

Document Status: Draft Update - Rewritten

Section 2 - BOARD OF EDUCATION

2:265 Title IX Grievance Procedure

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) [PRESSPlus1](#) 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:

1. A District employee conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; 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
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).

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.

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.

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

Respondent means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of the conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

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.

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, and (b) age-appropriate education about the warning signs, recognition, dangers, and prevention of teen dating violence in grades 7-12. 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*.
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, [PRESSPlus2](#) or a Complaint Manager.
3. Notifies applicants for employment, 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.

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, [PRESSPlus3](#) a Complaint Manager, or any employee with whom the person is comfortable speaking.

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. [PRESSPlus4](#)

Title IX Coordinator:

Name: [TBD, Director Human Resources](#)
Address: [300 Caterpillar Drive, Joliet, IL 60436](#)
Email
Telephone: [815-727-6903](#)

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.

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. 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*; 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.

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. The District's grievance process shall, at a minimum:

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.
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:
 - b. Not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual *Complainant* or *Respondent*.
 - c. 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.
4. 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.
5. Require that any individual designated by the District as a decision-maker receive training [PRESSPlus5](#) 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.
6. 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.
7. Include reasonably prompt timeframes for conclusion of the grievance process.
8. Describe the range of possible disciplinary sanctions and remedies the District may implement following any determination of responsibility.
9. Base all decisions upon the *preponderance of evidence* standard. [PRESSPlus6](#)
10. Include the procedures and permissible bases for the *Complainant* and *Respondent* to appeal.
11. Describe the range of *supportive measures* available to *Complainants* and *Respondents*.
12. 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.

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. 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.

Retaliation Prohibited

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*.

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)

PRESSPlus Comments

[PRESSPlus 1.](#) Rewritten in response to *State of Tennessee v. Cardona*, striking down the 2024 Title IX sex discrimination regulations and restoring the 2020 Title IX regulations. See the sample policy 2:265's footnotes, available at PRESS Online by logging in at www.iasb.com, for more information. **Issue 118, April 2025**

[PRESSPlus 2.](#) If the district does not employ an Assistant Building Principal and/or Dean of Students, strike the title(s) that do not apply, and use the Save Status "Adopted with Additional District Edits." **Issue 118, April 2025**

[PRESSPlus 3.](#) If the district does not employ an Assistant Building Principal and/or Dean of Students, strike the title(s) that do not apply, and use the Save Status "Adopted with Additional District Edits." **Issue 118, April 2025**

[PRESSPlus 4.](#) While the name and contact information is required by law to be listed, it is not part of the adopted policy and does not require board action. It is important for the updated name 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. If the 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 Title IX Coordinator with ultimate oversight should be listed in this policy.

Please [click here to submit the name and contact information](#) that will be applied to each of the following policies: 2:260, 2:265, 5:10, 5:20, 7:20, 7:180, and 7:255. Following the form's submission, IASB will add the Title IX Coordinator's name and contact information to this policy. **Issue 118, April 2025**

[PRESSPlus 5.](#) 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." After inserting the underscored text, use the Save Status "Adopted with Additional District Edits." **Issue 118, April 2025**

[PRESSPlus 6](#). 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. *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*, available at PRESS Online by logging in at www.iasb.com. **Issue 118, April 2025**