiate amounts.
3. Use of personal automobiles at the standard mileage rate approved by the Internal Revenue Service for income tax purposes. The reimbursement may not exceed the cost of coach airfare. Mileage for use of personal automobiles in trips to and from transportation terminals will also be reimbursed. Toll charges and parking costs will be reimbursed.
4. Automobile rental costs when the vehicle's use is warranted. The circumstances for such use must be explained on the expense form.
5. Taxis, airport limousines, ride sharing services, or other local transportation costs.

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<sup>158</sup> 50 ILCS 150/ does not define MARA. Consult the board attorney to assist with a conversation about how much authority the board wishes to delegate to the superintendent for purposes of setting the MARA. Topics for these conversations are listed in f/n 8 of sample policy 2:125, *Board Member Compensation; Expenses*.

<sup>159</sup> 50 ILCS 150/10 and 15. See f/n 13 in sample policy 2:125, *Board Member Compensation; Expenses* for more discussion.

<sup>160</sup> Amend the language in subheads **Registration**, **Travel**, **Meals**, **Lodging**, and **Miscellaneous Expenses** to align with the MARA defined in the board's expense regulation resolution. See sample exhibit 2:125-E3, *Resolution to Regulate Expense Reimbursements*, for a sample resolution.

See f/ns 4 and 8 in sample policy 2:125, *Board Member Compensation; Expenses*, for further discussion about the board's power to set the expense regulations by policy (105 ILCS 5/10-20) and clarify considerations and unanswered questions surrounding its statutorily-imposed duty to set a MARA (50 ILCS 150/10).

<sup>161</sup> Optional. This language reflects the standard for expenses permitted for federal awards. 41 C.F.R. §301-12.2. If the board does not reimburse baggage fees, delete this sentence and ~~and baggage receipts~~ from the next sentence.

## Meals

Meals charged to the District should represent mid-fare selections for the hotel/meeting facility or general area.<sup>162</sup> Tips are included with meal charges. Expense forms must explain the meal charges incurred. Alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed.

## Lodging

Employees should request conference rate or mid-fare room accommodations. A single room rate will be reimbursed. Employees should pay personal expenses at checkout. If that is impossible, deductions for the charges should be made on the expense form.

## Miscellaneous Expenses

Employees may seek reimbursement for other expenses incurred while attending a meeting sponsored by organizations described herein by fully describing the expenses on the expense form, attaching receipts.

## Additional Requirements for Travel Expenses Charged to Federal and State Grants<sup>163</sup>

All grant-related travel expenses must be pre-approved by the Superintendent or designee.<sup>164</sup>

Expenses for travel, including expenses for transportation, lodging, meals, and related items incurred by employees and charged to a federal grant or State grant governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/) must also meet the following requirements:

1. The participation of the employee is necessary to the award, and the costs are specifically related to the award.<sup>165</sup>
2. Expenses must be permissible under the terms and conditions of the award.
3. Expenses must be reasonable and consistent with this policy.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Alternatively, a board could set a daily limit on meal costs, such as:

Employees will be reimbursed for meal costs and tips up to \$\_\_\_ per day consistent with the maximum reimbursement amount(s) set by the Board.

But see also f/n 8 of sample policy 2:125, *Board Member Compensation; Expenses*, and ensure this amount is consistent with the MARA set by the board resolution.

<sup>163</sup> 30 ILCS 708/130. Boards are required to follow this subhead when they use grant money to reimburse employee travel expenses charged to federal pass-through grants and State grants covered by GATA. This policy is designed to be used in conjunction with sample administrative procedure 5:60-AP, *Federal and State Grant Travel Expense Procedures*, to achieve compliance.

GATA adopts the uniform federal guidance for State grants, including for travel costs. 2 C.F.R. §200.475. Additionally, under GATA, boards may charge travel expenses to grants based on their own policy, provided the policy does not exceed federal travel regulations. 30 ILCS 708/130; 41 C.F.R. Chapters 300-304 (federal travel regulations). With regard to lodging, meals, and incidentals specifically, boards not only must keep costs at or below the federal standards, but they also cannot allow costs to exceed those normally allowed by the Governor's Travel Control Board (GTCB). 30 ILCS 708/130. The federal travel regulations and the rules of the GTCB are comprehensive. This policy addresses the most common areas of travel expenses and applies the strictest standard between the State and federal travel rules. To the extent this policy does not cover certain specific types of travel expenses, GATA provides that the GTCB Rules must be followed, provided they do not exceed federal travel regulations. The federal rules are at: [www.gsa.gov/policy-regulations/regulations/federal-travel-regulation](http://www.gsa.gov/policy-regulations/regulations/federal-travel-regulation). The GTCB Rules are at: [www.ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/080/08002800sections.html](http://www.ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/080/08002800sections.html). Regardless of the federal and State rules, travel expenses must still comply with the MARA set by the Board, unless approved by the board in accordance with this policy.

In GATA and throughout the IASB Policy Reference Manual, the terms *award* and *grant* are used interchangeably. The federal regulations define and use the term *federal award* or *federal financial assistance* (2 C.F.R. §200.1), but awards/federal financial assistance are more commonly referred to as grants.

<sup>164</sup> Federal travel regulations state that requests for authorization for actual expense reimbursement should be made in advance of travel. 2 C.F.R. §301-11.302. Sample exhibit 5:60-E2, *Employee Estimated Expense Approval Form*, can be used as a form for pre-approval.

<sup>165</sup> 2 C.F.R. §§200.475(b)(1).

<sup>166</sup> 2 C.F.R. §200.475(b)(2).

4. The Board does not reimburse actual expenses or pay a per diem allowance unless the employee is on official *travel status*<sup>167</sup> for more than 12 hours.<sup>168</sup> However, employees remain eligible for mileage reimbursement (minus regular commuting mileage/costs) and other transportation expenses if on travel status less than 12 hours.<sup>169</sup>
5. Expenses may be charged based on an actual cost basis or on a per diem basis in lieu of actual costs incurred; however, only one method may be applied per trip.<sup>170</sup>
6. Commercial airfare costs in excess of the least expensive coach or economy class are prohibited except when such accommodations would: (1) require circuitous routing; (2) require travel during unreasonable hours; (3) excessively prolong travel; (4) result in additional costs that would offset transportation savings; or (5) offer accommodations not reasonably adequate for the traveler's medical needs. Qualifying circumstances must be explained on the expense form, and Board approval of the additional expense is required.<sup>171</sup>
7. Per diem rates and actual reimbursement amounts for mileage, meals, and lodging may not exceed the rates established by the Governor's Travel Control Board or federal travel regulations, whichever is less.<sup>172</sup> These limits do not apply when: (1) an employee stays in the lowest-priced room available at or near a hotel where a conference or seminar is located or in accommodations arranged by the conference/seminar organization, or (2) lodging at or below the established rate is unavailable.<sup>173</sup> In those cases, the employee will be reimbursed for actual lodging expenses with prior approval, but in no case will the reimbursement exceed 300% of the applicable maximum per diem rate.<sup>174</sup> If a conference fee includes a meal, the meal or per diem allowance will be reduced by the actual value of the meal or the applicable meal allowance, whichever is less.<sup>175</sup>
8. Employees must use the least expensive compact car available when using a rental car for travel, unless an exception is approved.<sup>176</sup> The Board does not reimburse employees for collision damage waiver or theft insurance.<sup>177</sup>
9. The Board will reimburse travel expenses not chargeable to an award from other District funds consistent with this policy.

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<sup>167</sup> *Travel status* is not specifically defined in the federal travel regulations or in the GTCB rules, however, the Governor's Travel Council Regulation Rules, which apply to State employees and members of State boards, provide that an employee is on *travel status* while away on official business. Travel status begins when an employee leaves his or her work location or, if reporting directly to a destination, from the employee's residence or other location. It ends when an employee returns to his or her work location or, if reporting directly from the original destination, to the employee's residence or other location at the completion of the authorized travel. 80 Ill.Admin.Code §3000.140.

<sup>168</sup> 41 C.F.R. §301-11.1.

<sup>169</sup> 41 C.F.R. §301-10.300-10.310 are the federal regulations that address mileage reimbursement and related expenses.

<sup>170</sup> 2 C.F.R. §200.475(a).

<sup>171</sup> 2 C.F.R. §200.475(e).

<sup>172</sup> To determine the lesser applicable amount, compare the State rates, available at: <https://cms.illinois.gov/employees/travel/travelreimbursement.html>, with the federal per diem rates, available at: [www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates](http://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates).

<sup>173</sup> 80 Ill.Admin.Code §2800.400; 41 C.F.R. §301-11.30.

<sup>174</sup> 41 C.F.R. §301-11.30. 300% is the maximum reimbursement amount permitted under federal travel expense regulations and may be adjusted down by the board. The board may not reimburse over the MARA even if the expense is under the 300% threshold, unless it meets the requirements of the ECA. See f/n 17, above. See sample procedure 5:60-AP, *Federal and State Grant Travel Expense Procedures*, for details on lodging requirements, including excessive lodging requests.

<sup>175</sup> 80 Ill.Admin.Code §2800.500.

<sup>176</sup> See 41 C.F.R. §301-10.450 for a list of authorized exceptions.

<sup>177</sup> 41 C.F.R. §301-10.451. Federal regulations generally prohibit reimbursement for collision damage waiver and theft insurance in part because the government has negotiated full insurance coverage into its agreements with rental companies. Similarly, the State has negotiated the cost of damage collision waivers into its preferred vendor agreement. Districts may wish to pursue similar arrangements for additional coverage. Employees will often have coverage for rental car damage through their own personal auto policies. The federal regulations permit employees on official business to be reimbursed for their out-of-pocket deductibles. *Id.*

LEGAL REF.: 2 C.F.R. §200.475.  
30 ILCS 708/130, Grant Accountability and Transparency Act.  
50 ILCS 150/, Local Government Travel Expense Control Act.  
105 ILCS 5/10-22.32.  
820 ILCS 115/9.5, Ill. Wage Payment and Collection Act.

CROSS REF.: 2:125 (Board Member Compensation; Expenses), 2:240 (Board Policy Development),  
4:50 (Payment Procedures), 4:55 (Use of Credit and Procurement Cards)



## General Personnel

### Staff Development Program <sup>178</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall implement a staff development program. The goal of the program shall be to update and improve the skills and knowledge of staff members in order to achieve and maintain a high level of job performance and satisfaction. Additionally, the development program for licensed staff members shall be designed to effectuate any School Improvement Plans so that student learning objectives meet or exceed goals established by the District and State.

### Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA) and Erin's Law Training

The staff development program shall include the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA) mandated reporter training and training on the awareness and prevention of child sexual abuse and grooming behaviors (*Erin's Law*) as follows (see Board policies 4:165, *Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors*, and 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*): <sup>179</sup>

1. Within three months of employment, each staff member must complete mandated reporter training from a provider or agency with expertise in recognizing and reporting child abuse. Mandated reporter training must be completed again at least every three years.
2. By January 31 of every year, all school personnel must complete evidence-informed training on preventing, reporting, and responding to child sexual abuse, grooming behaviors (including *sexual misconduct* as defined in *Faith's Law*), and boundary violations.

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<sup>178</sup> State or federal law controls this policy's content. A school board may set and enforce professional growth requirements. 105 ILCS 5/24-5. Failure to meet professional growth requirements is considered remediable. Morris v. Ill. State Bd. of Educ., 198 Ill.App.3d 51 (3rd Dist. 1990).

This policy contains items on which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts upon wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment, is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right.

105 ILCS 5/2-3.62 requires the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) to establish a regional network of educational service centers to coordinate and combine existing services in a manner that is practical and efficient for schools. Their purposes are to provide, among other things, continuing education, in-service training, and staff development services to all local school districts in Illinois.

<sup>179</sup> 325 ILCS 5/4(j); and 105 ILCS 5/10-23.13 (*Erin's Law*). Sexual misconduct under *Faith's Law* is defined in 105 ILCS 5/22-85.5(c).

Mandated reporter training may be in-person or web-based and must include, at a minimum, information on the following topics: (1) indicators for recognizing child abuse and child neglect; (2) the process for reporting suspected child abuse and child neglect and the required documentation; (3) responding to a child in a trauma-informed manner; (4) understanding the response of child protective services and the role of the reporter after a call has been made; and (5) implicit bias. *Implicit bias* means the attitudes or internalized stereotypes that affect people's perceptions, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner and that exist and often contribute to unequal treatment of people based on race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, and other characteristics. The implicit bias topic must include, at a minimum: (1) information on implicit bias; (2) information on racial and ethnic sensitivity; and (3) tools to adjust automatic patterns of thinking and ultimately eliminate discriminatory behaviors. 325 ILCS 5/4(j). Districts must provide mandated reporter training through either the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS), an entity authorized to provide continuing education through the Dept. of Financial and Professional Regulation, ISBE, the Ill. Law Enforcement Training Standards Board, the Ill. State Police, or an organization approved by DCFS to provide mandated reporter training. Id. *Child-serving organizations*, which are not defined in ANCRA, are "encouraged to provide in-person annual trainings." Id.

### In-Service Training Requirements

The staff development program shall provide, at a minimum, within six months of employment and renewed at least once every five years thereafter (unless required more frequently by other State or federal law), the in-service training of all District staff who work with pupils on:<sup>180</sup>

1. Health conditions of students,<sup>181</sup> including but not limited to training on:
  - a. Anaphylactic reactions and management, conducted by a person with expertise on anaphylactic reactions and management;
  - b. Management of asthma, prevention of asthma symptoms, and emergency response in the school setting;
  - c. The basics of seizure recognition and first aid and emergency protocols, consistent with best practice guidelines issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention;
  - d. The basics of diabetes care, how to identify when a diabetic student needs immediate or emergency medical attention, and whom to contact in case of emergency;
  - e. Current best practices regarding identification and treatment of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; and

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<sup>180</sup> This list of in-service trainings is required by State law but only Nos. 4, 5(d), and 7 are required to be specified in board policy. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39, amended by P.A.s 103-41, 103-413, 103-542, and 103-603, requires all teachers, administrators, and school support personnel to complete these trainings during an in-service training program conducted by their board or through other training opportunities, including institutes provided by regional superintendents and intermediate service center executive directors under 105 ILCS 5/3-11, amended by P.A.s 103-542 and 103-413. If teachers, administrators, or school support personnel obtain training outside of an in-service training program or from a previous school employer, they may present documentation showing current compliance to satisfy the requirement of receiving training within six months of first being employed. Id.

Different from the in-service training that school districts must provide to their staff, 105 ILCS 5/3-11, amended by P.A.s 103-542 and 103-413, contains requirements that the regional superintendents and intermediate service center executive directors must include during institutes for teachers, administrators, and school support personnel. Instruction on prevalent student chronic health conditions, as well as educator ethics and teacher-student conduct training, is also required. See also f/ns 4-12 below discussing the board's requirements in 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39.

Both 105 ILCS 5/3-11 and 5/10-22.39 use the phrase *teachers, administrators, and school support personnel*, but for brevity this material uses the phrase *all District staff*. While the language of this paragraph is not required to be in board policy, including it provides a way for boards to monitor that it is being done. It also provides an opportunity for each board and the superintendent to examine all current policies, collective bargaining agreements, and administrative procedures on this subject.

In-service training programs on the topics listed in 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39, amended by P.A.s 103-41, 103-413, 103-542, and 103-603, shall be credited toward hours of professional development required for license renewal as outlined in 105 ILCS 5/21B-45(e). School support personnel may be exempt from in-service training if the training is not relevant to the work they do.

<sup>181</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(b-5), added by P.A. 103-542 and amended by P.A. 103-603. Nurses and school nurses, as defined by 105 ILCS 5/10-22.23 (school nurse), are exempt from training on health conditions of students. Id.

For No. 1(c), Consult the board attorney about whether:

1. All asthma action plans should require immediate 911 calls based upon In re Estate of Stewart, 406 Ill.Dec. 345 (2nd Dist. 2016); In re Estate of Stewart, 412 Ill.Dec. 914 (Ill. 2017) (school district's appeal denied). The court held that a teacher's failure to dial 911 immediately upon a student's asthma attack was willful and wanton conduct, subjecting the school district to liability under the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act.
2. The duties and responsibilities of the district when it asks for but does not receive an asthma action plan from a parent/guardian and the logistics of distributing any received plans to those employees who need to know based upon Stewart, above.

For No. 1(d), see also 105 ILCS 150/25, amended by P.A. 103-542, and No. 6 under the subhead **Additional Training Requirements**.

For No. 1(e), see also 105 ILCS 145/25, amended by P.A. 103-542, and No. 7 under the subhead **Additional Training Requirements**.

- f. How to respond to an incident involving life-threatening bleeding, including use of a school's trauma bleeding control kit, if applicable.<sup>182</sup>
2. Social-emotional learning.<sup>183</sup> Training may include providing education to all school personnel about the content of the Illinois Social and Emotional Learning Standards, how they apply to everyday school interactions, and examples of how social emotional learning can be integrated into instructional practices across all grades and subjects.
3. Developing cultural competency,<sup>184</sup> including but not limited to understanding and reducing implicit bias, including *implicit racial bias* as defined in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.61 (implicit bias training).
4. Identifying warning signs of mental illness, trauma, and suicidal behavior in youth, along with appropriate intervention and referral techniques, including resources and guidelines as outlined in 105 ILCS 5/2-3.166 (*Ann Marie's Law*) and the definitions of *trauma*, *trauma-responsive learning environments*, and *whole child* as set forth in 105 ILCS 5/3-11.<sup>185</sup>
5. Domestic and sexual violence and the needs of expectant and parenting youth, conducted by persons with expertise in domestic and sexual violence and the needs of expectant and parenting youth.<sup>186</sup> Training shall include, but is not limited to:
  - a. Communicating with and listening to youth victims of domestic or sexual violence and expectant and parenting youth;
  - b. Connecting youth victims of domestic or sexual violence and expectant and parenting youth to appropriate in-school services and other agencies, programs, and services as needed;
  - c. Implementing the District's policies and procedures regarding such youth, including confidentiality; and
  - d. Procedures for responding to incidents of teen dating violence that take place at school, on school grounds, at school-sponsored activities, or in vehicles used for school-provided transportation as outlined in 105 ILCS 110/3.10 (see Board policy 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*).
6. Protections and accommodations for students,<sup>187</sup> including but not limited to training on:

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<sup>182</sup> See 105 ILCS 5/10-20.85, added by P.A. 103-128, for a definition of *trauma kit*. To avoid confusion between trauma related to life-threatening bleeding and *trauma* as defined in 105 ILCS 5/3-11(b), added by P.A. 103-413, this policy uses the phrase *trauma bleeding control kit* instead of *trauma kit*.

Beginning with the 2024-25 school year, training on life-threatening bleeding must be completed within six months of employment and renewed within two years. Beginning with the 2027-28 school year, training on life-threatening bleeding must be completed within six months of employment and renewed at least once every five years thereafter. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(b-5)(7), added by P.A. 103-542 and amended by P.A. 103-603. Trained employees using a trauma kit are generally immune from civil liability. *Id.*

<sup>183</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(b-10), added by P.A. 103-542.

<sup>184</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(b-15), added by P.A. 103-542.

<sup>185</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(b-20), added by P.A. 103-542 and amended by P.A. 103-603. Training on the implementation of trauma-informed practices satisfies the requirements of this subsection. *Id.* In addition, Illinois Mental Health First Aid training may satisfy the requirements of this subsection. If teachers, administrators, or school support personnel obtain mental health first aid training outside of an in-service training program, they may present a certificate of successful completion of that training to the school district to satisfy the requirements of this law. *Id.* For further information on Mental Health First Aid, see <https://namjillinois.org/resources/about-mental-illness/mental-health-first-aid/>.

<sup>186</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(b-25), added by P.A. 103-542. See sample policy 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*.

<sup>187</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(b-30), added by P.A. 103-542. Beginning with the 2024-25 school year, training on homelessness must be completed within six months of employment and renewed within two years. Beginning with the 2027-28 school year, training on homelessness must be completed within six months of employment and renewed at least once every five years thereafter. Boards may work with a community-based organization specializing in working with homeless children and youth to develop and provide this training. See 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(b-30)(1) - (5), added by P.A. 103-542, for homelessness training content requirements. **Note:** the homelessness training content requirements in 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(b-30)(1) - (5), added by P.A. 103-542, are nearly identical to the homelessness training content requirements in 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(h), added by P.A. 103-41.

- a. The federal Americans with Disabilities Act as it pertains to the school environment; and
  - b. Homelessness.
7. Educator ethics and responding to child sexual abuse and grooming behavior (see Board policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*),<sup>188</sup> including but not limited to training on:
  - a. Teacher-student conduct;
  - b. School employee-student conduct; and
  - c. Evidence-informed training on preventing, recognizing, reporting, and responding to child sexual abuse and grooming as outlined in 105 ILCS 5/10-23.13 (*Erin's Law*).
8. Effective instruction in violence prevention and conflict resolution,<sup>189</sup> conducted in accordance with the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/27-23.4 (violence prevention and conflict resolution education).

### Additional Training Requirements

In addition, the staff development program shall include each of the following:<sup>190</sup>

1. Ongoing professional development for all school personnel and school resource officers on the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6 and 5/10-20.14, the adverse consequences of school exclusion and justice-system involvement, effective classroom management strategies, culturally responsive discipline, trauma-responsive learning environments as defined in 105 ILCS 5/3-11(b), the appropriate and available supportive services for the promotion of student attendance and engagement, and developmentally appropriate disciplinary methods that promote positive and healthy school climates.<sup>191</sup>
2. Annual continuing education and/or training opportunities (professional standards) for school nutrition program directors, managers, and staff. Each school food authority's director shall document

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Beginning with the 2016-17 school year, institutes under 105 ILCS 5/3-11 had to include instruction on the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) (42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq.*) as it pertains to the school environment at least every two years. Contact the Regional Superintendent or the appropriate Intermediate Service Center Executive Director with questions about online training for this component of a teachers' institute. Discuss with the board attorney the best practices of documenting trainings and evaluations of trainings; many attorneys in the field prefer documentation of ADA trainings to assist in their defense of any potential ADA claims against the district.

<sup>188</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(b-35), added by P.A. 103-542. Each board may want to have a conversation with the superintendent and direct him or her to develop a curriculum for the in-services that instructs all district staff to maintain boundaries and act appropriately, professionally, and ethically with students. See also sample policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*, and f/n 11 in sample policy 4:110, *Transportation*. These expectations will be most effective when they reflect local conditions and circumstances. Employee conduct issues may be subjects of mandatory collective bargaining, therefore consulting the board attorney should be a part of this process. A district would commit an unfair labor practice by implementing new employee conduct rules without first offering to negotiate them with the applicable exclusive bargaining representative.

<sup>189</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(b-40), added by P.A. 103-542.

<sup>190</sup> Optional. These in-services and/or trainings are required by State and/or federal law but are not required to be specified in board policy. The only non-School Code State and/or federal law training requirements listed are from the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (325 ILCS 5/), Ill. Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/), Seizure Smart School Act (105 ILCS 150/), Care of Students with Diabetes Act (105 ILCS 150/), and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*).

Putting this optional list into the policy will help the board monitor that the required in-service and training topics are being covered. While it is possible to *pick and choose*, this practice is likely to add more confusion to an already confusing responsibility. Unless noted, the School Code does not mandate the frequency with which the training must occur. Several other trainings that are mentioned in laws other than the School Code are addressed in other sample policies and procedures. Many of those policies and procedures are listed in the cross-references to this policy, e.g., training requirements under the Care of Students with Diabetes Act, 105 ILCS 145/.

<sup>191</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(c-5), amended by P.A. 103-896. School board members are also included.

compliance with this requirement by the end of each school year and maintain documentation for a three-year period.<sup>192</sup>

3. All high school coaching personnel, including the head and assistant coaches, and athletic directors must obtain online concussion certification by completing online concussion awareness training in accordance with 105 ILCS 25/1.15. Coaching personnel and athletic directors hired on or after 8-19-14 must be certified before their position's start date.<sup>193</sup>
4. The following individuals must complete concussion training as specified in the Youth Sports Concussion Safety Act: coaches and assistant coaches (whether volunteer or employee) of an interscholastic athletic activity; nurses, licensed and/or non-licensed healthcare professionals serving on the Concussion Oversight Team; athletic trainers; game officials of an interscholastic athletic activity; and physicians serving on the Concussion Oversight Team.<sup>194</sup>
5. For school personnel who work with hazardous or toxic materials on a regular basis, training on the safe handling and use of such materials.<sup>195</sup>
6. For delegated care aides performing services in connection with a student's seizure action plan, training in accordance with 105 ILCS 150/, the Seizure Smart School Act.<sup>196</sup>
7. For delegated care aides performing services in connection with a student's diabetes care plan, training in accordance with 105 ILCS 145/, the Care of Students with Diabetes Act.<sup>197</sup>
8. For all District staff, annual sexual harassment prevention training.<sup>198</sup>
9. Title IX requirements for training in accordance with 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (see Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*).<sup>199</sup>
10. Training for all District employees on the prevention of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, and national origin in school as part of new employee training and at least once every two years.<sup>200</sup>
11. Training for at least one designated employee at each school about the Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services (PUNS) database and steps required to register students for it.<sup>201</sup>
12. Training in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/26A for at least one staff member in each school designated as a resource for students who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence, and for any employees whose duties include the resolution of complaints of violations of

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<sup>192</sup> 7 C.F.R. Parts 210 and 235. 7 C.F.R. §210.2 defines school nutrition program directors, managers and staff. 7 C.F.R. §§210.15(b)(8) (recordkeeping requirements) and 210.31(a), (c), (d), and (e) (professional standards requirements); 210.31(g)(requiring school food authority director to keep records). Food service funds may be used for reasonable, allocable, and necessary training costs. 7 C.F.R. §210.31(f). The U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) has established implementation resources that contain training opportunities and resources covering the four core training areas: nutrition, operations, administration, and communications/marketing at: [www.fns.usda.gov/cn/professional-standards](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/professional-standards).

<sup>193</sup> Required only for districts with grades 9-12 by 105 ILCS 25/1.15. Delete for elementary school districts.

<sup>194</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-80(h).

<sup>195</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.17a, amended by P.A. 103-780; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.330.

<sup>196</sup> 105 ILCS 150/25, amended by P.A. 103-542.

<sup>197</sup> 105 ILCS 145/25, amended by P.A. 103-542.

<sup>198</sup> 775 ILCS 5/2-109. See f/n 7 in sample policy 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*, for further detail about this training requirement.

<sup>199</sup> 34 C.F.R. §106.45. For training requirement details, see sample administrative procedure 2:265-AP1, *Title IX Response*.

<sup>200</sup> 775 ILCS 5/5A-103(c), added by P.A. 103-472. For training requirement details, see sample administrative procedure 2:270-AP, *Prevention and Response Program for Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment Based on Race, Color, and National Origin*.

<sup>201</sup> 105 ILCS 5/2-3.163(c), amended by P.A. 103-504.

105 ILCS 5/26A (see Board policy 7:255, *Students who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*).<sup>202</sup>

The Superintendent shall develop protocols for administering youth suicide awareness and prevention education to staff consistent with Board policy 7:290, *Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention*.<sup>203</sup>  
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<sup>202</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26A-35, added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *Ensuring Success in School (ESS) Law*, eff. 7-1-25, requires each designated Article 26A Resource Person to either (1) be trained to understand, provide information and referrals, and address issues pertaining to youth who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence, including training in the subjects set forth in 105 ILCS 5/26A-35(b)(i), or (2) have participated in an in-service training program under 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(d) that includes training on the rights of minors to consent to counseling services and psychotherapy under the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code within 12 months prior to designation. *Id.* However, 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(d) was deleted by P.A. 103-542 and its training contents are in 105 ILCS 5/10-22.39(b-25).

105 ILCS 5/26A-25(b)(1), added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25, requires employees whose duties include resolution of Article 26A complaints to initially complete at least eight hours of training on issues related to domestic and sexual violence and how to conduct the district's complaint resolution procedure, and to complete six hours of training annually thereafter. Such training must be conducted by individual(s) with expertise in domestic or sexual violence in youth and expertise in developmentally appropriate communications with elementary and secondary students regarding topics of a sexual, violent, or sensitive nature. *Id.* See sample administrative procedures 7:255-AP1, *Supporting Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*, and 7:255-AP2, *Complaint Resolution Procedure for Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

See pp. 28-30 of the June 2024 report of the second ESS Task Force for existing training requirements that may be suitable to fulfill Article 26A training requirements, at: [www.isbe.net/Documents\\_ESSTaskForce/Final-Report-ESS-Report-June-2024.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents_ESSTaskForce/Final-Report-ESS-Report-June-2024.pdf).

<sup>203</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 5/2-3.166(c)(2) (*Ann Marie's Law*). See sample administrative procedures 6:60-AP1, *Comprehensive Health Education Program*, and 7:290-AP, *Resource Guide for Implementation of Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention Program*.

<sup>204</sup> Districts are not required to train staff on life-saving techniques, though 105 ILCS 110/3, amended by P.A. 103-608, requires that all teachers, administrators, and other school personnel, as determined by school officials, be provided with information about emergency procedures and life-saving techniques within 30 days after the first day of each school year. *Id.* Such life-saving techniques must include the Heimlich maneuver, hands-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and automated external defibrillator (AED) use. The information provided must be in accordance with standards of the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association (AHA), or another nationally recognized certifying organization. *Id.* See e.g., <https://cpr.heart.org/en/cpr-courses-and-kits/hands-only-cpr/hands-only-cpr-resources>, <https://cpr.heart.org/en/training-programs/aed-implementation>, and [www.redcross.org/take-a-class/resources/learn-first-aid/adult-child-choking](http://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/resources/learn-first-aid/adult-child-choking).

For districts that have a practice of providing instruction in life-saving techniques and first-aid in their staff development programs, insert the following optional paragraph that aligns with 105 ILCS 5/3-11, 105 ILCS 110/3, amended by P.A. 103-608, and 77 Ill.Admin.Code §527.800:

An opportunity shall be provided for all staff members to acquire, develop, and maintain the knowledge and skills necessary to properly administer life-saving techniques and first aid, including the Heimlich maneuver, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and the use of an automated external defibrillator, in accordance with a nationally recognized certifying organization. Physical fitness facilities' staff must be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and use of an automated external defibrillator.

Persons performing CPR are generally exempt from civil liability if they are trained in CPR. 745 ILCS 49/10. Persons using an AED are generally exempt from civil liability if they were trained and acted according to the standards of the AHA. 745 ILCS 49/12.

The board may also want to address other staff development opportunities. While not required to be in policy, 105 ILCS 5/27-23.10, amended by P.A. 103-542, requires a school board to collaborate with State and local law enforcement agencies on gang resistance education. It also states that ISBE may assist in the development of instructional materials and teacher training for gang resistance education and training, which may be helpful to include in the staff development program. Other mandated and recommended staff development opportunities that are not located in the School Code or ISBE rules are found in the Ill. Administrative Code or federal regulations. Many of them are cross referenced in this policy.

- LEGAL REF.: 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.  
 42 U.S.C. §1758b, Pub. L. 111-296, Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010; 7 C.F.R. Parts 210 and 235.  
 105 ILCS 5/2-3.62, 5/2-3.166, 5/3-11, 5/10-20.17a, 5/10-20.61, 5/10-22.6(c-5), 5/10-22.39, 5/10-23.12, 5/10-23.13, 5/22-80(h), 5/22-95, 5/24-5, and 5/26A.  
 105 ILCS 25/1.15, Interscholastic Athletic Organization Act.  
 105 ILCS 145/25, Care of Students with Diabetes Act  
 105 ILCS 150/25, Seizure Smart School Act.  
 105 ILCS 110/3, Critical Health Problems and Comprehensive Health Education Act.  
 325 ILCS 5/4, Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act.  
 745 ILCS 49/, Good Samaritan Act.  
 775 ILCS 5/2-109 and 5/5A-103, Ill. Human Rights Act.  
 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§ 22.20, 226.800, and Part 525.  
 77 Ill.Admin.Code §527.800.
- CROSS REF.: 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 3:40 (Superintendent), 3:50 (Administrative Personnel Other Than the Superintendent), 4:160 (Environmental Quality of Buildings and Grounds), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 5:250 (Leaves of Absence), 6:15 (School Accountability), 6:20 (School Year Calendar and Day), 6:50 (School Wellness), 6:160 (English Learners), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:250 (Student Support Services), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:270 (Administering Medicines to Students), 7:285 (Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program), 7:290 (Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention), 7:305 (Student Athlete Concussions and Head Injuries)
- ADMIN. PROC.: 2:265-AP1 (Title IX Response), 2:265-AP2 (Formal Title IX Complaint Grievance Process), 2:270-AP (Prevention and Response Program for Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment Based on Race, Color, and National Origin), 4:160-AP (Environmental Quality of Buildings and Grounds), 4:170-AP6 (Plan for Responding to a Medical Emergency at a Physical Fitness Facility with an AED), 5:100-AP (Staff Development Program), 5:120-AP2 (Employee Conduct Standards), 5:150-AP (Personnel Records), 6:120-AP4 (Care of Students with Diabetes), 7:250-AP1 (Measures to Control the Spread of Head Lice at School), 7:250-AP2 (Protocol for Responding to Students with Social, Emotional, or Mental Health Needs), 7:255-AP1 (Supporting Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:255-AP2 (Complaint Resolution Procedure for Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:285-AP (Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program), 7:290-AP (Resource Guide for Implementation of Suicide and Depression Awareness and Prevention Program)



## **Instruction**

### **Home and Hospital Instruction** <sup>205</sup>

A student who is absent from school, or whose physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse anticipates that the student will be absent from school, because of a medical condition may be eligible for instruction in the student's home or hospital.<sup>206</sup> Eligibility shall be determined by State law and the Ill. State Board of Education rules governing (1) the continuum of placement options for students who have been identified for special education services or (2) the home and hospital instruction provisions for students who have not been identified for special education services.<sup>207</sup> Appropriate educational services from qualified staff will begin no later than five school days after receiving a written statement from: (1) a physician licensed to practice medicine in all of its branches, (2) a licensed physician assistant, or (3) a licensed advanced practice registered nurse.<sup>208</sup> Instructional or related services for a student receiving special education services will be determined by the student's individualized education program.

A student who is unable to attend school because of pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, the fulfillment of parenting obligations related to the health of the child, or health and safety concerns arising

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<sup>205</sup> State or federal law controls this policy's content. The following State laws and ISBE rules govern homebound and hospital instruction: 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6a, amended by P.A. 102-466, eff. 7-1-25 (home instruction and correspondence courses for students who are pregnant, parenting, or victims of domestic or sexual violence under 105 ILCS 5/26A); 105 ILCS 5/14-13.01 (reimbursement for home and hospital instruction along with factors to qualify for it); 105 ILCS 5/18-4.5 (reimbursement for home and hospital instruction); 105 ILCS 5/10-19.05(e) (an instructional session of one clock hour may be counted as ½ day of attendance, however, a student must receive four or more instructional clock hours to count as a full day of attendance); 23 Ill.Admin.Code §226.300 (home/hospital service for a special education student); 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.520.

See ISBE guidance, *Home/Hospital Instruction and Reimbursement Questions and Answers* available at: [www.isbe.net/Documents/Home-Hospital\\_QA.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/Home-Hospital_QA.pdf). At the time of PRESS Issue 118's publication (Apr. 2025), this guidance had not been updated to reflect changes to 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6a, amended by P.A. 102-466, eff. 7-1-25.

<sup>206</sup> 105 ILCS 5/14-13.01 defines the standards for determining when a student is eligible to receive home or hospital instruction. A student qualifies when a physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse *anticipates* a student's absence due to a medical condition. The law defines "ongoing intermittent basis" to mean a medical condition of such a nature and severity that it is anticipated that the student will be absent from school due to the medical condition for periods of at least two days at a time multiple times during the school year totaling at least 10 days or more of absences.

<sup>207</sup> 105 ILCS 5/14-13.01(a-5) requires that all students provide a written statement from a physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse stating the existence of a medical condition, the impact on the child's ability to participate in education, and the anticipated duration or nature of the child's absence from school. However, ISBE rules at 23 Ill.Admin.Code §226.300 (students qualifying for special education services) and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.520 (students not qualifying for special education services) have not yet been amended to reflect that this written statement may come from a physician assistant or an advanced practice registered nurse; they still state that such a written statement must come from a physician. ISBE's *Medical Certification for Home/Hospital Instruction* form, form 34-58, reflects that the written statement may come from a "physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches, APRN, or PA." Available at: [www.isbe.net/Documents/Medical-certification-home-hospital-instruction.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/Medical-certification-home-hospital-instruction.pdf).

A student with health needs may be protected by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. §1401(3)) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. §794(a))

<sup>208</sup> 105 ILCS 5/14-13.01(a-5). There is no requirement that a student be absent from school for a minimum number of days before he or she qualifies for home or hospital instruction. 105 ILCS 5/14-13.01(a). The statute allows schools to begin home or hospital instruction upon receipt of a written statement from a physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse but requires it to begin no later than five school days after receipt of the written statement.

Both 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§226.300(g) and 1.520(f) require home or hospital instructors to meet the requirements listed in 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.610, i.e., proper licensure as required by 105 ILCS 5/21B-15.



from domestic or sexual violence as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26A, will be provided home instruction, correspondence courses, or other courses of instruction under the following circumstances:<sup>209</sup>

1. Before the birth of the child when the student's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse indicates, in writing, that she is medically unable to attend regular classroom instruction.
2. For up to three months after the child's birth or a miscarriage.
3. When a student must care for his or her ill child if:
  - a. The child's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse informs the District, in writing, that the child has a serious health condition<sup>210</sup> that would require the student to be absent from school for two or more consecutive weeks; and
  - b. The student or the student's parent/guardian informs the District, in writing, that the student needs to care for the child during this period.
4. The student must treat physical or mental health complications or address safety concerns arising from domestic or sexual violence when a health care provider or an employee of the student's domestic or sexual violence organization, as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26A, informs the District, in writing, that the care is needed by the student and will cause the student's absence from school for two or more consecutive weeks.

The District may reassess home instruction provided to a student under No. 3 or No. 4 every two months to determine the student's continuing need for home instruction.

Periodic conferences will be held between appropriate school personnel, parent(s)/guardian(s), and hospital staff to coordinate course work and facilitate a student's return to school.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/10-19.05(e), 5/10-22.6a, 5/14-13.01, and 5/18-4.5.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.520, 1.610, and 226.300.

CROSS REF.: 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:250 (Student Support Services), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:280 (Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease)

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<sup>209</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6a, amended by P.A. 102-466, eff. 7-1-25. Number (2) does not require a written statement from a physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse. See sample policy 7:255, *Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

<sup>210</sup> *Serious health condition* means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental health condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility or continuing treatment by a health care provider that is not controlled by medication alone. Id.

## **Instruction**

### **Access to Electronic Networks** <sup>211</sup>

Electronic networks are a part of the District's instructional program and serve to promote educational excellence by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. <sup>212</sup>

The term *electronic networks* includes all of the District's technology resources, including, but not limited to:

1. The District's local-area and wide-area networks, including wireless networks (Wi-Fi), District-issued Wi-Fi hotspots, and any District servers or other networking infrastructure;
2. Access to the Internet or other online resources via the District's networks or to any District-issued online account from any computer or device, regardless of location;
3. District-owned or District-issued computers, laptops, tablets, phones, or similar devices.

The Superintendent shall develop an implementation plan for this policy and appoint system administrator(s). <sup>213</sup>

The School District is not responsible for any information that may be lost or damaged, or become unavailable when using the network, or for any information that is retrieved or transmitted via the Internet. <sup>214</sup> Furthermore, the District will not be responsible for any unauthorized charges or fees resulting from access to the Internet.

### **Curriculum and Appropriate Online Behavior**

The use of the District's electronic networks shall: (1) be consistent with the curriculum adopted by the District as well as the varied instructional needs, learning styles, abilities, and developmental levels of the students, and (2) comply with the selection criteria for instructional materials and library resource center materials. As required by federal law and Board policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*, students will be educated about appropriate online behavior, including but not limited to: (1) interacting with other individuals on social

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<sup>211</sup> State or federal law requires this subject matter be covered by policy. State or federal law controls this policy's content. This policy contains an item on which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts upon wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment, is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right. This policy concerns an area in which the law is unsettled.

A policy on Internet safety is necessary to receive *E-rate* funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (20 U.S.C. §7131) and to qualify for universal service benefits under the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) (47 U.S.C. §254(h) and (l)).

Generally, federal rules prohibit schools from soliciting or accepting gifts or other things of value exceeding \$20 from Internet service providers that participate or are seeking to participate in the E-rate program. 47 C.F.R. §54.503. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) temporarily waived its rules prohibiting such gifts to enable service providers to support remote learning efforts without impacting school E-rate funding. See <https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/DA-20-1479A1.pdf>.

<sup>212</sup> This goal is repeated in sample exhibits 6:235-API, E1, *Student Authorization for Access to the District's Electronic Networks*, and 6:235-API, E2, *Staff Authorization for Access to the District's Electronic Networks*.

<sup>213</sup> Topics for the implementation plan include integration of the Internet in the curriculum, staff training, and safety issues. The implementation plan can also include technical information regarding service providers, establishing Internet accounts, distributing passwords, software filters, menu creation, managing resources and storage capacity, and the number of access points for users to connect to their accounts. Another topic is investigation of inappropriate use.

<sup>214</sup> No system can guarantee to operate perfectly or to prevent access to inappropriate material; this policy statement attempts to absolve the district of any liability.

networking websites and in chat rooms, and (2) cyberbullying awareness and response.<sup>215</sup> Staff members may, consistent with the Superintendent's implementation plan, use the Internet throughout the curriculum.

The District's electronic network is part of the curriculum and is not a public forum for general use.<sup>216</sup>

### Acceptable Use<sup>217</sup>

All use of the District's electronic networks must be: (1) in support of education and/or research, and be in furtherance of the goals stated herein, or (2) for a legitimate school business purpose. Use is a privilege, not a right.<sup>218</sup> Users of the District's electronic networks have no expectation of privacy in any material that is stored on, transmitted, or received via the District's electronic networks. General rules for behavior and communications apply when using electronic networks. The District's administrative procedure, *Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Networks*, contains the appropriate uses, ethics, and protocol.<sup>219</sup> Electronic communications and downloaded material, including files deleted from a user's account but not erased, may be monitored or read by school officials.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> Required by 47 U.S.C. §254(h)(5)(B)(iii) and 47 C.F.R. §54.520(c)(i) only for districts that receive *E-rate* discounts for Internet access or plan to become participants in the *E-rate* discount program. All boards receiving an *E-rate* funding for Internet access were required to certify that they had updated their Internet safety policies. See, *FCC Report and Order 11-125* (8-11-11). This sentence is optional if the district only receives discounts for telecommunications, such as telephone service, unless the district plans to participate in the *E-rate* discount program.

<sup>216</sup> School authorities may reasonably regulate student expression in school-sponsored publications for education-related reasons. *Hazelwood Sch. Dist. v. Kuhlmeier*, 484 U.S. 260 (1988). This policy allows such control by clearly stating that school-sponsored network information resources are not a "public forum" open for general student use but are, instead, part of the curriculum.

It is an unfair labor practice (ULP) under the Ill. Educational Labor Relations Act (IELRA) for an employer to discourage employees from becoming or remaining members of a union. 115 ILCS 5/14(a)(10). In connection with that potential penalty, the IELRA requires employers to establish email policies in an effort to prohibit the use of its email system by outside sources. 115 ILCS 5/14(c-5). This policy aligns with IELRA requirements by clarifying the District's electronic network is not a public forum for general use by outside parties and by limiting use of the network to the purposes stated under the **Acceptable Use** subhead. However, districts are still prohibited under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution from suppressing messages based on viewpoint and may be subject to liability if they affirmatively block individual senders. See *Lindke v. Freed*, 601 U.S. 187 (2024); *Perry Educ. Ass'n v. Perry Local Educators' Ass'n*, 460 U.S. 37 (1983); *People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals v. Tabak*, 109 F.4th 627 (D.C. Cir. 2024). Consult the board attorney if the board wants to amend this policy to prohibit access by specific parties and/or before taking steps to "block" any specific party from the district's email system based on the content of the party's message.

