

Document Status: Draft Update - New

2:265 Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure

New/Unpublished Section

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)^{PRESSPlus1} concerning everyone in the District's education programs and activities, including applicants for employment, students, parents/guardians, employees, and third parties.^{PRESSPlus2}

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 whenever that person engages in conduct on the basis of an individual's sex that satisfies one or more of the following:^{PRESSPlus3}

1. A District employee conditions the provision of an aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;^{PRESSPlus4} 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)(10), *domestic violence* as defined in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(8), or *stalking* as defined in 34 U.S.C. §12291(a)(30).^{PRESSPlus5}

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

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. [PRESSPlus6](#)

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 pursuant to policy 5:100, *Staff Development Program*, and as recommended by the Superintendent, Title IX Coordinator, Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, ^{Q1}Dean of Students, ^{Q2}or a Complaint Manager. [PRESSPlus7](#)
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. [PRESSPlus8](#)

Making a Report

A person who wishes to make a report under this Title IX Sexual Harassment 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

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.^{PRESSPlus15} 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:
 - 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.
 1. 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.
 2. Require that any individual designated by the District as a decision-maker receive training on^{Q3} 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.
 3. 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.
 4. Include reasonably prompt timeframes for conclusion of the grievance process.
 5. Describe the range of possible disciplinary sanctions and remedies the District may implement following any determination of responsibility.
 6. Base all decisions upon the *preponderance of evidence* standard.^{Q4}
 7. Include the procedures and permissible bases for the *Complainant* and *Respondent* to appeal.
 8. Describe the range of *supportive measures* available to *Complainants* and *Respondents*.
 9. 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.^{PRESSPlus16}

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.^{PRESSPlus17} 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.^{PRESSPlus18}

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*.^{PRESSPlus19}

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; Conduct, and Conflict of Interest), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities),

speaking.^{PRESSPlus9} A person who wishes to make a report may choose to report to a person of the same gender.

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.^{PRESSPlus10}

Title IX Coordinator:

Name	Janah Sudduth-Mottola
Address	1121 CR 800 N Tolono, IL 61880
Email	sudduthj@unity.k12.il.us
Telephone	(217)485-6510

James Carver
1638 CR 1000 N Philo, IL 61864
carverj@unity.k12.il.us
(217)684-5218

Processing and Reviewing a Report or Complaint

Upon receipt of a report, 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*.^{PRESSPlus11}

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.^{PRESSPlus12} 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; Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*,^{PRESSPlus13} 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.^{PRESSPlus14}

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)

Questions and Answers:

***Required Question 1. Does the District employ Assistant Principals?

- Yes (default)
- No (IASB will remove Assistant Building Principal references from the policy)

***Required Question 2. Does the District employ a Dean of Students?

- Yes (default)
- No (IASB will remove Dean of Students references from the policy)

***Required Question 3. 34 C.F.R. §106.45(b)(1) lists the basic requirements for a grievance process. 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.**

Will the District use a live hearing during the grievance process?

- No (default)
- Yes (IASB will amend #5 by inserting the following after "receive training on": "any technology to be used at a live hearing and on")

***Required Question 4. 34 C.F.R. §106.45(b)(1)(vii) requires the Title IX sexual harassment grievance process to state the standard of evidence it will use to determine responsibility of the respondent. The standard of evidence 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 policy uses the *preponderance of the evidence* standard, not the *clear and convincing evidence* standard. *Preponderance of evidence* is a standard 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 the evidence* is the standard used in sample policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. *Clear and convincing* is a higher standard, requiring more than *preponderance of the 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 for the**

district, as well as implications if a different standard is used in this policy than in 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. Ensure the same standard of evidence is used in the district's implemented administrative procedure 2:265-AP2, *Formal Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Grievance Process*.

Which standard of proof has the Board adopted for policy 2:265?

- Preponderance of evidence (default)
- Clear and convincing evidence (IASB will replace "preponderance of" with "clear and convincing")

PRESSPlus Comments

PRESSPlus 1. The final Title IX regulations are eff. 8-14-20; however, their complexity and scope means that districts are unlikely to finalize policies until after the effective date. It is important for school officials to discuss Title IX requirements with their board attorneys, to ensure full implementation and to reduce risks based on Title IX's intersection with local and State laws and regulations. See the **PRESS Issue 105 Update Memo**, available at **PRESS Online** by logging in at www.iasb.com, for more information. **Issue 105, August 2020**

PRESSPlus 2. 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). Though 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. **Issue 105, August 2020**

PRESSPlus 3. 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). **Issue 105, August 2020**

PRESSPlus 4. 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. **Issue 105, August 2020**

PRESSPlus 5. See sample exhibit 2:265-E, *Title IX Sexual Harassment Glossary of Terms*, available at **PRESS** Online by logging in at www.iasb.com, for these definitions and other definitions of italicized terms in this policy. **Issue 105, August 2020**

PRESSPlus 6. See sample administrative procedure 2:265-AP1, *Title IX Sexual Harassment Response*, available at **PRESS** Online by logging in at www.iasb.com, for further discussion of supportive measures. **Issue 105, August 2020**

PRESSPlus 7. If the Board's policy 5:100, *Staff Development Program*, does not include the paragraphs listing trainings (from footnote 4 of sample policy 5:100), IASB will remove the phrase ~~pursuant to policy 5:100, *Staff Development Program*~~, and. **Issue 105, August 2020**

PRESSPlus 8. A district must prominently display its Title IX non-discrimination policies (policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, and this policy 2:265, *Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure*) and contact information for its Title IX coordinator(s) 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