<sup>217</sup> This paragraph provides general guidelines for acceptable use regardless of whether Internet use is supervised. In practice, many districts allow for incidental personal use of their networks during duty-free times. The specific rules are provided in sample exhibits 6:235-AP1, E1, *Student Authorization for Access to the District's Electronic Networks*, and 6:235-AP1, E2, *Staff Authorization for Access to the District's Electronic Networks* (see also f/n 1). This paragraph's application to faculty may have collective bargaining implications.

<sup>218</sup> The "privilege, not a right" dichotomy is borrowed from cases holding that a student's removal from a team does not require due process because such participation is a privilege rather than a right. The deprivation of a privilege typically does not trigger the Constitution's due process provision. *Clements v. Bd. of Educ. of Decatur Public Sch. Dist. No. 61*, 133 Ill.App.3d 531 (4th Dist. 1985). Nevertheless, before access privileges are revoked, the user should be notified and allowed to give an explanation.

<sup>219</sup> If students are allowed only supervised access and are not required to sign the *Authorization for Access to the District's Electronic Networks*, the provisions from the *Authorization* should be used as administrative procedures for covering student Internet use. See 6:235-AP1, *Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Networks*. This is an optional sentence:

The Superintendent shall establish administrative procedures containing the appropriate uses, ethics, and protocol for Internet use.

The Harassing and Obscene Communications Act criminalizes harassing and obscene electronic communication. 720 ILCS 5/26.5.

<sup>220</sup> The Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects individuals from searches only when the person has a legitimate expectation of privacy. This provision attempts to avoid Fourth Amendment protection for communications and downloaded material by forewarning users that their material may be read or searched, thus negating any expectation of privacy.

Email and computer files are "public records" as defined in the Ill. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) if they are, as in this policy, "under control" of the school board. 5 ILCS 140/2. They may be exempt from disclosure, however, when they contain information that, if disclosed, "would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy." 5 ILCS 140/7.

## Internet Safety<sup>221</sup>

Technology protection measures shall be used on each District computer with Internet access.<sup>222</sup> They shall include a filtering device that protects against Internet access by both adults and minors to visual depictions that are: (1) obscene, (2) pornographic, or (3) harmful or inappropriate for students, as defined by federal law and as determined by the Superintendent or designee.<sup>223</sup> The Superintendent or designee shall enforce the use of such filtering devices. An administrator, supervisor, or other authorized person may disable the filtering device for bona fide research or other lawful purpose, provided the person receives prior permission from the Superintendent or system administrator.<sup>224</sup> The Superintendent or designee shall include measures in this policy's implementation plan to address the following:<sup>225</sup>

1. Ensure staff supervision of student access to online electronic networks,<sup>226</sup>
2. Restrict student access to inappropriate matter as well as restricting access to harmful materials,
3. Ensure student and staff privacy, safety, and security when using electronic communications,
4. Restrict unauthorized access, including "hacking" and other unlawful activities, and
5. Restrict unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of personal identification information, such as, names and addresses.

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Alternatively, a school board may believe that making email semi-private enhances its educational value. The following grants limited privacy to email communications and can be substituted for the sample policy's sentence preceding this footnote:

School officials will not intentionally inspect the contents of email without the consent of the sender or an intended recipient, unless as required to investigate complaints regarding email that is alleged to contain material in violation of this policy or the District's administrative procedure, *Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Networks*.

<sup>221</sup> See f/n 1.

<sup>222</sup> While it is best practice to do so, neither CIPA nor the rules for the E-Rate program specifically address whether school-owned computers or other mobile computing devices must be filtered when using a non-school Internet connection. Consult the board attorney for guidance on this issue.

<sup>223</sup> This sample policy language is broader than the requirements in federal law (20 U.S.C. §7131, 47 U.S.C. §254, and 47 C.F.R. §54.520(c)(i)). It does not distinguish between minors (children younger than 17) and non-minors. The terms, *minor*, *obscene*, *child pornography*, and *harmful to minors* have not changed, but are now explicitly referred to in the regulations at 47 C.F.R. §54.520(a). Federal law defines *harmful to minors* as:

...any picture, image, graphic image file, or other visual depiction that—(i) taken as a whole and with respect to minors, appeals to a prurient interest in nudity, sex, or excretion; (ii) depicts, describes, or represents, in a patently offensive way with respect to what is suitable for minors, an actual or simulated sexual act or sexual contact, actual or simulated normal or perverted sexual acts, or a lewd exhibition of the genitals; and (iii) taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value as to minors.

The Federal Communications Commission specifically declined to find that access to social networking websites are per se *harmful to minors*. However, the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services issued a Surgeon General's Advisory stating there is not enough evidence to conclude that social media is safe for children. See [www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/reports-and-publications/youth-mental-health/social-media/index.html](http://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/reports-and-publications/youth-mental-health/social-media/index.html). School officials have discretion about whether or not to block access to these and similar sites. See *supra* f/n 3.

<sup>224</sup> Permitted by 20 U.S.C. §7131(c). The policy's provision for prior approval is not in the law and may be omitted. The entire sentence may be eliminated if a board does not want the filtering device to be disabled.

<sup>225</sup> In order to qualify for universal service benefits under the federal Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the district's Internet safety policy must address the items listed in the sample policy. 47 U.S.C. §254(l). The sample policy accomplishes this task by requiring these items be addressed in the policy's implementation plan or administrative procedure.

Note that federal law required school boards to hold at least one hearing or meeting to address the *initial* adoption of the Internet safety policy. Later revisions of the existing policy need not follow the public notice rule of CIPA, though a board will still need to follow its policy regarding revisions and the mandates of FOIA.

CIPA also requires this policy and its documentation to be retained for at least five years after the last day of service delivered in a particular funding year. This means the five-year retention requirement begins on the last day of service delivered under E-rate, not from the day the policy was initially adopted. Consult the board attorney about this requirement and the best practices for your individual board.

<sup>226</sup> Monitoring the online activities of *students* is broader than the requirement in federal law to monitor *minors*. The definition of minor for this purpose is "any individual who has not attained the age of 17 years." See 47 C.F.R. §54.520(a)(4)(i). The use of the word *students* is a best practice.

## Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-Enabled Tools <sup>227</sup>

The Board recognizes that AI-enabled tools are important to enhance student learning, educator effectiveness, and school operations. The use of AI-enabled tools in the District shall be implemented in a safe, ethical, and equitable manner and in accordance with Board policies 1:30, *School District Philosophy*, and 7:345, *Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security*.

To implement the use of AI-enabled tools in the District, the Superintendent or designee shall:

1. Develop a District-wide AI Plan that addresses the District's approach to the integration of AI;
2. Based on the District-wide AI Plan, establish AI Responsible Use Guidelines to address the responsible use of AI in the District by students and staff;
3. Ensure that AI-enabled tools comply with State and federal law;
4. Ensure that staff receive training and students receive instruction on the use of AI, as appropriate; and
5. Review the District's AI Plan and AI Responsible Use Guidelines on an annual basis and update them as needed.

## Authorization for Electronic Network Access <sup>228</sup>

Each staff member must sign the *Authorization for Access to the District's Electronic Networks* as a condition for using the District's electronic network. Each student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) must sign the *Authorization* before being granted unsupervised use. <sup>229</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Optional. Artificial intelligence is a rapidly evolving and complex technology that implicates many unsettled legal and ethical issues. This content contains an item on which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts upon wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right.

A Statewide Generative AI and Natural Language Processing Taskforce issued a report to the General Assembly in December 2024 (<https://doit.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/doit/meetings/ai-taskforce/reports/2024-gen-ai-task-force-report.pdf>) that recommended the Ill. State Board of Education provide guidance on the use of AI in schools, best practices, and educator training. The U.S. Dept. of Education released a toolkit to assist education leaders with the safe, ethical, and equitable integration of AI within education systems, available at: [http://downloads.microscribepub.com/il/press/federal\\_resources/FINAL-ED-OET-EdLeaders-AI-Toolkit-10.29.24\\_20250221.pdf](http://downloads.microscribepub.com/il/press/federal_resources/FINAL-ED-OET-EdLeaders-AI-Toolkit-10.29.24_20250221.pdf).

Note: This resource may no longer be available on a federal government website but is being maintained at PRESS Online to provide consistent subscriber access.

Adopting policy language that addresses AI provides (a) a way for boards to monitor how this technology is being used in the district, and (b) an opportunity for the board and the superintendent to examine all current policies, collective bargaining agreements, and administrative procedures on this subject. Before adoption of this subhead, the board may want to have a conversation with the superintendent to determine how local conditions, resources, and current practices will support the full implementation of a policy that addresses AI and its goals. The use of AI will be most effective when the policy reflects local conditions and circumstances. Consult the board attorney about these issues. See sample administrative procedure 6:235-AP3, *Development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Plan and AI Responsible Use Guidelines*, for a suggested framework for developing an AI plan and guidelines.

<sup>228</sup> The District's administrative procedure, 6:235-AP1, *Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Networks*, rather than this board policy, specifies appropriate conduct, ethics, and protocol for Internet use. This is consistent with the principle that detailed requirements are not appropriate for board policy; instead, they should be contained in separate district documents that are authorized by board policy. Keeping technical rules specifying acceptable use out of board policy will allow for greater flexibility, fewer changes to the policy manual, and adherence to the belief that board policy should be confined to governance issues and the provision of guidance on significant district issues. This sample policy only requires staff and students to sign the *Authorization*; however, all users of the District's Electronic Networks, including board members and volunteers, are bound by this policy and its implementing procedure and should be familiar with their content.

<sup>229</sup> The Superintendent's implementation plan should describe appropriate supervision for students on the Internet who are not required, or refuse, to sign the *Authorization*.

The use of personal electronic communication devices owned by students but used to gain Internet access that has been funded by E-rate is not addressed yet.

### Confidentiality

All users of the District's computers to access the Internet shall maintain the confidentiality of student records. Reasonable measures to protect against unreasonable access shall be taken before confidential student information is loaded onto the network.

### Violations

The failure of any user to follow the terms of the District's administrative procedure, *Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Networks*, or this policy, will result in the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal action.

LEGAL REF.: 20 U.S.C. §7131, Elementary and Secondary Education Act.  
47 U.S.C. §254(h) and (l), Children's Internet Protection Act.  
47 C.F.R. Part 54, Subpart F, Universal Service Support for Schools and Libraries.  
115 ILCS 5/14(c-5), Ill. Educational Labor Relations Act.  
720 ILCS 5/26.5.

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:170 (Copyright), 6:40 (Curriculum Development), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:210 (Instructional Materials), 6:220 (Bring Your Own Technology (BYOT) Program; Responsible Use and Conduct), 6:230 (Library Media Program), 6:260 (Complaints About Curriculum, Instructional Materials, and Programs), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools), 7:315 (Restrictions on Publications; High Schools), 7:345 (Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security)

ADMIN. PROC.: 6:235-AP1 (Acceptable Use of the District's Electronic Networks), 6:235-AP1, E1 (Student Authorization for Access to the District's Electronic Networks), 6:235-AP1, E2 (Staff Authorization for Access to the District's Electronic Networks)

## Instruction

### High School Credit for Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-Entering Students <sup>230</sup>

#### Credit for Non-District Experiences <sup>231</sup>

A student may receive high school credit for successfully completing any of the listed courses or experiences even when it is not offered in or sponsored by the District:

1. Distance learning course, including a correspondence, virtual, or online course
2. Courses in an accredited foreign exchange program
3. Summer school or community college courses <sup>232</sup>
4. College or high school courses offering dual credit at both the college and high school level <sup>233</sup>

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<sup>230</sup> State law requires that several of the programs in this policy be covered in policy. State law controls this policy's content. Note that 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(b) requires "[e]very school district [to] have an organized plan for recording pupil progress and/or awarding credit, including credit for courses completed by correspondence, online, or from other external sources, that can be disseminated to other schools within the State." Section 1.460 requires "[e]ach local board of education with a high school [to] adopt a policy which defines the board's position with reference to the awarding of high school credit on the basis of local examinations to pupils who have achieved the necessary proficiencies through independent study, either with or without private tutoring, or for work taken in or from another institution." 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.460.

Sample policy 6:185, *Remote Educational Program*, provides for educational programs **delivered by the district** in a location outside of the school.

Sample policy 6:315, *High School Credit for Students in Grade 7 or 8*, allows students enrolled in grade 7 or 8 to enroll in a course required for high school graduation. 105 ILCS 5/27-22.10(a); 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.440(c)(3).

<sup>231</sup> Each board may choose for which, if any, of the listed non-district experiences the district will grant high school credit. If a district does not grant credit for any of the listed activities, substitute the following alternative for all text in the entire section: "The District does not grant graduation credit for learning experiences that an enrolled student does not complete through the District."

<sup>232</sup> 105 ILCS 5/27-22.1 provides that no fewer than 60 hours of classroom instruction in summer school is required for one semester of high school course credit. Districts may accept courses completed in a community college (CC) toward graduation. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.440(f). Superintendents, pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-21.4, must annually report to the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) the number of students enrolled in accredited courses at any CC along with the name(s) and number(s) of the course(s) each student is taking.

<sup>233</sup> The Dual Credit Quality Act (DCQA) (110 ILCS 27/) defines dual credit as a college course taken by a high school student for credit at both the college and high school level. 110 ILCS 27/5 and 105 ILCS 5/10-20.62(a). An instructor who teaches a dual credit course does not need the certification required by Article 21 of the School Code but must meet the standards set forth in 110 ILCS 27/20(1), (2), (2.5), or (3). Dual credit programs require: (a) a specific partnership agreement between the district and a CC containing specified elements, as long as the district is in the CC's jurisdiction (110 ILCS 27/16), or (b) cooperation between the school district and the institution providing the dual credit courses (see the Higher Education Student Assistance Act at 110 ILCS 947/10 for a definition of *institution*). Partnership agreements that are entered into, amended, renewed, or extended after 1-1-23, must allow high school students who do not otherwise meet the CC's academic eligibility requirements to enroll in a dual credit course taught at the high school, but only for high school credit. 110 ILCS 27/16.5(a). If the district and CC cannot agree within 180 days of a district's initial request to enter into a partnership agreement, the two parties must use the model partnership agreement referenced at 110 ILCS 27/19.

Out-of-state dual credit contracts are prohibited until a district first offers the CC in the district in which the district is located the opportunity to provide a dual credit course. 110 ILCS 27/17. In addition, a district seeking to enter into an agreement with an out-of-state institution must provide notice to the Ill. State Board of Higher Education (BHE) of its intent to which the BHE will have 30 days to provide the district with a list of in-state institutions that can provide the district an equivalent dual credit opportunity. Id. Agreements between a district and an out-of-state institution that were in effect before 1-1-19 were not affected. Id. A high school evaluation of a dual credit program must also incorporate the analysis of data from the ISBE statewide longitudinal data system (see the P-20 Longitudinal Education Data System Act, 105 ILCS 13/, for more information).



5. Foreign language courses taken in an ethnic school program approved by the Illinois State Board of Education <sup>234</sup>
6. Work-related training at manufacturing facilities or agencies in a Tech Prep Program <sup>235</sup>
7. Credit earned in a Vocational Academy <sup>236</sup>

The student must seek approval from the Superintendent or designee to receive graduation credit for any non-District course or experience. The Superintendent or designee shall determine the amount of credit and whether a proficiency examination is required before the credit is awarded. As approval is not guaranteed, students should seek conditional approval of the experience before participating in a non-District course or experience. The student assumes responsibility for any fee, tuition, supply, or other expense. The student seeking credit is responsible for (1) providing documents or transcripts that demonstrate successful completion of the experience, and (2) taking a proficiency examination, if requested. The Superintendent or designee shall determine which, if any, non-District courses or experiences, will count toward a student's grade point average, class rank, and eligibility for athletic and extracurricular activities. When applicable, the Building Principal or designee shall, prior to the first day of class, inform individual high school students enrolled in a mixed enrollment dual credit course that includes students who have and have not met the community college's criteria for dual credit coursework of whether or not they are eligible to earn college credit for the course.<sup>237</sup> This section does not govern the transfer of credits for students transferring into the District.

#### Substitutions for Required Courses

**Vocational or technical education.**<sup>238</sup> A student in grades 9-12 may satisfy one or more high school courses (including physical education) or graduation requirements by successfully completing related vocational or technical education courses if: <sup>239</sup>

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105 ILCS 5/10-20.62(c), requires school boards to require the district's high schools, if any, to inform all 11th and 12th grade students of dual enrollment and dual credit opportunities at public CCs for qualified students. Qualified students may enroll in an unlimited amount of dual credit courses and earn an unlimited amount of academic credits from them if the course(s) are taught by an Ill. instructor, as provided by 110 ILCS 27/. Id. at (b). In addition, all dual credit coursework completed by a high school student must be transferred to all public institutions in Illinois on the same basis as coursework completed by a public CC student who previously earned a high school diploma in the manner set forth under the Ill. Articulation Initiative Act. Id. at 27/19.

The DCQA requires partnership agreements between districts and CCs to address access to dual credit courses by individual students with disabilities. 110 ILCS 27/16. 105 ILCS 5/14-8.03 also requires districts to provide special education students with information about career and technical education (CTE) opportunities, including at the postsecondary level. See *Increasing Postsecondary Opportunities and Success for Students and Youth with Disabilities* at: [www.sites.ed.gov/idea/idea-files/qa-increasing-postsecondary-opportunities-success-for-students-youth-with-disabilities-sept-17-2019/#Letter](http://www.sites.ed.gov/idea/idea-files/qa-increasing-postsecondary-opportunities-success-for-students-youth-with-disabilities-sept-17-2019/#Letter) for information on providing transition services to high school students who have individualized education programs (IEPs), are receiving services under the IDEA, and take courses offered by a community college or other postsecondary education institution program prior to high school graduation.

<sup>234</sup> 105 ILCS 5/2-3.44 and 5/10-22.43a. An ethnic school is a part-time, private school that teaches the foreign language of a particular ethnic group as well as the culture, geography, history, and other aspects of a particular ethnic group. 105 ILCS 5/2-3.44; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.465(b). For requirements, see 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.465.

<sup>235</sup> The State Superintendent and Board of Higher Education were encouraged by 105 ILCS 5/2-3.115 to establish a program of academic credit for Tech Prep work based learning for secondary school students with an interest in pursuing such career training, which could be instituted by school districts. See also 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.445.

<sup>236</sup> Vocational Academies Act, 105 ILCS 433/. The Act's purpose is to "integrate workplace competencies and career and technical education with core academic subjects." School districts are permitted to partner with CCs, local employers, and community-based organizations to establish a vocational academy that functions as a two-year school within a school for grades 10 through 12. Grant funds may be available from ISBE when the vocational academy meets statutory requirements.

<sup>237</sup> 110 ILCS 27/16.5(c). Written notification is not required by the law, but it is a best practice to show compliance with this requirement.

<sup>238</sup> Allowing for this substitution is optional, but, if offered, must be included in board policy. 105 ILCS 5/27-22.05.

<sup>239</sup> The *related* requirement is met if the course contains at least 50% of the content of the required course. Id. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.445 requires that the vocational or technical education course be completely described in the policy along with its relationship to the required course. The sample policy satisfies these requirements by referring to the courses as described in curricular material.



1. The Building Principal approves the substitution(s) and the vocational or technical education course is completely described in curriculum material along with its relationship to the required course; and
2. The student's parent/guardian requests and approves the substitution(s) in writing on forms provided by the District.

**Registered Apprenticeship Program.**<sup>240</sup> The Superintendent or designee will ensure that the District complies with State law requirements for registered apprenticeship programs.<sup>241</sup> The opportunities and requirements for registered apprenticeship programs contained in this policy will be posted on the District's website, and parents/guardians and students will also be notified of such opportunities in the appropriate school handbook(s).<sup>242</sup>

A student in grades 9-12 who is 16 years or older may satisfy one or more high school courses (including physical education) or graduation requirements by successfully completing a registered apprenticeship program if:

1. The registered apprenticeship program meets all criteria contained in State law;
2. The registered apprenticeship program is listed by the District, or the student identifies a registered (but not listed) apprenticeship program with a business or organization if one is not offered in the District;

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ISBE requires that the parent/guardian of a student under the age of 18 request the course substitution "on forms that the school district makes available" and that the request must be maintained in the student's temporary record. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.445. See sample exhibit 6:310-E, *Class Substitution Request*. There is no parallel recordkeeping requirement in the rules for registered apprenticeships; however, it is best practice to maintain all types of substitution requests as evidence of compliance with the form requirement.

<sup>240</sup> Allowing for this substitution is optional, but, if offered, must be included in board policy. 105 ILCS 5/2-3.175; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §255.200. A *registered apprenticeship program* is an industry-based occupational training program of study with standards reviewed and approved by the U.S. Dept. of Labor that meets characteristics set forth in State law and ISBE rules. The introductory sentence and listed items 1, 3, 4, and 6 are required to be in the policy if a board decides to allow students to participate in registered apprenticeship programs. See 23 Ill.Admin.Code §255.200(b). Item #2 is not required to be stated in policy, but is required to be included in a district's website notification (if any) to parents/guardians about registered apprenticeship opportunities. See f/n 13, below.

If a board adopts a policy to allow for student participation in registered apprenticeship programs, the policy must be posted on the district's website (if any) for students, parents, and members of the business and industry community to access. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §255.200(c)(1). See sample exhibit 2:250-E2, *Immediately Available District Public Records and Web-Posted Reports and Records*, and f/ns 13 and 14 below for other related website posting requirements.

Employers providing apprenticeships may be eligible for tax credits for certain educational expenses they incur on behalf of qualifying apprentices. 35 ILCS 5/231(b), amended by P.A. 103-1059. Districts that carry out registered apprenticeship programs should, but are not required to, aid an employer in claiming an available credit by providing a written receipt documenting the apprenticeship education expenses paid to the school by the employer. 14 Ill.Admin.Code §522.50(e). See <https://dceo.illinois.gov/expandrelocate/incentives/ilapprenticeshiptaxcredit.html> for more information about the credit.

<sup>241</sup> 105 ILCS 5/2-3.175; 23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 255. In addition to the requirements listed in the policy, districts allowing for student participation in registered apprenticeship programs must also: (1) submit data on participating students through ISBE's Student Information System, (2) identify and attempt to eliminate any barriers to student participation, and (3) include the program in the Career Pathway Endorsement if the district awards endorsements under the Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act (110 ILCS 148/). 23 Ill.Admin.Code §255.200(d)-(f).

<sup>242</sup> 23 Ill.Admin.Code §255.200(c). The Illinois Principals Association maintains a handbook service that coordinates with **PRESS** material, *Online Model Student Handbook (MSH)*, at: [www.ilprincipals.org/msh](http://www.ilprincipals.org/msh). The notification to students and parents on the district's website must include: (1) a statement that a student may participate in any registered apprenticeship program listed by the district; and (2) a statement that a student may find a registered, but not listed, apprenticeship program with a business or organization, if a registered apprenticeship program is not offered in the district. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §255.200(c)(2). See sample exhibit 2:250-E2, *Immediately Available District Public Records and Web-Posted Reports and Records*. For districts that do not maintain a website, use the following alternative sentence:

Parents/guardians and students will be notified of opportunities for registered apprenticeship programs in the appropriate school handbook(s).

3. The student enrolled in a registered apprenticeship program has the opportunity to earn post-secondary credit toward a certificate or degrees, as applicable;
4. The student's parent/guardian requests and approves the substitution(s) in writing on forms provided by the District and on its website;<sup>243</sup>
5. The Building Principal approves the substitution(s); and
6. All non-academic requirements mandated by the School Code for high school graduation that would otherwise prohibit or prevent the student from participating in the registered apprenticeship program are waived.

**Advanced placement computer science.**<sup>244</sup> The advanced placement computer science course is equivalent to a high school mathematics course. A student in grades 9-12 may substitute the advanced placement computer science course for one year of mathematics, in accordance with Section 27-22 of the School Code. The transcript of a student who completes the advanced placement computer science course will state that it qualifies as a mathematics-based, quantitative course.

**Substitutions for physical education.** A student in grades 9-12, unless otherwise stated, may submit a written request to the Building Principal to be excused from physical education courses for the reasons stated below.<sup>245</sup> The Superintendent or designee shall maintain records showing that the criteria set forth in this policy were applied to the student's individual circumstances, as appropriate.<sup>246</sup>

1. Ongoing participation in a marching band program for credit;<sup>247</sup>
2. Enrollment in Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC) program sponsored by the District;<sup>248</sup>
3. Ongoing participation in an *interscholastic* or *extracurricular athletic program*;<sup>249</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> 23 Ill.Admin.Code §255.200(b)(4). See sample exhibits 6:310-E, *Class Substitution Request*, and 2:250-E2, *Immediately Available District Public Records and Web-Posted Reports and Records*. If the district does not maintain a website, delete ~~and on its website~~.

<sup>244</sup> Optional, but allowed by 105 ILCS 5/27-22(e)(3) and 5/27-22(f-5).

<sup>245</sup> Optional, but allowed by 105 ILCS 5/27-6(b); 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e). A board that wants to allow any of these P.E. exemptions must include the ones it selects in a policy that excuses students on an individual basis.

<sup>246</sup> 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e).

<sup>247</sup> 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e)(4)(A). This policy excuses students from P.E. only during the marching band season because the statute allows the exemption "for ongoing participation in such marching band program." Thus, if the marching band season is over, the student's *ongoing participation* has ceased and the student no longer qualifies for the P.E. exemption. Common sense, however, would allow the exemption to continue until the end of the current grading period.

<sup>248</sup> 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e)(4)(B).

<sup>249</sup> 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e)(2) and (e)(3)(A). Prior to P.A. 100-465, the statute only allowed students in grades 11 and 12 to be excused from P.E. "for ongoing participation in an interscholastic athletic program." 105 ILCS 5/27-6(b)(1). 105 ILCS 5/27-6(b) now states "on a case-by-case basis, excuse pupils in grades 7 through 12 who participate in an interscholastic or extracurricular athletic program." While the statute no longer requires such participation to be *ongoing*, 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e)(3) requires *ongoing participation*. Thus, if the athletic program is over, the student's *ongoing participation* has ceased and the student no longer qualifies for the P.E. exemption. Common sense, however, would allow the exemption to continue only until the end of the grading period during which the athletic program is active. 23 Ill. Admin. Code §1.425(e)(2) limits interscholastic and extracurricular athletic programs to those that are sponsored by the school district as defined in school board policy. Boards do not have the "authority to honor parental excuses based upon students' participation in athletic training, activities or competitions conducted outside the auspices of the school district." *Id.* at §1.425(e)(6).

State statutes do not define *interscholastic athletic program* or *extracurricular athletic program*; however, 105 ILCS 5/22-80 defines *interscholastic athletic activity* as "any organized school-sponsored or school-sanctioned activity for students, generally outside of school instructional hours, under the direction of a coach, athletic director, or band leader, including, but not limited to, baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross country track, fencing, field hockey, football, golf, gymnastics, ice hockey, lacrosse, marching band, rugby, soccer, skating, softball, swimming and diving, tennis, track (indoor and outdoor), ultimate Frisbee, volleyball, water polo, and wrestling." 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e)(2) defines *interscholastic* and *extracurricular athletic programs* as "those programs that are sponsored by the school district as defined by school district policy." Boards have no authority to honor parental excuses based upon students' participation in athletic training, activities or competition conducted outside the auspices of the school district. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e)(6).

4. Enrollment in academic classes that are required for admission to an institution of higher learning (student must be in the 11th or 12th grade);<sup>250</sup> or
5. Enrollment in academic classes that are required for graduation from high school, provided that failure to take such classes will result in the student being unable to graduate (student must be in the 11th or 12th grade).<sup>251</sup>

A student who is eligible for special education may be excused from physical education courses pursuant to 7:260, *Exemption from Physical Education*.

**Volunteer service credit.**<sup>252</sup> A student participating in the District's Volunteer Service Credit Program, if any, may earn credit toward graduation for the performance of community service. The amount of credit given for program participation shall not exceed that given for completion of one semester of language arts, math, science, or social studies.

#### Re-Entering Students<sup>253</sup>

Individuals younger than 21 years of age may re-enter high school to acquire a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate, subject to the limitations in Board policy 7:50, *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools*. Re-entering students may obtain credit through the successful completion of the following (not all of these may be available at any one time):

1. District courses
2. Non-District experiences described in this policy
3. Classes in a program established under Section 10-22.20 of the School Code, in accordance with the standards established by the Illinois Community College Board
4. Proficiency testing, correspondence courses, life experiences, and other nonformal educational endeavors
5. Military service, provided the individual making the request has a recommendation from the American Council on Education

The provisions in the section **Credit for Non-District Experiences**, above, apply to the receipt of credit for any non-District course.

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For boards that want to explain the meaning of *interscholastic or extracurricular athletic program*, insert the following option at the end of #3:

(organized school-sponsored or school-sanctioned activities for students that are not part of the curriculum, not graded, not for credit, generally take place outside of school instructional hours, and under the direction of a coach, athletic director, or band leader)

For unit districts, ensure the definition matches the definition in policy 7:260, *Exemption from Physical Education*.

<sup>250</sup> 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e)(3)(B).

<sup>251</sup> 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.425(e)(3)(C).

<sup>252</sup> Optional. The credit given for one semester may not exceed that stated in this policy. 105 ILCS 5/27-22.3. The program may include participation in the organization of a high school or community blood drive or other blood donor recruitment campaign. Id. ISBE must provide assistance to districts opting to offer the program. 105 ILCS 5/2-3.108.

<sup>253</sup> Required by 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.470(a). While the sample policy does not provide for it, a school board may permit adults 21 years of age or older to re-enter high school. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.470(b). Items #4 & #5 are optional, but must be included in a policy if credit will be granted for them. 105 ILCS 5/27-6; 27-22.05.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/2-3.44, 5/2-3.108, 5/2-3.115, 5/2-3.142, 5/2-3.175, 5/10-22.43a, 5/10-20.62, 5/27-6, 5/27-22.3, and 5/27-22.05.

110 ILCS 27/, Dual Credit Quality Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.425(e), 1.440(f), 1.470(c), and Part 255.

CROSS REF.: 6:180 (Extended Instructional Programs), 6:300 (Graduation Requirements), 6:315 (High School Credit for Students in Grade 7 or 8), 6:320 (High School Credit for Proficiency), 7:50 (School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools), 7:260 (Exemption from Physical Education)

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## Students

### Equal Educational Opportunities <sup>254</sup>

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to color, race,<sup>255</sup> national origin, religion, sex,<sup>256</sup> sexual orientation, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, gender identity,<sup>257</sup> status of being homeless, immigration status, order of protection status, military status,

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<sup>254</sup> State or federal law requires this subject matter be covered by policy and controls this policy's content. Many civil rights laws guarantee equal educational opportunities; see citations in the Legal References.

<sup>255</sup> The Ill. Human Rights Act (IHRA) defines *race* to include traits associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists. 775 ILCS 5/1-103(M-5). The Ill. Dept. of Human Rights' (IDHR) jurisdiction over schools as "places of public accommodation" is limited, see f/n 4, below. See also sample policy 7:160, *Student Appearance*, regarding hairstyles associated with race.

<sup>256</sup> With some exceptions, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) guarantees that "[n]o person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance..." 20 U.S.C. §1681(a). See sample policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, for further discussion.

Title IX implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. §106.40 and 49 C.F.R. §25.445 prohibit "any rule concerning a student's actual or potential parental, family, or marital status which treats students differently on the basis of sex." Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) sex equity regulation at 23 Ill.Admin.Code §200.50(e) prohibits discrimination against a student "because of his or her actual or potential marital or parental status," and it specifies that: (1) pregnancy shall be treated as any other temporary disability, (2) pregnancy or parenthood shall not be considered cause for dismissal or exclusion from any program or activity, (3) participation in special programs provided for pregnant students or students who are parents shall be at the student's option, and (4) systems shall eliminate administrative and programmatic barriers to school attendance and school completion by pregnant students or students who are parents. Id. See f/n 8, below, regarding support services for pregnant and parenting students.

<sup>257</sup> The IHRA and an ISBE rule prohibit schools from discriminating against students on the basis of *sexual orientation* and *gender identity*. 775 ILCS 5/1-103(Q), 5/5-101(11), and 5/5-102; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240. *Sexual orientation* is defined as the "actual or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, or gender related identity, whether or not traditionally associated with the person's designated sex at birth." 775 ILCS 5/1-103(O-1). *Gender identity* is included in the definition of sexual orientation in the IHRA. The IHRA permits schools to maintain single-sex facilities that are distinctly private in nature, e.g., restrooms and locker rooms. 775 ILCS 5/5-103.

Adopting separate policies or inserting policy statements about accommodations and inclusion of transgender students in the educational program are unsettled areas of the law. Some lawyers believe doing so may open boards to equal protection challenges for not creating separate policies for other protected statuses, e.g., race, national origin, religion, etc. Governor Pritzker issued Executive Order (EO) 2019-11, titled "Strengthening Our Commitment to Affirming and Inclusive Schools" which established the Affirming and Inclusive Schools Task Force (Task Force) to identify strategies and best practices for ensuring welcoming, safe, supportive, and inclusive school environments for transgender, nonbinary, and gender nonconforming students. The Task Force delivered a report that served as the basis for two non-regulatory guidance documents entitled *Supporting Transgender, Nonbinary and Gender Nonconforming Students* and *Sample District Policy and Administrative Procedures* at [www.isbe.net/supportallstudents](http://www.isbe.net/supportallstudents). The Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) hosts these documents on its website.

Consult the board attorney if your board wishes to adopt a separate policy or insert policy statements about accommodations and inclusion of transgender students.

For boards that want to incorporate ISBE's *Sample District Policy and Administrative Procedures* policy recommendation into this policy, insert the following in place of "gender identity,": gender, gender identity (whether or not traditionally associated with the student's sex assigned at birth), gender expression.

**If the board inserts this option, it must also insert the options in f/n 7, below and in f/n 2 of sample policy 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*, but note the protected statuses list in this policy is different and should not be copied from here into 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*.**

See sample administrative procedure 7:10-AP1, *Accommodating Transgender, Nonbinary, or Gender Nonconforming Students*, for a case-by-case procedure that school officials may use when a student requests an accommodation based upon his or her gender identity.

unfavorable military discharge, reproductive health decisions, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy.<sup>258</sup> Further, the District will not knowingly enter into agreements with any entity or any individual that discriminates against students on the basis of sex or any other protected status, except that the District remains viewpoint neutral when granting access to school facilities under Board policy 8:20, *Community Use of School Facilities*.<sup>259</sup> Any student may file a discrimination complaint by using Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, or in the case of discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin, Board policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*.<sup>260</sup>

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For a list of policies that address the equal educational opportunities, health, safety, and general welfare of students within the District, see sample exhibit 7:10-E, *Equal Educational Opportunities Within the School Community*.

<sup>258</sup> In 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240, ISBE states that “no school system may deny access to its schools or programs to students who lack documentation of their immigration status or legal presence in the United States, and no school system may inquire about the immigration status of a student (*Plyler v. Doe*, 457 U.S. 202 (1982)).”

775 ILCS 5/1-102(A), amended by P.A.s 103-472 and 103-785, lists the following protected categories: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, order of protection status, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, pregnancy, reproductive health decisions, or unfavorable discharge from military service in connection with employment, real estate transactions, access to financial credit, and the availability of public accommodations, including in elementary, secondary, and higher education. See sample policy 5:10, *Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Recruitment*, and its footnotes for definitions of some of these terms.

The IHRA prohibits schools from discriminating against students on the bases of *reproductive health decisions*. 775 ILCS 5/1-103(Q), amended by P.A. 103-785. See 775 ILCS 5/1-103(O-2), amended by P.A. 103-785, for a definition of *reproductive health decisions*.

The IHRA’s jurisdiction in regard to schools as places of public accommodation is specifically limited to: (1) failing to enroll an individual, (2) denying or refusing full and equal enjoyment of facilities, goods, or services, or (3) failing to take corrective action to stop severe or pervasive harassment of an individual. 775 ILCS 5/5-102.2.

<sup>259</sup> 23 Ill.Admin.Code §200.40(g) prohibits entering into agreements with entities that discriminate against students on the basis on sex. Section 200.80(a)(4) contains an exception for single sex youth organizations, e.g., Girl Scouts. Note that the U.S. Supreme Court refused to apply New Jersey’s public accommodation law to the Boy Scouts because forcing the Scouts to accept a homosexual as a member would violate the Scouts’ freedom of expressive association. *Boy Scouts of America v. Dale*, 530 U.S. 640 (2002). When deciding whether to allow non-school groups to use its facilities, a public school district may not engage in viewpoint discrimination. *Good News Club v. Milford Central Sch.*, 533 U.S. 98 (2001).

<sup>260</sup> Districts must have a grievance procedure. See the Legal References following this policy and 105 ILCS 5/22-95, added by P.A. 103-472, regarding the internal complaint process for claims of discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin, which is addressed in sample policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*. Absent a specific statute or rule, there is no consensus on whether students have the right to appeal a board’s decision to the Regional Superintendent and thereafter to the State Superintendent pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/2-3.8.

## Sex Equity <sup>261</sup>

No student shall, based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity<sup>262</sup> be denied equal access to programs, activities, services, or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities.

Any student may file a sex equity complaint by using Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. A student may appeal the Board's resolution of the complaint to the Regional Superintendent (pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/3-10) and, thereafter, to the State Superintendent of Education (pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/2-3.8).<sup>263</sup>

Any student may file a sexual harassment complaint by using Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*.

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<sup>261</sup> Every district must have a policy on sex equity. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §200.40(b). The IHRA, Public Accommodation section, prohibits schools from: (1) failing to enroll an individual, (2) denying or refusing an individual full and equal enjoyment of its facilities, goods, or services, or (3) failing take corrective action to stop severe or pervasive harassment of an individual (775 ILCS 5/5-102.2), on the basis of the individual's sex or sexual orientation, among other classifications (775 ILCS 5/5-101(11)). Every four years, districts must evaluate their policies and practices to identify and eliminate sex discrimination as well as evaluate course enrollment data to identify disproportionate enrollment based on sex. In-service training for all staff members is required. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §200.40(e).

Every four years, districts must survey students about their athletic interests and must use survey results in planning for the future and assessing current program comparability. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §200.80(b)(1). Equal participation and equal opportunity in athletics is addressed in Title IX implementing regulations. 34 C.F.R. §106.41. Generally, when a school district offers a team for one gender but not for the other, a member of the excluded gender is allowed to try out for the team unless the sport is a *contact sport*. Contact sports are boxing, wrestling, rugby, ice hockey, football, basketball, and other sports involving bodily contact. The rules also list the factors that determine whether equal opportunities are available to both genders. These include: whether the selection of athletics accommodates the interests and abilities of both genders; equipment and supplies; scheduling; opportunity to receive coaching and academic tutoring; locker rooms, practice facilities, and fields; and publicity. Title IX prohibits any person from sexually harassing a student. See sample policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, for further discussion.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.60 requires public schools to provide reasonable accommodations to breastfeeding students. See sample administrative procedure 7:10-AP2, *Accommodating Breastfeeding Students*, for specific *reasonable accommodations* under Illinois law.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.63 requires school districts to make menstrual hygiene products (defined as tampons and sanitary napkins for use in connection with the menstrual cycle) available, at no cost to students, in bathrooms of every school building that is open for student use in grades 4 through 12 during the regular school day. **Note:** While P.A. 102-340 expanded the availability of menstrual hygiene products to students in grades 4 and 5, it did not expand the definition of *school building*, which remains defined as serving students in grades 6 through 12. Consult with the board attorney about implementing this law.

105 ILCS 5/26A-40, added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *Ensuring Success in School Law*, eff. 7-1-25, requires schools to "facilitate the full participation of students who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence" by providing certain in-school support services. For further information, see sample policy 7:255, *Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

<sup>262</sup> For boards that want to incorporate ISBE's *Sample District Policy and Administrative Procedures* policy recommendations into this policy (see f/n 4 above), insert:

1. In place of "or gender identity" as follows: "~~or~~ gender identity, or gender expression".
2. The following sentence as the second sentence of this subhead: "Students shall be supported in a manner consistent with their gender identity. This will include, but not be limited to, use of restrooms, locker rooms, and other facilities that correspond with the student's gender identity."

<sup>263</sup> Districts must have a sex equity grievance procedure and must tell students that they may appeal a board's resolution of a sex equity complaint to the Regional Superintendent and, thereafter, to the State Superintendent. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §200.40. Student complaints regarding breastfeeding accommodations must also be processed in accordance with these procedures. See sample policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, at f/n 9.

Use this alternative for districts in suburban Cook County: replace "Regional Superintendent" with "appropriate Intermediate Service Center Executive Director."

### Administrative Implementation

The Superintendent shall appoint a Nondiscrimination Coordinator and a Title IX Coordinator.<sup>264</sup> The Superintendent and Building Principal shall use reasonable measures to inform staff members and students of this policy and related grievance procedures.<sup>265</sup>

- LEGAL REF.: 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.  
29 U.S.C. §791 et seq., Rehabilitation Act of 1973; 34 C.F.R. Part 104.  
42 U.S.C. §2000d, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 34 C.F.R. Part 100.  
42 U.S.C. §11431 et seq., McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.  
Good News Club v. Milford Central Sch., 533 U.S. 98 (2001).  
Ill. Constitution, Art. I, §18.  
105 ILCS 5/3.25b, 5/3.25d(b), 5/10-20.12, 5/10-20.60, 5/10-20.63, 5/10-22.5, 5/26A, and 5/27-1.  
775 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq., Illinois Human Rights Act.  
775 ILCS 35/5, Religious Freedom Restoration Act.  
23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240 and Part 200.
- CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:50 (School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools), 7:60 (Residence), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:160 (Student Appearance), 7:165 (School Uniforms), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:250 (Student Support Services), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:330 (Student Use of Buildings - Equal Access), 7:340 (Student Records), 8:20 (Community Use of School Facilities)

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<sup>264</sup> Required by regulations implementing Title IX. 34 C.F.R. §106.8(a). See f/ns 24 and 25 in sample policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. The Nondiscrimination Coordinator often also serves as the Title IX Coordinator.

<sup>265</sup> Required by regulations implementing Title IX. 34 C.F.R. Part 106; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §200.40. Comprehensive faculty and student handbooks can provide required notices, along with other important information, to recipients. Handbooks can be developed by the building principal but should be reviewed and approved by the superintendent and board. Faculty handbooks may contain working conditions and be subject to mandatory collective bargaining. The Ill. Principals Association (IPA) maintains a handbook service that coordinates with **PRESS** material, *Online Model Student Handbook (MSH)*, at: [www.ilprincipals.org/msh](http://www.ilprincipals.org/msh).

## Students

### Harassment of Students Prohibited <sup>266</sup>

No person, including a School District employee, agent, or student, shall harass, intimidate, or bully a student on the basis of actual or perceived: race; color; national origin; military status; unfavorable discharge status from military service; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity<sup>267</sup>; gender-related identity or expression; ancestry; age; religion; physical or mental disability; order of protection status; status of being homeless; actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy; physical appearance; socioeconomic status; academic status; association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics; or any other distinguishing characteristic. The District will not tolerate harassing, intimidating conduct, or bullying whether verbal, physical, sexual, or visual, that affects the tangible benefits of education, that unreasonably interferes with a student's educational performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or

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<sup>266</sup> State or federal law requires this subject matter be covered by policy, controls this policy's content, and 105 ILCS 5/10-20.71 requires that every two years, each district within an Illinois county served by an accredited Children's Advocacy Center review all its existing sexual abuse investigation policies and procedures to ensure consistency with 105 ILCS 5/22-85. Each district must also have a policy on bullying. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7, amended by P.A. 103-47; see sample policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*.

This policy's list of protected classifications aligns with the list in sample policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*. The protected classifications are found in 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(a), amended by P.A. 103-47; 775 ILCS 5/1-103; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240.

The list of protected classifications in sample policy 7:10, *Equal Educational Opportunities*, is different – it does not contain the classifications that are exclusively identified in the bullying statute. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7, amended by P.A. 103-47.

The Ill. Human Rights Act (IHRA) and an Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) rule prohibit schools from discriminating against students on the basis of *sexual orientation* and *gender identity*. 775 ILCS 5/5-101(11); 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240. *Sexual orientation* is defined as the “actual or perceived heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, or gender related identity, whether or not traditionally associated with the person's designated sex at birth.” 775 ILCS 5/1-103(O-1). *Gender identity* is included in the definition of sexual orientation in the Act. The Act permits schools to maintain single-sex facilities that are distinctly private in nature, e.g., restrooms and locker rooms. 775 ILCS 5/5-103. Additionally, *race* is defined to include traits associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles such as braids, locks, and twists. 775 ILCS 5/1-103(M-5). 775 ILCS 5/1-102(A), added *order of protection status* to its list of protected categories. IHRA's jurisdiction regarding schools as a public accommodation is specifically limited to: (1) failing to enroll an individual, (2) denying access to facilities, goods, or services, or (3) failing to take corrective action to stop severe or pervasive harassment of an individual. 775 ILCS 5/5-102.2. It is also a violation of IHRA if a district is aware of an employee or agent's harassment towards a student but fails to take appropriate action to stop the harassment. 775 ILCS 5/5A-101 and 102, amended by P.A. 103-472.

<sup>267</sup> See f/n 4 in sample policy 7:10, *Equal Educational Opportunities*, for a discussion about Executive Order (EO) 2019-11 establishing the Affirming and Inclusive Schools Task Force (Task Force) that made policy and administrative procedure recommendations to ISBE that are discussed in its publication *Sample District Policy and Administrative Procedures* at [www.isbe.net/supportallstudents](http://www.isbe.net/supportallstudents).

For boards that want to incorporate ISBE's sample policy recommendation, insert the following in place of “gender identity;”: gender; gender identity (whether or not traditionally associated with the student's sex assigned at birth);

**If the board inserts this option, it must also insert the options in f/ns 4 and 9 of policy 7:10, *Equal Educational Opportunities*, but note the protected statuses list in this policy is different and should not be copied from here into 7:10, *Equal Educational Opportunities*.**

causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.<sup>268</sup>

### Sexual Harassment Prohibited

The District shall provide an educational environment free of verbal, physical, or other conduct or communications constituting harassment on the basis of sex as defined and otherwise prohibited by State and federal law.<sup>269</sup> See Board policies 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, and 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

### Making a Report or Complaint

Students are encouraged to promptly report claims or incidents of bullying, intimidation, harassment, sexual harassment, or any other prohibited conduct to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, a Complaint Manager, or any employee with whom the student is comfortable speaking.<sup>270</sup>

Reports under this policy will be considered a report under Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and/or Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*. The Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and/or Complaint Manager or designee shall process and review the report according to

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<sup>268</sup> This list of examples of prohibited conduct is optional. While hate speech is not specifically mentioned in this paragraph, any hate speech used to harass or intimidate is banned. Hate speech without accompanying misconduct may be prohibited in response to actual incidents when hate speech interfered with the educational environment. West v. Derby Unified Sch. Dist., 206 F.3d 1358 (10th Cir. 2000).

<sup>269</sup> Two laws apply to sexual harassment of students in Illinois. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) prohibits sexual harassment in any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. 20 U.S.C. §1681. Title IX defines sexual harassment as conduct on the basis of sex that meets one or more of the following: (1) a district employee conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; (2) unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it denies a person equal access to the District's education program or activity; or (3) *sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking* as defined in federal law. 34 C.F.R. §106.30. See sample policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, and sample exhibit 2:265-E, *Title IX Glossary of Terms*. Consult the board attorney to ensure the nondiscrimination coordinator and complaint managers are trained to appropriately respond to allegations of Title IX sexual harassment. See sample procedures 2:265-AP1, *Title IX Response*, and 2:265-AP2, *Formal Title IX Complaint Grievance Process*.

IHRA prohibits any district employee or agent from sexually harassing a student, and defines sexual harassment as any unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors made to a student, or any conduct of a sexual nature toward a student, when: (1) such conduct has the purpose of substantially interfering with the student's educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment; or (2) the district employee or agent either explicitly or implicitly makes the student's submission to or rejection of such conduct as a basis for making various enumerated education-related determinations. 775 ILCS 5/5A-101(E).

School districts are liable for damage awards for an employee's sexual harassment of a student in limited situations. Liability occurs only when a district official who, at a minimum, has authority to institute corrective action, has actual notice of and is deliberately indifferent to the employee's misconduct. Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent Sch. Dist., 524 U.S. 274 (1998). Schools are liable in student-to-student sexual harassment cases when school agents are deliberately indifferent to sexual harassment, of which they have actual knowledge that is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it can be said to deprive the victims of access to the educational opportunities or benefits provided by the school. Davis v. Monroe County Bd. of Educ., 526 U.S. 629 (1999). The Ill. Dept. of Human Rights investigates charges of sexual harassment in violation of the IHRA, and it is a civil rights violation when a district fails to take remedial or disciplinary action against an employee the district knows engaged in sexual harassment. 775 ILCS 5/5A-102.

<sup>270</sup> Using "or any employee with whom the student is comfortable speaking" ensures compliance with Title IX regulations providing that "any employee" of an elementary or secondary school who has notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment is deemed to have *actual knowledge* which triggers a district's duty to respond. 34 C.F.R. §106.30. By including "any employee" in this list, this policy contains an item on which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts upon wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right.

the appropriate grievance procedure. The Superintendent shall insert into this policy the names, office addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of the District's current Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and Complaint Managers.<sup>271 272</sup>

**Nondiscrimination Coordinator:**

**Title IX Coordinator:**

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Name

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Name

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Address

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Address

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Email

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Email

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Telephone

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Telephone

**Complaint Managers:**

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Name

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Name

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Address

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Address

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Email

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Email

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Telephone

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Telephone

The Superintendent shall use reasonable measures to inform staff members and students of this policy by including:

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<sup>271</sup> While the names and contact information are required by law to be listed, they are not part of the adopted policy and do not require board action. This allows for additions and amendments to the names and contact information when necessary. It is important for updated names and contact information to be inserted into this policy and regularly monitored.

Each district must communicate its bullying policy to students and their parents/guardians. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7, amended by P.A. 103-47; see sample policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*.

<sup>272</sup> Title IX regulations require districts to identify the name, office address, email address, and telephone number of the person who is responsible for coordinating the district's compliance efforts. 34 C.F.R. §106.8(a). For further discussion of the Title IX Coordinator, see f/n 17 in sample policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*. A district's Nondiscrimination Coordinator often also serves as its Title IX Coordinator.



1. For students, age-appropriate information about the contents of this policy in the District's student handbook(s), on the District's website, and, if applicable, in any other areas where policies, rules, and standards of conduct are otherwise posted in each school.<sup>273</sup>
2. For staff members, this policy in the appropriate employee handbook(s), if applicable, and/or in any other areas where policies, rules, and standards of conduct are otherwise made available to staff.

### Investigation Process

Any District employee who receives a report or complaint of harassment must promptly forward the report or complaint to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, or a Complaint Manager. Any employee who fails to promptly comply may be disciplined, up to and including discharge.

Reports and complaints of harassment will be confidential to the greatest extent practicable, subject to the District's duty to investigate and maintain an educational environment that is productive, respectful, and free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment.

For any report or complaint alleging sexual harassment that, if true, would implicate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*), the Title IX Coordinator or designee shall consider whether action under Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, should be initiated.

For any report or complaint alleging harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall investigate under Board policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*.

For any other alleged student harassment that does not require action under Board policies 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, or 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall consider whether an investigation under Board policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and/or 7:190, *Student Behavior*, should be initiated, regardless of whether a written report or complaint is filed.

### Reports That Involve Alleged Incidents of Sexual Abuse of a Child by School Personnel

An *alleged incident of sexual abuse* is an incident of sexual abuse of a child, as defined in<sup>274</sup> 720 ILCS 5/11-9.1A(b), that is alleged to have been perpetrated by school personnel, including a school vendor or volunteer, that occurred: on school grounds during a school activity; or outside of school grounds or not during a school activity.

Any complaint alleging an incident of sexual abuse shall be processed and reviewed according to Board policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*. In addition to reporting the suspected abuse, the

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<sup>273</sup> In addition to notifying students of Board policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, a district must notify them of the name, office address, email address, and telephone number of district's Title IX Coordinator. 34 C.F.R. §106.8(a). 105 ILCS 5/10-20.69 requires districts to maintain and implement an *age-appropriate* policy on sexual harassment that is included in the school district's student handbook, as well as on a district's website and, if applicable, other areas where such information is posted in each school. The law does not expressly state that the age-appropriate policy is for students; however, that is the most logical interpretation. In practice, most districts maintain a student handbook for each building. Because the law only requires one policy, this policy manages the age-appropriate requirement by directing age-appropriate explanations of the policy be included in the building-level student handbook(s). Student handbooks can be developed by the building principals, but should be reviewed and approved by the superintendent and school board. The Ill. Principals Association maintains a handbook service that coordinates with **PRESS** material, *Online Model Student Handbook (MSH)*, at: [www.ilprincipals.org/msh](http://www.ilprincipals.org/msh).

<sup>274</sup> Required for districts located within a county served by an accredited Children's Advocacy Center (CAC). Delete this subhead if your school district is within a county not served by an accredited CAC. 105 ILCS 5/22-85 (governing the investigation of an *alleged incident of sexual abuse* of any child within any Illinois counties served by a CAC). For a map of accredited CACs, and to identify a CAC that may serve your district, see [www.childrensadvocacycentersofillinois.org/about/map](http://www.childrensadvocacycentersofillinois.org/about/map). For further discussion see f/ns 14-16 in sample policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*.

complaint shall also be processed under Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, or Board policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*.

#### Enforcement

Any District employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any third party who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the District, e.g., vendor, parent/guardian, invitee, etc. Any District student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with the behavior policy. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to disciplinary action.

#### Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation against any person for bringing complaints or providing information about harassment is prohibited (see Board policies 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*, and 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*).

Students should report allegations of retaliation to the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager.

LEGAL REF.: 20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq., Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; 34 C.F.R. Part 106.  
29 U.S.C. §791 et seq., Rehabilitation Act of 1973; 34 C.F.R. Part 104.  
42 U.S.C. §2000d, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; 34 C.F.R. Part 100.  
105 ILCS 5/10-20.12, 5/10-22.5, 5/10-23.13, 5/26A, 5/27-1, and 5/27-23.7.  
775 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq., Illinois Human Rights Act.  
23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240 and Part 200.  
Davis v. Monroe County Bd. of Educ., 526 U.S. 629 (1999).  
Franklin v. Gwinnett Co. Public Schs., 503 U.S. 60 (1992).  
Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent Sch. Dist., 524 U.S. 274 (1998).  
West v. Derby Unified Sch. Dist. No. 260, 206 F.3d 1358 (10th Cir. 2000).

CROSS REF.: 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 4:165 (Awareness and Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and Grooming Behaviors), 5:20 (Workplace Harassment Prohibited), 5:90 (Abused and Neglected Child Reporting), 5:120 (Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:240 (Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence)

## Students

### School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools <sup>275</sup>

Age [*Elementary or Unit Districts only*]

To be eligible for admission, a child must be five years old on or before September 1 of that school term.<sup>276</sup> A child entering first grade must be six years of age on or before September 1 of that school term.<sup>277</sup> Based upon an assessment of a child's readiness to attend school, the District may permit him or her to attend school prior to these dates.<sup>278</sup> A child will also be allowed to attend first grade based upon an assessment of his or her readiness if he or she attended a non-public preschool, continued his or her education at that school through kindergarten, was taught in kindergarten by an appropriately licensed teacher, and will be six years old on or before December 31.<sup>279</sup> A child with exceptional needs who qualifies for special education services is eligible for admission at three years of age.<sup>280</sup> Early entrance to kindergarten or first grade may also be available through Board policy 6:135, *Accelerated Placement Program*.<sup>281 282</sup>

<sup>275</sup> State law requires some of the subject matter contained in this sample policy to be covered by policy and controls this policy's content. Boards must adopt a policy on school admissions (105 ILCS 5/10-21.2) and restricting a student from transferring from another school while under a suspension or expulsion from that school (105 ILCS 5/10-22.6). A *registration guidance document*, updated annually, is available from the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) at: [www.isbe.net/Documents/guidance\\_reg.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/guidance_reg.pdf).

<sup>276</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12. The district may, however, establish a kindergarten for children between the ages of 4 and 6 years old. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.18. Any child between the ages of 7 and 17 (unless the child has already graduated from high school) must attend public or private school, with certain exceptions allowed for physical and mental disability, lawful employment, or other reasons as specified by statute. 105 ILCS 5/26-1. The phrase "a child between the ages of 7 and 17" is liberally construed to fully carry out the true intent and meaning of the General Assembly (5 ILCS 70/1.01), which is to ensure that students graduate from high school (105 ILCS 5/26-1). Therefore, "the ages of 7-17" means a child is 17 until his or her 18th birthday.

<sup>277</sup> Optional sentence.

<sup>278</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12.

<sup>279</sup> *Id.* Delete the first four sentences in this paragraph if the district operates a year-round school and use the following alternative:

To be eligible for admission, a child must be at least five years old within 30 days after the commencement of that school term. Based upon an assessment of the child's readiness to attend school, the District may permit him or her to attend school prior to this date. A child may also attend first grade based upon an assessment of his or her readiness if he or she attended a non-public preschool and continued his or her education at that school through kindergarten, was taught in kindergarten by an appropriately licensed teacher, and will attain age six within four months after the commencement of the term.

<sup>280</sup> 105 ILCS 5/14-1.02 and 5/14-1.03a. An ISBE rule states: "Each school district shall be responsible for actively seeking out and identifying all children from birth through age 21 within the district (and those parentally-placed private school children for whom the district is responsible under 34 C.F.R. §300.131) who may be eligible for special education and related services." 23 Ill.Admin.Code §226.100. Note that after a child is determined to be eligible for special education services, the child must be placed in the appropriate program no later than the beginning of the next school semester. 105 ILCS 5/14-8.02.

<sup>281</sup> 105 ILCS 5/14A-17, Accelerated Placement Act (APA). For high school districts, delete this sentence and the cross reference to 6:135, *Accelerated Placement Program*. See sample policy 6:135, *Accelerated Placement Program*, and sample administrative procedure 6:135-AP, *Accelerated Placement Program Procedures*, for further detail.

Attorneys disagree whether the APA conflicts with 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12 (*School year – School age*). See ¶n 4 in sample policy 6:135, *Accelerated Placement Program* for a discussion about reconciling the APA and 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12. **Consult the board attorney for guidance.**

<sup>282</sup> Districts should consider implementing specific and objective criteria for early admissions and address such issues as who pays the costs for assessments, etc. Using this exception defeats the age requirement rules because it only relies upon a child's readiness, regardless of his or her age.

## Admission Procedure

All students must register for school each year on the dates and at the place designated by the Superintendent. Parents/guardians of students enrolling in the District for the first time must present:

1. A certified copy of the student's birth certificate. If a birth certificate is not presented, the Superintendent or designee shall notify in writing the person enrolling the student that within 30 days he or she must provide a certified copy of the student's birth certificate. A student will be enrolled without a birth certificate.<sup>283</sup> When a certified copy of the birth certificate is presented, the school shall promptly make a copy for its records, place the copy in the student's permanent<sup>284</sup> record, and return the certified copy to the person enrolling the child. If a person enrolling a student fails to provide a certified copy of the student's birth certificate, the Superintendent or designee shall immediately notify the local law enforcement agency, and shall also notify the person enrolling the student in writing that, unless he or she complies within ten days, the case will be referred to the local law enforcement authority for investigation. If compliance is not obtained within that ten-day period, the Superintendent or designee shall so refer the case. The Superintendent or designee shall immediately report to the local law enforcement authority any material received pursuant to this paragraph that appears inaccurate or suspicious in form or content.<sup>285</sup>
2. Proof of residence, as required by Board policy 7:60, *Residence*.
3. Proof of disease immunization or detection and the required physical examination, as required by State law and Board policy 7:100, *Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students*.<sup>286</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> Presenting a certified copy of a student's birth certificate is a missing children's law enforcement issue **that may not be used for denying enrollment**. See **Guidance Documents** subhead in sample administrative procedure 7:50-AP, *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools*, for more information about enrollment and residency issues. Consult the board attorney if a student cannot produce a certified copy of his or her birth certificate and wishes to provide a passport, visa, or other governmental documentation of identity. To balance the tension between the missing children's laws reporting requirements and *Plyler v. Doe* (457 U.S. 202 (1982)), many attorneys advise not to report a student's failure to produce a birth certificate; however always consult the board attorney for assistance based upon the specific facts of the enrollment situation (see f/n 11 below).

<sup>284</sup> 23 Ill.Admin.Code §375.10 states that the *student permanent record* shall include basic identifying information, including the student's name, birth date and place, and gender, and evidence required under 325 ILCS 50/5(b)(1).

<sup>285</sup> Two almost identical laws govern this requirement: Missing Children Records Act (325 ILCS 50/) and Missing Children Registration Law (325 ILCS 55/). We reconciled their differences as much as possible but chiefly used the language from the Registration Law because it has the clearest explanation. The statutory enforcement requirements, as nonsensical as they may seem, are quoted in the policy. **Important:** Schools cannot deny admission based upon immigration (illegal) status alone. Note that singling out foreign-looking students for visa requests is probably illegal discrimination. See *Plyler v. Doe*. See also f/n 18 below.

According to the Ill. State Police, a certified copy of the student's birth certificate is the only acceptable proof of the child's identity and age. 20 Ill.Admin.Code §1290.60(a). For more discussion about acceptable proof of identity, see f/n 1 in sample administrative procedure 7:50-AP, *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools*. The Missing Children Records Act requires schools to make prompt copies of these certified copies. 325 ILCS 50/5(b)(1). Once made, schools need not request another certified copy with respect to that child for any other year in which the child is enrolled in that school or other entity. *Id.* While the Act does not mandate where the copy should be kept, it is appropriate for placement in the student's permanent record. See 23 Ill.Admin.Code §375.10 and f/n 10, above. The school person who receives the copy of the certified birth certificate should initial and date the document. That way, if there is a question or an investigation (which can happen even years after enrollment) there will not be an issue as to who received the document and the date it was processed.

A district must also *flag* a student's record on notification by the State police of the student's disappearance and report to the State police any request for a *flagged* student record. 325 ILCS 50/3, 50/5.

<sup>286</sup> Each school must maintain records for each student that reflect compliance with the examinations and immunizations required by 105 ILCS 5/27-8.1 and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.530(a). A Tuberculosis skin test is required if the student lives in an area designated by the Ill. Dept. of Public Health as having a high incidence of Tuberculosis. 105 ILCS 5/27-8.1(1).

The individual enrolling a student shall be given the opportunity to voluntarily state whether the student has a parent or guardian who is a member of a branch of the U.S. Armed Forces and who is either deployed to active duty or expects to be deployed to active duty during the school year.<sup>287</sup> Students who are children of active duty military personnel transferring will be allowed to enter: (a) the same grade level in which they studied at the school from which they transferred, if the transfer occurs during the District's school year, or (b) the grade level following the last grade completed.<sup>288</sup>

### Homeless Children

Any homeless child shall be immediately admitted, even if the child or child's parent/guardian is unable to produce records normally required for enrollment.<sup>289</sup> Board policy 6:140, *Education of Homeless Children*, and its implementing administrative procedure, govern the enrollment of homeless children.

### Foster Care Students

The Superintendent will appoint at least one employee to act as a liaison to facilitate the enrollment and transfer of records of students in the legal custody of the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) when enrolling in or changing schools. The District's liaison ensures that DCFS' Office of Education and Transition Services receives all written notices and records pertaining to students in the legal custody of DCFS as required by State law.<sup>290</sup>

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<sup>287</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-70. Districts must report this enrollment information as aggregate data to ISBE. *Id.*

<sup>288</sup> The Educational Opportunity for Military Children Act (105 ILCS 70/) further details enrollment and entrance requirements for children of active military personnel. 105 ILCS 70/33. After enrollment, the law allows a district to perform evaluations to ensure appropriate placement of the student. Course, program, graduation, extracurricular(s), and other placement options for this student population are further discussed in sample administrative procedure 7:50-AP, *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools*.

<sup>289</sup> Required by Education for Homeless Children Act (105 ILCS 45/) and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. §11431 *et seq.*). See §11432(g)(3)(C)(i).

<sup>290</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 5/10-20.59. These liaisons must be licensed under Article 21B of the School Code. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.59 directs how employees are prioritized for liaison appointment. Liaisons are "encouraged to build capacity and infrastructure within their school district to support students in the legal custody of the Department of Children and Family Services." Schools are required to give DCFS liaisons certain notices, records, and meeting invitations. See 105 ILCS 5/10-20.77 (notice and invitation to attend parent-teacher conferences and other meetings); 105 ILCS 5/10-21.8 (copies of correspondence and reports upon request of DCFS); 105 ILCS 5/13B-60.10 (notice and invitation to attend alternative learning opportunities program conference); 105 ILCS 5/14-8.02 (notices related to special education); 105 ILCS 10/ (student records). See sample administrative procedure 7:340-AP1, *School Student Records*, for more information regarding DCFS access to the student records of children in its legal custody. The law does not specifically require that a district's DCFS liaison perform these duties; this policy assigns them to the liaison because they logically fit within the responsibilities outlined in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.59, which may include:

1. Streamlining the enrollment process for students in foster care;
2. Implementing student data tracking and monitoring mechanisms;
3. Ensuring that students in DCFS custody receive all school nutrition and meal programs available;
4. Coordinating student withdrawal from a school, record transfers, and credit recovery;
5. Becoming experts on the foster care system and State laws and policies in place that support students in DCFS custody;
6. Coordinating with child welfare partners;
7. Providing foster care-related information and training to the district;
8. Working with DCFS to help students maintain their school placement, if appropriate;
9. Reviewing student schedules to ensure students are on track to graduate;
10. Encouraging a successful transition into adulthood and post-secondary opportunities;
11. Encouraging involvement in extracurricular activities; and
12. Knowing what support is available within the district and community for students in DCFS custody.

## Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools <sup>291</sup>

A student may transfer into or out of the District according to State law and procedures developed by the Superintendent or designee. A student seeking to transfer into the District must serve the entire term of any suspension or expulsion, imposed for any reason by any public or private school, in this or any other state, before being admitted into the School District.

## Foreign Students [*High School or Unit Districts only*] <sup>292</sup>

<sup>291</sup> 105 ILCS 5/2-3.13a requires each transferor (original) school to keep documentation of transfers in the student's record. It also requires "notification [by the transferee (recipient) school] of the transfer on or before July 31 following the school year during which the student withdraws from the transferor school or school district or the student shall be counted in the calculation of the transferor school's or school district's annual student dropout rate." ISBE rule, 23 Ill.Admin.Code §375.75(e), is consistent with this requirement. The rule also requires the transferring school or district to maintain any documentation of the student's transfer, including records indicating the school or school district to which the student transferred, in that student's temporary record. *Id.*

Out-of-state transfer students, including children of military personnel, may use unofficial transcripts for admission to a school until official transcripts are obtained from the student's last school district. 105 ILCS 10/8.1 and 70/32. See also sample administrative procedure 7:50-AP, *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools*.

A board has two basic options for students transferring into the district who are serving a suspension or expulsion. Under option one, it may comply with the minimum requirements of 105 ILCS 5/2-3.13a by refusing to allow a student transferring from any public school to attend classes until the period of any suspension or expulsion has expired when the penalty was for: (1) knowingly possessing in a school building or on school grounds a weapon as defined in the Gun Free Schools Act; (2) knowingly possessing, selling, or delivering in a school building or on school grounds a controlled substance or cannabis; or (3) battering a staff member of the school. Under option two, a board may require a student who was suspended or expelled for *any* reason from any public or private school in this or any other state to complete the entire term of the suspension or expulsion before being admitted to the school district. The sample policy uses the second, more simple, more comprehensive alternative.

A board may adopt a policy providing that if a student is suspended or expelled for any reason from any school, anywhere, the student must complete the suspension's or expulsion's entire term in an alternative school program under Article 13A (105 ILCS 5/13A, amended by P.A. 103-473) or an alternative learning opportunities program under Article 13B (105 ILCS 5/13B) before being admitted into the school district if there is no threat to the safety of students or staff in the alternative program. 105 ILCS 5/2-3.13a and 5/10-22.6(g), amended by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *Ensuring Success in School (ESS) Law*, eff. 7-1-25. If a board adopts such a policy, it must allow for the consideration of any mitigating factors (including the student's status as a parent, expectant parent, or victim of domestic or sexual violence as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26A). 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(g), amended by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25. If a board wants to provide for this alternative, it may add the following to either of the above options and add 105 ILCS 5/26A to the Legal References:

The Superintendent is authorized to allow a student who was suspended or expelled from any public or private school to be placed in an alternative school program established under Article 13A of the School Code or an alternative learning opportunities program established under Article 13B of the School Code for the remainder of the suspension or expulsion. When determining whether to authorize such placement, the Superintendent shall consider any mitigating factors relating to the suspension or expulsion, including the student's status as a parent, expectant parent, or victim of domestic or sexual violence as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26A.

<sup>292</sup> Generally, a citizen of a foreign country who wishes to enter the U.S. must first obtain either: (1) a nonimmigrant visa (for temporary stay for tourism, medical treatment, business, temporary work, or study), or (2) an immigrant visa for permanent residence. Common visas presented by foreign students are:

1. J-1 nonimmigrant visas for participants in educational and cultural exchange programs designated by the U.S. Dept. of State (DOS), Exchange Visitor Program, and Designation Staff. These students are enrolled provided they otherwise qualify for admission. For information about J-1 visas and the Exchange Visitor Program, see [j1visa.state.gov/programs](http://j1visa.state.gov/programs).
2. F-1 nonimmigrant student visa. F-1 visas are not issued for attendance at an elementary or middle school (K-8). Before obtaining an F-1 student visa, the individual must submit evidence that the school district has been reimbursed for the unsubsidized per capita cost of the education. These students are enrolled provided they otherwise qualify for admission. However, attendance at U.S. public high schools cannot exceed a total of 12 months.
3. B-2 visitor nonimmigrant visas. There is disagreement over whether these students must be enrolled tuition free. Their *visitor* visa is evidence of nonresident status. Call the district's attorney for guidance.
4. The qualified school-age child of an alien who holds another type of visa, i.e., A, E, H, I, L, etc., other than a visitor visa. These students are enrolled provided they otherwise qualify for admission. Likewise, dependents of foreign nationals on long-term visas are enrolled provided they otherwise qualify for admission.

The District accepts foreign exchange students with a J-1 visa and who reside within the District as participants in an exchange program sponsored by organizations screened by administration. Exchange students on a J-1 visa are not required to pay tuition.<sup>293</sup>

Privately sponsored exchange students on an F-1 visa may be enrolled if an adult resident of the District has temporary guardianship, and the student lives in the home of that guardian. Exchange students on an F-1 visa are required to pay tuition at the established District rate.<sup>294</sup> F-1 visa student admission is limited to high schools, and attendance may not exceed 12 months.

The Board may limit the number of exchange students admitted in any given year. Exchange students must comply with District immunization requirements. Once admitted, exchange students become subject to all District policies and regulations governing students.

#### Re-enrollment<sup>295</sup> [*High School or Unit Districts only*]

Re-enrollment shall be denied to any individual 19 years of age or above who has dropped out of school and who could not earn sufficient credits during the normal school year(s) to graduate before his or her 21st birthday. However, at the Superintendent's or designee's discretion and depending on program availability, the individual may be enrolled in a graduation incentives program established under 105 ILCS 5/26-16 or an alternative learning opportunities program established under 105 ILCS 5/13B-1 (see 6:110, *Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program*). Before being denied re-enrollment, the District will offer the individual due process as required in cases of expulsion under policy 7:210, *Expulsion Procedures*. A person denied re-enrollment will be offered counseling and be directed to alternative educational programs, including adult education programs that lead to graduation or receipt of a GED diploma. This section does not apply to students eligible for special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act or accommodation plans under the Rehabilitation Act, Section 504.

5. No immigration documentation. *Plyler v. Doe*. A school cannot deny admission based upon immigration (illegal) status alone. Note that singling out foreign-looking students for visa requests is probably illegal discrimination. Thus, undocumented aliens are enrolled, provided they otherwise qualify for admission.

6. Immigrant visa. These students are enrolled provided they otherwise qualify for admission.

The Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) is an Internet-based system that provides tracking and monitoring, with access to accurate and current information on nonimmigrant students (F and M visas) and exchange visitors (J visa), and their dependents (F-2, M-2, and J-2). 8 U.S.C. §1372(c)(2), implemented by 8 C.F.R. §214.1(h), is an exception to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. §1232g) authorizing and requiring districts to report information concerning an F, J, or M nonimmigrant to the extent necessary to comply with 8 U.S.C. §1372 and 8 C.F.R. §214.3(g) to certify these students for enrollment. SEVIS enables schools and program sponsors to transmit electronic information and event notifications, via the Internet, to the U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security (DHS) and DOS throughout a student's or exchange visitor's stay. SEVIS will provide system alerts, event notifications, and reports to the end-user schools and programs, as well as for DHS and DOS offices.

According to federal regulations, students who apply for F-1, M-1, F-3, J-1, or M-3 visas must pay a fee to the DHS. The regulations describe when and how the fee is to be paid, who is exempt from the fee, and the consequences for failure to pay, 8 C.F.R. Parts 103, 214, and 299.

<sup>293</sup> State law allows, but does not require, boards to waive nonresident tuition for these students. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.5a.

<sup>294</sup> Exchange students on F-1 visas must pay the full-unsubsidized public education costs before entering the U.S. 8 U.S.C. §1101(a)(15)(F); 8 U.S.C. §1184(m). Boards may not waive the fee.

<sup>295</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26-2(b). The requirements in this section are provided in State law, that is: (1) it is mandatory that a district deny re-enrollment as provided in this section; (2) it is permissive whether to enroll the individual in a district graduation incentives program or alternative learning opportunities program (although depending on circumstances, a student below the age of 20 may be entitled to enroll in a graduation incentives program); (3) it is mandatory to provide due process before denying re-enrollment; (4) it is mandatory to offer the individual who is denied re-enrollment counseling and to direct that person to alternative educational programs; and (5) it is mandatory that this section not apply to students eligible for special education.

105 ILCS 5/26-2(c) allows a district to deny enrollment to a student 17 years of age or older for one semester for failure to meet minimum academic or attendance standards if certain conditions are met. See sample policy 7:70, *Attendance and Truancy*.

- LEGAL REF.: 8 U.S.C. §1101 et seq., Illegal Immigrant and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996.  
20 U.S.C. §1232g, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.  
20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq., Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act.  
29 U.S.C. §794, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504.  
42 U.S.C. §11431 et seq., McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.  
105 ILCS 5/2-3.13a, 5/10-20.12, 5/10-20.59, 5/10-22.5a, 5/14-1.02, 5/14-1.03a, 5/26-1, 5/26-2, and 5/27-8.1.  
105 ILCS 10/8.1, Ill. School Student Records Act.  
105 ILCS 45/, Education for Homeless Children Act.  
105 ILCS 70/, Educational Opportunity for Military Children Act.  
325 ILCS 50/, Missing Children Records Act.  
325 ILCS 55/, Missing Children Registration Law.  
410 ILCS 315/2, Communicable Disease Prevention Act.  
20 Ill.Admin.Code Part 1290, Missing Person Birth Records and School Registration.  
23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 226, Special Education.  
23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 375, Student Records.
- CROSS REF.: 4:110 (Transportation), 6:30 (Organization of Instruction), 6:110 (Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program), 6:135 (Accelerated Placement Program), 6:140 (Education of Homeless Children), 6:300 (Graduation Requirements), 6:310 (High School Credit for Non-District Experiences; Course Substitutions; Re-Entering Students), 7:60 (Residence), 7:70 (Attendance and Truancy), 7:100 (Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students), 7:340 (Student Records)



## Students

### Residence <sup>296</sup>

#### Resident Students

Only students who are residents of the District may attend a District school without a tuition charge, except as otherwise provided below or in State law.<sup>297</sup> A student's residence is the same as the person who has legal custody of the student.<sup>298</sup>

A person asserting legal custody over a student, who is not the child's natural or adoptive parent, shall complete a signed statement, stating: (a) that he or she has assumed and exercises legal responsibility for the child, (b) the reason the child lives with him or her, other than to receive an education in the District, and (c) that he or she exercises full control over the child regarding daily educational and medical decisions in case of emergency. If the District knows the current address of the child's natural or adoptive parent, the District shall request in writing that the person complete a signed statement or affidavit stating: (a) the role and responsibility of the person with whom their child is living, and (b) that the person with whom the child is living has full control over the child regarding daily educational and medical decisions in case of emergency.<sup>299</sup>

A student whose family moves out of the District during the school year will be permitted to attend school for the remainder of the year without payment of tuition.<sup>300</sup>

When a student's change of residence is due to the military service obligation of the student's legal custodian, the student's residence is deemed to be unchanged for the duration of the custodian's military service obligation if the student's custodian made a written request. The District, however, is not responsible for the student's transportation to or from school.<sup>301</sup>

If, at the time of enrollment, a dependent child of military personnel is housed in temporary housing located outside of the District, but will be living within the District within six months after the time of initial

<sup>296</sup> State or federal law controls this policy's content. For a resource, see the Ill. State Board of Education's non-regulatory guidance, *Residency & Enrollment, Immigrant Pupils, Homeless Pupils and School Fees & Waivers* at [www.isbe.net/Pages/Student-Registration-and-Enrollment-Guidance.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Student-Registration-and-Enrollment-Guidance.aspx).

<sup>297</sup> In certain cases, no tuition may be charged for nonresident children placed: (1) by the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services (DCFS) with a foster parent or child care facility, (2) by DCFS with a foster parent, child care facility, relative caregiver or non-custodial parent, as part of a safety plan (105 ILCS 5/10-20.12b, amended by P.A. 103-629); or (3) with a person who (i) has temporary custody of a child of a person who is on active military duty, and (ii) is responsible for making decisions for that child (105 ILCS 70/).

<sup>298</sup> In the case of divorced or divorcing parents, the Ill. Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act (IMDMA), 750 ILCS 5/, provides that "for purposes of Section 10-20.12b of the School Code only, the parent with the majority of parenting time is considered to have legal custody." See 750 ILCS 5/606.10. See also the Ill. Council of School Attorneys' *Answers to FAQs Regarding Students with Divorced or Divorcing Parents*, at: [www.iasb.com/IASB/media/Documents/FAQDivorcedorDivorcingParents.pdf](http://www.iasb.com/IASB/media/Documents/FAQDivorcedorDivorcingParents.pdf). The IMDMA also requires a *parenting plan* that sets forth a child's residential address for school enrollment purposes. 750 ILCS 5/602.10(f)(6). **Consult the board attorney when the residential address set forth in a parenting plan is not the address of the parent with the majority of parenting time.**

<sup>299</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12b. In order to establish residence, a school district may not require a parent to transfer custody/guardianship to the person with whom the child is living. *Israel S. by Owens v. Bd. of Educ. of Oak Park and River Forest High Sch. Dist. 200*, 235 Ill.App.3d 652 (5th Dist. 1992). See also *Joel R. v. Bd. of Educ. of Manheim Sch. Dist. 83*, 292 Ill.App.3d 607 (1st Dist. 1997).

<sup>300</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12a(a).

<sup>301</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12b(a-5).

enrollment, the child is allowed to enroll, subject to the requirements of State law, and must not be charged tuition.<sup>302</sup>

### Residence of Students with Disabilities<sup>303</sup>

The residence of a child with a disability is determined in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/14-1.11, 5/14-1.11a, and 5/14-1.11b.

### Requests for Nonresident Student Admission<sup>304</sup>

Nonresident students may attend District schools upon the approval of a request submitted by the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) for nonresident admission. The Superintendent may approve the request subject to the following:<sup>305</sup>

1. The student will attend on a year-to-year basis. Approval for any one year is not authorization to attend a following year.
2. The student will be accepted only if there is sufficient room.
3. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be charged the maximum amount of tuition as allowed by State law.<sup>306</sup>
4. The student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be responsible for transporting the student to and from school.

### Admission of Nonresident Students Pursuant to an Agreement or Order<sup>307</sup>

Nonresident students may attend District schools pursuant to:

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<sup>302</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.5a(a-5). Military personnel must provide proof that the child will be living within the district within six months after the date of initial enrollment. Proof of residency may include postmarked mail addressed to the military personnel and sent to an address located within the district, a lease agreement for occupancy of a residence located within the district, or proof of ownership of a residence located within the district.

<sup>303</sup> When special education services are provided, a student's resident district is determined by 105 ILCS 5/14-1.11 (when the resident district is the district in which the parent/guardian resides), 14-1.11a, amended by P.A. 103-676 (when the resident district is the district in which the student resides), and 14-1.11b (applying the provisions of 105 ILCS 5/14-1.11 and 14-1.11a to determine the resident district in all cases in which special education services and facilities are provided).

<sup>304</sup> Optional. A district that wants to include this subhead should specify and customize the listed criteria to match local conditions. Consult the board attorney regarding cost exceptions that may be applicable to specific student populations such as students with disabilities.

<sup>305</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12a(a), amended by P.A.s 103-111 and 103-780, allows boards to adopt a policy to waive nonresident tuition if the student is the child of a district employee. A *child* means a district employee's child who is a biological child, adopted child, foster child, stepchild, or a child for which the employee serves as legal guardian. *Id.* If a board wishes to accept requests from district employees for their nonresident children to attend school in the district on a tuition-free basis, insert the following language as its own paragraph after the numbered list:

For a nonresident student who is the child of a District employee, if the Superintendent approves the request for nonresident admission for the student, the tuition cost is waived pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12a(a).

<sup>306</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12a specifies a formula for calculating the maximum amount a district can charge nonresident students.

<sup>307</sup> The agreement described in #1 is optional (105 ILCS 5/10-22.5a(a)) and districts are not required to enter into such agreements nor to alter existing transportation services due to the attendance of such nonresident students. The agreement described in #2 is optional (105 ILCS 5/10-22.5a(a)); districts should be sure it is consistent with sample policy 7:50, *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools*.

An example of an agreement described in #3 is one to accept nonresident students; entering into such an agreement is optional. Nonresident students may include students who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence under 105 ILCS 5/26A, added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *Ensuring Success in School Law*, eff. 7-1-25. Interdistrict transfer is not required by Article 26A, but including language about it in this policy is recommended in the 2024 Ensuring Success in School (ESS) Task Force Report to the Governor and the General Assembly, available here: [www.isbe.net/Documents/ESSTaskForce/Final-Report-ESS-Report-June-2024.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/ESSTaskForce/Final-Report-ESS-Report-June-2024.pdf). For further information about the 2024 ESS Task Force, see f/n 1 in sample policy 7:255, *Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

1. A written agreement with an adjacent school district to provide for tuition-free attendance by a student of that district, provided both the Superintendent or designee and the adjacent district determine that the student's health and safety will be served by such attendance.
2. A written agreement with cultural exchange organizations and institutions supported by charity to provide for tuition-free attendance by foreign exchange students and nonresident pupils of charitable institutions.
3. According to an intergovernmental agreement, including, but not limited to, an agreement for interdistrict transfer of students who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence under 105 ILCS 5/26A.
4. Whenever any State or federal law or a court order mandates the acceptance of a nonresident student.

#### Homeless Children

Any homeless child shall be immediately admitted, even if the child or child's parent/guardian is unable to produce records normally required to establish residency.<sup>308</sup> School Board policy 6:140, *Education of Homeless Children*, and its implementing administrative procedure, govern the enrollment of homeless children.

#### Challenging a Student's Residence Status <sup>309</sup>

If the Superintendent or designee determines that a student attending school on a tuition-free basis is a nonresident of the District for whom tuition is required to be charged, he or she on behalf of the School Board shall notify the person who enrolled the student of the tuition amount that is due. The notice shall detail the specific reasons why the Board believes that the student is a nonresident of the District<sup>310</sup> and shall be given by certified mail, return receipt requested. The person who enrolled the student may challenge this determination and request a hearing as provided by the School Code, 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12b.

LEGAL REF.: 42 U.S.C. §11431 et seq., McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.12a, 5/10-20.12b, 5/10-22.5, 5/10-22.5a, 5/14-1.11, 5/14-1.11a, 5/14-1.11b, and 5/26A.

105 ILCS 45/, Education for Homeless Children Act.

105 ILCS 70/, Educational Opportunity for Military Children Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240.

Israel S. by Owens v. Bd. of Educ. of Oak Park and River Forest High Sch. Dist. 200, 235 Ill.App.3d 652 (5th Dist. 1992).

Joel R. v. Board of Education of Manheim School District 83, 292 Ill.App.3d 607 (1st Dist. 1997).

Kraut v. Rachford, 51 Ill.App.3d 206 (1st Dist. 1977).

CROSS REF.: 6:140 (Education of Homeless Children), 7:50 (School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools), 7:70 (Attendance and Truancy), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence)

<sup>308</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 45/ and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 42 U.S.C. §11431 et seq. See §11432 (g)(3)(C)(i).

<sup>309</sup> Id. See sample administrative procedure 7:60-AP1, *Challenging a Student's Residence Status*, for sample procedures implementing this paragraph.

<sup>310</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12b.

## Students

### Attendance and Truancy <sup>311</sup>

#### Compulsory School Attendance <sup>312</sup>

This policy applies to individuals who have custody or control of a child: (a) between the ages of six (on or before September 1) and 17 years (unless the child has graduated from high school), or (b) who is enrolled in any of grades kindergarten through 12 in the public school regardless of age.

Subject to specific requirements in State law, the following children are not required to attend public school: (1) any child attending a private school (including a home school) or parochial school, (2) any child who is physically or mentally unable to attend school (including a pregnant student suffering medical complications as certified by her physician), (3) any child lawfully and necessarily employed, (4) any child over 12 and under 14 years of age while in confirmation classes, (5) any child absent because of religious reasons, including to observe a religious holiday, for religious instruction, or because his or her religion forbids secular activity on a particular day(s) or time of day, and (6) any child 16 years of age or older who is employed and is enrolled in a graduation incentives program.

The parent/guardian of a student who is enrolled must authorize all absences from school and notify the school in advance or at the time of the student's absence. A valid cause for absence includes illness (including mental or behavioral health of the student),<sup>313</sup> attendance at a verified medical or therapeutic appointment (including a victim services provider),<sup>314</sup> observance of a religious holiday, death in the immediate family, attendance at a civic event,<sup>315</sup> family emergency, other situations beyond the control of the student as determined by the Board, voting pursuant to policy 7:90, *Release During School Hours* (10 ILCS 5/7-42 and

<sup>311</sup> State law requires boards to adopt a policy covering some of the topics herein and controls this policy's content. 105 ILCS 5/22-92; 23 Ill.Admin Code Part 207. Any school receiving public funds must develop and annually communicate to its students and their parents/guardians an absenteeism and truancy policy. *Id.* The Ill. Principals Association (IPA) maintains a handbook service that coordinates with **PRESS** material, *Online Model Student Handbook* (MSH), at: [www.ilprincipals.org/msh/](http://www.ilprincipals.org/msh/).

This policy must be updated every two years and filed with the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) and the regional superintendent of schools [or Intermediate Service Center Executive Director, whichever is appropriate]. 105 ILCS 5/22-92(b); 23 Ill.Admin.Code §207.30(a). 105 ILCS 5/3-0.01 states that any references to *regional superintendent* include the chief administrative officer of Intermediate Service Centers established under 105 ILCS 5/2-3.62. See the **Monitoring** subhead and f/n 21, below.

<sup>312</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26-2 addresses enrolled students below or over set compulsory attendance ages. The law also requires any persons having custody or control of a child who is enrolled in grades kindergarten through 12 in the public school to cause the child to attend school.

105 ILCS 5/26-1 contains the compulsory school age exemptions. Each listed exception is specifically included in the statute, except the reference to *home school*. See sample policy 7:40, *Nonpublic School Students, Including Parochial and Home-Schooled Students*, regarding assigning students who enroll from a non-public school. See sample policy 6:150, *Home and Hospital Instruction*, regarding providing instruction to a pregnant student or other student who is medically unable to attend school.

<sup>313</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26-1 and 5/26-2a. A student may be absent for mental or behavioral health for up to five days without providing a medical note, and the student must be given an opportunity to make up any missed school work. *Medical note* is not defined, but the same portion of the statute discusses a student's inability to attend school due to a disability being certified by an Illinois licensed physician, chiropractic physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant; presumably, any of these individuals could provide a *medical note*. After the second mental health day used, the student may be referred to the appropriate school support personnel. *Id.* See sample policy 7:250, *Student Support Services*.

<sup>314</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26-2a, amended by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *Ensuring Success in School (ESS) Law*, eff. 7-1-25.

<sup>315</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26-1 and 5/26-2a. Subject to ISBE guidelines, a middle or high school student shall be permitted one school day-long excused absence per school year to engage in a *civic event*, defined as "an event sponsored by a non-profit organization or governmental entity that is open to the public. *Civic event* includes, but is not limited to, an artistic or cultural performance or educational gathering that supports the mission of the sponsoring non-profit organization. Schools may require students to provide an appropriate administrator with reasonable advance notice of the intended absence and documentation of participation.

5/17-15), other circumstances that cause reasonable concern to the parent/guardian for the student's mental, emotional, or physical health or safety, or other reason as approved by the Superintendent or designee.<sup>316</sup> For students who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence, valid cause for absence also includes the fulfillment of a parenting responsibility and addressing circumstances resulting from domestic or sexual violence.<sup>317</sup> Students absent for a valid cause may make up missed homework and classwork assignments in a reasonable timeframe.<sup>318</sup>

### Absenteeism and Truancy Program

The Superintendent or designee shall manage an absenteeism and truancy program in accordance with the School Code and School Board policy. The program shall include but not be limited to:

1. A protocol for excusing a student from attendance who is necessarily and lawfully employed. The Superintendent or designee is authorized to determine when the student's absence is justified.<sup>319</sup>
2. A protocol for excusing a student in grades 6 through 12 from attendance to sound *Taps* at a military honors funeral held in Illinois for a deceased veteran.<sup>320</sup>

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<sup>316</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-92(a)(1) requires a policy with a definition of valid cause for absence in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/26-2a. These reasons are in 105 ILCS 5/26-2a except that (1) "other reason as approved by the Superintendent," and (2) absences for students to vote authorized by 10 ILCS 5/7-42 and 5/17-15 were added. An ISBE rule requires that the absenteeism and truancy policy define valid causes for absence. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.290.

For elementary districts, delete the following phrase from the second sentence of this paragraph: "~~voting pursuant to policy 7:90, Release During School Hours (10 ILCS 5/7-42 and 5/17-15),~~" and delete 7:90, *Release During School Hours*, from the Cross References.

For high school and unit districts that do not wish to include the **Voting** subhead in policy 7:90, *Release During School Hours*, amend the second sentence of this paragraph as follows: "~~policy 7:90, Release During School Hours (the Election Code, 10 ILCS 5/7-42 and 5/17-15),~~" and delete 7:90, *Release During School Hours* from the Cross References.

<sup>317</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26-2a, amended by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25. *Fulfillment of a parenting responsibility* includes, but is not limited to, arranging and providing child care, caring for a sick child, attending prenatal or other medical appointments for the expectant student, and attending medical appointments for a child. *Id.* *Circumstances resulting from domestic or sexual violence* includes, but is not limited to, experiencing domestic or sexual violence, recovering from physical or psychological injuries, seeking medical attention, seeking services from a domestic or sexual violence organization as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26A-10, seeking psychological or other counseling, participating in safety planning, temporarily or permanently relocating, seeking legal assistance or remedies, or taking any other action to increase the safety or health of the student or to protect the student from future domestic or sexual violence. *Id.* Before an absence of three or more consecutive days that is related to domestic or sexual violence, a district may require a student to verify his or her claim of domestic or sexual violence under 105 ILCS 5/26A-45. *Id.* See sample policy 7:255, *Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*, and sample administrative procedure 7:255-API, *Supporting Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

<sup>318</sup> See f/n 3. In addition, 105 ILCS 5/10-20.78 requires a written policy related to absences and missed homework or classwork assignments as a result of or related to a student's pregnancy. It makes sense to apply such a policy to all students who are absent for a valid cause.

<sup>319</sup> Any child "necessarily and lawfully employed" may be exempted from attendance by the superintendent "on certification of the facts by and the recommendation of the school board." 105 ILCS 5/26-1. The policy's language serves to delegate this "certification of the facts" to the superintendent or designee. The following option allows a board to consider and include specific criteria in the policy:

A student may be excused, at the Superintendent's discretion, when: (1) the student has a last period study hall, (2) the parent/guardian provides written permission, (3) the student's employer provides written verification of employment, (4) the student provides evidence of a valid work permit, or (5) other reason deemed justifiable by the Superintendent.

Child Labor laws include: 29 C.F.R. Part 570 (minimum age standards, occupations, conditions, etc.); Child Labor Law of 2024, 820 ILCS 206/, added by P.A. 103-721; 56 Ill.Admin.Code Part 250 (child labor regulations). To streamline the employment certificate process for minors, the Ill. Dept. of Labor (IDOL) has a paperless certification system for districts to provide IDOL with the name and contact information of the superintendent or designee as the *issuing officer*. The *school issuing officer* will then be granted access to electronically complete and submit either the IDOL's *Employment Certificate Form* or *Temporary Employment Certificate Form*, at: [www2.illinois.gov/idol/Laws-Rules/FLS/Pages/Employment-Certificates-Minors.aspx](http://www2.illinois.gov/idol/Laws-Rules/FLS/Pages/Employment-Certificates-Minors.aspx).

<sup>320</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26-1. A student must notify the building principal or other administrator at least two days prior to the absence providing the date, time, and location of the military honors funeral. This requirement may be waived if the student did not receive notice at least two days in advance, but the student shall notify the administration as soon as possible of the absence.

3. A protocol for excusing a student from attendance on a particular day(s) or at a particular time of day when his/her parent/guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat-support postings.<sup>321</sup>
4. A process to telephone, within two hours after the first class, the parents/guardians of students in grade 8 or below who are absent without prior parent/guardian notification.<sup>322</sup>
5. A process to identify and track students who are truants, chronic or habitual truants, or truant minors as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26-2a.
6. A description of diagnostic procedures for identifying the cause(s) of a student's unexcused absenteeism, including interviews with the student, his or her parent(s)/guardian(s), and staff members or other people who may have information about the reasons for the student's attendance problem.<sup>323</sup>
7. The identification of supportive services that may be offered to truant, chronically truant, or chronically absent students, including parent-teacher conferences, student and/or family counseling, and information about available community services relevant to such students' needs.<sup>324</sup> See Board policy 6:110, *Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program*.
8. A process for the collection and review of chronic absence data and to:
  - a. Determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families, and
  - b. Encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success.<sup>325</sup>
9. Reasonable efforts to provide ongoing professional development to all school personnel, Board members, and school resource officers on the appropriate and available supportive services for the promotion of student attendance and engagement.<sup>326</sup>

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A student whose absence is excused to sound *Taps* shall be counted in attendance for purposes of calculating the average daily attendance of students in the district. The district must allow the student reasonable time to make up school work and if school work is satisfactorily completed, the day of absence is counted as an attendance day for the student.

<sup>321</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26-1. Such a student must be granted five days of excused absences in any school year and, at the board's discretion, may be granted additional excused absences to visit the student's parent/guardian. The student and his/her parent/guardian are responsible for obtaining assignments from the student's teacher prior to any period of excused absence and for ensuring that such assignments are completed by the student prior to his/her return to school from the excused absence period. Id.

<sup>322</sup> This notification is required by 105 ILCS 5/26-3b. Delete for high school districts.

<sup>323</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-92(a)(2).

<sup>324</sup> Id. at (3). The School Code references to dropout prevention include: 105 ILCS 5/26-3a (regional superintendent activities and annual report); 105 ILCS 5/10-20.25a (annual report by boards); and 105 ILCS 5/1A-4(E) (ISBE report).

<sup>325</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-92(a)(4) requires the incorporation of provisions relating to chronic absenteeism in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/26-18. 105 ILCS 5/26-18 requires districts to collect and review chronic absence data and determine what systems of support and resources are needed to engage chronically absent students and their families to encourage the habit of daily attendance and promote success. 105 ILCS 5/26-18(c). The review must include an analysis of chronic absence data from each attendance center. Id. Districts are also encouraged to: (1) provide a system of support to students at risk of reaching or exceeding chronic absence levels, i.e., those available through the Illinois Multi-tiered Systems of Support Network; and (2) make resources available to families, i.e., those available through ISBE's Family Engagement Framework, to support and engage students and their families. 105 ILCS 5/26-18(d). *Chronic absence* means "absences that total 10% or more of school days of the most recent school year, including absences with and without valid cause, as defined in Section 26-2a of this Code, and out-of-school suspensions for an enrolled student." 105 ILCS 5/26-18(a). In contrast, a *chronic or habitual truant* is "a child who is subject to compulsory school attendance and who is absent without valid cause from such attendance for 5% or more of the previous 180 regular attendance days." 105 ILCS 5/26-2a.

<sup>326</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(c-5), amended by P.A. 103-896.



10. A process to request the assistance and resources of outside agencies, such as, the juvenile officer of the local police department or the truant office of the appropriate Regional Office of Education, if truancy continues after supportive services have been offered.<sup>327</sup>
11. A protocol for cooperating with non-District agencies including County or municipal authorities, the Regional Superintendent, truant officers, the Community Truancy Review Board, and a comprehensive community based youth service agency. Any disclosure of school student records must be consistent with Board policy 7:340, *Student Records*, as well as State and federal law concerning school student records.<sup>328</sup>
12. An acknowledgement that no punitive action, including out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, or court action, shall be taken against a truant minor for his or her truancy unless available supportive services and other school resources have been provided to the student.<sup>329</sup>
13. The criteria to determine whether a student's non-attendance is due to extraordinary circumstances shall include economic or medical necessity or family hardship and such other criteria that the Superintendent believes qualifies.<sup>330</sup>

[For high school and unit districts only]

<sup>327</sup> Use this alternative for districts in suburban Cook County: replace "Regional Office of Education" with "appropriate Intermediate Service Center."

<sup>328</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26-9 requires school officers and superintendents to assist truant officers. A minor who is reported by the regional superintendent as a chronic truant may be adjudicated a "truant minor in need of supervision" if the minor declines or refuses to fully participate in truancy intervention services. 705 ILCS 405/3-33.5, amended by P.A. 103-379. Truant minors in need of supervision may be required by the court to perform reasonable public service that does not interfere with school hours, school-related activities, or work commitments of the minor or the minor's parent, guardian, or legal custodian. *Id.* Fees or costs may not be ordered or imposed in contempt proceedings related to the minor's adjudication as a truant minor in need of supervision. *Id.*

Counties may regulate truants by ordinance and impose fines and/or community services on truants, as permitted by law, or, if the truant is under 10 years of age, on the parent or custodian. 55 ILCS 5/5-1078.2; 55 ILCS 5/5-1101.3, amended by P.A. 103-379. Municipalities may regulate truants by ordinance and impose fines and/or community services on truants, as permitted by law, or, if the truant is under 13 years of age, on the parent or custodian. 65 ILCS 5/11-5-9. Local officials or authorities that enforce, prosecute, or adjudicate municipal ordinances adopted under 65 ILCS 5/11-5-9, or that work with school districts to address truancy problems, are designated as: (a) part of the juvenile justice system, established by the Juvenile Court Act of 1987, and (b) *juvenile authorities* within the definition set forth in subsection (a)(6.5) of Section 10-6 of the Ill. School Student Records Act. 105 ILCS 10/6(a)(6.5). *Id.* **A superintendent should consult with the board attorney before disclosing school student records to non-district entities.** See 7:340-AP1, *School Student Records*, for a sample procedure for release of such records to juvenile authorities.

Passed in response to a [ProPublica article](http://www.propublica.org/series/the-price-kids-pay) series entitled The Price Kids Pay, at: [www.propublica.org/series/the-price-kids-pay](http://www.propublica.org/series/the-price-kids-pay), P.A. 103-379 restricts the ability of the juvenile courts and certain county boards to assess fines, fees, assessments, and costs to minors and the minor's parents/guardians, subject to the minor's adjudication under various ordinances and statutes.

<sup>329</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26-12 prohibits punitive action "unless available supportive services and other school resources have been provided to the student." In addition, "a truant minor may not be expelled for nonattendance unless he or she has accrued 15 consecutive days of absences without valid cause and the student cannot be located by the school district or the school district has located the student but cannot, after exhausting all available supportive services, compel the student to return to school." *Id.*

<sup>330</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26-3a requires the district to "establish, in writing, a set of criteria for use by the local superintendent of schools in determining whether a pupil's failure to attend school is the result of extraordinary circumstances, including but not limited to economic or medical necessity or family hardship."

This statute also requires the "clerk or secretary" of the board to quarterly report to the regional superintendent and Secretary of State the identity of students who were removed from the regular attendance roll, exclusive of transferees, because they were expelled; have withdrawn; left school; withdrew due to extraordinary circumstances; have re-enrolled in school since their names were removed from the attendance rolls; were certified to be chronic or habitual truants; or were previously certified as chronic or habitual truants who have resumed regular school attendance. The statute provides that the status of a driver's license or instructional permit will be jeopardized for a student who is the subject of this notification because of non-attendance unless the non-attendance is due to extraordinary circumstances as determined by the local district. State Superintendent Koch announced in his *Weekly Message*, 8-28-07, see **Funding & Disbursements** subhead, p.2, at: [www.isbe.net/Documents\\_Superintendent\\_Weekly\\_Message/message\\_082807.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents_Superintendent_Weekly_Message/message_082807.pdf), that ISBE is delaying implementing this statute based upon legal guidance from the U.S. Dept. of Education's Family Policy Compliance Office that its implementation would violate the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

14. A process for a 17-year-old resident to participate in the District's various programs and resources for truants.<sup>331</sup> The student must provide documentation of his/her dropout status for the previous six months. A request from an individual 19 years of age or older to re-enroll after having dropped out of school is handled according to provisions in 7:50, *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools*.
15. A process for the temporary exclusion of a student 17 years of age or older for failing to meet minimum attendance standards according to provisions in State law. A parent/guardian has the right to appeal a decision to exclude a student.<sup>332</sup>

#### Updating<sup>333</sup>

Pursuant to State law and Board policy 2:240, *Board Policy Development*, the Board updates this policy at least once every two years. The Superintendent or designee shall assist the Board with its update.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/22-92 and 5/26-1 through 5/26-3, 5/26-5 through 5/26-16, 5/26-18, and 5/26A.

705 ILCS 405/3-33.5, Juvenile Court Act of 1987.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.242 and Part 207.

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 6:110 (Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program), 6:150 (Home and Hospital Instruction), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:50 (School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools), 7:60 (Residence), 7:80 (Release Time for Religious Instruction/Observance), 7:90 (Release During School Hours), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:340 (Student Records)

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<sup>331</sup> A district must allow this participation; the length of the drop-out period and the documentation requirement contained in the next sentence are permissive. 105 ILCS 5/26-14.

<sup>332</sup> Optional, but provided in 105 ILCS 5/26-2(c)(3); ISBE's rule controls the appeal process, 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.242.

<sup>333</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-92(b). Every two years this policy must be updated and, even if no updates are made, filed with ISBE and the regional superintendent of schools [or Intermediate Service Center Executive Director, whichever is appropriate]. *Id.*; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §207.30. The policy must contain all requirements of 105 ILCS 5/22-92, indicate the date of adoption (by month, day, and year) and any revision dates, and be filed electronically by September 30 each review year through ISBE's Web Application Security (IWAS) system. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§207.20(a), 207.30(a). If, after review and re-evaluation of the policy, the district determines that no updates are necessary, either a copy of board minutes clearly indicating the policy was re-evaluated and no changes were deemed necessary or a signed statement from the board president indicating the policy was re-evaluated and no changes were deemed necessary must be submitted to IWAS. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §207.30(a)(3). ISBE has stated that for districts that update the adoption date listed on a policy whenever the policy is updated, the date of adoption is sufficient to also indicate the revision date. See ISBE *Absenteeism and Truancy Policy FAQ*, at: [www.isbe.net/Documents/Absenteeism-Truancy-Policy-FAQ.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/Absenteeism-Truancy-Policy-FAQ.pdf).



## Students

### Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment <sup>334</sup>

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important District goals.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, physical appearance, socioeconomic status, academic status, pregnancy, parenting status, homelessness, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from military service, order of protection status, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic **is prohibited** in each of the following situations: <sup>335</sup>

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.

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<sup>334</sup> All districts must have a policy on bullying, monitor it, review and re-evaluate it, and file it with the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) every two years, no later than September 30 of the review year. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7, amended by P.A. 103-47; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.295. The policy must be based on ISBE's template for a model bullying prevention policy (available at [www.isbe.net/Documents/Model-Bullying-Prevention-Policy.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/Model-Bullying-Prevention-Policy.pdf)), contain all requirements of 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7, indicate the date of adoption (by month, day, and year), and be filed electronically each review year through ISBE's IWAS system. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(d), amended by P.A. 103-47; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.295(b), (c). ISBE monitors policy implementation, including by providing technical assistance upon receipt of an allegation by a parent/guardian that a school or district has not substantially complied with its bullying policy. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.295(e), (f). If a district fails to file its policy by the deadline or submits a deficient policy, ISBE will provide a written request for filing and provide the district with technical assistance and resources to assist it in meeting bullying policy requirements and, as appropriate, notify the district's regional office of education or intermediate service center. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(d); 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.295(g). If the district still fails to file its policy within 14 days of receipt of ISBE's written request, ISBE shall issue a letter of non-compliance (23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.295(e)(3)) and publish notice of non-compliance on its website (105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(g)(3)).

This sample policy's first paragraph allows a school board to consider its goals for preventing bullying and remedying its consequences; it may be amended.

In addition to a bullying prevention policy, all districts must have a policy on student behavior. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.280. Boards must, in consultation with their parent-teacher advisory committees and other community-based organizations, address aggressive behavior, including bullying, in their student behavior policy. See sample policy 7:190, *Student Behavior*, and sample exhibit 7:190-E1, *Aggressive Behavior Reporting Letter and Form*.

This policy contains an item on which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts upon wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right. See f/n 9, below.

Additionally, 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(f), added by P.A. 103-47, requires districts to collect non-identifiable data regarding verified allegations of bullying within the District and submit it in an annual report to ISBE by no later than August 15 of each year, beginning with the 2024-25 school year through the 2030-31 school year. ISBE rules for data submission require that data be submitted electronically on a form approved by ISBE and include: (1) a record of each verified allegation of bullying and action taken; (2) whether the instance of bullying was based on actual or perceived characteristics identified in 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(a) and, if so, lists the relevant characteristics; and (3) a record demonstrating that the district adhered to its bullying policy. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.295(h). See [www.isbe.net/Pages/Bullying-Prevention.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Bullying-Prevention.aspx) for ISBE's *Racism-Free Schools Law and Bullying Prevention Data Collection Guidance* (8-7-24) and *Bullying Racism Free Schools Data Collection Template*.

<sup>335</sup> This paragraph and its subparts 1-4 are from the bullying prevention statute. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(a); see also 775 ILCS 5/1-103 and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240. With the exception of order of protection status, the protected statuses are mandated by the bullying prevention statute. *Order of protection status* is not a basis for bullying in 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7, amended by P.A. 103-47, but it is listed here because the Ill. Human Rights Act (IHRA) prohibits harassment based on *order of protection status*. 775 ILCS 5/1-103(K-5), (Q). Including *order of protection status* in the list of protected statuses aligns with the protected statuses listed in sample policy 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*.

2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a nonschool-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the School District or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This paragraph (item #4) applies only when a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred; it does not require staff members to monitor any nonschool-related activity, function, or program.

#### Definitions from 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7 <sup>336</sup>

*Bullying* includes *cyberbullying* and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

*Bullying* may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

*Cyberbullying* means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. *Cyberbullying* includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. *Cyberbullying* also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of *bullying*.

*Restorative measures* means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that: (i) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, (ii) contribute to maintaining school safety, (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral

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<sup>336</sup> All definitions are directly from 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7. See also resources from Cyberbullying Research Center, available at: [www.cyberbullying.org/](http://www.cyberbullying.org/), and the U.S. School Safety Clearinghouse website at: [www.SchoolSafety.gov](http://www.SchoolSafety.gov), discussed in f/n 1, para. 3 of sample policy 4:170, *Safety*.

health needs in order to keep students in school, and (vii) increase student accountability if the incident of bullying is based on religion, race, ethnicity, or any other category that is identified in the Ill. Human Rights Act.<sup>337</sup>

*School personnel* means persons employed by, on contract with, or who volunteer in a school district, including without limitation school and school district administrators, teachers, school social workers, school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, school resource officers, and security guards.<sup>338</sup>

### Bullying Prevention and Response Plan

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and maintain a bullying prevention and response plan that advances the District's goal of providing all students with a safe learning environment free of bullying and harassment. This plan must be consistent with the requirements listed below.<sup>339</sup>

1. The District uses the definition of *bullying* as provided in this policy.<sup>340</sup>
2. Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of this District. However, nothing in the District's bullying prevention and response plan is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution or under Section 3 of Article I of the Illinois Constitution.
3. Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, a Complaint Manager, or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking.<sup>341</sup> Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the District named officials or any staff member. The District named officials and all staff members are available for help with a bully or to make a report about bullying.<sup>342</sup> Anonymous reports are also accepted; however, this shall not be construed to permit formal disciplinary action solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

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<sup>337</sup> 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b).

<sup>338</sup> 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b).

<sup>339</sup> Each numbered requirement, 1-12, corresponds with the same number in 5/27-23.7(b)(1) - (b)(12), and the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b)(13) are included in numbered requirement 4. As a result, there are no reference citations in footnotes. All non-statutory requirements, plus alternatives and optional provisions, are described in footnotes.

<sup>340</sup> 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b), para. 3(1). See f/n 4, above and ISBE's *School Policies for Bullying Prevention* at: [www.isbe.net/Documents/Bullying-Prev-Policy-Req.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/Bullying-Prev-Policy-Req.pdf).

A board may augment the School Code requirement by using this alternative:

Using the definition of *bullying* as provided in this policy, the Superintendent or designee shall emphasize to the school community that: (a) the District prohibits bullying; and (b) all students should conduct themselves with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students. This may include a process for commending or acknowledging students for demonstrating appropriate behavior.

<sup>341</sup> The statute requires that the policy contain the email address and telephone number for the staff person(s) responsible for receiving bullying reports. Using the district Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers is consistent with sample policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. While the names and contact information are required by law to be listed, they are not part of the adopted policy and do not require board action. This allows for additions and amendments to the names and contact information when necessary. It is important for updated names and contact information to be inserted into this policy and regularly monitored. A telephone number for making anonymous reports may also be added.

<sup>342</sup> 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(d), requires that "[s]chool personnel available for help with a bully or to make a report about bullying" be made known to parents/guardians, students, and school personnel.

**Nondiscrimination Coordinator:** <sup>343</sup>

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Name

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Address

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Email

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Telephone

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**Complaint Managers:**

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Name

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Address

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Email

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Telephone

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**Title IX Coordinator:**

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Name

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Address

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Telephone

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4. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the parents/guardians of all students involved in an alleged incident of bullying will be notified of such, along with threats, suggestions, or instances of self-harm determined to be the result of bullying, within 24 hours after the school's administration is made aware of the student's involvement in the incident. As appropriate, the school's administration shall also discuss the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures. The school shall make diligent efforts to notify a parent or legal guardian, utilizing all contact information the school has available or that can be reasonably obtained within the 24-hour period. <sup>344</sup>
5. The Superintendent or designee shall promptly investigate and address reports of bullying, by, among other things:
- Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date the report of a bullying incident was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported bullying incident.
  - Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
  - Notifying the Building Principal or school administrator or designee of the reported incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received.

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<sup>343</sup> Sample policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, states that a district's Nondiscrimination Coordinator often also serves as its Title IX Coordinator. Best practice is that throughout the board policy manual, the same individual be named as Nondiscrimination Coordinator. In contrast, Complaint Managers identified in individual policies may vary depending upon local district needs.

<sup>344</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14 contains a similar requirement. See sample exhibit 7:190-E1, *Aggressive Behavior Reporting Letter and Form*.

- d. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the Building Principal or school administrator or his or her designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

The Superintendent or designee shall investigate whether a reported incident of bullying is within the permissible scope of the District's jurisdiction and shall require that the District provide the victim with information regarding services that are available within the District and community, such as counseling, support services, and other programs.<sup>345</sup>

6. The Superintendent or designee shall use interventions to address bullying, that may include, but are not limited to, school social work services, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, school psychological services, and community-based services.<sup>346</sup>
7. A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying **is prohibited**. Any person's act of reprisal or retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge with regard to employees, or suspension and/or expulsion<sup>347</sup> with regard to students.
8. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the District's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, a person who is found to have falsely accused another of bullying, as a means of retaliation, as a means of bullying, or provided false information will be treated as either: (a) *bullying*, (b) student discipline up to and including suspension and/or expulsion, and/or (c) both (a) and (b) for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.
9. The District's bullying prevention and response plan is based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians.
10. The Superintendent or designee shall post this policy on the District's publicly accessible website, if any, and include it in the student handbook, and, where applicable, post it where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted. The policy must be distributed annually to parents/guardians, students, and school personnel (including new employees when hired), and must also be provided periodically throughout the school year to students and faculty.<sup>348</sup>
11. Pursuant to State law and Board policy 2:240, *Board Policy Development*, the Board monitors this policy every two years by conducting a review and re-evaluation of this policy to make any necessary and appropriate revisions. The Superintendent or designee shall assist the Board with its re-evaluation and assessment of this policy's outcomes and effectiveness. Updates to this policy will reflect any necessary and appropriate revisions. This process shall include, without limitation:<sup>349</sup>
  - a. The frequency of victimization;
  - b. Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school;
  - c. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs;

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<sup>345</sup> This sentence contains requirements found in 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(d).

<sup>346</sup> A grant may be available from ISBE for the promotion of a safe and healthy learning environment. 105 ILCS 5/2-3.180 and 3.181. A list of grant funding opportunities is available at: [www.isbe.net/Pages/Grants.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Grants.aspx). ISBE is also directed to create the Illinois Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention Fund, through which a grant may be available to support anti-bullying programming. 30 ILCS 105/5.997 and 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(i)-(j), all added by P.A. 103-47.

<sup>347</sup> Consult the board attorney about the potential conflict of 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b)(7) (allowance of suspension and/or expulsion of students for reprisal/retaliation against reports of bullying) with 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-20) (districts must resolve threats, address disruptions, and minimize the length (and implementation of) suspensions and expulsions to the greatest extent practicable). See sample policies 7:200, *Suspension Procedures*, at f/n 8 and 7:210, *Expulsion Procedures*, at f/ns 11 and 13.

<sup>348</sup> 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b)(10), amended by P.A. 103-47.

<sup>349</sup> 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7. See the ISBE guidance document that is cited in f/n 7, above.

- d. The types of bullying utilized; and
- e. Bystander intervention or participation.

The evaluation process may use relevant data and information that the District already collects for other purposes. Acceptable documentation to satisfy the re-evaluated policy submission include one of the following:

- i. An updated version of the policy with the amendment/modification date included in the reference portion of the policy;
- ii. If no revisions are deemed necessary, a copy of Board minutes indicating that the policy was re-evaluated and no changes were deemed to be necessary; or
- iii. A signed statement from the Board President indicating that the Board re-evaluated the policy and no changes to it were necessary.

The Superintendent or designee must post the information developed as a result of the policy re-evaluation on the District's website, or if a website is not available, the information must be provided to school administrators, Board members, school personnel, parents/guardians, and students. Reviews and re-evaluations in years they are due must be submitted to ISBE by September 30.

12. The Superintendent or designee shall fully implement the Board policies, including without limitation, the following:<sup>350</sup>

- a. 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. A student may use this policy to complain about bullying.
- b. 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*. Any person may use this policy to complain about sexual harassment in violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.
- c. 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*. Any person may use this policy to complain about discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and/or the Illinois Human Rights Act.
- d. 6:60, *Curriculum Content*. Bullying prevention and character instruction is provided in all grades in accordance with State law.
- e. 6:65, *Student Social and Emotional Development*. Student social and emotional development is incorporated into the District's educational program as required by State law.

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<sup>350</sup> The statute requires that the bullying policy *be consistent with* other board policies. The list of policies may be deleted and the following alternative used: "12. The District's bullying prevention plan must be consistent with other Board policies." If a policy list is included, be sure the referenced policies were adopted locally and amend the list accordingly.

The bullying statute does not identify staff member duties regarding the prevention of or response to student bullying. The following optional provision addresses staff member responsibilities and may be added as a new paragraph 13:

13. The Superintendent or designee shall fully inform staff members of the District's goal to prevent students from engaging in bullying and the measures being used to accomplish it. This includes each of the following:
  - a. Communicating the District's expectation and State law requirement that teachers and other licensed employees maintain discipline.
  - b. Establishing the expectation that staff members: (1) intervene immediately to stop a bullying incident that they witness or immediately contact building security and/or law enforcement if the incident involves a weapon or other illegal activity, (2) report bullying, whether they witness it or not, to an administrator, and (3) inform the administration of locations on school grounds where additional supervision or monitoring may be needed to prevent bullying.
  - c. Where appropriate in the staff development program, providing strategies to staff members to effectively prevent bullying and intervene when it occurs.
  - d. Establishing a process for staff members to fulfill their obligation to report alleged acts of bullying.

- f. 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks*. This policy states that the use of the District's electronic networks is limited to: (1) support of education and/or research, or (2) a legitimate business use.
- g. 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*. This policy prohibits any person from harassing, intimidating, or bullying a student based on an identified actual or perceived characteristic (the list of characteristics in 7:20 is the same as the list in this policy).
- h. 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*. This policy prohibits teen dating violence on school property, at school sponsored activities, and in vehicles used for school-provided transportation.
- i. 7:190, *Student Behavior*. This policy prohibits, and provides consequences for, hazing, bullying, or other aggressive behaviors, or urging other students to engage in such conduct.
- j. 7:310, *Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools*, and 7:315, *Restrictions on Publications; High Schools*. These policies prohibit students from and provide consequences for: (1) accessing and/or distributing at school any written, printed, or electronic material, including material from the Internet, that will cause substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities, and (2) creating and/or distributing written, printed, or electronic material, including photographic material and blogs, that causes substantial disruption to school operations or interferes with the rights of other students or staff members.<sup>351</sup>

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, 5/10-22.6(b-20), 5/24-24, and 5/27-23.7.  
 405 ILCS 49/, Children's Mental Health Act.  
 775 ILCS 5/1-103, Ill. Human Rights Act.  
 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.240, 1.280, and 1.295.

CROSS REF.: 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 2:270 (Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited), 4:170 (Safety), 5:230 (Maintaining Student Discipline), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:220 (Bus Conduct), 7:230 (Misconduct by Students with Disabilities), 7:240 (Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities), 7:285 (Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools), 7:315 (Restrictions on Publications; High Schools)

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<sup>351</sup> For elementary districts, delete: ~~and 7:315, *Restrictions on Publications; High Schools*~~ and delete the Cross Reference to 7:315, *Restrictions on Publications; High Schools*. For high school districts, delete ~~7:310, *Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools*, and~~ and delete the Cross Reference to 7:310, *Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools*. In both cases, revise the beginning of the sentence to read: "These policies prohibit students from and provides."



## Students

### Teen Dating Violence Prohibited <sup>352</sup>

Engaging in teen dating violence that takes place at school, on school property, at school-sponsored activities, or in vehicles used for school-provided transportation is prohibited.<sup>353</sup> For purposes of this policy, the term *teen dating violence* occurs whenever a student who is 13 to 19 years of age uses or threatens to use physical, mental, or emotional abuse to control an individual in the dating relationship; or uses or threatens to use sexual violence in the dating relationship. <sup>354</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and maintain a program to respond to incidents of teen dating violence that: <sup>355</sup>

1. Fully implements and enforces each of the following Board policies: <sup>356</sup>
  - a. 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. This policy provides a method for any student, parent/guardian, employee, or community member to file a complaint if he or she believes that the School Board, its employees, or its agents have violated his or her rights under the State or federal Constitution, State or federal statute, Board policy, or various enumerated bases.
  - b. 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*. This policy prohibits a District employee, agent, or student from engaging in sexual harassment in violation of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Prohibited conduct includes but is not limited to sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking.
  - c. 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*. This policy prohibits any person, including a District employee, agent, or student, from harassing intimidating, or bullying a student based on the student's actual or perceived characteristics of sex; sexual orientation; gender identity; and gender-related identity or expression (this policy includes more protected statuses).

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<sup>352</sup> All school boards must have a policy on teen dating violence. 105 ILCS 110/3.10. This sample policy is designed to align with a district's already-existing procedures for reporting bullying and school violence. See f/n 7. The curriculum components for teen dating violence education, which apply to districts with students enrolled in grades 7 through 12, are listed in 6:60-API, *Comprehensive Health Education Program*.

<sup>353</sup> 105 ILCS 110/3.10(b)(1). School officials must proceed carefully before disciplining a student for out-of-school conduct. A school's authority over off-campus conduct is much more limited than incidents that occur on school grounds. However, school officials may generally: (1) remove a student from extracurricular activities when the conduct code for participation requires students to conduct themselves at all times as good citizens and exemplars of the school (see sample policy 7:240, *Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities*); and (2) suspend or expel a student from school attendance when the student's expression causes substantial disruption to school operations.

<sup>354</sup> 105 ILCS 110/3.10(a). For districts that wish to broaden the ages (e.g., perhaps include 11-12 year olds in a middle school setting), delete the following phrase from the first sentence: "~~who is 13 to 19 years of age~~". The law defines *dating* or *dating relationship* as an "ongoing social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature between two persons." The terms do not include "a casual relationship or ordinary fraternization between two persons in a business or social context."

<sup>355</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 110/3.10(b)(3).

<sup>356</sup> Be sure the referenced board policies, as adopted locally, contain the language paraphrased in this policy. If not, either substitute similar language from the locally adopted board policies on the same topics, or just insert the titles from relevant locally adopted policies.

The statutory content requirements for a teen dating policy include "establish[ing] procedures for the manner in which employees of a school are to respond to incidents of teen dating violence." This policy fulfills this requirement by incorporating by reference the following administrative procedure: 7:180-API, *Prevention, Identification, Investigation, and Response to Bullying*. This means that 7:180-API should be considered to be part of this policy.



- d. 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*. This policy prohibits students from engaging in bullying, intimidation, and harassment at school, school-related events and electronically. Prohibited conduct includes threats, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.
2. Encourages anyone with information about incidents of teen dating violence to report them to any of the following individuals:<sup>357</sup>
  - a. Any school staff member. School staff shall respond to incidents of teen dating violence by following the District's established procedures for the prevention, identification, investigation, and response to bullying and school violence.<sup>358</sup>
  - b. The Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, or a Complaint Manager identified in policy 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*.<sup>359</sup>
3. Incorporates age-appropriate instruction in grades 7 through 12, in accordance with the District's comprehensive health education program in Board policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*. This includes incorporating student social and emotional development into the District's educational program as required by State law and in alignment with Board policy 6:65, *Student Social and Emotional Development*.<sup>360</sup>
4. Incorporates education for school staff, as recommended by the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, or a Complaint Manager.<sup>361</sup>
5. Notifies students and parents/guardians of this policy.<sup>362</sup>

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<sup>357</sup> 105 ILCS 110/3.10(b)(4), requires the policy to identify by job title which school officials are responsible for receiving reports related to teen dating violence.

<sup>358</sup> *Id.* at ¶ns 5 and 6. Sexual violence is one listed component of teen dating violence. 105 ILCS 110/3.10(a). Sexual violence has also been found by the Ill. Gen. Assembly to be a component of bullying and school violence. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7. Thus, identifying *any school staff member* is consistent with 7:180-AP1, *Prevention, Identification, Investigation, and Response to Bullying*, which uses the student-friendly reporting system outlined in 7:180-AP1, E2, *Be a Hero by Reporting Bullying*.

<sup>359</sup> *Id.* Under any reporting system, a report involving bullying and school violence that is based upon a protected status (often teen dating violence will involve conduct based upon the target's sex) must be referred to the district's Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, or a Complaint Manager (7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*). Customize this list to reflect local conditions. These individuals may also take reports directly from students.

<sup>360</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 110/3.10(b)(2). The curriculum-specific components for teen dating violence education are listed in 6:60-AP1, *Comprehensive Health Education Program*.

<sup>361</sup> *Id.* For boards that add the optional paragraphs in policy 5:100, *Staff Development Program*, add the phrase "and Board policy 5:100, *Staff Development Program*."

<sup>362</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 110/3.10(b)(5). Boards must communicate this policy to students and their parents/guardians. This may be accomplished, in part, by (1) sending 7:185-E, *Memo to Parents/Guardians Regarding Teen Dating Violence*, and (2) amending the district's anti-bullying campaign statement(s), such as the following, in the student handbook and school website:

Bullying, teen dating violence, intimidation, and harassment are not acceptable in any form and will not be tolerated at school or any school-related activity. The School District will take disciplinary action against any student who participates in such conduct or who retaliates against someone for reporting incidents of bullying, teen dating violence, intimidation, or harassment.

Incorporated  
by Reference: 7:180-AP1 (Prevention, Identification, Investigation, and Response to Bullying)

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 110/3.10.

CROSS REF.: 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Grievance Procedure), 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:230 (Maintaining Student Discipline), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:220 (Bus Conduct), 7:230 (Misconduct by Students with Disabilities), 7:240 (Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities)

## **Students**

### **Student Behavior** <sup>363</sup>

The goals and objectives of this policy are to provide effective discipline practices that: (1) ensure the safety and dignity of students and staff; (2) maintain a positive, weapons-free, and drug-free learning environment; (3) keep school property and the property of others secure; (4) address the causes of a student's misbehavior and provide opportunities for all individuals involved in an incident to participate in its resolution; and (5) teach students positive behavioral skills to become independent, self-disciplined citizens in the school community and society. <sup>364</sup>

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<sup>363</sup> All districts must have a policy on student discipline, including school searches and bullying prevention (105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, amended by P.A. 103-896); re-engagement of students returning from an exclusionary discipline or an alternative school (105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-25), amended by P.A. 103-896); and corporal punishment (105 ILCS 5/24-24). See also 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.280. See the Cross References for policies on searches and bullying. Each district must furnish a copy of the discipline policy to parents/guardians within 15 days after the beginning of the school year, or within 15 days after starting classes for a student who transfers into the district. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14(a), amended by P.A. 103-896. The school board must require that each school inform its pupils of the discipline policy's contents. Id.

School boards, along with the parent-teacher advisory committee, must annually review their pupil discipline policies, those policies' implementation, and any other factors related to the safety of their schools, students, and staff. Id. For more information about the parent-teacher advisory committee, see sample policy 2:150, *Committees*. The parent-teacher advisory committee, in cooperation with local law enforcement agencies, must develop, with the school board, a reciprocal reporting system. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14(b), amended by P.A. 103-896. See sample administrative procedure 7:190-AP3, *Guidelines for Reciprocal Reporting of Criminal Offenses Committed by Students*. School districts are encouraged to create memoranda of understanding that define law enforcement's role in schools. See sample exhibit 7:190-E3, *Memorandum of Understanding*. In consultation with stakeholders, the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) must draft and publish guidance for development of reciprocal reporting systems by 7-1-25. Id.

Given the unique concerns facing school officials, school disciplinary codes are not required to be drafted as narrowly or with the same precision as criminal statutes. Bethel Sch. Dist. v. Fraser, 478 U.S. 675 (1986).

<sup>364</sup> The goals and objectives in this policy give the board a focus for monitoring it. This list can be deleted, replaced, or modified by the board. Data on student discipline is available at: [www.isbe.net/Pages/Expulsions-Suspensions-and-Truants-by-District.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Expulsions-Suspensions-and-Truants-by-District.aspx).

See f/n 1 in sample policy 4:170, *Safety*, for information on the U.S. School Safety Clearinghouse website at: [www.schoolsafety.gov](http://www.schoolsafety.gov).

### When and Where Conduct Rules Apply <sup>365</sup>

A student is subject to disciplinary action for engaging in prohibited student conduct, as described in the section with that name below, whenever the student's conduct is reasonably related to school or school activities, including, but not limited to:

1. On, or within sight of, school grounds before, during, or after school hours or at any time;
2. Off school grounds at a school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school;
3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or
4. Anywhere, if the conduct interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including, but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property. <sup>366</sup>

### Prohibited Student Conduct <sup>367</sup>

The school administration is authorized to discipline students for gross disobedience or misconduct, including but not limited to:

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<sup>365</sup> Board policy should provide a jurisdictional statement telling students and staff the circumstances under which the district will take disciplinary action. Jurisdictional rules in board policy should generally be as broad as possible to give staff members authority to respond to unforeseen situations. Taking jurisdiction over off-campus misconduct generally survives the test of reasonableness when the misconduct has a direct nexus to the school. A countervailing interest concerns liability for off-campus student injuries, i.e., the greater the jurisdiction a district is willing to impose, the greater the scope of liability it may be assuming. Ultimately, a decision whether to discipline for off-campus misconduct requires a thorough factual inquiry to determine the degree of nexus and impact on the school. Consult the board attorney in these situations.

A U.S. Supreme Court decision and many lower court decisions address disciplining a student for off-campus misconduct. See Mahanoy Area Sch. Dist. v. B.L., 594 U.S. 180 (2021), discussed in f/n 3 of sample policy 7:240, *Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities*; and J.S. v. Blue Mountain Sch. Dist., 650 F.3d 915 (3rd Cir. 2011), combined with Layshock v. Hermitage Sch. Dist., 650 F.3d 205 (3d Cir. 2011), cert. denied 565 U.S. 1156 (2012)(absent evidence that parodies of school personnel caused, or could cause, substantial disruption, school districts may not punish out-of-school expressive conduct, even if it is lewd, indecent, or offensive speech).

In contrast, the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a student's expulsion for an article in an underground newspaper titled "So You Want to be a Hacker." The article's instructions for hacking into the school's computers clearly interfered with the school's operations. Boucher v. Sch. Bd. of the Sch. Dist. of Greenfield, 134 F.3d 821 (7th Cir. 1998). See also Wisniewski v. Bd. of Educ. of the Weedsport Central Sch. Dist., 494 F.3d 34 (2nd Cir. 2007), cert. denied 552 U.S. 1296 (2008), (holding a student's transmission of an icon of a pistol with blood splattering and the words "Kill Mr. VanDer Molen" crossed the boundary of protected speech and posed a reasonably foreseeable risk that the icon would come to the attention of school authorities and materially and substantially disrupt the school).

Historically, schools have had more leeway in disciplining participants in athletics and extracurricular activities; however, the Mahanoy decision raises unresolved questions about the degree of leeway now afforded to school officials. See sample policy 7:240, *Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities* at f/n 3 for further discussion.

A judge may transfer a student to another school for committing stalking or non-consensual sexual contact against another student, or for aiding and abetting such an act; the parents/guardians are responsible for transportation and other costs associated with the transfer. Stalking No Contact Order Act and the Civil No Contact Order Act, 740 ILCS 21/80 and 22/213. A school district is seldom notified when a transfer order is requested. When notified, school officials should immediately seek the board attorney's advice concerning available options.

<sup>366</sup> The factual context will determine the appropriateness of taking jurisdiction. Contact the board attorney before disciplining a student for off-campus conduct. See, e.g., Doe v. Superintendent of Schs. of Stoughton, 767 N.E.2d 1054 (Mass. 2002)(suspension for off-campus commission of a felony was upheld). See f/n 3, above.

<sup>367</sup> Consult the board attorney for advice on deleting or modifying any of the items in this section on prohibited student conduct.

1. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco or nicotine materials, including without limitation, electronic cigarettes.<sup>368</sup>
2. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling alcoholic beverages.<sup>369</sup> Students who are under the influence of an alcoholic beverage are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they had alcohol in their possession.
3. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, selling, or offering for sale:
  - a. Any illegal drug or controlled substance, or cannabis (including marijuana, hashish, and medical cannabis unless the student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under *Ashley's Law*).<sup>370</sup>
  - b. Any anabolic steroid unless it is being administered in accordance with a physician's or licensed practitioner's prescription.<sup>371</sup>
  - c. Any performance-enhancing substance on the Illinois High School Association's most current banned substance list unless administered in accordance with a physician's or licensed practitioner's prescription.<sup>372</sup>
  - d. Any prescription drug when not prescribed for the student by a physician or licensed practitioner, or when used in a manner inconsistent with the prescription or prescribing physician's or licensed practitioner's instructions. The use or possession of medical cannabis, even by a student for whom medical cannabis has been prescribed, is prohibited unless the

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<sup>368</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.5b prohibits use of tobacco on school property. Federal law prohibits smoking within schools by anyone. Pro-Children Act of 2004, 20 U.S.C. §7971 *et seq.* Districts that fail to comply risk a civil penalty of up to \$1,000 per violation per day. 20 U.S.C. §7973(e)(1). See sample policy 8:30, *Visitors to and Conduct on School Property*, for more information.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration now regulates electronic cigarettes. 21 C.F.R. Parts 1100, 1140, and 1143. An electronic or e-cigarette resembles a regular cigarette and contains a battery-operated heating element that turns a liquid into a mist for inhaling. The liquid may contain nicotine. E-cigarettes are sometimes referred to as e-cigs, vapes, e-hookahs, vape pens, and electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), and they are generally involved in *vaping*. Vaping is the act of inhaling and exhaling the aerosol, often referred to as vapor that is produced by an e-cigarette or similar device. An e-cigarette resembles a cigarette and contains a battery-operated heating element that turns a liquid into a mist for inhaling. Some e-cigarettes do not look like tobacco products and are shaped like other objects, such as USB flash drives, and are more easily concealed.

Information and resources are available at:

[www.isbe.net/Pages/School-Health-Issues.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/School-Health-Issues.aspx)

[www.fda.gov/tobacco-products](http://www.fda.gov/tobacco-products)

[www.cdc.gov/tobacco/e-cigarettes/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/e-cigarettes/index.html)

[www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/prevention-wellness/tobacco/e-cigarettes-and-vapes](http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/prevention-wellness/tobacco/e-cigarettes-and-vapes)

<https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/tobacco/nicotine-vaping>

<sup>369</sup> *Alcoholic beverages* are defined in 235 ILCS 5/1-3.01 to 3.05.

<sup>370</sup> *Controlled substance* is defined in 720 ILCS 570/102(f); *cannabis* is defined in 720 ILCS 550/3(a) and in 410 ILCS 705/1-10. Either spelling, *marihuana* or *marijuana*, is correct; however, *marijuana* is more common. See f/n 11 for a discussion of medical cannabis and *Ashley's Law*.

<sup>371</sup> *Anabolic steroid* is defined in 720 ILCS 570/102(c-1).

<sup>372</sup> See sample policies 7:240, *Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities*, and 7:300, *Extracurricular Athletics*.

student is authorized to be administered a medical cannabis infused product under Ashley's Law.<sup>373</sup>

- e. Any inhalant, regardless of whether it contains an illegal drug or controlled substance: (a) that a student believes is, or represents to be capable of, causing intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system; or (b) about which the student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student intended the inhalant to cause intoxication, hallucination, excitement, or dulling of the brain or nervous system. The prohibition in this section does not apply to a student's use of asthma or other legally prescribed inhalant medications.
- f. Any substance inhaled, injected, smoked, consumed, or otherwise ingested or absorbed with the intention of causing a physiological or psychological change in the body, including without limitation, pure caffeine in tablet or powdered form.<sup>374</sup>
- g. *Look-alike* or counterfeit drugs, including a substance that is not prohibited by this policy, but one: (a) that a student believes to be, or represents to be, an illegal drug, controlled substance, or other substance that is prohibited by this policy; or (b) about which a student engaged in behavior that would lead a reasonable person to believe that the student expressly or impliedly represented to be an illegal drug, controlled substance, or other substance that is prohibited by this policy.<sup>375</sup>
- h. Drug paraphernalia, including devices that are or can be used to: (a) ingest, inhale, or inject cannabis or controlled substances into the body; and (b) grow, process, store, or conceal cannabis or controlled substances.<sup>376</sup>

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<sup>373</sup> To legally use medical cannabis, an individual must first become a *registered qualifying patient*. The use of cannabis by a *registered qualifying patient* is permitted only in accordance with the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program. 410 ILCS 130/. There are many situations in which no one, even a *registered qualifying patient*, may possess or use cannabis. This includes in a school bus or on the grounds of any preschool, or primary or secondary school unless the student meets the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/22-33, a/k/a *Ashley's Law*. 410 ILCS 130/30(a)(2) and (3). *Ashley's Law* provides that school districts "shall authorize a parent or guardian or any other individual registered with the Department of Public Health as a designated caregiver of a student who is a registered qualifying patient to administer a medical cannabis infused product to the student on the premises of the child's school or on the child's school bus if both the student (as a registered qualifying patient) and the parent or guardian or other individual (as a registered designated caregiver) have been issued registry identification cards under the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act." 105 ILCS 5/22-33(b). Once the product is administered, the designated caregiver must remove the product from the school premises/bus. *Id.* 105 ILCS 5/22-33(b-5) allows a properly trained school nurse or administrator to administer medical cannabis infused products to a student while at school, a school-sponsored activity, or before/after normal school activities, including while the student is in before-school or after-school care on school-operated property or while being transported on a school bus. The product may not be administered in a manner that would (in the school or district's opinion) create a disruption or expose other students to the product, and schools are not required to authorize use of the product if the school or district would lose federal funding as a result. 105 ILCS 5/22-33(c). For more information, see f/ns 22-32 in sample policy 7:270, *Administering Medicines to Students*. Contact the board attorney for advice concerning medical cannabis, including whether a federal or State law requires the district to accommodate a student who is a *registered qualifying patient*. See Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. §12101 *et seq.*; Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, 20 U.S.C. §1400 *et seq.*; Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, 29 U.S.C. §794; 105 ILCS 5/14-1.01 *et seq.*, 5/14-7.02, and 5/14-7.02b; and 23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 226.

<sup>374</sup> The Powdered Caffeine Control and Education Act states: "No person may sell, offer for sale, give away, or provide free samples of powdered pure caffeine to any person under age 18 located within the State or to any person under age 18 making the purchase from within the State." A limited exception to this prohibition exists for "the sale of any powdered pure caffeine product that receives explicit approval as safe and effective for its intended use under the federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act or is lawfully marketed under an over-the-counter monograph issued by the United States Food and Drug Administration." 410 ILCS 647/20.

<sup>375</sup> *Counterfeit* and *look-alike substances* are defined in 720 ILCS 570/102(g) and (y). This provision is broader because it would apply, for example, if a student represents a powdered vitamin to be pure caffeine – pure caffeine is prohibited on campus even though it is a legal substance. Look-alike drugs should be defined; an unpublished Ill. appellate decision in 2000 found a policy prohibiting possession of *look-alikes* had vagueness problems.

<sup>376</sup> *Drug paraphernalia* is defined in 720 ILCS 600/2(d). Contact the board attorney for advice concerning a student who is a *registered qualifying patient*, as explained in f/n 11.

Students who are under the influence of any prohibited substance are not permitted to attend school or school functions and are treated as though they had the prohibited substance, as applicable, in their possession.

4. Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring a *weapon* as that term is defined in the **Weapons** section of this policy, or violating the **Weapons** section of this policy.<sup>377</sup>
5. Using or possessing an electronic paging device.<sup>378</sup>
6. Using a cellular telephone, video recording device, personal digital assistant (PDA), or other electronic device in any manner that disrupts the educational environment or violates the rights of others, including using the device to take photographs in locker rooms or bathrooms, cheat, or otherwise violate student conduct rules. Unless otherwise banned under this policy or by the Building Principal, all electronic devices must be kept powered off or silenced and out-of-sight<sup>379</sup> during the regular school day unless: (a) the supervising teacher grants permission; (b) use of the device is provided in a student's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 plan; (c) it is used during the student's lunch period, or (d) it is needed in an emergency that threatens the safety of students, staff, or other individuals.<sup>380</sup>
7. *Sexting*, which, for purposes of this policy, is the act of creating, sending, sharing, viewing, receiving, or possessing sexually explicit messages, images, or videos electronically, regardless of whether they are authentic or computer-generated, through the use of a computer, electronic communication device, or cellular phone. Sexting also includes creating, sending, sharing, viewing, receiving, or possessing *indecent visual depictions*, *non-consensual dissemination of private sexual images*, and *non-consensual dissemination of sexually explicit digitized depictions*, as defined in State law.<sup>381</sup>
8. Using or possessing a laser pointer unless under a staff member's direct supervision and in the context of instruction.

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<sup>377</sup> This language is broader than the **Weapons** section of this policy. The **Weapons** section contains the statutorily required punishment for "a student who is determined to have brought" a weapon to school along with the statutory definition of *weapon*. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(d). The language in item #4 is broader because it prohibits "using, possessing, controlling, or transferring" a weapon in addition to violating the **Weapons** section. See the footnotes in the **Weapons** section for a discussion of the Firearm Concealed Carry Act's provisions.

<sup>378</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-21.10.

<sup>379</sup> Delete "and out-of-sight" if the district wants to provide greater flexibility. A board should, in consultation with the superintendent and board attorney, carefully review its policy on the use of electronic devices to ensure it aligns with building-level practices and any student handbook provisions addressing student use of personal mobile devices, including, but not limited to, cell phones, smartwatches, and smart glasses.

<sup>380</sup> State law leaves to local boards the discretion whether to prohibit student possession of cellular phones. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.28. The misuse of camera phones can seriously invade a student's privacy. A board wanting a sweeping prohibition may use the following alternative for item #6:

Using or possessing a cellular telephone, two-way radio, video recording device, and/or other telecommunication device, unless authorized and approved by the Building Principal.

Operating transmitters designed to jam or block wireless communications violates the federal Communications Act of 1934. 47 U.S.C. §§301, 302a, and 333. Fines are as high as \$10,000 for each violation and/or imprisonment, and the device may also be seized. 47 U.S.C. §§501-510.

Making a video recording or live video transmission of another person without their consent in a restroom, locker room, or changing room is a Class 4 felony. 720 ILCS 5/26-4. A minor who distributes or disseminates an indecent visual depiction of another minor through the use of a computer or electronic communication device may be subject to adjudication as a minor in need of supervision. 705 ILCS 405/3-40.

<sup>381</sup> This definition of *sexting* is adapted from Merriam-Webster's definition at [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sexting](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sexting), and it incorporates offenses under State law that address the dissemination of explicit images. A district may wish to use another definition or create its own with the board attorney. See sample administrative procedure 7:190-AP6, *Guidelines for Investigating Sexting Allegations*, for definitions of the italicized terms in this paragraph and their accompanying citations. See also sample administrative procedure 7:190-AP5, *Student Handbook - Electronic Devices*.

9. Disobeying rules of student conduct or directives from staff members or school officials. Examples of disobeying staff directives include refusing a District staff member's request to stop, present school identification, or submit to a search.
10. Engaging in academic dishonesty, including cheating, intentionally plagiarizing, using a writing service and/or generative artificial intelligence technology in place of original work unless specifically authorized by staff,<sup>382</sup> wrongfully giving or receiving help during an academic examination, altering report cards, and wrongfully obtaining test copies or scores.
11. Engaging in hazing or any kind of bullying or aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to a staff person or another student, or urging other students to engage in such conduct. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, any use of violence, intimidation, force, noise, coercion, threats, stalking, harassment, sexual harassment, public humiliation, theft or destruction of property, retaliation, hazing, bullying, bullying using a school computer or a school computer network, or other comparable conduct.<sup>383</sup>
12. Engaging in any sexual activity, including without limitation, offensive touching, sexual harassment, indecent exposure (including mooning), and sexual assault. This does not include the non-disruptive: (a) expression of gender or sexual orientation or preference, or (b) display of affection during non-instructional time.

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<sup>382</sup> Optional. *Generative artificial intelligence* (Gen AI) is defined in State law as "an automated computing system that, when prompted with human prompts, descriptions, or queries, can produce outputs that simulate human-produced content, including, but not limited to, the following: (1) textual outputs, such as short answers, essays, poetry, or longer compositions or answers; (2) image outputs, such as fine art, photographs, conceptual art, diagrams, and other images; (3) multimedia outputs, such as audio or video in the form of compositions, songs, or short-form or long-form audio or video; and (4) other content that would be otherwise produced by human means." 775 ILCS 5/2-101(N), added by P.A. 103-804, eff. 1-1-26. When not used for academic dishonesty purposes, Gen AI tools may present innovative learning opportunities for students and teaching opportunities for educators. For further information, see sample policy 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks*, and its f/n 17, and sample administrative procedure 6:235-AP3, *Development of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Plan and AI Responsible Use Guidelines*.

<sup>383</sup> All districts must have a policy on bullying. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(d), amended by P.A. 103-47. Sample policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*, contains the statutory definition of bullying. Districts must also have an age-appropriate policy on sexual harassment. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.69. See sample policy 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*, and its f/n 9 for further detail.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.14(d), amended by P.A. 103-896, requires boards, in consultation with their parent-teacher advisory committees and other community-based organizations, to include provisions in their student discipline policy to address aggressive behavior, including bullying. These provisions must include procedures for notifying a student's parents/guardians about his/her aggressive behavior and early intervention procedures based upon available community-based and district resources. See sample exhibit 7:190-E1, *Aggressive Behavior Reporting Letter and Form*. In consultation with stakeholders, ISBE must draft and publish guidance for evidence-based intervention procedures, including examples, by 7-1-25. *Id.* *Evidence-based intervention* means an intervention that has demonstrated a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes, documented in a peer-reviewed scholarly journal. *Id.*

Suspending students for hazing was upheld in Gendelman v. Glenbrook North High Sch. and Northfield Twp. Sch. Dist. 225, 2003 WL 21209880 (N.D.Ill. 2003). This decision may have been legislatively overturned by amending 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14.

The failure of a school official (including any administrator, teacher, counselor, support staff, or coach) to report hazing is a Class B misdemeanor. 720 ILCS 5/12C-50.1.

A person commits a felony hate crime when, by reason of the actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or national origin of another individual or group of individuals, regardless of the existence of any other motivating factor or factors, he or she commits assault, battery, aggravated assault, intimidation, stalking, cyberstalking, misdemeanor theft, criminal trespass to residence, misdemeanor criminal damage to property, criminal trespass to vehicle, criminal trespass to real property, mob action, disorderly conduct, transmission of obscene message, harassment by telephone, or harassment through electronic communications as these crimes are defined in the Criminal Code. 720 ILCS 5/12-7.1. The penalty is heightened when the offense is committed in a school or administrative facility.

720 ILCS 5/26-1(a)(3.5) and (b) make transmitting a threat of violence, death, or bodily harm directed against persons at a school, school function, or school event, whether or not school is in session, or causing such a threat to be transmitted, a Class 4 felony.



13. Teen dating violence, as described in Board policy 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*.<sup>384</sup>
14. Causing or attempting to cause damage to, or stealing or attempting to steal, school property or another person's personal property.<sup>385</sup>
15. Entering school property or a school facility without proper authorization.
16. In the absence of a reasonable belief that an emergency exists, calling emergency responders (such as calling 911); signaling or setting off alarms or signals indicating the presence of an emergency; or indicating the presence of a bomb or explosive device on school grounds, school bus, or at any school activity.
17. Being absent without a recognized excuse; State law and School Board policy regarding truancy control will be used with chronic and habitual truants.<sup>386</sup>
18. Being involved with any public school fraternity, sorority, or secret society, by: (a) being a member; (b) promising to join; (c) pledging to become a member; or (d) soliciting any other person to join, promise to join, or be pledged to become a member.<sup>387</sup>
19. Being involved in gangs or gang-related activities, including displaying gang symbols or paraphernalia.<sup>388</sup>
20. Violating any criminal law, including but not limited to, assault, battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, vandalism, and hazing.
21. Making an explicit threat on an Internet website against a school employee, a student, or any school-related personnel if the Internet website through which the threat was made is a site that was accessible within the school at the time the threat was made or was available to third parties who worked or studied within the school grounds at the time the threat was made, and the threat could be reasonably interpreted as threatening to the safety and security of the threatened individual because of his or her duties or employment status or status as a student inside the school.<sup>389</sup>
22. Operating an unmanned aircraft system (UAS) or drone for any purpose on school grounds or at any school event unless granted permission by the Superintendent or designee.<sup>390</sup>
23. Engaging in any activity, on or off campus, that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the school environment, school operations, or an educational function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of students, staff, or school property.<sup>391</sup>

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<sup>384</sup> All school boards must have a policy on prohibited teen dating violence. 105 ILCS 110/3.10. Verify that the board adopted the policy listed and amend its title in this policy, if necessary.

<sup>385</sup> 720 ILCS 5/26-1(a)(3.5) and (b) make threatening to destroy a school building or school property, whether or not school is in session, or causing such a threat to be transmitted, a Class 4 felony.

<sup>386</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26-2a; 5/26-9; and 5/26-12. See sample policies 6:110, *Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program*, and 7:70, *Attendance and Truancy*.

<sup>387</sup> State law requires schools to suspend or expel any student who engages in this activity. 105 ILCS 5/31-3.

<sup>388</sup> See *Kelly v. Bd. of Educ. of McHenry Cmty. High Sch. Dist. 156*, 2007 WL 114300 (N.D.Ill. 2007) (upheld student's expulsion for drawing gang symbols while at school; testimony that the danger posed by gang signs and the presence of gangs at school supported the board's insistence on strict enforcement of board policy prohibiting gang related behavior and made expulsion a proper remedy).

<sup>389</sup> 740 ILCS 147/15 *et seq.* allows a school district to bring a civil suit against a gang, gang officers, or gang members for losses it suffers due to their criminal activity.

<sup>389</sup> This statement of misconduct restates 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(d-5). The following alternative provides a shorter statement but will require the administrator to check the statute before imposing discipline based on it:

Making an explicit threat on an Internet website against a school, employee, or any school-related personnel under circumstances described in 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(d-5).

<sup>390</sup> For more information regarding unmanned aircraft systems, see [www.faa.gov/uas](http://www.faa.gov/uas).

<sup>391</sup> A catchall provision, e.g., this one, gives staff members authority to respond to unforeseen situations.

For purposes of this policy, the term possession includes having control, custody, or care, currently or in the past, of an object or substance, including situations in which the item is: (a) on the student's person; (b) contained in another item belonging to, or under the control of, the student, such as in the student's clothing, backpack, or automobile; (c) in a school's student locker, desk, or other school property; or (d) at any location on school property or at a school-sponsored event.<sup>392</sup>

Efforts, including the use of positive interventions and supports, shall be made to deter students, while at school or a school-related event, from engaging in aggressive behavior that may reasonably produce physical or psychological harm to someone else. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the parent/guardian of a student who engages in aggressive behavior is notified of the incident.<sup>393</sup> The failure to provide such notification does not limit the Board's authority to impose discipline, including suspension or expulsion, for such behavior.

No disciplinary action shall be taken against any student that is based totally or in part on the refusal of the student's parent/guardian to administer or consent to the administration of psychotropic or psychostimulant medication to the student.<sup>394</sup>

### Disciplinary Measures<sup>395</sup>

School officials shall limit the number and duration of expulsions and out-of-school suspensions to the greatest extent practicable, and, where practicable and reasonable, shall consider forms of non-exclusionary discipline before using out-of-school suspensions or expulsions.<sup>396</sup> School personnel shall not advise or

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If the board adopts a mandatory uniform policy (see sample policy 7:165, *School Uniforms*), add the following item to the list as number 22: "Failing to comply with the mandatory uniform policy, but only after repeated attempts to secure compliance, such as conferences with parents/guardians, have been unsuccessful."

<sup>392</sup> Possession should be defined to avoid vagueness problems.

<sup>393</sup> See f/n 20.

<sup>394</sup> Mandated by 105 ILCS 5/10-20.36.

<sup>395</sup> **IMPORTANT:** The practice of suspending or expelling a student based on the number of accumulated disciplinary infractions is illegal under 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6. This includes a system of assigning points to specific infractions and then tallying the points a student receives over a period of time to determine a disciplinary exclusion from school.

Before amendments to 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6, courts used the following factors to determine if a board abused its discretion when it expelled a student: (1) the egregiousness of the student's conduct; (2) the record of the student's past conduct; (3) the likelihood that such conduct will affect the delivery of educational services to other students; (4) the severity of the punishment; and (5) the intent of the child. Robinson v. Oak Park, 213 Ill.App.3d 77 (1st Dist. 1991); Wilson ex rel. Geiger v. Hinsdale Elementary Dist., 349 Ill.App.3d 243 (2nd Dist. 2004). The amendments to 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6 called into question the validity of relying on past misconduct in suspension or expulsion decisions. At least one Ill. appellate court has held that the Robinson factors no longer apply because the legislature incorporated specific criteria for expulsion directly into 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6 when it amended the statute. A.A. v. Summit Sch. Dist. No. 104, 2024 IL App (1st) 232451. **Consult the board attorney for guidance.**

Aside from procedural due process protection, students have a constitutional substantive due process right. This right protects them from an abuse of government power which "shocks the conscience." While the scope of substantive due process is very limited, it is available to students who believe they were subject to arbitrary and excessive discipline. Generally, however, school officials need not fear being found guilty of a substantive due process violation. Federal courts are loath to second-guess school officials. See Tun v. Whitticker, 398 F.3d 899 (7th Cir. 2005) (expulsion did not amount to a substantive due process violation because it fell short of the required *shocks the conscience* standard).

<sup>396</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-5). In addition, subsection c-5 states, "[s]chool districts must make reasonable efforts to provide ongoing professional development to all school personnel, school board members, and school resource officers on the requirements of [105 ILCS 5/10-20.14], the adverse consequences of school exclusion and justice-system involvement, effective classroom management strategies, culturally responsive discipline, trauma-responsive learning environments, as defined in [105 ILCS 5/3-11(b)], the appropriate and available supportive services for the promotion of student attendance and engagement, and developmentally appropriate disciplinary methods that promote positive and healthy school climates." 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(c-5), amended by P.A. 103-896.

encourage students to drop out voluntarily due to behavioral or academic difficulties.<sup>397</sup> Potential disciplinary measures include, without limitation, any of the following:<sup>398</sup>

1. Notifying parent(s)/guardian(s).
2. Disciplinary conference.
3. Withholding of privileges.
4. Temporary removal from the classroom.
5. Return of property or restitution for lost, stolen, or damaged property.<sup>399</sup>
6. In-school suspension. The Building Principal or designee shall ensure that the student is properly supervised.<sup>400</sup>
7. After-school study or Saturday study<sup>401</sup> provided the student's parent/guardian has been notified. If transportation arrangements cannot be agreed upon, an alternative disciplinary measure must be used. The student must be supervised by the detaining teacher or the Building Principal or designee.
8. Community service with local public and nonprofit agencies that enhances community efforts to meet human, educational, environmental, or public safety needs.<sup>402</sup> The District will not provide transportation. School administration shall use this option only as an alternative to another disciplinary measure, giving the student and/or parent/guardian the choice.
9. Seizure of contraband; confiscation and temporary retention of personal property that was used to violate this policy or school disciplinary rules.<sup>403</sup>
10. Suspension of bus riding privileges in accordance with Board policy 7:220, *Bus Conduct*.<sup>404</sup>
11. Out-of-school suspension from school and all school activities in accordance with Board policy 7:200, *Suspension Procedures*.<sup>405</sup> A student who has been suspended may also be restricted from being on school grounds and at school activities.<sup>406</sup>

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<sup>397</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(h).

<sup>398</sup> Most school attorneys advise against using a grade reduction as a disciplinary measure. A decision upholding such a policy is Knight v. Bd. of Educ., 38 Ill.App.3d 603 (4th Dist. 1976). A decision striking one is Smith v. Sch. City of Hobart, 811 F.Supp. 391 (N.D.Ind. 1993) (grade reduction policy requiring 9-week grades to be reduced 4% for each day of a suspension was found unconstitutional).

<sup>399</sup> While restitution is permitted, issuing a fine or fee as a disciplinary consequence is not permitted. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(i). Possible parental liability for damages under the Parental Responsibility Law (740 ILCS 115/5) is discussed in f/n 2 in sample policy 7:170, *Vandalism*.

<sup>400</sup> An in-school suspension program may focus on promoting non-violent conflict resolution and positive interaction with other students and school personnel, and districts may employ a school social worker or a licensed mental health professional to oversee in-school suspension programs. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(l). Providing programming during in-school suspensions is not required, however providing such programming will help distinguish them from exclusionary suspensions. See f/n 4 in sample policy 5:230, *Maintaining Student Discipline*, for further discussion of in-school suspension programs.

<sup>401</sup> Teachers may not be required to teach on Saturdays. 105 ILCS 5/24-2.

<sup>402</sup> See Herndon v. Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Bd., 89 F.3d 174 (4th Cir. 1996) (upheld policy requiring students to complete community service in order to graduate).

<sup>403</sup> Consult the board attorney for advice concerning confiscated devices. There is no binding Ill. court decision regarding school personnel seizing and retaining a student's property. The Supreme Court of Arkansas held that a teacher and principal did not violate a student's state or federal rights when they confiscated and retained a student's cell phone for two weeks for violating school rules on cell phones. Koch v. Adams, 361 S.W.3d 817 (Ark. 2010).

<sup>404</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b) and (b-30).

<sup>405</sup> A suspension may be imposed in only limited situations that vary according to the suspension's length. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-15)-(b-25). This is explained in sample board policy 7:200, *Suspension Procedures*, and its footnotes.

<sup>406</sup> This sentence is optional. A board may make this mandatory by replacing "may also be" with "shall also be."

12. Expulsion from school and all school activities for a definite time period not to exceed two calendar years in accordance with Board policy 7:210, *Expulsion Procedures*.<sup>407</sup> A student who has been expelled may also be restricted from being on school grounds and at school activities.<sup>408</sup>
13. Transfer to an alternative program if the student is expelled or otherwise qualifies for the transfer under State law. The transfer shall be in the manner provided in Article 13A or 13B of the School Code.<sup>409</sup>
14. Notifying juvenile authorities or other law enforcement whenever the conduct involves criminal activity, including but not limited to, illegal drugs (controlled substances), look-alikes, alcohol, or weapons or in other circumstances as authorized by the reciprocal reporting agreement between the District and local law enforcement agencies.<sup>410</sup>

The above list of disciplinary measures is a range of options that will not always be applicable in every case. In some circumstances, it may not be possible to avoid suspending or expelling a student because behavioral interventions, other than a suspension and expulsion, will not be appropriate and available, and the only

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<sup>407</sup> An expulsion may be imposed in only limited situations. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-20). This is explained in sample policy 7:210, *Expulsion Procedures*, and its footnotes.

105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(d) permits expulsion for a definite period of time not to exceed two calendar years. School officials must document whether other interventions were attempted or whether it was determined that there were no other appropriate and available interventions.

<sup>408</sup> This sentence is optional. A board may make this mandatory by replacing “may also be” with “shall also be.”

<sup>409</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(a) and (b), amended by P.A. 103-896. 105 ILCS 5/13A, amended by P.A. 103-473, a/k/a *Safe Schools Law*, governs the transfer of *disruptive students*, defined to include suspension- or expulsion-eligible students in grades 6-12, to an alternative school program. See sample administrative procedure 7:190-AP9, *Administrative Transfer to Regional Safe School Program*, and the ISBE regional safe schools program webpage at: [www.isbe.net/Pages/Regional-Safe-Schools-Program.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Regional-Safe-Schools-Program.aspx). 105 ILCS 5/13B governs the transfer of students to an alternative learning opportunities program. See ISBE's alternative learning opportunities program webpage at: [www.isbe.net/Pages/Special-Education-Alternative-Learning-Opportunities-Programs.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Special-Education-Alternative-Learning-Opportunities-Programs.aspx).

Contact the board attorney regarding the necessary due process procedures before imposing a disciplinary transfer to an alternative school. The court in Leak v. Rich Twp. High Sch. Dist. 227 (397 Ill.Dec. 90 (1st Dist. 2015)), held that placement in an alternative school is tantamount to an expulsion. Thus, according to dicta in this decision, districts must follow expulsion procedures before a student is transferred to an alternative school. Schools may still reach agreements with parents/guardians to transfer students to such schools without completing the expulsion procedures.

The alternative program may not deny the transfer on the basis of the suspension or expulsion, except in cases in which the transfer is deemed to cause a threat to the safety of students or staff in the alternative program.

<sup>410</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-88. See sample policy 7:150, *Agency and Police Interviews*.

reasonable and practical way to resolve the threat and/or address the disruption is a suspension or expulsion.<sup>411</sup>

Corporal punishment is prohibited in all circumstances. *Corporal punishment* is defined as a discipline method in which a person deliberately inflicts pain upon a student in response to the student's unacceptable behavior or inappropriate language, with an aim to halt an offense, prevent its recurrence, or set an example for others.<sup>412</sup> It includes slapping, paddling, or prolonged maintenance of students in physically painful positions, or intentional infliction of bodily harm. Corporal punishment does not include reasonable force as permitted by 105 ILCS 5/10-20.33.<sup>413</sup>

#### Isolated Time Out, Time Out, and Physical Restraint<sup>414</sup>

Neither isolated time out, time out, nor physical restraint shall be used to discipline or punish a student. These methods are only authorized for use as permitted in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.33, Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) rules (23 Ill.Admin.Code §§ 1.280, 1.285), and the District's procedure(s).

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<sup>411</sup> **Note:** Districts that receive early childhood block grant funding (authorized by 105 ILCS 5/1C-2, amended by P.A. 103-594, of the School Code) are prohibited from expelling children from their early childhood programs. 105 ILCS 5/2-3.71(a)(7), amended by P.A. 103-594 (making it inoperative on 7-1-26), and 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(k). On and after 7-1-26, the Dept. of Early Childhood Act, 325 ILCS 3/15-30(a)(7) will prohibit expulsion of children enrolled in early childhood programs funded under 325 ILCS 3/1-10). A district may, however, transition a child to a new program if: (1) it has documented evidence that all available interventions and supports recommended by a qualified professional have been exhausted; (2) the program determines that transitioning a child is necessary for the well-being of the child or his or her peers and staff; and (3) the current and pending programs create a transition plan for the child with parent or legal guardian permission. 105 ILCS 5/2-3.71(a)(7)(C) (inoperative on 7-1-26); 325 ILCS 3/15-30(a)(7)(C) on and after 7-1-26. A district may temporarily remove a child from attendance in the group setting in the case of a serious safety threat to a child or others, or in the case of possession of a weapon as described in 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(d), but it must then begin the process of documenting interventions and supports as outlined in the law. 105 ILCS 5/2-3.71(a)(7)(E) (inoperative on 7-1-26); 325 ILCS 3/15-30(a)(7) on and after 7-1-26. ISBE rules implementing these requirements are at 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§ 235.300-235.340. For guidance on behavior support and transition plans, including links to ISBE Form 37-50A, *Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) Program Transition Plan*, and ISBE Form 37-50B, *Early Childhood Block Grant (ECBG) Behavior Support Plan*, see ISBE's *Frequently Asked Questions: Behavior Support and Program Transition* (March 2021) at: [www.isbe.net/Documents/EC-FAQ-Behavior-Transition-Plan.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/EC-FAQ-Behavior-Transition-Plan.pdf). **Consult the board attorney for advice to ensure compliance with ISBE rules.** Compliance with this law does not relieve a district of its obligations to also comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 when disciplining students with disabilities. For further information, see sample policy 7:230, *Misconduct by Students with Disabilities*. For districts that receive early childhood block grant funding, add the following:

Students enrolled in the District's State-funded preschool program(s) may be temporarily removed or transitioned to a new program in accordance with federal and State law. State law prohibits the expulsion of students from the program(s).

If this language is inserted, add 105 ILCS 5/2-3.71(a)(7) to the Legal References for this policy.

<sup>412</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-100, added by P.A. 103-806.

<sup>413</sup> The last two sentences of this paragraph paraphrase 105 ILCS 5/24-24, amended by P.A. 103-806.

<sup>414</sup> *Physical restraint* or *restraint* does not include momentary periods of physical restriction by direct person to person contact, without the aid of material or mechanical devices, that are accomplished with limited force and that are designed to prevent a student from completing an act that would result in potential physical harm to himself, herself, or another or damage to property. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.33(b). Isolated time out, time out, or physical restraint may be used by staff members **only if** their use is authorized by policy and administrative procedure. 105 ILCS 5/2-3.130 and 5/10-20.33; 105 ILCS 5/24-24; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.280(c) and 1.285. See sample administrative procedure 7:190-AP4, *Use of Isolated Time Out, Time Out, and Physical Restraint*. **The sample policy allows the use of isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint pursuant only to the conditions allowed in the School Code and ISBE rules.** State statute and ISBE rules contain complex restrictions on the use of isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint. 105 ILCS 5/2-3.130 and 5/10-20.33; 105 ILCS 5/24-24; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.280(c) and 1.285. According to the ISBE rule, isolated time out, time out, and physical restraints are allowed only if a board authorizes their use in a policy containing the numerous components identified in the rule. To comply with ISBE's rule, a board must also incorporate by reference the district's procedure, i.e., 7:190-AP4, *Use of Isolated Time Out, Time Out, and Physical Restraint*. By doing this, the policy includes the district's procedure. **For a board that wants to prohibit the use of isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint** (1) replace the contents of this subhead with "The district prohibits the use of isolated time out, time out, and physical restraint, as defined in 105 ILCS 5/10-20.33."; (2) amend the Legal References as follows "23 Ill.Admin.Code §§~~1.280, 1.285~~," and (3) delete "Incorporated by Reference: 7:190-AP4 (Use of Isolated Time Out, Time Out, and Physical Restraint)."

## Weapons <sup>415</sup>

A student who is determined to have brought one of the following objects to school, any school-sponsored activity or event, or any activity or event that bears a reasonable relationship to school shall be expelled for a period of at least one calendar year but not more than two calendar years:

1. A *firearm*, meaning any gun, rifle, shotgun, or weapon as defined by Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code (18 U.S.C. § 921), firearm as defined in Section 1.1 of the Firearm Owners Identification Card Act (430 ILCS 65/), or firearm as defined in Section 24-1 of the Criminal Code of 2012 (720 ILCS 5/24-1).
2. A knife, brass knuckles, or other knuckle weapon regardless of its composition, a billy club, or any other object if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm, including *look-alikes* of any *firearm* as defined above.

The expulsion requirement under either paragraph one or two above may be modified by the Superintendent, and the Superintendent's determination may be modified by the Board on a case-by-case basis. The Superintendent or designee may grant an exception to this policy, upon the prior request of an adult supervisor, for students in theatre, cooking, ROTC, martial arts, and similar programs, whether or not school-sponsored, provided the item is not equipped, nor intended, to do bodily harm.<sup>416</sup>

This policy's prohibitions concerning weapons apply regardless of whether: (1) a student is licensed to carry a concealed firearm, or (2) the Board permits visitors, who are licensed to carry a concealed firearm, to store a firearm in a locked vehicle in a school parking area.<sup>417</sup>

## Re-Engagement of Returning Students <sup>418</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain a process to facilitate the re-engagement of students who are returning from an out-of-school suspension, expulsion, or an alternative school setting. The goal of re-engagement shall be to support the student's ability to be successful in school following a period of exclusionary discipline and shall include the opportunity for students who have been suspended to complete or make up work for equivalent academic credit.<sup>419</sup>

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<sup>415</sup> This section paraphrases 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(d) and contains the statutorily required punishment for bringing a weapon to school along with the statutory definition of *weapon*. When preparing for a due process hearing, a principal needs to use the applicable State and federal law definitions of *firearm* – not just the School Code.

While subsection 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-10) explicitly forbids zero tolerance policies, it provides an exception for those zero tolerance policies established by State or federal law, which includes weapons in school. Section 10-22.6(d) provides that a student who brings a weapon to school, as defined in the section, "shall be expelled for a period not less than one year," unless modified by the superintendent or board. The federal Gun-Free Schools Act (20 U.S.C. §7961 *et seq.*) provides for at least a one-year expulsion for students who bring firearms to school. As directed by 20 U.S.C. §7961(b)(1), 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(d), the superintendent and the board may modify that consequence; however, the superintendent/board may decline to exercise that discretion and instead impose the maximum penalty authorized by law. Analyzing the student's circumstances on a case-by-case basis may avoid a judicial finding that an expulsion is too severe. See *Washington v. Smith*, 248 Ill.App.3d 534 (1st Dist. 1993).

Item #4 in the **Prohibited Student Conduct** section is broader because it prohibits "using, possessing, controlling, or transferring" a weapon in addition to violating the **Weapons** section.

<sup>416</sup> Optional.

<sup>417</sup> The Firearm Concealed Carry Act permits a properly licensed individual to carry a concealed firearm within a vehicle into a school parking area and store it in a locked vehicle out of plain view. 430 ILCS 66/65(b). The federal Gun-Free Schools Act has a similar provision. 20 U.S.C. §7961(g). The School Code, however, contains no similar exception to the ban on firearms at schools. Contact the board attorney before permitting students to store their firearms in their vehicle's trunk while parked at school.

<sup>418</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-25), amended by P.A. 103-896. See sample administrative procedure 7:190-AP8, *Student Re-Engagement Guidelines*. In consultation with stakeholders, ISBE must draft and publish guidance for the re-engagement of students who are suspended out-of-school, expelled, or returning from an alternative school setting by 7-1-25. *Id.*

<sup>419</sup> A goal for re-engagement is optional. Schools must permit students who were suspended, including students suspended from the school bus who do not have alternate transportation to school, to makeup work for equivalent academic credit. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-30).

### Required Notices

A school staff member shall immediately notify the office of the Building Principal in the event that he or she: (1) observes any person in possession of a firearm on or around school grounds; however, such action may be delayed if immediate notice would endanger students under his or her supervision, (2) observes or has reason to suspect that any person on school grounds is or was involved in a drug-related incident, or (3) observes a battery committed against any staff member or is subject to a battery.<sup>420</sup> *School grounds* includes modes of transportation to school activities and any public way within 1000 feet of the school, as well as school property itself.

Upon receiving a report of (1), above, the Building Principal or designee shall immediately notify local law enforcement. In addition, upon receiving a report on any of the above (1)-(3), the Building Principal or designee shall notify the Superintendent or designee and any involved student's parent/guardian.<sup>421</sup>

Upon receiving a report on any of the above (1)-(3), the Superintendent or designee shall immediately notify local law enforcement. The Superintendent or designee shall also report these incidents to ISBE through its web-based School Incident Reporting System as they occur during the year and no later than July 31 for the preceding school year.<sup>422</sup>

### Delegation of Authority

Each teacher, and any other school personnel when students are under his or her charge, is authorized to impose any disciplinary measure, other than suspension, expulsion, corporal punishment, or in-school suspension, that is appropriate and in accordance with the policies and rules on student discipline. Teachers, other licensed educational employees, and any other persons (whether or not a licensed employee) providing a related service for or with respect to a student, may only use reasonable force as permitted by 105 ILCS 5/10-20.33. Teachers may temporarily remove students from a classroom for disruptive behavior.<sup>423</sup>

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<sup>420</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-27.1A(a), 5/10-27.1B, amended by P.A.s 103-609 (first to pass both houses) and 103-780 (second to pass both houses and controlling), and 5/10-21.7. *School grounds* includes the real property comprising any school, any conveyance used to transport students to school or a school-related activity, and any public way within 1,000 feet of any school ground.

<sup>421</sup> *Id.* State law imposes the duty to report firearm possession only on school officials; this duty may be also imposed on volunteers and community members. Only staff members, however, are vulnerable to committing a petty offense for their failure to report, and only staff members are protected from civil or criminal liability that might arise as a result of making a report (although the liability potential for anyone making a report is remote).

The building principal must notify the student's parent/guardian only when the alleged offense is firearm possession. 105 ILCS 5/10-27.1A(b). The policy expands this notification duty to include drug-related incidents and battery of a staff member; a board disinclined to do this should amend the second sentence as follows:

In addition, upon receiving a report on any of the above (1)-(3), the Building Principal or designee shall notify the Superintendent or designee and if a student is reportedly in possession of a firearm, also any involved student's parent/guardian.

<sup>422</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-27.1A, amended by P.A.s 103-34, 103-609 (first to pass both houses) and 103-780 (second to pass both houses and controlling); 105 5/10-27.1B, amended by P.A.s 103-609 (first to pass both houses) and 103-780 (second to pass both houses and controlling); and 105 ILCS 5/10-21.7. See f/n 6 and subhead **J. Required Notices** of sample administrative procedure 4:170-API, *Comprehensive Safety and Security Plan*. Reporting on SIRS does not satisfy the requirement to report incidents to local law enforcement authorities.

<sup>423</sup> 105 ILCS 5/24-24, amended by P.A. 103-806, requires: (1) teachers, other licensed educational employees, and any other person (whether or not a licensed employee) providing a related service for or with respect to a student (except for individuals employed as paraprofessionals) to maintain discipline, and (2) the district to have a policy on discipline that provides that:

[A] teacher, other licensed employee, and any other person, whether or not a licensed employee, providing a related service for or with respect to a student may only use reasonable force as permitted under [105 ILCS 5/10-20.33], shall provide that a teacher may remove a student from the classroom for disruptive behavior, and shall include provisions which provide due process to students. The policy shall prohibit the use of corporal punishment, as defined in [105 ILCS 5/22-100], in all circumstances. 105 ILCS 5/24-24, amended by P.A. 103-806.

The Superintendent, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, or Dean of Students is authorized to impose the same disciplinary measures as teachers and may suspend students guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct from school (including all school functions) and from riding the school bus, up to 10 consecutive school days, provided the appropriate procedures are followed.<sup>424</sup> The Board may suspend a student from riding the bus in excess of 10 school days for safety reasons.<sup>425</sup>

Student Handbook <sup>426</sup>

The Superintendent, with input from the parent-teacher advisory committee,<sup>427</sup> shall prepare disciplinary rules implementing the District's disciplinary policies. These disciplinary rules shall be presented annually to the Board for its review and approval.

A student handbook, including the District disciplinary policies and rules, shall be distributed to the students' parents/guardians within 15 days of the beginning of the school year or a student's enrollment.

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<sup>424</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b).

<sup>425</sup> Id.

<sup>426</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14(a) requires schools to provide a copy of the student discipline policy to parents/guardians within 15 days after the beginning of the school year, or within 15 days after a transfer student starts classes, but it does not specify how to provide copies. For ease of administration, this policy specifies that copies will be provided via student handbooks.

<sup>427</sup> The board must establish and maintain a parent-teacher advisory committee to develop guidelines on student discipline. See sample policy 2:150, *Committees*. This policy's dissemination requirements are from 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14.

A comprehensive student handbook can provide notice of the school's conduct rules, extracurricular and athletic participation requirements, and other important information. The handbook can be developed by the building principal, but should be reviewed and approved by the superintendent and board. The Illinois Principals Association maintains a handbook service that coordinates with **PRESS** material, *Online Model Student Handbook (MSH)*, at: [www.ilprincipals.org/msh/](http://www.ilprincipals.org/msh/).



Incorporated

by Reference: 7:190-AP4 (Use of Isolated Time Out, Time Out, and Physical Restraint)

LEGAL REF.: 20 U.S.C. §7971 et seq., Pro-Children Act of 2004.  
20 U.S.C. §7961 et seq., Gun Free Schools Act.  
105 ILCS 5/10-20.5b, 5/10-20.14, 5/10-20.28, 5/10-20.36, 5/10-21.7, 5/10-21.10, 5/10-22.6, 5/10-27.1A,  
5/10-27.1B, 5/22-33, 5/22-100, 5/24-24, 5/26-12, 5/27-23.7, and 5/31-3.  
105 ILCS 110/3.10, Critical Health Problems and Comprehensive Health Education Act.  
410 ILCS 130/, Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Pilot Program.  
410 ILCS 647/, Powdered Caffeine Control and Education Act.  
430 ILCS 66/, Firearm Concealed Carry Act.  
23 Ill.Admin.Code §§ 1.280, 1.285.

CROSS REF.: 2:150 (Committees), 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 5:230 (Maintaining Student Discipline), 6:110 (Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program), 7:70 (Attendance and Truancy), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:140 (Search and Seizure), 7:150 (Agency and Police Interviews), 7:160 (Student Appearance), 7:170 (Vandalism), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:200 (Suspension Procedures), 7:210 (Expulsion Procedures), 7:220 (Bus Conduct), 7:230 (Misconduct by Students with Disabilities), 7:240 (Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities), 7:270 (Administering Medicines to Students), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools), 7:315 (Restrictions on Publications; High Schools), 8:30 (Visitors to and Conduct on School Property)

## **Students**

### **Suspension Procedures** <sup>428</sup>

#### **In-School Suspension** <sup>429</sup>

The Superintendent or designee is authorized to maintain an in-school suspension program. The program shall include, at a minimum, each of the following:

1. Before assigning a student to in-school suspension, the charges will be explained and the student will be given an opportunity to respond to the charges.
2. Students are supervised by licensed school personnel.
3. Students are given the opportunity to complete classroom work during the in-school suspension for equivalent academic credit.

#### **Out-of-School Suspension**

The Superintendent or designee shall implement suspension procedures that provide, at a minimum, for each of the following: <sup>430</sup>

1. A conference during which the charges will be explained and the student will be given an opportunity to respond to the charges before he or she may be suspended.
2. A pre-suspension conference is not required, and the student can be immediately suspended when the student's presence poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disruption to the educational process. In such cases, the notice and conference shall follow as soon as practicable.
3. An attempted phone call to the student's parent(s)/guardian(s).
4. A written notice of the suspension to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student, which shall: <sup>431</sup>

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<sup>428</sup> State law requires districts to have a policy on student discipline. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, amended by P.A. 103-896; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.280. State or federal law controls this policy's content.

Boards may authorize *by policy* the superintendent, building principal, assistant building principal, or dean of students to suspend students guilty of gross disobedience or misconduct from school, including all school functions. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b), amended by P.A. 103-896. See sample policy 7:190, *Student Behavior*, for such an authorization.

<sup>429</sup> An in-school suspension program may focus on promoting non-violent conflict resolution and positive interaction with other students and school personnel, and districts may employ a school social worker or a licensed mental health professional to oversee in-school suspension programs. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(l), amended by P.A. 103-896. Providing programming during in-school suspensions is not required; however, providing educational programs during in-school suspensions will help distinguish them from exclusionary suspensions. See f/n 4 in sample policy 5:230, *Maintaining Student Discipline*, for further discussion of in-school suspension programs. Contact the board attorney for advice concerning amending this section.

20 ILCS 1705/76 requires the Ill. Dept. of Public Health to create and maintain an online database and resource page on its website that contains mental health resources specifically geared toward school social workers, school counselors, parents, teachers, and school support personnel. See the database at: [www.dhs.state.il.us](http://www.dhs.state.il.us).

<sup>430</sup> Suspension procedures are required by State law. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6, amended by P.A. 103-896. The right to attend school is a property right protected by the due process clause of the U.S. Constitution. *Goss v. Lopez*, 419 U.S. 565 (1975). Imposing a short deprivation of this property right by suspending a student for 10 or fewer days requires only minimal due process. The student must be generally informed of the reasons for the possible suspension and be permitted to tell his/her version of the story. Making a decision to suspend before the hearing violates the basic due process requirement that the hearing be meaningful. *Sieck v. Oak Park-River Forest High Sch.*, 807 F.Supp. 73 (N.D. Ill. 1992).

<sup>431</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6, amended by P.A. 103-896.

- a. Provide notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s) of their child’s right to a review of the suspension;
- b. Include information about an opportunity to make up work missed during the suspension for equivalent academic credit;<sup>432</sup>
- c. Detail the specific act of gross disobedience or misconduct resulting in the decision to suspend;
- d. Provide rationale or an explanation of how the chosen number of suspension days will address the threat or disruption posed by the student or his or her act of gross disobedience or misconduct; and
- e. Depending upon the length of the out-of-school suspension, include the following applicable information:
  - i. For a suspension of 3 school days or less, an explanation that the student’s continuing presence in school would either pose:<sup>433</sup>
    - a) A threat to school safety, or
    - b) A disruption to other students’ learning opportunities.
  - ii. For a suspension of 4 or more school days, an explanation:<sup>434</sup>
    - a) That other appropriate and available behavioral and disciplinary interventions have been exhausted,
    - b) As to whether school officials attempted other interventions or determined that no other interventions were available for the student,<sup>435</sup> and
    - c) That the student’s continuing presence in school would either:
      - i) Pose a threat to the safety of other students, staff, or members of the school community, or
      - ii) Substantially disrupt, impede, or interfere with the operation of the school.
    - d) Of what, if any, appropriate and available support services will be provided to the student during the length of his or her suspension, as determined by the Superintendent or designee.<sup>436</sup>

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**Consult the board attorney** (1) about the specific documentation required in this portion of the notice, and (2) to ensure that 7:200-E1, *Short Term Out-of-School Suspension (1-3 Days) Reporting Form* and 7:200-E2, *Long Term Out-of-School Suspension (4-10 Days) Reporting Form* reflect the exact practices that the district will use to implement this requirement.

<sup>432</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-30).

<sup>433</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-15) explains that “threat to school safety or a disruption to other students’ learning opportunities” shall be determined by the school board or its designee on a case-by-case basis. **Consult the board attorney for specific advice regarding the application of these statutory terms in this context (see f/n 8, below).**

<sup>434</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-20). School officials are granted the sole authority to determine on a case-by-case basis: (1) whether “appropriate and available behavioral and disciplinary interventions have been exhausted;” and (2) whether “the student’s continuing presence in school would either (i) pose a threat to the safety of other students, staff, or members of the school community, or (ii) substantially disrupt, impede, or interfere with the operation of the school.” Consult the board attorney to request specific training for school officials to apply these statutory terms in this context.

<sup>435</sup> While school officials have discretion to determine the length of suspensions, they must resolve threats, address disruptions, and minimize the length of student exclusions to the greatest extent practicable. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-20). **Consult the board attorney about the practical implementation of documenting other appropriate and available interventions for the student.**

Last, the law also requires school districts to make reasonable efforts to provide ongoing professional development to all school personnel, school board members, and school resource officers on the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6 and 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, adverse consequences of school exclusion and justice-system involvement, effective classroom management strategies, culturally responsive discipline, *trauma-responsive learning environments* as defined in 105 ILCS 5/3-11(b), appropriate and available supportive services for the promotion of student attendance and engagement, and developmentally appropriate disciplinary methods that promote positive and healthy school climates. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(c-5), amended by P.A. 103-896.

<sup>436</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-25), amended by P.A. 103-896. In consultation with stakeholders, the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) must draft and publish guidance for the re-engagement of students who are suspended out-of-school, expelled, or returning from an alternative school setting by 7-1-25. Id.

5. A summary of the notice, including the reason for the suspension and the suspension length, must be given to the Board by the Superintendent or designee.
6. Upon request of the parent(s)/guardian(s), a review of the suspension shall be conducted by the Board or a hearing officer appointed by the Board.<sup>437</sup>
  - a. At the review, the student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) may appear with a representative of their choice and at their expense, be accompanied by a support person of their choice and at their expense, disclose any factor to be considered in mitigation (including the student's status as a parent, expectant parent, or victim of domestic or sexual violence as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26A), and discuss the suspension with the Board or its hearing officer. Any representative and support person must comply with hearing rules and may be prohibited from further participation if they violate the rules or engage in behavior or advocacy that harasses, abuses, or intimidates either party, a witness, or anyone else in attendance at the hearing.<sup>438</sup>
  - b. If the review involves allegations of sexual violence by the student, neither the student nor the student's representative shall directly question nor have direct contact with the alleged victim. The student or the student's representative may, at the discretion of the Board or its hearing officer, suggest questions to be posed by the Board or its hearing officer to the alleged victim.<sup>439</sup>
  - c. Whenever there is evidence that mental illness may be the cause for the suspension, the Superintendent or designee shall invite a representative from a local mental health agency to consult with the Board.<sup>440</sup>
  - d. After presentation of the evidence or receipt of the hearing officer's report, the Board shall take such action as it finds appropriate. If the suspension is upheld, the Board's written suspension decision shall specifically detail items (a) and (e) in number 4, above.<sup>441</sup>

LEGAL REF.: Goss v. Lopez, 419 U.S. 565 (1975).  
 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, 5/10-22.6.  
 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.280.

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:220 (Bus Conduct)

<sup>437</sup> A board may hear student disciplinary cases in a meeting closed to the public. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9).

<sup>438</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-35), added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *Ensuring Success in School (ESS) Law*, eff. 7-1-25. A representative chosen by the parent/guardian (or by the student, if emancipated) must be permitted to represent the student "throughout the proceedings and to address the school board or its appointed hearing officer." A support person chosen by the parent/guardian (or by the student, if emancipated) must also be permitted to accompany the student to any expulsion hearing or proceeding. Id. For the definition of *support person*, see sample administrative procedure 7:255-AP1, *Supporting Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

<sup>439</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-40), added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25.

<sup>440</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(c).

<sup>441</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b).

## Students

### Expulsion Procedures <sup>442</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall implement expulsion procedures that provide, at a minimum, for the following: <sup>443</sup>

1. Before a student may be expelled, the student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be provided a written request to appear at a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. The request shall be sent by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested. <sup>444</sup> The request shall: <sup>445</sup>
  - a. Include the time, date, and place for the hearing.
  - b. Briefly describe what will happen during the hearing.
  - c. Detail the specific act of gross disobedience or misconduct resulting in the decision to recommend expulsion.
  - d. Inform the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) that a representative of their choice and at their expense is permitted to represent the student throughout the proceedings and to address the Board or its hearing officer.
  - e. Inform the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) that a support person of their choice and at their expense is permitted to accompany the student throughout the proceedings.
  - f. List the student's prior suspension(s).
  - g. State that the School Code allows the School Board to expel a student for a definite period of time not to exceed two calendar years, as determined on a case-by-case basis.
  - h. Ask that the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) inform the Superintendent or Board Attorney if the student will appear with a representative and/or support person and, if so, provide the name(s) and contact information for the representative and/or support person.
2. Unless the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) indicate that they do not want a hearing or fail to appear at the designated time and place, the hearing will proceed. It shall be conducted by the Board or a hearing officer appointed by it. <sup>446</sup> If a hearing officer is appointed, he or she shall report to the Board the evidence presented at the hearing and the Board shall take such final action as it finds appropriate.

<sup>442</sup> State or federal law requires districts to have a policy on student discipline. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, amended by P.A. 103-896; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.280. State or federal law controls this policy's content. The discipline of special education students must comply with the Individuals With Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and the Illinois State Board of Education's Special Education rules. See sample policy 7:230, *Misconduct by Students with Disabilities*.

<sup>443</sup> Expulsion procedures are required by State law. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(a), amended by P.A. 103-896. The right to attend school is a property right protected by the due process clause of the U.S. Constitution. *Goss v. Lopez*, 419 U.S. 565 (1975). Thus, an expulsion of more than 10 days requires due process including, but not limited to, notice of the charges, an opportunity to hear the evidence in support of the charges, an opportunity to refute them, and a decision by an impartial decision maker based on the evidence presented. The adequacy of an expulsion hearing is frequently challenged; the board attorney should be consulted as every due process analysis will be highly fact-specific. See f/ns 9 and 12, *infra*.

<sup>444</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(a), amended by P.A. 103-896. Whenever the term "registered mail" is used in the School Code, it shall be deemed to authorize the use of either registered mail or certified mail, return receipt requested. 105 ILCS 5/1-3.5.

<sup>445</sup> *Id.* Items a and b address due process, which includes the right to receive a notice with enough detail and with enough time to prepare a defense. Item c details the requirements pertaining to expulsions throughout 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6. Items d and e are required by 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-35), added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *Ensuring Success in School (ESS) Law*, eff. 7-1-25. See f/n 7, below. Items f through h are optional best practice inclusions. **Consult the board attorney about the specific documentation required in this portion of the notice to ensure the district's practice matches the policy language.**

<sup>446</sup> A board may hear student disciplinary cases in a meeting closed to the public. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9).

3. Whenever there is evidence that mental illness may be the cause for the recommended expulsion, the Superintendent or designee shall invite a representative from a local mental health agency to consult with the Board.<sup>447</sup>
4. During the expulsion hearing, the Board or hearing officer shall hear evidence concerning whether the student is guilty of the gross disobedience or misconduct as charged.
  - a. School officials must provide: (1) testimony of any other interventions attempted and exhausted or of their determination that no other appropriate and available interventions were available for the student, and (2) evidence of the threat or disruption posed by the student.
  - b. The student and his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) may appear with a representative, be accompanied by a support person, disclose any factor to be considered in mitigation (including his or her status as a parent, expectant parent, or victim of domestic or sexual violence as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26A), offer evidence, present witnesses, cross-examine witnesses who testified, and otherwise present reasons why the student should not be expelled. Any representative and support person must comply with hearing rules and may be prohibited from further participation if they violate the rules or engage in behavior or advocacy that harasses, abuses, or intimidates either party, a witness, or anyone else in attendance at the hearing.<sup>448</sup>
  - c. If the expulsion hearing involves allegations of sexual violence by the student, neither the student nor the student's representative shall directly question nor have direct contact with the alleged victim. The student or the student's representative may, at the discretion of the Board or its hearing officer, suggest questions to be posed by the Board or its hearing officer to the alleged victim.<sup>449</sup>
5. After presentation of the evidence or receipt of the hearing officer's report, the Board shall decide the issue of guilt and take such action as it finds appropriate.
6. If the Board acts to expel the student, its written expulsion decision shall:<sup>450</sup>
  - a. Detail the specific reason why removing the student from his or her learning environment is in the best interest of the school.<sup>451</sup>
  - b. Provide a rationale for the specific duration of the recommended expulsion.<sup>452</sup>

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<sup>447</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(c).

<sup>448</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-35), added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25. For the definition of *support person*, see sample administrative procedure 7:255-API, *Supporting Students who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

A student's opportunity to offer evidence, present witnesses, cross-examine witnesses, and otherwise present reasons why the student should not be expelled generally outweighs a district's interest in not providing the student these opportunities. See, Camlin v. Beecher Comm. Sch. Dist., 339 Ill.App.3d 1013 (3rd Dist. 2003) and Colquitt v. Rich Tsp H. S. Dist., 298 Ill.App.3d 856 (1st Dist. 1998). Determining whether denying these opportunities would violate a student's right to due process requires a careful analysis of the facts and federal case law. See Brown v. Plainfield Dist., 500 F. Supp.2d 996 (N.D. Ill. 2007) and Coronado v. Valleyview Sch. Dist., 537 F.3d 791 (7th Cir. 2008).

<sup>449</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-40), added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25.

<sup>450</sup> **Consult the board attorney to request specific training for school officials to apply these statutory terms in the context of expulsions.** See sample exhibit 7:210-E1, *Notice of Expulsion Hearing*. The law gives school officials discretion while also requiring them to resolve threats, address disruptions, and minimize the length of student exclusions to the greatest extent practicable. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-20). Yet, the law also requires school districts to make reasonable efforts to provide ongoing professional development to all school personnel, school board members, and school resources offices on the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6 and 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, adverse consequences of school exclusion and justice-system involvement, effective classroom management strategies, culturally responsive discipline, trauma-responsive learning environments as defined in 105 ILCS 5/3-11(b), and developmentally appropriate disciplinary methods that promote positive and healthy school climates. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(c-5), amended by P.A. 103-896.

<sup>451</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(a), amended by P.A. 103-896.

<sup>452</sup> Id.

- c. Document how school officials determined that all behavioral and disciplinary interventions have been exhausted by specifying which interventions were attempted or whether school officials determined that no other appropriate and available interventions existed for the student. <sup>453</sup>
- d. Document how the student's continuing presence in school would (1) pose a threat to the safety of other students, staff, or members of the school community, or (2) substantially disrupt, impede, or interfere with the operation of the school. <sup>454</sup>
- e. Upon expulsion, the District may refer the student to appropriate and available support services. <sup>455</sup>

LEGAL REF.: Goss v. Lopez, 419 U.S. 565 (1975).  
105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, 5/10-22.6.

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 7:130 (Student Rights and Responsibilities), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:200 (Suspension Procedures), 7:230 (Misconduct by Students with Disabilities)

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<sup>453</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-20) requires and grants school officials the sole authority to determine on a case-by-case basis: (1) whether "appropriate and available behavioral and disciplinary interventions have been exhausted," and (2) whether "the student's continuing presence in school would either (i) pose a threat to the safety of other students, staff, or members of the school community or (ii) substantially disrupt, impede, or interfere with the operation of the school."

<sup>454</sup> Id.

<sup>455</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.6(b-25), amended by P.A. 103-896. **Consult the board attorney about transfers to an alternative program pursuant to Article 13A of the School Code.** See Leak v. Bd. of Educ. of Rich Twp. High Sch. Dist. 227, 2015 IL App (1st) 143202, requiring *obiter dictum* that before school officials transfer students to alternative schools for extended periods of time, they must provide students with a meaningful opportunity to be heard.

## **Students**

### **Student Support Services** <sup>456</sup>

The District provides a liaison to facilitate the enrollment and transfer of records of students in the legal custody of the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services when enrolling in or changing schools. <sup>457</sup>

The following student support services may be provided by the School District: <sup>458</sup>

1. Health services supervised by a qualified school nurse.<sup>459</sup> The Superintendent or designee may implement procedures to further a healthy school environment and prevent or reduce the spread of disease.

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<sup>456</sup> State or federal law controls this policy's content. The Children's Mental Health Act requires all districts to have a policy for incorporating social and emotional development into its educational program. 405 ILCS 49/15(b). The policy must address two areas: (1) teaching and assessing social and emotional skills; and (2) protocols for responding to children with social, emotional, or mental health problems, or a combination of such problems, that impact learning ability. *Id.* Sample policy 6:65, *Student Social and Emotional Development*, addresses the first required area and this sample policy addresses the second required area.

<sup>457</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 5/10-20.59. See f/n 16 in sample policy 7:50, *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools*, for liaison responsibilities and requirements.

<sup>458</sup> All districts are required to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to determine the scope of student personnel services needs in the areas of: (1) guidance and counseling needs; (2) psychological needs; (3) social work needs; and (4) health needs. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.420(q). Endorsement requirements for various types of school support personnel are referenced in f/ns 3 through 6 below, and further information is available at: [www.isbe.net/Pages/PEL-School-Support-Ed-Lic.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/PEL-School-Support-Ed-Lic.aspx). Until 6-20-26, an individual who fails to meet the necessary qualifications for a specific school support personnel endorsement, but holds another professional license or certification approved by ISBE, may seek short-term approval for assignment to a position in situations where an unforeseen vacancy occurs. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §25.48. Short-term approvals are valid for three full fiscal years. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §25.432.

105 ILCS 5/2-3.147, added by P.A. 95-558 and repealed by P.A. 99-30, created the Ensuring Success in School Task Force. 105 ILCS 5/26A-15, added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *Ensuring Success in School (ESS) Law*, and scheduled to be repealed on 12-1-25, created a subsequent Ensuring Success in School Task Force. See f/n 1 in sample policy 7:255, *Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*, for further information.

<sup>459</sup> School districts may employ non-professional-educator-licensed *registered professional nurses* to perform professional nursing services. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.23; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.760(c). A *registered professional nurse* means any nurse who is licensed to practice professional nursing in Illinois under the Nurse Practice Act (225 ILCS 65/) and whose license is active and in good standing with the Ill. Dept. of Financial and Professional Regulation. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.760(b).

A *school nurse* means any registered professional nurse who also holds a professional educator license endorsed for school support services in school nursing, or any registered professional nurse who does not hold the professional educator license but was employed in the school district of current employment before 7-1-76. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.760(c).

105 ILCS 5/10-22.23 provides that any nurse first employed on or after 7-1-76, whose duties require teaching or the exercise of instructional judgment or educational evaluation of students, must be licensed under 105 ILCS 5/21B-25.

A school nurse may hold a Professional Educator License with a school support personnel endorsement. 105 ILCS 5/21B-25(2)(G); 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.760(c), 23.120, 25.245.

Health services may also be available through school based/linked health centers implemented by the Ill. Dept. of Public Health. 105 ILCS 129/; 77. Ill.Admin.Code Part 641. For further information, see: <https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/life-stages-populations/maternal-child-family-health-services/school-health#resources>.



2. Educational and psychological testing services and the services of a school psychologist<sup>460</sup> as needed. In all cases, written permission to administer a psychological examination must be obtained from a student's parent(s)/guardian(s). The results will be given to the parent(s)/guardian(s), with interpretation, as well as to the appropriate professional staff.
3. The services of a school social worker.<sup>461</sup> A student's parent/guardian must consent to regular or continuing services from a social worker.
4. School counseling<sup>462</sup> services. The Superintendent or designee shall annually inform all school personnel and students 12 years of age and older, in writing, of the availability of counseling without parent/guardian consent under 405 ILCS 5/3-550.<sup>463</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall develop protocols for responding to students with social, emotional, or mental health needs that impact learning ability.<sup>464</sup> The District, however, assumes no liability for preventing, identifying, or treating such needs.

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<sup>460</sup> A *school psychologist* means a psychologist who holds a Professional Educator License with a school psychologist endorsement per 105 ILCS 5/21B-25 and either: (1) has graduated with a master's degree or higher degree in psychology or educational psychology from an institution of higher education that maintains equipment, courses of study, and standards of scholarship approved by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE), has had at least one school year of full-time supervised experience in the delivery of school psychological service approved by the State Superintendent of Education, and has such additional qualifications as may be required by ISBE; or (2) holds a valid Nationally Certified School Psychologist credential. 105 ILCS 5/14-1.09. School psychologists hold a Professional Educator License with a school support personnel endorsement. 105 ILCS 5/21B-25(2)(G); 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.760(a), 23.130, 25.235. The scope of school psychological services is described in 105 ILCS 5/14-1.09.1.

<sup>461</sup> A *school social worker* means a social worker who has graduated from an accredited graduate school of social work and has such additional qualifications as may be required by ISBE and who holds a Professional Educator License with a school support personnel endorsement for school social work per 105 ILCS 5/21B-25. 105 ILCS 5/14-1.09a. See 105 ILCS 5/10-22.24a and 5/21B-25(2)(G); 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.760(a), 23.140, 25.215. School social workers may not provide services outside of their district employment to any student(s) attending school in the district. 105 ILCS 5/14-1.09a.

*School marriage and family therapists* are another type of school support personnel; they hold a Professional Educator License with a school support personnel endorsement. 105 ILCS 5/21B-25(2)(G); 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§23.150, 25.260. The scope of school social worker services is described in 105 ILCS 5/14-1.09.2.

<sup>462</sup> *School counselors* hold a Professional Educator License with a school support personnel endorsement. 105 ILCS 5/21B-25(2)(G); 105 ILCS 5/10-22.24a; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§1.760(a), 23.110, 25.225. *School counselors* refers to district employees that work in high schools to offer students advice and assistance in making career or college plans. 105 ILCS 5/22-93, amended by P.A. 103-1020. School counseling services may include, but are not limited to, the numerous services detailed in 105 ILCS 5/10-22.24b, amended by P.A.s 103-542 and 103-780.

In contrast, *professional counselors* and professional counseling practice in Illinois are governed by the Professional Counselor and Clinical Professional Counselor Licensing and Practice Act and its implementing regulations. 225 ILCS 107/; 68 Ill.Admin.Code Part 1375. The Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code, 405 ILCS 5/, provides that minors 12 years of age or older may request and receive up to eight 90-minute sessions (previously five 45-minute sessions) of professional counseling services or psychotherapy (provided by a clinical psychologist) without the consent of the minor's parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis. 405 ILCS 5/3-550. Most school districts do not regularly provide *professional* counseling or *clinical* psychological services to students. Instead, most districts provide *school counseling* or *school psychological* services to students, and Illinois law does not specify any limits on the number of school counseling or school psychological sessions which a minor may have before obtaining parent/guardian permission. If your district seeks to regularly provide *professional counseling* or *clinical psychological* services to students, consult with your board attorney about potential changes to board policies and administrative procedures, as well as collective bargaining issues.

<sup>463</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26A-40(h), added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25.

<sup>464</sup> Required by 405 ILCS 49/15(b).

Erin's Law Counseling Options, Assistance, and Intervention <sup>465</sup>

The Superintendent or designee will ensure that each school building's Student Support Committee identifies counseling options for students who are affected by sexual abuse and grooming behaviors, along with District and community-based options for victims of sexual abuse and grooming behaviors to obtain assistance and intervention. Community-based options must include a Children's Advocacy Center and sexual assault crisis center(s) that serve the District, if any.

Article 26A Domestic or Sexual Violence and Parenting Resource Personnel <sup>466</sup>

The Superintendent or designee will ensure that at least one staff member in each school building is designated as a resource person (Article 26A Resource Person) for students who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence and offers those services required by 105 ILCS 5/26A. See Board policy 7:255, *Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*. The Article 26A Resource Person may be a member of the building's Student Support Committee.

The Superintendent shall ensure that this policy is implemented in a manner consistent with State and federal laws, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 42 U.S.C. §12101 et seq., and that it is respectful of student privacy, including that student records are maintained and their confidentiality protected in accordance with Board policy and District procedures. <sup>467</sup>

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/10-23.13(b), 5/10-20.59, 5/21B-25(G), and 5/26A.

405 ILCS 5/, Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code.

405 ILCS 49/, Children's Mental Health Act.

740 ILCS 110/, Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act.

CROSS REF.: 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 6:270 (Guidance and Counseling Program), 7:100 (Health, Eye, and Dental Examinations; Immunizations; and Exclusion of Students), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:280 (Communicable and Chronic Infectious Disease), 7:340 (Student Records)

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<sup>465</sup> Required by *Erin's Law*, 105 ILCS 5/10-23.13(b)(2), (3), and (5). See sample policy 5:90, *Abused and Neglected Child Reporting*, and sample administrative procedure 5:90-AP1, *Coordination with Children's Advocacy Center*, for more information on Children's Advocacy Centers.

<sup>466</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 5/26A-35, added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25. See sample policy 7:255, *Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*, and sample administrative procedure 7:255-AP1, *Supporting Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

<sup>467</sup> This policy text is based on recommendations of the second ESS Task Force. See pp. 13-14 of the June 2024 ESS Task Force final report, at: [www.isbe.net/Documents\\_ESSTaskForce/Final-Report-ESS-Report-June-2024.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents_ESSTaskForce/Final-Report-ESS-Report-June-2024.pdf).

## Students

### Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence <sup>468</sup>

Domestic and sexual violence affect a student's ability to learn. Students who are parents or expectant parents have unique needs. Providing support services that enable students who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence (Article 26A Students) to succeed in school are important District goals and required by 105 ILCS 5/26A (Article 26A).

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement a program for supporting Article 26A Students that:

1. Distributes this policy and procedures for requesting supportive services or filing a complaint to all students at the beginning of each school year. <sup>469</sup>
2. Ensures at least one staff member in each school building is designated as a resource person for Article 26A Students (Article 26A Resource Person) and receives training in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/26A-35. <sup>470</sup>
3. Notifies all District employees and agents that, upon learning or suspecting that a student is a parent, expectant parent, or victim of domestic or sexual violence, they must refer the student to a designated Article 26A Resource Person. <sup>471</sup>
4. Ensures any employees whose duties include the resolution of Article 26A complaints receive training in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/26A-25(b)(1). <sup>472</sup>
5. Requires verification of a student's claim of Article 26A status relating to domestic or sexual violence in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/26A-45. <sup>473</sup>

<sup>468</sup> State law requires this subject matter be covered by policy. 105 ILCS 5/26A, added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *Ensuring Success in School (ESS) Law*, eff. 7-1-25. An *expectant parent* is a student who (i) is pregnant and (ii) has not yet received a diploma for completion of a secondary education as defined in 105 ILCS 5/22-22. Id. at 5/26A-10.

105 ILCS 5/2-3.147, added by P.A. 95-558 and repealed by P.A. 99-30, created the first Ensuring Success in School (ESS) Task Force. Supervised by the Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE), it developed policies, procedures, and protocols for school boards to adopt to address the education and related needs of students who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence; the goal was to encourage these students to stay in school, stay safe while in school, and successfully complete their education. The June 2010 report of the first ESS Task Force is available here: [www.isbe.net/Documents/ess-task-force-final-report0610.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/ess-task-force-final-report0610.pdf). 105 ILCS 5/26A-15, added by P.A. 102-466 (a/k/a *ESS Law*) and scheduled to be repealed on 12-1-25, created a second ESS Task Force supervised by ISBE, also focused on the education and related needs of students who are parents, expectant parents, or victims of domestic or sexual violence. The second ESS Task Force was to: (1) draft and publish model policies and intergovernmental agreements for inter-district transfers, (2) draft and publish model complaint resolution procedures, and (3) identify current mandatory and new staff trainings needed. The June 2024 report of the second ESS Task Force is available here: [www.isbe.net/Documents/ESSTaskForce/Final-Report-ESS-Report-June-2024.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/ESSTaskForce/Final-Report-ESS-Report-June-2024.pdf).

<sup>469</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26A-20(d), added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25.

<sup>470</sup> See f/n 25 in sample policy 5:100, *Staff Development Program*, and sample administrative procedure 7:255-API1, *Supporting Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*, for further information about training requirements.

<sup>471</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26A-40(e), added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25. *Agents* is not defined and who is considered an agent for the district is fact-specific; consult the board attorney for guidance.

<sup>472</sup> See f/n 3, above.

<sup>473</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26A-45, added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25. See detailed verification requirements and restrictions in sample administrative procedure 7:255-API1, *Supporting Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

6. Provides Article 26A Students with in-school support services, information about non-school-based support services, and the ability to make up work missed due to circumstances related to the student's Article 26A status in accordance with 105 ILCS 5/26A-40.<sup>474</sup>
7. Ensures the prompt and equitable resolution of all Article 26A complaints through a complaint resolution procedure that fully complies with 105 ILCS 5/26A-25.<sup>475</sup>
8. Ensures that all information concerning an Article 26A Student's status and related experiences, or information concerning a student who is a named perpetrator of domestic or sexual violence, provided to or otherwise obtained by the District or its employees or agents pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/26A is retained in a confidential temporary file in accordance with 105 ILCS 10/2(f).<sup>476</sup> Confidentiality procedures will:<sup>477</sup>
  - a. Provide that such information may not be disclosed to any other individual outside of the District, including any other employee, except if such disclosure is: (1) permitted by the Ill. School Student Records Act (105 ILCS 10/), the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. §1232g), or other applicable State or federal laws; or (2) requested or consented to, in writing, by the Article 26A Student or their parent/guardian if it is safe to obtain written consent from the parent/guardian; and
  - b. Comply with the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/26A-30.
9. Ensures that in the event an Article 26A Student or their parent/guardian reports an incident of alleged domestic or sexual violence, the District's procedures comply with 105 ILCS 5/26A-20(c).<sup>478</sup>

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<sup>474</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26A-40, added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25. Providing accommodations to ensure equal educational opportunities for students who are parents and expectant parents is also required by federal regulations implementing Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) (20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*) and ISBE sex equity regulations. 34 C.F.R. §106.40 and 49 C.F.R. §25.445; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §200.50. See sample policy 7:10, *Equal Educational Opportunities*, and sample administrative procedure 7:10-AP2, *Accommodating Breastfeeding Students*. Reasonable accommodations for breastfeeding students are also required by 105 ILCS 5/10-20.60.

<sup>475</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26A-25 and 5/26A-20(c), added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25, list the basic requirements for a complaint resolution procedure. Live hearings are not required but may be offered as part of the complaint resolution procedure. **Consult the board attorney if the board wants the district to use a live hearing in its complaint resolution procedure.** For an Article 26A complaint resolution procedure, see sample administrative procedure 7:255-AP2, *Complaint Resolution Procedure for Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*. See also sample administrative procedure 7:255-AP1, *Supporting Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

<sup>476</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26A-45(a), added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25. The *ESS Law* amended the definition of *student temporary record* in the Ill. School Student Records Act (ISSRA) (105 ILCS 10/) to include information concerning a student's status and related experiences as a parent, expectant parent, or victim of domestic or sexual violence as defined in 105 ILCS 5/26A. 105 ILCS 10/2(f), amended by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25.

<sup>477</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 5/26A-30, added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25. The policy text is based on recommendations of the second ESS Task Force. See p. 14 of the June 2024 ESS Task Force final report, at: [www.isbe.net/Documents\\_ESSTaskForce/Final-Report-ESS-Report-June-2024.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents_ESSTaskForce/Final-Report-ESS-Report-June-2024.pdf). The phrase "including any other employee" comes directly from 105 ILCS 5/26A-30(a) and is confusing because it is unclear whose employee is being referenced. ISSRA permits student records to be disclosed to any district employees with a "current demonstrable educational or administrative interest" in a student if disclosure is "in furtherance of such interest." 105 ILCS 10/6(a)(2). **Consult the board attorney for guidance.**

<sup>478</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26A-20(c)(1)-(6), added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25, states elements that must be in a district's "policy on the procedures" that a student or their parent/guardian may follow if he or she chooses to report an incident of alleged domestic or sexual violence. Having a "policy on the procedures" is a misnomer because the board does not adopt procedures but rather, through policy, directs the superintendent to establish procedures to implement policy. Only the required element at 105 ILCS 5/26A-20(c)(6), to establish a complaint resolution procedure, appears in this policy's text because the remaining elements are not board work and therefore inappropriate to include in board policy. Instead, required elements from 105 ILCS 5/26A-20(c)(1)-(5) appear in sample administrative procedure 7:255-AP2, *Complaint Resolution Procedure for Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

10. Complies with State and federal law and aligns with Board policies.<sup>479</sup>

Requesting Support Services

An Article 26A Student and/or their parent/guardian may request support services under this policy by contacting the building-level Article 26A Resource Person, whose name and contact information will be annually distributed to employees, students, and parents/guardians by each Building Principal.

Filing a Complaint

An Article 26A Student and/or their parent/guardian may file a complaint under this policy with the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, a Complaint Manager, or any employee with whom the person is comfortable speaking.<sup>480</sup>

The Superintendent shall insert into this policy and keep current the names, office addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of the District's current Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Title IX Coordinator, and Complaint Managers.<sup>481</sup>

**Nondiscrimination Coordinator:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone

**Complaint Managers:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone

**Title IX Coordinator:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone

<sup>479</sup> See sample administrative procedure 7:255-AP1, *Supporting Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*, for a list of board policies implicated by the ESS Law and that may interact with this policy.

<sup>480</sup> By including "any employee" in this list, this policy contains an item on which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts upon wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right.

<sup>481</sup> While the names and contact information are required by law to be listed, they are not part of the adopted policy and do not require board action. This allows for additions and amendments to the names and contact information when necessary. It is important for updated names and contact information to be inserted into this policy and regularly monitored.

### Complaint Resolution Procedure

When a complaint is filed, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and/or Complaint Manager or designee shall process and review it according to administrative procedure 7:255-AP2, *Complaint Resolution Procedure for Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

### Enforcement

Any District employee who is determined, at the conclusion of the complaint resolution procedure, to have violated Article 26A will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any third party who is determined, at the conclusion of the complaint resolution procedure, to have violated Article 26A will be addressed in accordance with the authority of the Board in the context of the relationship of the third party to the District, e.g., vendor, parent/guardian, invitee, etc.

This policy does not increase or diminish the ability of the District or the parties to exercise any other rights under existing law.

### Policy Review<sup>482</sup>

At least once every two years, pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/26A-20 and Board policy 2:240, *Board Policy Development*, the Board reviews and makes any necessary updates to this policy and to any other policies that may act as a barrier to their immediate enrollment and re-enrollment, attendance, graduation, and success in school of any student who is a parent, expectant parent, or victim of domestic or sexual violence. The Superintendent or designee shall assist the Board with its review and any updates.

### Retaliation Prohibited<sup>483</sup>

Retaliation against an Article 26A Student or their parent/guardian for exercising or attempting to exercise their rights under Article 26A is prohibited. Individuals should report allegations of retaliation to the Building Principal, an administrator, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, and/or a Complaint Manager.

A student, employee, or other person authorized by the District to provide aid, benefit, or service under the District's education program or activity who retaliates against others for reporting or complaining of violations of this policy or for participating in any manner under this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, with regard to employees, or suspension or expulsion, with regard to students.

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<sup>482</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26A-20(a), added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25. This provision also requires districts to review and revise any procedures that act as a barrier to Article 26A Students. Since procedure review and revision is administrator work and not board work, this requirement is addressed in sample administrative procedure 7:255-AP1, *Supporting Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

<sup>483</sup> 105 ILCS 5/26A-50, added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/26A.  
105 ILCS 10/, Ill. School Student Records Act.  
405 ILCS 5/, Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code.  
405 ILCS 49/, Children's Mental Health Act.  
740 ILCS 110/, Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act.  
23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240 and Part 200.

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 6:110 (Programs for Students At Risk of Academic Failure and/or Dropping Out of School and Graduation Incentives Program), 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities), 6:150 (Home and Hospital Instruction), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:60 (Residence), 7:70 (Attendance and Truancy), 7:250 (Student Support Services), 7:340 (Student Records)

## **Students**

### **Administering Medicines to Students** <sup>484</sup>

Students should not take medication during school hours or during school-related activities unless it is necessary for a student's health and well-being. When a student's licensed health care provider and parent/guardian believe that it is necessary for the student to take a medication during school hours or school-related activities, the parent/guardian must request that the school dispense the medication to the child and otherwise follow the District's procedures on dispensing medication.

No School District employee shall administer to any student, or supervise a student's self-administration of, any prescription or non-prescription medication until a completed and signed *School Medication Authorization Form (SMA Form)* is submitted by the student's parent/guardian.

No student shall possess or consume any prescription or non-prescription medication on school grounds or at a school-related function other than as provided for in this policy and its implementing procedures.

Nothing in this policy shall prohibit any school employee from providing emergency assistance to students, including administering medication.

The Building Principal shall include this policy in the Student Handbook and shall provide a copy to the parents/guardians of students. <sup>485</sup>

### **Self-Administration of Medication**

A student may possess and self-administer an epinephrine injector, e.g., EpiPen®, and/or asthma medication prescribed for use at the student's discretion, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed

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<sup>484</sup> All boards must have a policy for administering medication. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14b. State law prohibits school boards from requiring that teachers and other non-administrative school employees administer medication to students; exceptions are certificated school nurses and non-certificated registered professional nurses. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b. For a sample medication authorization form, see sample exhibit 7:270-E1, *School Medication Authorization Form*.

Separate from this policy, boards must also adopt a policy that addresses the prevention of anaphylaxis and a district's response to medical emergencies resulting from anaphylaxis. See sample policy 7:285, *Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program*, and its accompanying administrative procedure, 7:285-AP, *Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program*, for more information. Due to the structure of the School Code and the IASB Policy Reference Manual, sample policy 7:285, *Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program*, does not address the administration of epinephrine and instead refers to this policy 7:270, *Administering Medicine to Students*.

<sup>485</sup> Each district must inform students, e.g., through homeroom discussion or loudspeaker announcement, about, and distribute to their parents/guardians, the district's policy, guidelines, and forms on administering medicines within 15 days after the beginning of each school year, or within 15 days after starting classes for a student who transfers into the district. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14b. A comprehensive student handbook can provide notice to parents and students of the school's rules, extracurricular and athletic participation requirements, and other important information. The handbook can be developed by the building principal, but should be reviewed and approved by the superintendent and board. The Illinois Principals Association maintains a handbook service that coordinates with **PRESS** material, *Online Model Student Handbook (MSH)*, at: [www.ilprincipals.org/msh/](http://www.ilprincipals.org/msh/).



an *SMA Form*.<sup>486</sup> The Superintendent or designee will ensure an Emergency Action Plan is developed for each self-administering student.<sup>487</sup>

A student may self-administer medication required under a *qualifying plan*, provided the student's parent/guardian has completed and signed an *SMA Form*.<sup>488</sup> A qualifying plan means: (1) an asthma action plan, (2) an Individual Health Care Action Plan, (3) an allergy emergency action plan, (4) a plan pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or (5) a plan pursuant to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. A student may also possess the supplies and equipment necessary to monitor and treat diabetes in accordance with the student's diabetes care plan and/or the supplies, equipment, and medication necessary to treat epilepsy in accordance with the student's seizure action plan.<sup>489</sup>

The District shall incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of any injury arising from a student's self-administration of medication, including asthma medication or epinephrine injectors, or medication required under a qualifying plan.<sup>490</sup> A student's parent/guardian must indemnify and hold harmless the District and its employees and agents, against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of a student's self-administration of an epinephrine injector, asthma medication, and/or a medication required under a qualifying plan.<sup>491</sup>

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<sup>486</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-30 requires school districts to allow students to *self-administer* their prescribed asthma medication and an epinephrine injector as described. *Self-carry* means a student's ability to carry his or her prescribed asthma medication or epinephrine injector. *Self-administer* and *self-administration* mean that a student may use these two medications at his or her discretion: (1) while in school; (2) while at a school sponsored activity; (3) while under the supervision of school personnel; or (4) before or after normal school activities, such as while in before-school or after-school care on school-operated property.

<sup>487</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b(d). The plan must address actions to be taken if the student is unable to self-administer medication and the situations in which the school must call 911. *Id.* For plan guidance, see sample administrative procedure 7:270-AP1, *Dispensing Medication*.

<sup>488</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b(c), amended by P.A. 103-175. A student with an asthma action plan, an Individual Health Care Action Plan, an allergy emergency action plan, a plan pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, or a plan pursuant to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act may self-administer medication if the student's parent/guardian provides the school with: (1) written permission for the student's self-administration of medication, (2) written authorization from the student's physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse for the student to self-administer the medication, and (3) the prescription label containing the name of the medication, the prescribed dosage, and the time(s) or circumstances under which the medication is to be administered. *Id.* This does not allow a student to self-carry unless otherwise permitted. Contact the board attorney for further guidance.

<sup>489</sup> 105 ILCS 145/30; 105 ILCS 150/30.

<sup>490</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-30 (asthma medication and epinephrine injectors) and 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b (medications required by a plan listed in 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b(c)). 105 ILCS 5/22-30(c) requires this information to be in a notification to parents/guardians. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b does not specifically require this information to be in a notification to parents/guardians. However, 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b requires parents/guardians to sign a statement that includes the district's protections from liability under 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b; the signed acknowledgment (see f/n 7) is the notice. This policy includes the liability protection information under 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b to also inform the community.

The storage of medication is not addressed in the applicable statutes and may not be covered as part of the district's protections from liability and hold harmless provisions. Contact the board attorney and the board's liability insurance carrier for further discussion about the district's liability and coverage in this area.

<sup>491</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-30(c) and 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b(e). Both statutes require parents/guardians to sign a statement: (1) acknowledging the statement from f/n 6 above; and (2) that they must indemnify and hold harmless the school district and its employees and agents against any claims, except a claim based on willful and wanton conduct, arising out of the self-administration of medication by the student. There are several methods to obtain a parent/guardian's signature for this purpose, e.g., receipt of handbook signature, or see sample exhibit 7:270-E1, *School Medication Authorization Form*. Discuss with the board attorney the method that works best for the district.

### School District Supply of Undesignated Asthma Medication <sup>492</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall implement 105 ILCS 5/22-30(f) and maintain a supply of undesignated asthma medication in the name of the District and provide or administer them as necessary according to State law. *Undesignated asthma medication* means an asthma medication prescribed in the name of the District or one of its schools. A school nurse or trained personnel, as defined in State law,<sup>493</sup> may administer an undesignated asthma medication to a person when they, in good faith, believe a person is having *respiratory distress*. Respiratory distress may be characterized as *mild-to-moderate* or *severe*.<sup>494</sup> Each building administrator and/or his or her corresponding school nurse shall maintain the names of trained personnel who have received a statement of certification pursuant to State law. <sup>495</sup>

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<sup>492</sup> Optional. A school board must ensure that it does not adopt this section into the policy unless it is prepared to implement 105 ILCS 5/22-30. The law permits a district to maintain a supply of undesignated asthma medication in any secure location that is accessible before, during, and after school where a person is most at risk, including, but not limited to a classroom or the nurse's office, and use them when necessary.

Consult the board attorney about the consequences of informing the community that the district will obtain a prescription for a supply of undesignated asthma medication, implement a plan for its use, and then not doing it, as doing so may be fraught with legal liabilities. Also fraught with legal liabilities is when the district provides them, but does not have them accessible before, during, and after school where an asthmatic person is most at risk as required by 105 ILCS 5/22-30. See *In re Estate of Stewart*, 406 Ill.Dec. 345 (2nd Dist. 2016)(denying tort immunity to district, finding its response to a student's asthma attack was *willful* and *wanton* (which district disputed as a possible heart attack)) and *In re Estate of Stewart*, 412 Ill.Dec. 914 (Ill. 2017)(school district's appeal denied).

The superintendent is given broad authority to implement this section; however, several preliminary steps should occur with the assistance of the board attorney. They include, but are not limited to: (1) investigating the feasibility of obtaining a prescription for a supply of undesignated asthma medication in the name of the district or one of its schools, and (2) outlining the advantages and disadvantages of implementing this plan based upon each district's individual resources and circumstances, and student population's needs. To address the challenge of filling prescriptions for undesignated asthma medication, the Ill. Pharmacists Association drafted a letter that may be presented to a pharmacy by a district, available at: [www.isbe.net/Documents/IPA-Letter-Stock-Albuterol-Schools.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/IPA-Letter-Stock-Albuterol-Schools.pdf).

<sup>493</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-30(a) defines *trained personnel* as any school employee or volunteer personnel authorized in Sections 10-22.34, 10-22.34a, and 10-22.34b of the School Code who has completed training required by 105 ILCS 5/22-30(g), to recognize and respond to anaphylaxis, an opioid overdose, or respiratory distress. 105 ILCS 5/22-30(a).

The Ill. State Board of Education (ISBE) must develop the training curriculum for trained personnel, and it may be conducted online or in person. *Id.* at (h), and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.540(e)(3). 105 ILCS 5/22-30(h-5), 5/22-30(h), and 5/22-30(h-10), and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.540(e) list the training curriculum requirements to recognize and respond to an opioid overdose, an allergic reaction, including anaphylaxis, and respiratory distress, respectively. See training resources, at: [www.isbe.net/Pages/School-Nursing.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/School-Nursing.aspx).

<sup>494</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-30(a). *Respiratory distress* means the perceived or actual presence of wheezing, coughing, shortness of breath, chest tightness, breathing difficulty, or any other symptoms consistent with asthma. *Id.*

<sup>495</sup> *Id.* at (g); 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.540(e)(9) and (10).

### School District Supply of Undesignated Epinephrine Injectors <sup>496</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall implement 105 ILCS 5/22-30(f) and maintain a supply of undesignated epinephrine injectors in the name of the District and provide or administer them as necessary according to State law. *Undesignated epinephrine injector* means an epinephrine injector prescribed in the name of the District or one of its schools. A school nurse or trained personnel, as defined in State law,<sup>497</sup> may administer an undesignated epinephrine injector to a person when they, in good faith, believe a person is having an anaphylactic reaction. Each building administrator and/or his or her corresponding school nurse shall maintain the names of trained personnel who have received a statement of certification pursuant to State law. <sup>498</sup>

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<sup>496</sup> Optional. See f/n 9, above. If the board adopts this subhead, the use of undesignated epinephrine injectors must align with its anaphylaxis prevention, response, and management policy. See sample policy 7:285, *Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program*, at f/n 7, and its sample administrative procedure, 7:285-AP, *Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program*, at f/ns 4, 5, and 6. If the district does not maintain an undesignated supply of epinephrine, ensure that policy 7:285 and administrative procedure 7:285-AP do not state that it does maintain such a supply.

A school board must ensure that it does not adopt this section into the policy unless it is prepared to implement 105 ILCS 5/22-30. The law permits a district to maintain a supply of undesignated epinephrine injectors in any secure location that is accessible before, during, and after school where an allergic person is most at risk, including, but not limited to, classrooms and lunchrooms, and use them when necessary.

Consult the board attorney about the consequences of informing the community that the district will obtain a prescription for a supply of undesignated epinephrine injectors, and implement a plan for their use, and then not doing it, as doing so may be fraught with legal liabilities. Also fraught with legal liabilities is if the district provides them, but does not have them accessible before, during, and after school where an allergic person is most at risk as required by 105 ILCS 5/22-30, amended by P.A. 102-413. See In re Estate of Stewart, 406 Ill.Dec. 345 (2nd Dist. 2016)(denying tort immunity to district, finding its response to a student's asthma attack was *willful* and *wanton* (which district disputed as a possible heart attack)); In re Estate of Stewart, 412 Ill.Dec. 914 (Ill. 2017)(school district's appeal denied).

The superintendent is given broad authority to implement this section; however, several preliminary steps should occur with the assistance of the board attorney. They include, but are not limited to: (1) investigating the feasibility of obtaining a prescription for a supply of undesignated epinephrine injectors in the name of the district or one of its schools, and (2) outlining the advantages and disadvantages of implementing this plan based upon each district's individual resources and circumstances, and student population's needs.

<sup>497</sup> See the discussion regarding *trained personnel*, in f/n 10, above.

<sup>498</sup> See f/n 12, above.

### School District Supply of Undesignated Opioid Antagonists <sup>499</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall implement 105 ILCS 5/22-30(f) and maintain a supply of undesignated opioid antagonists and provide or administer them as necessary according to State law. *Opioid antagonist* means a drug that binds to opioid receptors and blocks or inhibits the effect of opioids acting on those receptors, including, but not limited to, naloxone hydrochloride or any other similarly acting drug approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. *Undesignated opioid antagonist* is not defined by the School Code; for purposes of this policy it means an opioid antagonist prescribed in the name of the District or one of its schools or obtained by the District without a prescription. A school nurse or trained personnel,<sup>500</sup> as defined in State law, may administer an undesignated opioid antagonist to a person when they, in good faith, believe a person is having an opioid overdose. Each building administrator and/or his or her corresponding school nurse shall maintain the names of trained personnel who have received a statement of certification pursuant to State law.<sup>501</sup> See the website for the Ill. Dept. of Human Services for information about opioid prevention, abuse, public awareness, and a toll-free number to provide information and referral services for persons with questions concerning substance abuse treatment.<sup>502</sup>

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<sup>499</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 5/22-30(f), amended by P.A. 103-348. In the case of a shortage of opioid antagonists, a district must make reasonable efforts to maintain a supply. *Id.* At least one opioid antagonist, a naloxone nasal spray, has been approved by the U.S. Federal Food and Drug Administration for over-the-counter, nonprescription use. A district must obtain a prescription for a supply of opioid antagonists from a *health care professional* with prescriptive authority under the Substance Use Disorder Act, 20 ILCS 301/5-23, unless it is able to secure a supply without a prescription. *Id.* *Health care professional* means a physician licensed to practice medicine in all its branches, a licensed physician assistant with prescriptive authority, a licensed advanced practice registered nurse with prescriptive authority, or an advanced practice registered nurse who practices in a hospital or ambulatory surgical treatment center and possesses appropriate clinical privileges in accordance with the Nurse Practice Act, 20 ILCS 301/5-23(d)(4). *Id.*

Consult the board attorney regarding the Safe and Drug-Free School and Communities Act of 1994 (20 U.S.C. §7101(b)). It prohibits funds provided under it to be used for medical services or drug treatment or rehabilitation, except for integrated student supports, specialized instructional support services, or referral to treatment for impacted students, which may include students who are victims of, or witnesses to crime or who illegally use drugs.

A school board must ensure that it does not adopt this section into the policy unless it is prepared to implement 105 ILCS 5/22-30, amended by P.A. 103-348. The law permits a district to maintain a supply of undesignated opioid antagonists in any secure location where a person is at risk of an opioid overdose and use them when necessary. The consequences of informing the community that the district will obtain a prescription for a supply of opioid antagonists and implement a plan for their use, and then not doing it may be fraught with legal liabilities.

The superintendent is given broad authority to implement this section; however, several preliminary steps should occur with the assistance of the board attorney. They include, but are not limited to: (1) investigating the feasibility of obtaining a prescription for a supply of opioid antagonists in the name of the district or one of its schools, and (2) outlining the advantages and disadvantages of implementing this plan based upon each district's individual resources and circumstances, and student population's needs.

<sup>500</sup> See the discussion regarding *trained personnel* in f/n 10, above. The Clinical Social Work and Social Work Practice Act also authorizes licensed school social workers to possess and administer opioid antagonists in the licensed clinical social worker's or licensed social worker's professional capacity. 225 ILCS 20/4.5, added by P.A. 103-1048.

<sup>501</sup> See f/n 12, above.

<sup>502</sup> This sentence is optional. 20 ILCS 301/20-30, mandates the Ill. Dept. of Human Services to create a website with these resources. The purpose of this sentence is to provide the community with information about a public health crisis affecting students. See [www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=58142](http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=58142) for resources.

### School District Supply of Undesignated Oxygen Tanks <sup>503</sup>

In schools where the District maintains special educational facilities, the Superintendent or designee shall implement 105 ILCS 5/22-30(f) and maintain a supply of undesignated oxygen tanks in the name of the District and provide or administer them as necessary. The supply shall be maintained in accordance with manufacturer instructions and local fire department rules.

### School District Supply of Undesignated Glucagon <sup>504</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall implement 105 ILCS 145/27 and maintain a supply of undesignated glucagon in the name of the District in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

When a student's prescribed glucagon is not available or has expired, a school nurse or delegated care aide may administer undesignated glucagon only if he or she is authorized to do so by a student's diabetes care plan.

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<sup>503</sup> Optional. 105 ILCS 5/22-30(f), amended by P.A. 103-196, permits a district maintaining special educational facilities under 105 ILCS 5/14-4.01 to maintain a supply of undesignated oxygen tanks in a secure location that is accessible before, during, and after school where a person with developmental disabilities is most at risk, including, but not limited to classrooms and lunchrooms. Delete if the district does not maintain special educational facilities for children with disabilities under 105 ILCS 5/14-4.01. *Special educational facility* is not specifically defined in 105 ILCS 5/14-4.01; consult the board attorney for advice regarding this term and if it is limited to separate buildings, self-contained classrooms, and/or programs attended solely by students with disabilities. For example, this option may not be available if a district utilizes a special education cooperative for all of its special education programming. There is a reference to *special education facilities* in 105 ILCS 5/14-12.01, which may provide some guidance; it addresses reimbursement for the construction and maintenance of "special education facilities designed and utilized to house instructional program, diagnostic services" and "other special education services for children with disabilities." 105 ILCS 22-30(f), amended by P.A. 103-196, does not specify who can administer undesignated oxygen, nor does it specify any training requirements for its use in schools. To minimize potential liability and ensure proper administration, a best practice is to restrict who can administer undesignated oxygen to school nurses and other school personnel who have received appropriate training on the emergency use and storage of oxygen. See sample administrative procedure 7:270-AP2, *Checklist for District Supply of Undesignated Medication(s)*.

Consult the board attorney about the consequences of informing the community that the district will obtain a prescription for a supply of undesignated oxygen tanks and implement a plan for their use, and then not doing it, as doing so may be fraught with legal liabilities. Also fraught with legal liabilities is if the district provides them, but does not have them accessible before, during, and after school where a person with developmental disabilities is most at risk as required by 105 ILCS 5/22-30(f), amended by P.A. 103-196, eff. 1-1-24. See In re Estate of Stewart, 406 Ill.Dec. 345 (2nd Dist. 2016)(denying tort immunity to district, finding its response to a student's asthma attack was *willful* and *wanton* (which district disputed as a possible heart attack)); In re Estate of Stewart, 412 Ill.Dec. 914 (Ill. 2017)(school district's appeal denied).

<sup>504</sup> Optional. 105 ILCS 145/27 permits a district to maintain a supply of undesignated glucagon in any secure location that is immediately accessible to a school nurse or delegated care aide. A school board must ensure that it does not adopt this section into the policy unless it is prepared to implement it.

Consult the board attorney about the consequences of informing the community that the district will obtain a prescription for a supply of undesignated glucagon, and implement a plan for their use, and then not doing it, as doing so may be fraught with legal liabilities.

The superintendent is given broad authority to implement this section; however, several preliminary steps should occur with the assistance of the board attorney. They include, but are not limited to: (1) investigating the feasibility of obtaining a prescription for a supply of undesignated glucagon in the name of the district or one of its schools, and (2) outlining the advantages and disadvantages of implementing this plan based upon each district's individual resources and circumstances, and student population's needs.

## Administration of Medical Cannabis <sup>505</sup>

The Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act<sup>506</sup> allows a *medical cannabis infused product* to be administered to a student by one or more of the following individuals:

1. A parent/guardian of a student who is a minor who registers with the Ill. Dept. of Public Health (IDPH) as a designated caregiver to administer medical cannabis to their child. A designated caregiver may also be another individual other than the student's parent/guardian. Any designated caregiver must be at least 21 years old<sup>507</sup> and is allowed to administer a medical cannabis infused product to a child who is a student on the premises of his or her school or on his or her school bus if:
  - a. Both the student and the designated caregiver possess valid registry identification cards issued by IDPH;
  - b. Copies of the registry identification cards are provided to the District; <sup>508</sup>
  - c. That student's parent/guardian completed, signed, and submitted a School Medication Authorization Form - Medical Cannabis; and <sup>509</sup>
  - d. After administering the product to the student, the designated caregiver immediately<sup>510</sup> removes it from school premises or the school bus.
2. A properly trained school nurse or administrator, who shall be allowed to administer the medical cannabis infused product to the student on the premises of the child's school, at a school-sponsored

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<sup>505</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-33(g) (*Ashley's Law*), requires school boards to adopt a policy and implement it by:

1. Authorizing a parent/guardian and/or a *designated caregiver* of a student who is a *registered qualifying patient* to administer a medical cannabis infused product to that student at school or on the school bus (105 ILCS 5/22-33(b)).
2. Allowing a school nurse or administrator to administer a medical cannabis infused product to a student who is a *registered qualifying patient* while at school, a school-sponsored activity, or before/after normal school activities, including while the student is in before-school or after-school care, on school-operated property, or while being transported on a school bus (105 ILCS 5/22-33(b-5)).
3. Authorizing a student who is a *registered qualifying patient* to self-administer a medical cannabis infused product if the self-administration takes place under the direct supervision of a school nurse or school administrator (*Id.*).

Important: If a district would lose federal funding as a result of the board adopting this policy, the board may not authorize the use of a medical cannabis infused product under *Ashley's Law* and not adopt this subsection. 105 ILCS 5/22-33(f). See f/n 26, below, and paragraph two of f/n 1 in sample policy 5:50, *Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition*, for more information about Congress interfering with a state's decision to implement laws governing the legalization of cannabis, and consult the board attorney about the issue of federal funding. See also ISBE's *Frequently Asked Questions, Ashley's Law*, at: [www.isbe.net/Documents/Medical-Cannabis-FAQ.pdf](http://www.isbe.net/Documents/Medical-Cannabis-FAQ.pdf).

<sup>506</sup> 410 ILCS 130/.

<sup>507</sup> *Id.* at 130/10(i), and 130/57(a) and (b). A student under the age of 18 may have up to three designated caregivers as long as at least one is a biological parent or a legal guardian. *Id.* at 130/57(a). A student 18 years of age or older may appoint up to three designated caregivers who meet the requirements of the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act. *Id.* at 130/57(b).

<sup>508</sup> The laws are silent about copies of the cards being provided to the district. Requiring copies of the registry cards is a best practice. Consult the board attorney about any records laws implicated in requiring and maintaining copies of these registry cards.

<sup>509</sup> A completed and signed school medication authorization form is not required by *Ashley's Law* but is a best practice and consistent with this sample policy's language for other medications. See sample exhibit 7:270-E2, *School Medication Authorization Form - Medical Cannabis*.

<sup>510</sup> The word *immediately* is not in *Ashley's Law*. It is added to ensure legal compliance with federal laws that could affect federal funding. For example, consider administrators who may be in the situation where a designated caregiver provides his or her child the product and then wants to volunteer in the school or greet another child in the school while carrying the product in the building, which may violate the Cannabis Control Act (720 ILCS 550/5.2). Consult the board attorney about the best term to use here, if any, as nothing in the law addresses these common scenarios that school administrators will encounter.

activity, or before/after normal school activities, including while the student is in before-school or after-school care on school-operated property or while being transported on a school bus. <sup>511</sup>

3. The student him or herself when the self-administration takes place under the direct supervision of a school nurse or administrator. <sup>512</sup>

*Medical cannabis infused product* (product) includes oils, ointments, foods, and other products that contain usable cannabis but are not smoked or vaped. <sup>513</sup> Smoking and/or vaping medical cannabis is prohibited. <sup>514</sup>

The product may not be administered in a manner that, in the opinion of the District or school, would create a disruption to the educational environment or cause exposure of the product to other students. A school employee shall not be required to administer the product. <sup>515</sup>

Discipline of a student for being administered a product by a designated caregiver, or by a school nurse or administrator, or who self-administers a product under the direct supervision of a school nurse or administrator <sup>516</sup> pursuant to this policy is prohibited. The District may not deny a student attendance at a school solely because he or she requires administration of the product during school hours.

#### Void Policy <sup>517</sup>

The **School District Supply of Undesignated Asthma Medication** section of the policy is void whenever the Superintendent or designee is, for whatever reason, unable to: (1) obtain for the District a prescription for undesignated asthma medication from a physician or advanced practice nurse licensed to practice medicine in all its branches, or (2) fill the District's prescription for undesignated school asthma medication. <sup>518</sup>

The **School District Supply of Undesignated Epinephrine Injectors** section of the policy is void whenever the Superintendent or designee is, for whatever reason, unable to: (1) obtain for the District a prescription for

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<sup>511</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-33(b-5). A school nurse or administrator must annually complete a training curriculum to be developed by ISBE in consultation with the Ill. Dept. of Public Health prior to administering a medical cannabis infused product to a student in accordance with this section. 105 ILCS 5/22-33(f-5). See [www.isbe.net/Pages/Health.aspx](http://www.isbe.net/Pages/Health.aspx) for training resources.

<sup>512</sup> Id. Any product administered by a school nurse or administrator, or self-administered under the supervision of a school nurse or administrator, must be stored with the school nurse at all times in a manner consistent with storage of other student medication at the school and may be accessible only by the school nurse or a school administrator. 105 ILCS 5/22-33(b-10).

<sup>513</sup> 410 ILCS 130/10(q). Consult the board attorney regarding the controversial issue of students using at, or bringing to school, cannabis-infused products without THC that are derived from *hemp* or *industrial hemp* (hemp oil or cannabidiol (CBD) oil, the naturally occurring cannabinoid constituent of cannabis). Hemp or industrial hemp is defined in the Industrial Hemp Act (IHA) as the plant *Cannabis sativa* L. and any part of that plant, whether growing or not, with a delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol concentration of not more than 0.3 percent on a dry weight basis and includes any intermediate or finished product made or derived from industrial hemp. 505 ILCS 89/5. Hemp or industrial hemp is also colloquially known as *agricultural hemp*.

Products from hemp or industrial hemp are widely available. As a consequence, school employees may encounter the argument from a student and his or her parent/guardian that the use of hemp or CBD oil products derived from hemp or industrial hemp (containing no THC) is not a violation of Illinois law because 720 ILCS 550/4 states "[e]xcept as otherwise provided in the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act and the Industrial Hemp Act, it is unlawful for any person knowingly to possess cannabis." In addition, products containing hemp or CBD oil can be purchased with a prescription and without a medical marijuana card, so a parent/guardian may argue that such prescriptions should be administered at school as any other prescription medication would be. Consult the board attorney for guidance.

<sup>514</sup> Optional sentence. 410 ILCS 130/10(q) prohibits medical cannabis from being smoked. District administrators may find providing this information to the community helpful to enforcement of this policy.

<sup>515</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-33(e). Consult the board attorney for guidance regarding whether a school nurse or administrator can be required to administer the product. ISBE's FAQ on *Ashley's Law* (see f/n 21) states that a school staff member cannot be forced to administer a medical cannabis infused product to a student because *Ashley's Law* does not require it.

<sup>516</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-33(d).

<sup>517</sup> Remove this section if the board does not adopt the undesignated asthma medication, the undesignated epinephrine injector, the undesignated opioid antagonist, the undesignated glucagon, or the administration of medical cannabis sections (see f/n 21) of the policy. If the board adopts one or some but not all, delete the appropriate paragraph(s) or sentence(s) in this section.

<sup>518</sup> Discuss with the board attorney whether the board should remove this sentence when the district reaches full implementation of this section.



undesigned epinephrine injectors from a physician or advanced practice nurse licensed to practice medicine in all its branches, or (2) fill the District's prescription for undesigned school epinephrine injectors.<sup>519</sup>

The **School District Supply of Undesigned Opioid Antagonists** section of the policy is void whenever the Superintendent or designee is unable to obtain a supply of opioid antagonists due to a shortage, in which case the District shall make reasonable efforts to maintain a supply.<sup>520</sup>

The **School District Supply of Undesigned Oxygen Tanks** section of the policy is void whenever the Superintendent or designee is, for whatever reason, unable to: (1) obtain for the District a prescription for oxygen tanks from a qualifying prescriber,<sup>521</sup> or (2) fill the District's prescription for undesigned oxygen tanks.<sup>522</sup>

The **School District Supply of Undesigned Glucagon** section of the policy is void whenever the Superintendent or designee is, for whatever reason, unable to: (1) obtain for the District a prescription for glucagon from a qualifying prescriber,<sup>523</sup> or (2) fill the District's prescription for undesigned school glucagon.<sup>524</sup>

The **Administration of Medical Cannabis** section of the policy is void and the District reserves the right not to implement it if the District or school is in danger of losing federal funding.<sup>525</sup>

#### Administration of Undesigned Medication<sup>526</sup>

Upon any administration of an undesigned medication permitted by State law, the Superintendent or designee(s) must ensure all notifications required by State law and administrative procedures occur.

#### Undesigned Medication Disclaimers

Upon implementation of this policy, the protections from liability and hold harmless provisions applicable under State law apply.<sup>527</sup>

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<sup>519</sup> See f/n 12, above.

<sup>520</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-30(f), amended by P.A. 103-348. See f/n 15, above.

<sup>521</sup> 105 ILCS 22-30(f), amended by P.A. 103-196, provides that a physician, a physician assistant who has prescriptive authority under the Physician Assistant Practice Act of 1987 (225 ILCS 95/7.5), or an advanced practice registered nurse who has prescriptive authority under the Nurse Practice Act (225 ILCS 65-40) may prescribe undesigned oxygen tanks in the name of the district to be maintained for use when necessary.

<sup>522</sup> See f/n 19, above.

<sup>523</sup> 105 ILCS 145/27 provides that a physician, a physician assistant who has prescriptive authority under the Physician Assistant Practice Act of 1987 (225 ILCS 95/7.5), or an advanced practice registered nurse who has prescriptive authority under the Nurse Practice Act (225 ILCS 65-40) may prescribe undesigned glucagon in the name of the district to be maintained for use when necessary.

<sup>524</sup> See f/n 20, above.

<sup>525</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-33(f).

<sup>526</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-30 and 105 ILCS 145/27 detail specific required notifications, which are listed in sample administrative procedure 7:270-AP2, *Checklist for District Supply of Undesigned Medication(s)*. Schools are not required to accept opt-out requests from parents for the administration of undesigned medications, and even if a parent fails to acknowledge a notification, a school nurse or other trained personnel are not precluded from administering undesigned medications in accordance with the School Code. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.540(b)(2).

<sup>527</sup> 105 ILCS 5/22-30(c). The school, and its employees and agents, incur no liability, except for willful and wanton conduct, as a result of an injury to a student arising from the administration of asthma medication, epinephrine injectors, or opioid antagonists (*Id.*), a student's self-administration of medication (105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b, amended by P.A. 103-175), or administration of undesigned glucagon (insofar as it would be considered part of the care of a student with diabetes, see 105 ILCS 145/45).



No one, including without limitation, parents/guardians of students, should rely on the District for the availability of undesignated medication. This policy does not guarantee the availability of undesignated medications. Students and their parents/guardians should consult their own physician regarding these medication(s).

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14b, 5/10-22.21b, 5/22-30, and 5/22-33.

105 ILCS 145/, Care of Students with Diabetes Act.

105 ILCS 150/, Seizure Smart School Act.

410 ILCS 130/, Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act.

720 ILCS 550/, Cannabis Control Act.

23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.540.

CROSS REF.: 7:285 (Anaphylaxis Prevention, Response, and Management Program)

ADMIN. PROC.: 7:270-AP1 (Dispensing Medication), 7:270-AP2 (Checklist for District Supply of Undesignated Medication(s)), 7:270-E1 (School Medication Authorization Form), 7:270-E2 (School Medication Authorization Form - Medical Cannabis)

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105 ILCS 5/22-30(c) requires the district to inform parents/guardians in writing of the protections from liability and hold harmless provisions that apply to the administration of asthma medication, epinephrine injectors, and opioid antagonists. In addition, a statement must be signed by a student's parent/guardian acknowledging the district's protections from liability and hold harmless provisions for these undesignated medications. *Id.* A similar acknowledgment must be signed by a student's parent/guardian for the self-administration of medication. 105 ILCS 5/10-22.21b(e). See sample exhibit 7:270-E1, *School Medication Authorization Form*, for a sample acknowledgement.

## **Students**

### **Restrictions on Publications: Elementary Schools** <sup>528</sup>

*[For elementary or unit districts only]*

#### **School-Sponsored Publications and Websites**

School-sponsored publications, productions, and websites are part of the curriculum and are not a public forum for general student use.<sup>529</sup> School authorities may edit or delete material that is inconsistent with the District's educational mission.

All school-sponsored communications shall comply with the ethics and rules of responsible journalism. Text that is libelous, obscene, vulgar, lewd, invades the privacy of others, conflicts with the basic educational mission of the school, is socially inappropriate, is inappropriate due to the maturity of the students, or is materially disruptive to the educational process will not be tolerated.

The author's name will accompany personal opinions and editorial statements. An opportunity for the expression of differing opinions from those published/produced will be provided within the same media.

#### **Non-School Sponsored Publications Accessed or Distributed On-Campus** <sup>530</sup>

For purposes of this section and the following section, a *publication* includes, without limitation: (1) written or electronic print material, (2) audio-visual material on any medium including electromagnetic media (e.g., images, digital files, flash memory, etc.), or combinations of these whether off-line (e.g., a printed book, digital files, etc.) or online (e.g., any website, social networking site, database for information retrieval, etc.), or (3) information or material on electronic devices (e.g., text or voice messages delivered by cell phones, tablets, and other hand-held devices). <sup>531</sup>

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<sup>528</sup> State or federal law controls this policy's content. This policy concerns an area in which the law is unsettled. It applies only to elementary or unit districts (both elementary and high school students). Unit districts should adopt this policy and policy 7:315, *Restrictions on Publications; High Schools*. The Speech Rights of Student Journalists Act, 105 ILCS 80/5, applies to high school and unit districts.

<sup>529</sup> School authorities may reasonably regulate student expression in school-sponsored publications for education-related reasons. *Hazelwood Sch. Dist. v. Kuhlmeier*, 484 U.S. 260 (1988). This policy allows such control by clearly stating that school-sponsored publications are not a "public forum" open for general student use but are, instead, part of the curriculum.

A school board that does not retain control of student publications can anticipate at least two problems: (1) how to keep content consistent with the district's mission, and (2) how to ensure that the Constitutional rights of third parties are not violated by student journalists. Concerning the second problem, a third party may seek to hold the district responsible for the student journalists' acts. See *Yeo v. Town of Lexington*, 131 F.3d 241 (1st Cir. 1997), *cert. denied* (1998).

<sup>530</sup> Non-school sponsored publications, like underground newspapers, cannot be subject to the same degree of regulation by school authorities as school-sponsored publications. Absent a showing of material and substantial interference with the requirements of good discipline, students retain their First Amendment free speech rights. The federal circuits disagree on whether school authorities may require prior approval before a student is allowed to distribute non-school-sponsored publications. The Seventh Circuit, which covers Illinois, refused to approve prior approval regulations. *Fujishima v. Bd. of Ed.*, 460 F.2d 1355 (7th Cir. 1972), but see *Baughman v. Freienmuth*, 478 F.2d 1345 (4th Cir. 1973). Non-school sponsored web sites should be regulated in the same manner as non-school sponsored publications.

A school policy prohibiting junior high students from distributing written material at school that is prepared by non-students was upheld in *Hedges v. Wauconda Cmty. Unit Sch. Dist. No. 118*, 9 F.3d 1295 (7th Cir. 1993).

<sup>531</sup> The definition of publication is optional and may be amended. This sample definition uses broad and generally understood terms to keep the policy current with rapid technology changes.

Creating, distributing, and/or accessing non-school sponsored publications shall occur at a time and place and in a manner that will not cause disruption, be coercive, or result in the perception that the distribution or the publication is endorsed by the District.

Students are prohibited from creating, distributing, and/or accessing at school any publication that:

1. Will cause substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities;<sup>532</sup>
2. Violates the rights of others, including but not limited to material that is libelous, invades the privacy of others, or infringes on a copyright;<sup>533</sup>
3. Is socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to maturity level of the students, including but not limited to material that is obscene, pornographic, or pervasively lewd and vulgar, contains indecent and vulgar language, or *sexting* as defined by Board policy 7:190, *Student Behavior*, and/or Student Handbooks;
4. Is reasonably viewed as promoting illegal drug use;<sup>534</sup> or
5. Is distributed in kindergarten through eighth grade and is primarily prepared by non-students, unless it is being used for school purposes. Nothing herein shall be interpreted to prevent the inclusion of material from outside sources or the citation to such sources as long as the material to be distributed or accessed is primarily prepared by students.<sup>535</sup>

Accessing or distributing on-campus includes accessing or distributing on school property or at school-related activities. A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for: (1) accessing or distributing forbidden material, or (2) for writing, creating, or publishing such material intending for it to be accessed or distributed at school.<sup>536</sup>

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<sup>532</sup> For example, a school district may discipline a student for writing an underground newspaper, and distributing it at school, that contained an article on how to hack into the school's computer. School authorities could reasonably believe the article would be disruptive. Boucher v. Sch. Bd. of the Sch. Dist. of Greenfield, 134 F.3d 821 (7th Cir. 1998).

<sup>533</sup> School officials may not regulate student speech based upon their fear or apprehension of disturbance. Many decisions address the tension between students' right to free speech and restrictions of it on campus. See, for example:

Brandt v. Bd. of Educ. of City of Chicago, 480 F.3d 460 (7th Cir. 2007), *cert. denied* (2007) (school did not violate students' First Amendment rights when it disciplined students for wearing T-shirts with a "talentless infantile drawing" that school officials reasonably found to undermine the educational atmosphere).

Nuxoll v. Indian Prairie Sch. Dist. #204, 523 F.3d 668 (7th Cir. 2008) (holding that the student was likely to succeed on merits of his claim that the school would violate his speech rights by preventing him from wearing T-shirt with slogan "Be Happy, Not Gay"). But see L.M. v. Town of Middleborough, Mass., 103 F.4th 854 (1st Cir. 2024) (holding a school could prohibit a student from wearing a shirt that read "There Are Only Two Genders" because the message directly attacked the personal characteristics of transgender and nonconforming students, which could cause lower grades and increased absences).

J.C. v. Beverly Hills Unified Sch. Dist., 711 F.Supp.2d 1094 (C.D.Cal. 2010) (discussed the "rights of others to be secure and let alone" argument from Tinker, but found that the school district violated a student's First Amendment rights for disciplining her when she posted a video clip on a website).

B.H. v. Easton Area Sch. Dist., 725 F.3d 293 (3rd Cir. 2013), *cert. denied* (2014) (school violated students' free speech rights by banning the wearing of cancer awareness bracelets containing the caption *I♥boobies*).

<sup>534</sup> Morse v. Frederick, 551 U.S. 393 (2007).

<sup>535</sup> Optional. The rationale for this section is that prior to high school, students have not developed sufficient experience and education in critical review of external resource materials. Accordingly, in order to accomplish the district's educational mission, yet allow students the opportunity to communicate with their fellow students, widespread student distribution of written material in elementary and middle school may be limited to material primarily prepared by the students themselves. Hedges v. Wauconda Cmty. Unit Sch. Dist. No. 118, 9 F.3d 1295 (7th Cir. 1993); Leal v. Everett Public Schs., 88 F.Supp.3d 1220 (W.D.Wa. 2015).

<sup>536</sup> See f/n 5, above.

### Non-School Sponsored Publications Accessed or Distributed Off-Campus <sup>537</sup>

A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for creating and/or distributing a publication that: (1) causes a substantial disruption or a foreseeable risk of a substantial disruption to school operations, or (2) interferes with the rights of other students or staff members.

### Bullying and Cyberbullying <sup>538</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall treat behavior that is bullying and/or cyberbullying according to Board policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*, in addition to any response required by this policy.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7.

Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 260 (1988).

Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Cmty. Sch. Dist., 393 U.S. 503 (1969).

Hedges v. Wauconda Cmty. Unit Sch. Dist. No. 118, 9 F.3d 1295 (7th Cir. 1993).

CROSS REF.: 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:315 (Restrictions on Publications; High Schools), 8:25 (Advertising and Distributing Materials in Schools Provided by Non-School Related Entities)

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<sup>537</sup> Optional. School officials must proceed carefully before disciplining a student for out-of-school conduct. A school's authority over off-campus expression is much more limited than expression on school grounds. Many decisions address the tension between public schools' authority to discipline students for off-campus speech and students' right to free speech. However, school officials may generally: (1) remove a student from extracurricular activities for failure to follow an extracurricular conduct code (see sample policy 7:240, *Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities*); and (2) suspend or expel a student from school attendance when the student's expression causes substantial disruption to school operations, as provided in this policy (see also sample policy 7:190, *Student Behavior*). For example, see:

Mahanoy Area School Dist. v. B.L., 594 U.S. 180 (2021), (a school could not suspend a student from the cheerleading team for vulgar posts that she made on a social media platform where there was no evidence of substantial disruption of a school activity; schools also have more limited authority to punish students for vulgar, off-campus speech, unless there are circumstances involving severe bullying or harassment, threats aimed at teachers or other students, failure to follow rules concerning lessons, writing of papers, use of computers, participation in other online school activities, or breaches of school security devices including school computers).

J.S. v. Blue Mountain Sch. Dist., 650 F.3d 915 (3rd Cir. 2011), combined with Layshock v. Hermitage Sch. Dist., 650 F.3d 205 (3d Cir. 2011), *cert. denied* (2012) (schools may not punish students for their off-campus indecent and offensive parodies of their principals, absent a showing that the parodies caused, or could cause, substantial disruption in the schools).

Kowalski v. Berkeley Cnty. Sch., 652 F.3d 565 (4th Cir. 2011), *cert. denied* (2012) (upheld a student's suspension for off-campus posts to a social network site that defamed a classmate because it was foreseeable that the expression would reach the school and the student's conduct involved substantial disruption and interference with the work and discipline of the school).

The statutory definition of *bullying* includes *cyberbullying* (105 ILCS 5/27-23.7); these terms are defined in sample policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*.

Consult the board attorney for guidance concerning off-campus speech. Every situation is fact-specific and the issues require careful evaluation.

<sup>538</sup> 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7.

## **Students**

### **Restrictions on Publications: High Schools** <sup>539</sup>

*[For high school or unit districts only]*

#### **Definitions** <sup>540</sup>

*Libel* means the willful or negligent publication of provably false and unprivileged statements of fact that do demonstrable harm to a living person's reputation.

*Obscene* means lewd; impure; indecent; calculated to shock the moral sense of humans by a disregard of chastity or modesty. Objectionable or offensive to accepted standards of decency.

*School official* means a Building Principal or designee.

*School-sponsored media* means any material that is prepared, substantially written, published, or broadcast by a student journalist, distributed or generally made available to members of the student body, and prepared under the direction of a student media advisor. It does not include media intended for distribution or transmission solely in the classroom in which the media is produced.

*Slander* means the speaking of false statements of fact that seriously harm a living person's reputation.

*Student journalist* means a public high school student who gathers, compiles, writes, edits, photographs, records, or prepares information for dissemination in school-sponsored media.

*Student media adviser*<sup>541</sup> means an individual employed, appointed, or designated by the District to supervise or provide instruction relating to school-sponsored media.

#### **School-Sponsored Media**

School-sponsored publications, productions, and websites are governed by the Speech Rights of Student Journalists Act and School Board policies, and student journalists are responsible for determining the news, opinion, feature, and advertising content of those publications, productions, and websites. <sup>542</sup>

Student journalists must: <sup>543</sup>

<sup>539</sup> State or federal law controls this policy's content. This policy concerns an area in which the law is unsettled.

<sup>540</sup> Speech Rights of Student Journalists Act (SRSJA), 105 ILCS 80/5. See also *Black's Law Dictionary*, 11th ed. 2019.

<sup>541</sup> *Id.* uses *adviser*, not *advisor*. *Adviser* is used throughout this policy for consistency with the statute.

<sup>542</sup> *Id.* With some exceptions, the Act effectively restricts school authorities' power to reasonably regulate student expression in high school-sponsored publications for education-related reasons under *Hazelwood Sch. Dist. v. Kuhlmeier*, 484 U.S. 260 (1988). See the last sentence in f/n 6, below.

<sup>543</sup> Consult the board attorney about text that balances the student journalists' rights to have control of their media publications with the board's interests in (a) ensuring differing opinions are published, (b) the SRSJA, and (c) providing student journalists opportunities to apply the Illinois media literacy curriculum mandates.

Number 5 in the list is intended to align with the *media literacy* curriculum mandate for students in grades 9 through 12 and is listed at 105 ILCS 5/27-20.08 and sample policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*. *Media literacy* means the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and communicate using a variety of objective forms, including, but not limited to, print, visual, audio, interactive, and digital texts. *Id.* Media literacy instruction must include a component on social responsibility and civics that includes "[s]uggesting a plan of action in the class, school, or community to engage others in a respectful, thoughtful, and inclusive dialogue over a specific issue using facts and reason." Providing opportunity and space for expression of differing opinions in media aligns with and promotes this inclusive dialog.

For boards that provide student journalists more flexibility, make the following three edits: (1) replace "must" with: "shall strive to," (2) amend number 5 to read: "In the use of personal opinions, editorial statements, and/or letters to the editor, determine the need to provide opportunity and space for the expression of differing opinions within the same media to align with the District's media literacy curriculum mandate in 105 ILCS 5/27-20.08", and (3) delete number 6.

1. Make decisions based upon news value and guided by the Code of Ethics provided by the Society of Professional Journalists, National Scholastic Press Association, Journalism Education Association, or other relevant group;
2. Produce media based upon professional standards of accuracy, objectivity, and fairness;
3. Review material to improve sentence structure, grammar, spelling, and punctuation;
4. Check and verify all facts and verify the accuracy of all quotations;
5. In the use of personal opinions, editorial statements, and/or letters to the editor, provide opportunity and space for the expression of differing opinions within the same media to align with the District's media literacy curriculum mandate in 105 ILCS 5/27-20.08; and
6. Include an author's name with any personal opinions and editorial statements, if appropriate.

Student journalists may not create, produce, or distribute school-sponsored media that: <sup>544</sup>

1. Is libelous, slanderous, or obscene;
2. Constitutes an unwarranted invasion of privacy;
3. Violates federal or State law, including the Constitutional rights of third parties;<sup>545</sup> or
4. Incites students to: <sup>546</sup>
  - a. Commit an unlawful act;
  - b. Violate any of the District's policies; or
  - c. Materially and substantially disrupt the orderly operation of the school.

The District will not engage in prior restraint of material prepared by student journalists for school-sponsored media, unless the material fits into one of the four prohibited categories listed above, in which case the

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<sup>544</sup> 105 ILCS 80/15. A school board may retain control of material in student publications that falls within the listed exceptions. Consult the board attorney about how much control of high school student publications school officials may retain in the context of the Speech Rights of Student Journalists Act.

<sup>545</sup> 105 ILCS 80/15.

Delete “, including Constitutional rights of third parties” if the board wants only the word-for-word statutory language in its policy. Because the Constitutional rights of third parties are common controversies within the context of student-sponsored publications, the purpose of this additional text is to underscore that Constitutional rights of third parties are included under the exception of State and federal law.

While 105 ILCS 80/20 limits liability of school districts for a student journalist's expression, except in cases of willful or wanton misconduct, some attorneys believe it may still be possible that a third party may seek to hold the district responsible for the student journalists' acts. See *Yeo v. Town of Lexington*, 131 F.3d 241 (1st Cir. 1997), *cert. denied* (1998).

<sup>546</sup> 105 ILCS 80/15 broadly allows school boards to limit speech that would incite violation of any policy. This policy language follows the statute. Policies most often needing assessment are those that involve a district's educational mission and philosophy and social appropriateness language for student body's age(s)/maturity. School officials must be careful to understand that that law is written that student journalists using media to *incite* other students to act a certain way is the exception. Additional text may be added to (1) underscore that 105 ILCS 80/15 does not authorize or protect expression that *incites* students to violate board policies, and (2) reminds students and the community that school officials have many legal obligations to implement and enforce specific board policies and ensure school environments are safe and conducive to learning.

While 105 ILCS 80/20 limits liability of school districts for a student journalist's expression, except in cases of willful or wanton misconduct, discuss with the board attorney how to balance the rights of student journalists under this law and the other policy implementation duties that face school officials with board policies and laws.

For boards that want to provide additional text to the word-for-word statutory language in their policies, add to item 4.b: , including but not limited to (1) its educational mission in Board policies 1:30, *School District Philosophy* and 6:10, *Educational Philosophy and Objectives*, and (2) speech that is socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to the maturity of the students pursuant to Board policies 6:65, *Student Social and Emotional Development* and 7:180 *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*.

Superintendent or designee and/or student media adviser may review, edit, and delete such media material before publication or distribution of the media.<sup>547</sup>

No expression made by students in the exercise of freedom of speech or freedom of the press under this policy shall be deemed to be an expression of the District or an expression of Board policy.<sup>548</sup>

#### Non-School Sponsored Publications Accessed or Distributed On Campus<sup>549</sup>

For purposes of this section and the following section, a *publication* includes, without limitation: (1) written or electronic print material, (2) audio-visual material on any medium including electromagnetic media (e.g., images, digital files, flash memory, etc.), or combinations of these whether off-line (e.g., a printed book, digital files, etc.) or online (e.g., any website, social networking site, database for information retrieval, etc.), or (3) information or material on electronic devices (e.g., text or voice messages delivered by cell phones, tablets, and other hand-held devices).<sup>550</sup>

Creating, distributing, and/or accessing non-school sponsored publications shall occur at a time and place and in a manner that will not cause disruption, be coercive, or result in the perception that the distribution or the publication is endorsed by the District.

Students are prohibited from creating, distributing, and/or accessing at school any publication that:

1. Will cause a material and substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities;<sup>551</sup>
2. Violates the rights of others, including but not limited to material that is libelous, slanderous or obscene, invades the privacy of others, or infringes on a copyright;<sup>552</sup>

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<sup>547</sup> 105 ILCS 80/10 requires school officials to show justification without undue delay before limiting student expression. For boards that want the student media advisor to provide student journalists with written justification prior to limiting materials, insert the following sentence to end the paragraph:

In such cases, the student media adviser will promptly provide the student journalist with a written justification prior to limiting the material.

<sup>548</sup> 105 ILCS 80/20.

<sup>549</sup> Non-school sponsored publications, like underground newspapers, cannot be subject to the same degree of regulation by school authorities as school-sponsored publications. Absent a showing of material and substantial interference with the requirements of good discipline, students retain their First Amendment free speech rights. The federal circuits disagree on whether school authorities may require prior approval before a student is allowed to distribute non-school-sponsored publications. The Seventh Circuit, which covers Illinois, refused to approve prior approval regulations. Fujishima v. Bd. of Ed., 460 F.2d 1355 (7th Cir. 1972), but see Baughman v. Freienmuth, 478 F.2d 1345 (4th Cir. 1973). Non-school sponsored web sites should be regulated in the same manner as non-school sponsored publications.

A school policy prohibiting junior high students from distributing written material at school that is prepared by non-students was upheld in Hedges v. Wauconda Cmty. Unit Sch. Dist. No. 118, 9 F.3d 1295 (7th Cir. 1993).

<sup>550</sup> The definition of *publication* is optional and may be amended. This sample definition uses broad and generally understood terms to keep the policy current with rapid technology changes.

<sup>551</sup> For example, a school district may discipline a student for writing an underground newspaper, and distributing it at school, that contained an article on how to hack into the school's computer. School authorities could reasonably believe the article would be disruptive. Boucher v. Sch. Bd. of the Sch. Dist. of Greenfield, 134 F.3d 821 (7th Cir. 1998).

<sup>552</sup> School officials may not regulate student speech based upon their fear or apprehension of disturbance. Many decisions address the tension between students' right to free speech and restrictions of it on campus. See, for example:

Brandt v. Bd. of Educ. of City of Chicago, 480 F.3d 460 (7th Cir. 2007), *cert. denied* (2007) (school did not violate students' First Amendment rights when it disciplined students for wearing T-shirts with a "talentless infantile drawing" that school officials reasonably found to undermine the educational atmosphere).

Nuxoll v. Indian Prairie Sch. Dist. #204, 523 F.3d 668 (7th Cir. 2008) (holding that the student was likely to succeed on merits of his claim that the school would violate his speech rights by preventing him from wearing T-shirt with slogan "Be Happy, Not Gay"). But see L.M. v. Town of Middleborough, Massachusetts, 103 F.4th 854 (1st Cir. 2024) (holding a school could prohibit a student from wearing a shirt which read "There Are Only Two Genders" because the message directly attacked the personal characteristics of transgender and nonconforming students, which could cause lower grades and increased absences).

3. Is socially inappropriate or inappropriate due to maturity level of the students, including but not limited to material that is obscene, pornographic, or pervasively lewd and vulgar, contains indecent and vulgar language, or *sexting* as defined by Board policy 7:190, *Student Behavior*, and/or Student Handbooks;
4. Is reasonably viewed as promoting illegal drug use;<sup>553</sup>
5. Is distributed in kindergarten through eighth grade and is primarily prepared by non-students, unless it is being used for school purposes. However, material from outside sources or the citation to such sources may be allowed, as long as the material to be distributed or accessed is primarily prepared by students;<sup>554</sup> or
6. Encourages or incites students to violate any Board policies.

Accessing or distributing *on-campus* includes accessing or distributing on school property or at school-related activities. A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for: (1) accessing or distributing forbidden material, or (2) for writing, creating, or publishing such material intending for it to be accessed or distributed at school.<sup>555</sup>

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J.C. v. Beverly Hills Unified Sch. Dist., 593 F.3d 249 (3rd Cir. 2010) (discussed the “rights of others to be secure and let alone” argument from Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Cmty. Sch. Dist., 393 U.S. 503 (1969), but found that the school district violated a student’s First Amendment rights for disciplining her when she posted a video clip on a website).

B.H. v. Easton Area Sch. Dist., 725 F.3d 293 (3rd Cir 2013), *cert. denied* (2014) (school violated students’ free speech rights by banning the wearing of cancer awareness bracelets containing the caption *I♥boobies*).

<sup>553</sup> Morse v. Frederick, 551 U.S. 393 (2007).

<sup>554</sup> Optional. The rationale for this section is that prior to high school, students have not developed sufficient experience and education in critical review of external resource materials. Accordingly, in order to accomplish the district’s educational mission, yet allow students the opportunity to communicate with their fellow students, widespread student distribution of written material in elementary and middle school may be limited to material primarily prepared by the students themselves. Hedges v. Wauconda Cmty. Unit Sch. Dist. No. 118, 9 F.3d 1295 (7th Cir. 1993); Leal v. Everett Pub. Schs., 88 F.Supp.3d 1220 (W.D.Wa. 2015).

<sup>555</sup> See f/n 13, above.



#### Non-School Sponsored Publications Accessed or Distributed Off-Campus <sup>556</sup>

A student engages in gross disobedience and misconduct and may be disciplined for creating and/or distributing a publication that: (1) causes a substantial disruption or a foreseeable risk of a substantial disruption to school operations, or (2) interferes with the rights of other students or staff members.

#### Bullying and Cyberbullying <sup>557</sup>

The Superintendent or designee shall treat behavior that is *bullying* and/or *cyberbullying* according to Board policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*, in addition to any response required by this policy.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/27-20.08 and 5/27-23.7.

105 ILCS 80/, Speech Rights of Student Journalists Act.

Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Cmty. Sch. Dist., 393 U.S. 503 (1969).

Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier, 484 U.S. 260 (1988).

Morse v. Frederick, 551 U.S. 393 (2007).

Hedges v. Wauconda Cmty. Unit Sch. Dist. No. 118, 9 F.3d 1295 (7th Cir. 1993).

CROSS REF.: 1:30 (School District Philosophy), 6:10 (Educational Philosophy and Objectives), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:180 (Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publication; Elementary Schools), 8:25 (Advertising and Distributing Materials in Schools Provided by Non-School Related Entities)

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<sup>556</sup> Optional. School officials must proceed carefully before disciplining a student for out-of-school conduct. A school's authority over off-campus expression is much more limited than expression on school grounds. Many decisions address the tension between public schools' authority to discipline students for off-campus speech and students' right to free speech. However, school officials may generally: (1) remove a student from extracurricular activities when the conduct code for participation requires students to conduct themselves at all times as good citizens and exemplars of the school (see sample policy 7:240, *Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities*); and (2) suspend or expel a student from school attendance when the student's expression causes substantial disruption to school operations, as provided in this policy (see also sample policy 7:190, *Student Behavior*). For example, see:

Mahanoy Area School Dist. v. B.L., 594 U.S. 180 (2021) (a school could not suspend a student from the cheerleading team for vulgar posts that she made on a social media platform where there was no evidence of substantial disruption of a school activity; schools have more limited authority to punish students for vulgar, off-campus speech, unless there are circumstances involving severe bullying or harassment, threats aimed at teachers or other students, failure to follow rules concerning lessons, writing of papers, use of computers, participation in other online school activities, or breaches of school security devices including school computers).

J.S. v. Blue Mountain Sch. Dist., 650 F.3d 915 (3rd Cir. 2011), combined with Layshock v. Hermitage Sch. Dist., 650 F.3d 205 (3rd Cir. 2011), cert. denied (2012) (schools may not punish students for their off-campus indecent and offensive parodies of their principals, absent a showing that the parodies caused, or could cause, substantial disruption in the schools).

Kowalski v. Berkeley Cnty. Sch., 652 F.3d 565 (4th Cir. 2011), cert. denied (2012) (upheld a student's suspension for off-campus posts to a social network site that defamed a classmate because it was foreseeable that the expression would reach the school and the student's conduct involved substantial disruption and interference with the work and discipline of the school).

The statutory definition of *bullying* includes *cyberbullying* (105 ILCS 5/27-23.7); these terms are defined in sample policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*.

Consult the board attorney for guidance concerning off-campus speech. Every situation is fact specific, and the issues require careful evaluation.

<sup>557</sup> 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7.

## Students

### Student Records <sup>558</sup>

School student records are confidential. Information from them shall not be released other than as provided by law.<sup>559</sup> A school student record is any writing or other recorded information concerning a student and by which

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<sup>558</sup> State law requires school boards to adopt a policy and procedures implementing the Illinois School Student Records Act (ISSRA) and specifying the content of school student records. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §§375.100 and 226.740. Both State and federal law address school student records. See the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. §1232g) implemented by federal rules at 34 C.F.R. Part 99) and ISSRA (105 ILCS 10/, amended by P.A.102-466, a/k/a *Ensuring Success in School (ESS) Law*, eff. 7-1-25, implemented by ISBE rules at 23 Ill.Admin.Code Part 375).

In addition, the U.S. Dept. of Education's (DOE) *Protecting Student Privacy* webpage, a service of the Privacy Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) and the Student Privacy Policy Office, is a *one-stop* resource for education stakeholders to learn about student privacy and confidentiality, including data privacy and security practices related to student-level longitudinal data systems, at: [www.studentprivacy.ed.gov/](http://www.studentprivacy.ed.gov/). PTAC published a guide for school officials titled *Protecting Student Privacy While Using Online Educational Services: Requirements and Best Practices* (2014), at:

[www.studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/protecting-student-privacy-while-using-online-educational-services-requirements-and-best-practices](http://www.studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/protecting-student-privacy-while-using-online-educational-services-requirements-and-best-practices).

The DOE also issued a summary of resources on FERPA and virtual learning (2020) at: [www.studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/ferpa-and-virtual-learning](http://www.studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/ferpa-and-virtual-learning). **Boards that wish to enter into cloud computing and other operator contracts must comply with the Student Online Personal Protection Act (SOPPA), 105 ILCS 85/, and should contact the board attorney for implementation guidance.** See also f/n 2, item #7, below.

Confusion persists regarding the interplay between the FERPA and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) (Pub. L. 104-191). The Privacy Rule implementing HIPAA, issued by the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS), addresses the disclosure of individuals' health information by *covered entities*. 45 C.F.R. Parts 160 and 164, Subparts A and E. Generally speaking, a school district becomes a *covered entity*, and must comply with applicable sections in the Privacy Rule, if it provides health care and transmits health information in electronic form in connection with transactions. However, *educational records* as defined by FERPA are excluded from HIPAA's definition of *protected health information*. 45 C.F.R. §160.103. In most cases this exception relieves school districts of complying with burdensome privacy notices and authorization forms. In December 2019, HHS and DOE issued an update to its *Joint Guidance on the Application of FERPA and HIPAA to Student Health Records*, at:

[www.studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/joint-guidance-application-ferpa-and-hipaa-student-health-records](http://www.studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/joint-guidance-application-ferpa-and-hipaa-student-health-records).

The board attorney should be consulted on all HIPAA-related questions.

<sup>559</sup> A plethora of statutory and decisional law protects student records. Aside from the laws identified in f/n 1, other laws protecting student records include:

1. Schools may not provide a student's *personal information* to a business organization or financial institution that issues credit or debit cards. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.38.
2. Schools may not sell personal information concerning a child under the age of 16, with a few exceptions, unless a parent has consented. Children's Privacy Protection and Parental Empowerment Act, 325 ILCS 17/.
3. The release of confidential information given by a student to a therapist, e.g., school counselor or psychologist, is governed by the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act. 740 ILCS 110/.
4. Schools must keep a sex offender registration form received from law enforcement separately from school student records maintained on behalf of the juvenile sex offender. 730 ILCS 152/121.
5. Divorced or separated parents/guardians with and without *parental responsibility* (formerly custody) are both permitted to inspect and copy the student's school student records. The Ill. Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act (IMDMA), 750 ILCS 5/602.11.
6. Schools may not provide a parent/guardian access to his or her child's school records if the parent is prohibited by an order of protection from inspecting or obtaining such records pursuant to the Domestic Violence Act of 1986 or the Code of Criminal Procedure of 1963. *Id.*

a student may be identified individually that is maintained by a school or at its direction by a school employee, regardless of how or where the information is stored, except as provided in State or federal law as summarized below:<sup>560</sup>

1. Records kept in a staff member's sole possession.
2. Records maintained by law enforcement officers working in the school.<sup>561</sup>
3. Video and other electronic recordings (including without limitation, electronic recordings made on school buses<sup>562</sup>) that are created in part for law enforcement, security, or safety reasons or purposes. The content of these recordings may become part of a school student record to the extent school officials create, use, and maintain this content, or it becomes available to them by law enforcement officials, for disciplinary or special education purposes regarding a particular student.
4. Any information, either written or oral, received from law enforcement officials concerning a student less than the age of 18 years who has been arrested or taken into custody.<sup>563</sup>

State and federal law grants students, parents/guardians, and when applicable, the Ill. Dept. of Children and Family Services' Office of Education and Transition Services, certain rights, including the right to inspect,

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7. SOPPA (105 ILCS 85/) addresses a school district's obligations related to *covered information* of students and contracts with educational technology *operators*. In some instances, covered information as defined under SOPPA may also qualify as education records under FERPA and school student records under ISSRA. See sample policy 7:345, *Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security*, and sample administrative procedure 7:345-AP, *Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security*, for a description of SOPPA obligations.
  8. School employees or agents may not disclose information concerning a student's status and related experiences as a parent, expectant parent, or victim of domestic or sexual violence, or a student's status as a named perpetrator of domestic or sexual violence except under certain circumstances and only upon prior notice to, and discussion with, the student. 105 ILCS 5/26A-30, added by P.A. 102-466, a/k/a *ESS Law*, eff. 7-1-25. See sample policy 7:255, *Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*, and the **Confidentiality** subhead of sample administrative procedure 7:255-AP1, *Supporting Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence*.

**Note:** Nos. 5 and 6 above may conflict with FERPA in that they restrict a parent/guardian's right to access his or her child's school records more than is expressly permitted by FERPA. 20 U.S.C. §1232g(a)(1)(A), (B); 34 C.F.R. §99.10(a). **Consult the board attorney for guidance.**

Allowing students to grade each other's papers does not violate FERPA; such student work is not a *school record* until it is recorded by the teacher. Owasso I.S.D. No. I-011 v. Falvo, 534 U.S. 426 (2002). School student records are *per se* prohibited from disclosure; a district is under no obligation to redact them. Chicago Tribune Co. v. Chicago Bd. of Educ., 332 Ill.App.3d 60 (1st Dist. 2002).

<sup>560</sup> 20 U.S.C. §1232g(a)(4); 34 C.F.R. §99.3; 105 ILCS 10/2(d); 705 ILCS 405/1-7 and 5-905; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §375.10. Rather than listing the exceptions in the policy, a school board may choose to end the sentence after the proviso "except as provided in State or federal law."

<sup>561</sup> For a helpful resource, see f/n 1 in sample policy 7:150, *Agency and Police Interviews*.

<sup>562</sup> For an explanation, see footnotes in sample policy 7:220, *Bus Conduct*.

<sup>563</sup> Many lawyers believe that once these records are received by a school, they are protected as *education records* under FERPA. Consult the board attorney for advice.

copy<sup>564</sup>, and/or challenge school student records.<sup>565</sup> The information contained in school student records shall be kept current, accurate, clear, and relevant. All information maintained concerning a student receiving special education services shall be directly related to the provision of services to that child.<sup>566</sup> The District may release directory information as permitted by law, but a parent/guardian shall have the right to opt-out of the release of directory information regarding his or her child.<sup>567</sup> The District will comply with State or federal

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<sup>564</sup> 105 ILCS 10/5(a). ISSRA does not give DCFS representatives the right to challenge student records. 105 ILCS 10/7. For more information about DCFS liaison qualifications and duties, see sample policy 7:50, *School Admissions and Student Transfers To and From Non-District Schools*, at f/n 16.

105 ILCS 10/5(c) requires that a parent's or student's request to inspect and copy records be granted no later than 10 business days (previously 15 school days) after the date of receipt of such a request by the official records custodian.

105 ILCS 10/5(c-5) outlines how a school district may extend the 10 business day timeline for response by not more than five business days from the original due date if one or more of these six reasons applies:

1. The requested records are stored in whole or in part at other locations than the office having charge of the requested records;
2. The request required the collection of a substantial number of specified records;
3. The request is couched in categorical terms and requires an extensive search for the records responsive to it;
4. The requested records have not been located in the course of routine search and additional efforts are being made to locate them;
5. The request for records cannot be complied with by the school district within the time limits prescribed by subsection (c) without unduly burdening or interfering with the operations of the school district; or
6. There is a need for consultation, which shall be conducted with all practicable speed, with another public body or school district among two or more components of a public body or school district having a substantial interest in the determination or in the subject matter of the request.

The person making the request and the school district may also agree in writing to extend the timeline for compliance for a period to be determined by the parties. Id.

<sup>565</sup> 23 Ill.Admin.Code §375.10 provides that districts may, through board policy, allow scores received on college entrance examinations to be included on a student's academic transcript if that inclusion is requested in writing by a student, parent or person who enrolled the student. If the board of a unit or high school district wants to allow this, insert:

A student or the student's parent/guardian may request, in writing, that scores received on college entrance examinations be included on the student's academic transcript.

**Note:** Though 23 Ill.Admin.Code §375.10 uses the phrase "student, parent or person who enrolled the student," student records rights under ISSRA and FERPA attach to *eligible students* and their parents/guardians, not to "a person who enrolled the student" (though that person is typically a parent or guardian).

If a board allows for the inclusion of college entrance examination scores on academic transcripts, amend the district's notification to parents/guardians and students of their school student records rights with the process for requesting the inclusion. 23 Ill.Admin.Code §375.30(d)(5). See sample exhibit 7:340-AP1, E1, *Notice to Parents/Guardians and Students of Their Rights Concerning a Student's School Records*, for an example.

<sup>566</sup> 23 Ill.Admin.Code §226.740(a).

<sup>567</sup> This sentence is required if the board allows schools to release student directory information. 20 U.S.C. §1232g; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §375.80; 34 C.F.R. §99.37. There is at least one instance in Illinois in which parents were upset that their school district released students' names and addresses pursuant to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. FOIA contains an exemption for home addresses. Many lawyers, however, say that a district must release student information pursuant to a FOIA request when each of the following has occurred: the FOIA request seeks information that is included in the district's definition of student directory information, the district notified parents that it releases directory information, and the parents did not opt out of allowing directory information to be released concerning their child. An opinion from the Ill. Public Access Counselor supports that a district may not rely on the FOIA exemption for home addresses. PAO 12-3.

This sample policy does not identify the components of *directory information*, leaving that task to implementing material. Boards may want to discuss this quagmire with the superintendent knowing that there are good reasons to release directory information, e.g., to allow the district to publish information about specific students, and good reasons to not release directory information, e.g., to avoid releasing names and addresses pursuant to a FOIA request.

law with regard to release of a student's school records, including, where applicable, without notice to, or the consent of, the student's parent/guardian or eligible student.<sup>568</sup> Upon request, the District discloses school student records without parent consent to the official records custodian of another school in which a student has enrolled or intends to enroll, as well as to any other person as specifically required or permitted by State or federal law.<sup>569</sup>

The Superintendent shall fully implement this policy and designate an *official records custodian* for each school who shall maintain and protect the confidentiality of school student records, inform staff members of this policy, and inform students and their parents/guardians of their rights regarding school student records.<sup>570</sup>

### Student Biometric Information Collection<sup>571</sup>

The Superintendent or designee may recommend a student biometric information collection system solely for the purposes of identification and fraud prevention.<sup>572</sup> Such recommendation shall be consistent with budget requirements and in compliance with State law. Biometric information means any information that is collected through an identification process for individuals based on their unique behavioral or physiological characteristics, including fingerprint, hand geometry, voice, or facial recognition or iris or retinal scans.

Before collecting student biometric information, the District shall obtain written permission from the person having legal custody/parental responsibility<sup>573</sup> or the student (if over the age of 18).<sup>574</sup> Upon a student's 18th

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23 Ill.Admin.Code §375.80(a)(1) no longer includes *gender* as information which may be designated as directory information. This is consistent with attorneys' views that Illinois' past practice of including *gender* within directory information may have violated FERPA. FERPA regulations provide that directory information "means information contained in an education record of a student that would not generally be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed" and it "includes, but is not limited to, the student's name; address; telephone listing; electronic mail address; photograph; date and place of birth; major field of study; grade level; enrollment status (e.g., undergraduate or graduate, full-time or part-time); dates of attendance; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; degrees, honors, and awards received; and the most recent educational agency or institution attended." 34 C.F.R. §99.3. Though FERPA regulations do not explicitly preclude the designation of *gender* as directory information, DOE guidance has consistently advised schools not to disclose a student's sex as directory information because it would be considered harmful or an invasion of privacy. See *Letter to Institutions of Postsecondary Education*, DOE Family Policy Compliance Office (September 2009). Consult the board attorney about the practical implementation of this issue. Some attorneys, for example, believe photos of the "Girls Volleyball Team" may contradict DOE guidance.

<sup>568</sup> 20 U.S.C. §1232g(j), as added by Sec. 507 of the U.S.A. Patriot Act of 2001.

<sup>569</sup> 34 C.F.R. §99.31; 105 ILCS 10/6.

<sup>570</sup> Each school must have an *official records custodian*. 105 ILCS 10/4(a). Districts must notify students and parents/guardians of their rights concerning school student records. 105 ILCS 10/3; 105 ILCS 10/4; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §375.30; 34 C.F.R. §99.7. Comprehensive faculty and student handbooks can provide required notices, along with other important information, to recipients. Handbooks can be developed by the building principal, but should be reviewed and approved by the superintendent and board. See sample exhibit 7:340-AP1, E1, *Notice to Parents/Guardians and Students of Their Rights Concerning a Student's School Records*, and sample administrative procedure 7:340-AP1, *School Student Records*.

<sup>571</sup> This program is optional; however, districts either wishing to implement such a program or districts that have already engaged in the collection of student biometric information must have a policy consistent with the requirements of 105 ILCS 5/10-20.40. This section restates the School Code's requirements for a student biometric information policy.

<sup>572</sup> For districts already collecting biometric information, the following is an alternative:

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain a biometric screening program that is consistent with budget requirements and in compliance with State law.

<sup>573</sup> Several statutes define legal custody and when a court may grant it; the term requires statutory construction/interpretation and school boards should discuss this issue with their attorney prior to adopting a policy on collection of student biometric information.

105 ILCS 5/10-20.40(b)(1) states the definition of legal custody is the same as the definition of legal custody for purposes of residency, payment of tuition, hearings, and criminal penalties at 105 ILCS 5/10-20.12b(2)(i)-(v).

The IMDMA, 750 ILCS 5/, changed the terms *custody* and *visitation* to *parental responsibility* and *parenting time*, respectively. It also requires a *parenting plan* that allocates: (1) significant decision-making responsibilities; and (2) each parent's right to access his or her child's school records. The IMDMA does not amend ISSRA or the School Code.

<sup>574</sup> Based upon 105 ILCS 5/10-20.40, written permission is not required annually; it is valid until a request for discontinuation of the use of biometric information is received or until the student reaches the age of 18. See sample exhibit 7:340-AP1, E5, *Biometric Information Collection Authorization*.

birthday, the District shall obtain written permission from the student to collect student biometric information.<sup>575</sup> Failure to provide written consent to collect biometric information shall not be the basis for refusal of any services otherwise available to a student.

All collected biometric information shall be stored and transmitted in a manner that protects it from disclosure. Sale, lease, or other disclosure of biometric information to another person or entity is strictly prohibited.<sup>576</sup>

The District will discontinue use of a student's biometric information and destroy all collected biometric information within 30 days after: (1) the student graduates or withdraws from the School District, or (2) the District receives a written request to discontinue use of biometric information from the person having legal custody/parental responsibility of the student or the student (if over the age of 18).<sup>577</sup> Requests to discontinue using a student's biometric information shall be forwarded to the Superintendent or designee.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop procedures to implement this policy consistent with State and federal law.<sup>578</sup>

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<sup>575</sup> Districts must reissue exhibit 7:340-AP1, E5, *Biometric Information Collection Authorization* to students turning 18 years of age during the school year. This is because all rights and privileges accorded to a parent under ISSRA become exclusively those of the student upon his or her 18th birthday, graduation from secondary school, marriage, or entry into military service, whichever comes first. 105 ILCS 10/2(g).

<sup>576</sup> State law contains two exceptions: (1) the individual who has legal custody/parental responsibility of the student or the student (if over the age of 18) consents to the disclosure; and (2) the disclosure is required by court order. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.40(b)(5).

<sup>577</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.40(d). No notification to or approval from the district's local records commission, pursuant to the Local Records Act, is required to destroy student biometric information. See f/n 15 for a discussion about the terms *custody* and *parental responsibility*.

<sup>578</sup> Whether the student biometric information is an education record under FERPA or falls under an exception to an education record under FERPA is an issue about which school boards should consult their board attorney. Protected Health Information under the DHS's interpretations of HIPAA excludes education records covered by FERPA, and thus HIPAA requirements are not expected to be triggered by districts collecting student biometric information. However, before implementing policies and procedures to collect student biometric information, a board should discuss these issues with the board attorney.

LEGAL REF.: 20 U.S.C. §1232g, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; 34 C.F.R. Part 99.  
50 ILCS 205/7, Local Records Act.  
105 ILCS 5/10-20.12b, 5/10-20.40, 5/14-1.01 et seq., and 5/26A-30.  
105 ILCS 10/, Ill. School Student Records Act.  
105 ILCS 85/, Student Online Personal Protection Act.  
325 ILCS 17/, Children's Privacy Protection and Parental Empowerment Act.  
750 ILCS 5/602.11, Ill. Marriage and Dissolution of Marriage Act.  
23 Ill.Admin.Code Parts 226 and 375.  
Owasso I.S.D. No. I-011 v. Falvo, 534 U.S. 426 (2002).  
Chicago Tribune Co. v. Chicago Bd. of Ed., 332 Ill.App.3d 60 (1st Dist. 2002).

CROSS REF.: 5:100 (Staff Development Program), 5:130 (Responsibilities Concerning Internal Information), 7:15 (Student and Family Privacy Rights), 7:220 (Bus Conduct), 7:255 (Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:345 (Use of Educational Technologies; Student Data Privacy and Security)

ADMIN. PROC.: 7:15-E (Notification to Parents of Family Privacy Rights), 7:255-AP1 (Supporting Students Who are Parents, Expectant Parents, or Victims of Domestic or Sexual Violence), 7:340-AP1 (School Student Records), 7:340-AP1, E1 (Notice to Parents/Guardians and Students of Their Rights Concerning a Student's School Records), 7:340-AP1, E3 (Letter to Parents and Eligible Students Concerning Military Recruiters and Postsecondary Institutions Receiving Student Directory Information), 7:340-AP1, E4 (Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Military Recruiter Access to Students and Student Information), 7:340-AP1, E5 (Biometric Information Collection Authorization), 7:340-AP2 (Storage and Destruction of School Student Records), 7:340-AP2, E1 (Letter Containing Schedule for Destruction of School Student Records)

## Community Relations

### Visitors to and Conduct on School Property <sup>579</sup>

The following definitions apply to this policy:

**School property** - District and school buildings, grounds, and parking areas; vehicles used for school purposes; and any location used for a School Board meeting, school athletic event, or other school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities. <sup>580</sup>

**Visitor** - Any person other than an enrolled student or District employee.

All visitors to school property are required to report to the Building Principal's office and receive permission to remain on school property. All visitors must sign a visitors' log, show identification, and wear a visitor's badge. When leaving the school, visitors must return their badge. On those occasions when large groups of parents/guardians, friends, and/or community members are invited onto school property or when community members are attending Board meetings, visitors are not required to sign in but must follow school officials' instructions. Persons on school property without permission will be directed to leave and may be subject to criminal prosecution. <sup>581</sup>

Except as provided in the next paragraph, any person wishing to confer with a staff member should contact that staff member to make an appointment. Conferences with teachers are held, to the extent possible, outside school hours or during the teacher's conference/preparation period.

Requests to access a school building, facility, and/or educational program, or to interview personnel or a student for purposes of assessing the student's special education needs, should be made at the appropriate building. Access shall be facilitated according to guidelines from the Superintendent or designee. <sup>582</sup>

The School District expects mutual respect, civility, and orderly conduct among all people on school property or at a school event. No person on school property or at a school event (including visitors, students, and employees) shall perform any of the following acts:

<sup>579</sup> State or federal law controls this policy's content. Boards may make and enforce reasonable rules of conduct and sportsmanship for school events and deny future admission to school events to violators for up to one year provided a notice and hearing are given. 105 ILCS 5/24-24. See f/n 20 below.

This policy contains an item on which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts upon wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment, is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right.

<sup>580</sup> School-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities aligns with the text of 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(a).

<sup>581</sup> This paragraph is up to the local board's discretion. Many public school buildings were built before school security was the concern it is now. A first step in creating a secure environment is to manage access to school buildings. Along with limiting the entrances that may be used, school officials should post signs with instructions for visitors and a warning to trespassers. Signs may be as simple as "Visitors Must Report to Office" and "No Trespassing – Violators will be Prosecuted." Applicable criminal trespass laws include: 720 ILCS 5/21-1 (criminal damage to property); 5/21-1.2 (institutional vandalism); 5/21-3 (criminal trespass to real property); 5/21-5 (criminal trespass to State supported land); 5/21-5.5 (criminal trespass to a safe school zone); 5/21-9 (criminal trespass to a place of public amusement); 5/21-11 (distributing or delivering written or printed solicitation on school property). This sample policy identifies board members as visitors.

The following optional provisions must be modified according to local conditions:

**Option 1:** The Superintendent or designee may post certain school facilities for the community's use on non-school days when they are not being used for school purposes.

**Option 2:** The Superintendent or designee shall manage a program to allow community use of the following facilities on non-school days, during the daylight, provided they are not being used for school purposes: tennis courts, playground, and track.

<sup>582</sup> 105 ILCS 5/14-8.02(g-5). See sample administrative procedure 6:120-AP2, *Access to Classrooms and Personnel*, and sample exhibit 6:120-AP2, E1, *Request to Access Classroom(s) or Personnel for Special Education Evaluation and/or Observation Purposes*.



1. Strike, injure, threaten, harass, or intimidate a staff member, Board member, sports official or coach, or any other person.<sup>583</sup>
2. Behave in an unsportsmanlike manner, or use vulgar or obscene language.
3. Unless specifically permitted by State law, possess a weapon, any object that can reasonably be considered a weapon or looks like a weapon, or any dangerous device.<sup>584</sup>
4. Damage or threaten to damage another's property.<sup>585</sup>
5. Damage or deface school property.<sup>586</sup>
6. Violate any Illinois law,<sup>587</sup> or town or county ordinance.
7. Smoke or otherwise use tobacco products.<sup>588</sup>
8. Distribute, consume, use, possess, or be impaired by or under the influence of an alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug.<sup>589</sup>
9. Be present when the person's alcoholic beverage, cannabis, other lawful product, or illegal drug consumption is detectable, regardless of when and/or where the use occurred.<sup>590</sup>

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<sup>583</sup> See e.g., 720 ILCS 5/12-2 (aggravated assault); 5/12-2(b)(9) (aggravated assault against a sports official or coach); 5/12-3.05(c) (aggravated battery on public property); 5/12-3.05(d)(3) (aggravated battery against a school employee); 5/12-9 (threats to public officials); 5/24-1.2 (discharge of a firearm).

<sup>584</sup> With one exception, a license to carry a firearm does not permit an individual to carry a concealed firearm on or into any building, real property, and/or parking area under the control of an elementary or secondary school, or any bus paid for in whole or part with public funds. 430 ILCS 66/65(a). The following optional provision adds that exception, which is a restatement of 430 ILCS 66/65(b), to the text in number 3:

An individual licensed to carry a concealed firearm under the Illinois Firearm Concealed Carry Act is permitted to: (a) carry a concealed firearm within a vehicle into a parking area controlled by a school or the District and may store a firearm or ammunition concealed in a case within a locked vehicle or locked container out of plain view within the vehicle in the parking area, and/or (b) carry a concealed firearm in the immediate area surrounding his or her vehicle in a parking area controlled by a school or the District for the limited purpose of storing or retrieving a firearm within the vehicle's trunk.

Other relevant weapons laws include 705 ILCS 405/5-407 (juvenile in possession of a firearm), 720 ILCS 5/24-9 (firearms; child protection); 720 ILCS 5/24-1(c) (unlawful use of weapons in schools); 720 ILCS 5/24-1.2, 5/24-3 (unlawful delivery or sale of a firearm near school); 705 ILCS 405/5-130, 405/5-805 (minor 15 years or older who commits aggravated battery with a firearm at school is tried as an adult).

<sup>585</sup> See e.g., 720 ILCS 5/2-19.5 (definition of school), 5/16-1 (theft), 5/18-1 (robbery; aggravated robbery), 5/19-1 (burglary), and 21-1 (criminal damage to property).

<sup>586</sup> See e.g., 720 ILCS 5/21-1.01 (criminal damage to government supported property), 21-1.2 (institutional vandalism), and 21-1.3 (criminal defacement of property).

<sup>587</sup> See e.g., 720 ILCS 5/11-9.3 (presence within school zone by child sex offenders prohibited), 5/11-14 (prostitution), and 5/11-18, amended by P.A. 103-1071, eff. 7-1-25 (patronizing a person engaged in the sex trade); 720 ILCS 5/21-11 (soliciting students to commit illegal acts).

<sup>588</sup> Required by 105 ILCS 5/10-20.5b and 410 ILCS 82/1 et seq. Federal law prohibits smoking inside schools (20 U.S.C. §7973); districts failing to comply with the federal no-smoking ban risk a civil penalty of up to \$1000 per violation per day.

<sup>589</sup> See 720 ILCS 570/407 (delivery of controlled substance on or within 1000 feet of a school) and 410 ILCS 705/ (Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act). See also the discussion in f/n 5 and 6 of sample policy 5:50, *Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition*; this statement must be consistent with employee working conditions and employee conduct standards (see sample administrative procedure 5:120-AP2, *Employee Conduct Standards*).

<sup>590</sup> Each board and superintendent may want to engage in a conversation regarding how the district might partner with local law enforcement to enforce this policy and the penalties available under the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act, e.g., posting signs barring community members from bringing in weapons, alcohol, cannabis, tobacco, etc. Signage reminding visitors of the policy may make it easier for staff and/or local law enforcement to enforce.

10. Use or possess medical cannabis, unless he or she has complied with policy 7:270, *Administering Medicines to Students*, implementing *Ashley's Law*.<sup>591</sup>
11. Impede, delay, disrupt, or otherwise interfere with any school activity or function (including using cellular phones in a disruptive manner).<sup>592</sup>
12. Enter upon any portion of school premises at any time for purposes other than those that are lawful and authorized by the Board.
13. Operate a motor vehicle: (a) in a risky manner, (b) in excess of 20 miles per hour, or (c) in violation of an authorized District employee's directive.<sup>593</sup>
14. Engage in any risky behavior, including roller-blading, roller-skating, or skateboarding.<sup>594</sup>
15. Violate other District policies or regulations, or a directive from an authorized security officer or District employee.
16. Engage in any conduct that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the District or a School function.

#### Convicted Child Sex Offender<sup>595</sup>

State law prohibits a child sex offender from being present on school property or loitering within 500 feet of school property when persons under the age of 18 are present, unless the offender is:

1. A parent/guardian of a student attending the school and has notified the Building Principal of his or her presence at the school for the purpose of: (i) attending a conference at the school with school personnel to discuss the progress of his or her child academically or socially, (ii) participating in child review conferences in which evaluation and placement decisions may be made with respect to his or her child regarding special education services, or (iii) attending conferences to discuss other student issues concerning his or her child such as retention and promotion; or

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<sup>591</sup> Managing cannabis on district property and the school setting presents many unsettled and complex legal issues. To legally use medical cannabis in Illinois, an individual must first become a *registered qualifying patient*. The use of cannabis by a *registered qualifying patient* is permitted only in accordance with the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act (Medical Cannabis Program Act (MCPA)). 410 ILCS 130/. There are many situations in which no one, even a *registered qualifying patient*, may possess or use cannabis, including (a) in a school bus, (b) on the grounds of any preschool or primary or secondary school, or (c) in close physical proximity to anyone under the age of 18 years of age. 410 ILCS 130/30(a)(2), (3), and (4). However, *Ashley's Law*, 105 ILCS 5/22-33(b) and (g), allows parents/guardians and other *designated caregivers* to administer medical cannabis infused products to students who are *registered qualifying patients* at school or on the school bus, and requires school boards to adopt a policy to implement the law unless the district would lose federal funding. See sample policy 7:270, *Administering Medicines to Students* and its f/n 22.

Remember that *Ashley's Law* requires the designated caregiver to remove the product from the school premises or the school bus after administering it to the student, so as a result, sample policy 7:270, *Administering Medicines to Students*, requires immediate removal of medical cannabis infused products after administering them to the student (see f/n 27 of that policy for further discussions).

<sup>592</sup> See e.g., 720 ILCS 5/21.2-1 *et seq.* (interference with a public institution of education).

<sup>593</sup> See e.g., 625 ILCS 5/11-605 (special speed limit zones). 625 ILCS 5/12-610.1(e) prohibits wireless telephone use while operating a motor vehicle on a roadway in a school speed zone except for emergency purposes. 625 ILCS 5/12-803(f), added by P.A. 103-404, prohibits motor vehicle drivers from making contact with any portion of a stopped school bus or making contact with a school child within 30 feet of the school bus.

<sup>594</sup> The pivotal question in a negligence case is whether the defendant acted reasonably. A ban on rollerblading demonstrates that the district took reasonable steps to reduce the risk of injury.

<sup>595</sup> 720 ILCS 5/11-9.3(a). The definition of *child sex offender* is found at 720 ILCS 11-9.3(d), amended by P.A. 103-1071, eff. 7-1-25. The statute assigns the child sex offender the "duty to remain under the direct supervision of a school official." In order to ensure this happens and to protect students, the sample policy requires the superintendent, or designee who is a certified employee, to supervise a child sex offender whenever the offender is in a child's vicinity. See also the Sex Offender Community Notification Law (730 ILCS 152/101 *et seq.*); Murderer and Violent Offender Against Youth Community Notification Law (730 ILCS 154/75 - 154/105); sample policy 4:170, *Safety*; and sample administrative procedure 4:175-AP1, *Criminal Offender Notification Laws; Screening*.

2. Has permission to be present from the Board, Superintendent, or Superintendent's designee. If permission is granted, the Superintendent or Board President shall provide the details of the offender's upcoming visit to the Building Principal.

In all cases, the Superintendent, or designee who is a certified employee, shall supervise a child sex offender whenever the offender is in a child's vicinity.

#### Exclusive Bargaining Representative Agent <sup>596</sup>

Upon notifying the Building Principal's office, authorized agents of an exclusive bargaining representative will be provided reasonable access to employees in the bargaining unit they represent in accordance with State law. Such access shall be conducted in a manner that will not impede the normal operations of the District.

#### Enforcement

Any staff member may request identification from any person on school property; refusal to provide such information is a criminal act.<sup>597</sup> The Building Principal or designee shall seek the immediate removal of any person who refuses to provide requested identification.

Any person who engages in conduct prohibited by this policy may be ejected from or denied admission to school property in accordance with State law.<sup>598</sup> The person also may be subject to being denied admission to school athletic or extracurricular events for up to one calendar year in accordance with the procedures below.

<sup>599</sup>

#### Procedures to Deny Future Admission to Athletic or Extracurricular School Events

Before any person may be denied admission to athletic or extracurricular school events, the person has a right to a hearing before the Board. The Superintendent may refuse the person admission pending such hearing. The Superintendent or designee must provide the person with a hearing notice, delivered or sent by certified

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<sup>596</sup> 105 ILCS 5/24-25; 115 ILCS 5/3(c). If a provision contained in a collective bargaining agreement addresses this issue, it will supersede this policy for those covered employees. In such cases, the board policy should be amended to state, "Please refer to the applicable collective bargaining agreement." For employees whose collective bargaining agreement does not address this subject, the policy should reflect the board's current practice. Consult the board attorney about this subhead. It is an item on which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts wages, hours, or terms and conditions of employment, is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right. Amend the language to reflect what is recommended by the board attorney.

The School Code permits bargaining representatives to meet with employees during *duty-free time* upon notice to the school office. The Ill. Educational Labor Relations Act expanded the rights of access by bargaining representatives to also include meeting with employees during the employee work day if the meeting: (1) is to investigate and discuss grievances and workplace-related complaints (no time limit is specified) or (2) is with a newly hired employee within the first two weeks of employment (or on a later date if mutually agreed upon by the employee and bargaining representative) for one hour or less. In those circumstances, the district may not dock employee pay or charge leave time. 115 ILCS 5/3(c). However, the access must be *reasonable* and "shall at all times be conducted in a manner so as not to impede normal operations." *Id.* Consult the board attorney for guidance regarding specific requests and whether, if granted, they would impede normal operations, e.g., requests for access to staff while they are performing instructional or supervisory duties. Determining whether normal operations are impeded will likely depend upon the position and duties of the employee in the district.

<sup>597</sup> 105 ILCS 5/24-25. Refusal to provide such information is a Class A misdemeanor.

<sup>598</sup> 105 ILCS 5/10-20.5 (rules), 5/10-22.10 (control and supervision of school houses and school grounds); 720 ILCS 5/21-3 (criminal trespass to real property), 5/21-5 (criminal trespass to State supported land), 5/21-5.5 (criminal trespass to a safe school zone). See f/n 3, above.

<sup>599</sup> See Nuding v. Cerro Gordo Comm. Unit Sch. Dist., 313 Ill. App.3d 344 (4th Dist. 2000) (board was authorized to ban parent from attending all school events and extracurricular activities by 105 ILCS 5/24-24 and to enforce conduct rules at its meetings by 105 ILCS 5/10-20.5; the ban was based on the parent's exposing a toy gun and a pocketknife at a board meeting); Jordan ex rel. Edwards v. O'Fallon Tp. High Sch. Dist., 302 Ill.App.3d 1070 (5th Dist. 1999) (105 ILCS 5/24-24 did not give a high school athlete the right, under the due process clause, to a notice and hearing before he could be suspended from participating in interscholastic athletics; the statute expands the schools' authority to ban people from attending school events for breaching conduct and sportsmanship code).

mail with return receipt requested, at least ten days before the Board hearing date. The hearing notice must contain:<sup>600</sup>

1. The date, time, and place of the Board hearing;
2. A description of the prohibited conduct;
3. The proposed time period that admission to school events will be denied; and
4. Instructions on how to waive a hearing.<sup>601</sup>

LEGAL REF.: 20 U.S.C. §7971 et seq., Pro-Children Act of 2001.

Nuding v. Cerro Gordo Community Unit School Dist., 313 Ill. App.3d 344 (4th Dist. 2000).

105 ILCS 5/10-20.5, 10-20.5b, 5/10-22.10, 5/22-33, 5/24-25, and 5/27-23.7(a).

115 ILCS 5/3(c), Ill. Educational Labor Relations Act.

410 ILCS 130/, Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program Act.

410 ILCS 705/, Cannabis Tax and Regulation Act.

430 ILCS 66/, Firearm Concealed Carry Act.

720 ILCS 5/11-9.3, 5/21-1, 5/21-1.2, 5/21-3, 5/21-5, 5/21-5.5, 5/21-9, and 5/21-11.

CROSS REF.: 2:200 (Types of School Board Meetings), 2:230 (Public Participation at School Board Meetings and Petitions to the Board), 4:170 (Safety), 5:50 (Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition), 6:120 (Education of Children with Disabilities), 6:250 (Community Resource Persons and Volunteers), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:270 (Administering Medicines to Students), 8:20 (Community Use of School Facilities)

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<sup>600</sup> 105 ILCS 5/24-24. If a violator is a student, the hearing should be held in a closed meeting. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(9). Otherwise, a hearing regarding denial of admission to *school events or property* pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/24-24 may take place in an open meeting or in a closed meeting so long as the board prepares and makes available for public inspection a written decision setting forth its determinative reasoning. 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(4.5), added by P.A. 103-311. Note: while 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(4.5), added by P.A. 103-311, refers to *school events or property*, 105 ILCS 5/24-24 only authorizes boards to deny admission to athletic and extracurricular *events*. The term *events* is arguably broader than *property* as school events may take place offsite; consult the board attorney for guidance.

Some boards prefer an open meeting hearing to make it publicly known what alleged conduct could result in someone being denied admission to athletic or extracurricular events, while others prefer a closed meeting hearing so as not to provide a public platform to someone alleged to have engaged in prohibited conduct. Consult the board attorney to determine the best approach for the district and to ensure alignment with local practices and conditions.

This text aligns with 105 ILCS 5/24-24 and only requires a hearing for denying admission to *school events*. The court in *Nuding* (see f/n 20, above) did not specifically answer whether a board meeting qualified as a *school event* under 105 ILCS 5/24-24, but it upheld the board's right to enforce conduct rules at its meetings under 105 ILCS 5/10-20.5.

Consult the board attorney if the district would like to deny an individual admission to board meetings. This issue involves a balancing of a board's interest in the orderly transaction of its public business and the efficiency of its meetings against an individual's: (a) statutory rights to attend meetings and/or comment to and ask questions of the board (105 ILCS 5/10-16 and 5 ILCS 120/2.06(g)), and (b) constitutional freedoms and rights of speech, the press, assembly, and to petition the government (U.S. Constitution, First Amendment and Ill. Constitution, Art. I, §§ 1, 2, 4, and 5).

<sup>601</sup> The hearing requirement is for the violator's benefit and, consequently, the violator should be able to waive it.