



District Advisory Council (DAC) 2024-2025

Thursday, November 7, 2024

6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Howell Center, 3955 W. Pensacola Street

	What	Who	Outcome
1.	Welcome and Introductions	Dr. Michelle Gayle, Deputy Superintendent	
2.	Approval of Agenda	Jacquelyn Steele, Chair	Vote
3.	Approval of Minutes (October 2024)	Jacquelyn Steele, Chair	Vote
4.	Policy Overview  Policy 5517 Anti-Harassment Owner: Tonja Fitzgerald & Wallace Knight	Wallace Knight, Director Planning & Policy	Vote
5.	LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library	Pam Monroe, Library Director	Information
6.	Early Childhood/Early Learning	Brooke Brunner, Director	Information
7.	Parent Engagement- Break Out Session	Dr. Michelle Gayle, Deputy Superintendent	Information
8.	SAC Questions		Information
9.	Wrap up on Issue		Information
	Adjourn		

*\*Please note that one or more Board members may attend this meeting.*



**Next Meeting: December 5, 2024**

**District Advisory Council**  
**Thursday, October 10, 2024**  
**In-Person Meeting: 6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M**

- I. **Schools/Members Attending:** Jacquelyn Steele (Chair/Conley), Scott Whittle (Parliamentary/District Staff), Kristen Hunter (Secretary/Sullivan), Jane Floyd-Bullen (A.C.E. Transitions/ Everhart), Joanne Clark (A.C.E.), Stepan Davis (Astoria Park), Renee Gadson (Bond), Linda Edson (Buck Lake/Swift Creek), Ursula Moore (Bond), Daniel Zeruto (Buck Lake), James Michael Sutherland (Canopy Oaks), Britannia Davidson (Canopy Oaks), Lyndon Dallas (Cobb), Taita Scott (Deerlake), Kristin McClellan (Early Childhood), Dr. Karen Minert (E.S.E.), Cheryl Collier-Brown (Fairview), Mandi Mayer (Fairview), Erica Stetler (St. Braden), Sophia Perkins (Hartsfield), Katie Lyons (Hawks Rise), Lauren Brewer (K.L.E.S.), Dr. Louis Dilbert (L.C.S.B.: Dr. Marcus Nicolas), Scott Mazur (L.C.T.A.), Katie Crawley (L.C.V.S.) Shelley Green (Lincoln), Nathaniel Wienert (DeSoto Trails), Andreka Rittman (NIMS), Sandra Alber (Oak Ridge), Ranae A. Vos (PACE), Gia Gallon (Pineview), Melissa E Cooper (Rickards), Leah Hutchins (Riley), Brandi Andrews (Roberts), Laci Moore (Ruediger), Glondetra Arnold (Sealey), Deanna C. Hughes (Sealey), Susan Jones (Springwood), Niah Hatcher (G.L.C.), Desmond Cole (Superintendent Appointee- High Schools/Godby), Cari Molinaro (Woodville)
- II. **District Members/Visitors:** Shane Syfrett (Asst. Superintendent), Stacey Turknnett (PICS), Laurie Cox (Board Member), April Knight (Title 1), Beth Young (Parent/Ft. Braden)
- III. **Excused Members:** Demaris Barrios (Vice Chair/DeSoto Trail/Montford), Kristy Ward (ACE-Transitions), Stacy Ball (Chaires), Kelly Willis (Gilchrist), Gillian Stewart (L.C.S.B.: Rosanne Wood), Wallace Knight (Policy and Title 9), LaToyer Hankerson (Sabal Palm), Amy Alvis (Superintendent Appointee: Special Sites/G.L.C.), Kerri Anderson (Superintendent Appointee- Elementary/Moore), Jason Koerner (Superintendent Appointee- Middle/ Swift Creek), Dr. Hightower (Apalachee)
- IV. **Approval of Agenda:** Cheryl Collier-Brown made the motion to approve the October 10, 2024, agenda, which was seconded by Shane Syfrett. The motion was unanimously approved.
- V. **Approval of Minutes:** Cheryl Collier-Brown moved to approve the agenda for September 19, 2024, which Scott Whittle seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.
- VI. **Policy Updates:**
  - Policy 2520 Adoption of Instructional Materials—Nathaniel Wienert made the motion to approve Policy 2520, which was seconded by Cheryl Collier-Brown. The motion was unanimously approved.
  - Policy 3120.03 Athletic Coaches- The motion to approve Policy 3120.03 was made by Daniel Zeruto and seconded by Scott Whittle. The motion was unanimously approved.

District Advisory Council  
Thursday, October 10, 2024  
In-Person Meeting: 6:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M

- Policy 3120.08 Part-Time Extra-Curricular Personnel- The motion to approve Policy 3120.08 was made by Daniel Zeruto and seconded by Scott Whittle. The motion was unanimously approved.
- Policy 7440.03 Small Unmanned Aircraft Systems- The motion to approve Policy 7440.03 was made by Cheryl Collier-Brown and seconded by Scott Whittle. The motion was unanimously approved.

- VII. Title I:** April Knight, Director of Title 1 for LCS, presented. The main purpose is to increase student achievement under **Every Student Success Act** and strengthen parent and family engagement. This is a supplementary grant that also supports at-home learning and supports parents. For the 2024-2025 school year, LCS has 18 traditional public schools, two particular school sites, one public charter, and nine private schools that receive funds from Title 1. You can find the names of schools and all of this information on the LCS Title One page. PACE is a skipped school but receives funding from Title 1 Part D, financing from the DJJ, and the neglected and delinquent. DOE caps the funding for parent engagement at 2%, and 80% of the fund is used to hire appropriate school staff.  $FTE + \text{Eligible students} + \text{eligible private students} + \text{total schools (public, charter, and private)} = \text{Title 1 Allocation}$ . Carryforward (roll-forward) is unused funds from public, charter, and private schools (private is in a different fund). Private school shares must remain separate from public funds. You can only carry forward 15% of the grant.
- VIII. Suggestions for Agenda Topics:** Each table discussed possible topics for future agendas at DAC meetings. Topics were written on sticky notes and collected.
- IX. Wrap-Up:** Jacquelyn Steele spoke about the upcoming DAC By-Laws committee. If you want to sign up or participate in the DAC By-Laws committee, please email Stacey Turknnett.
- X. Adjourn: 7:10 P.M.**



Book	Policy Manual
Section	5000 Students
Title	ANTI-HARASSMENT
Code	po5517
Status	
Legal	<p>42 U.S.C. 1983</p> <p>20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.</p> <p>42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq., Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended</p> <p>29 U.S.C. 6101, The Age Discrimination Act of 1975</p> <p>29 U.S.C. 794, Rehabilitation Act of 1973</p> <p>29 U.S.C. 621 et seq., Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967</p> <p>42 U.S.C. 2000e et seq.</p> <p>42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.</p> <p>20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq., The Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act of 2004, as amended (commonly known as The Individuals with Disabilities Act)</p> <p>F.S. 110.1221, 784.049, 1000.05, 1006.07</p>
Adopted	September 4, 2012
Last Revised	August 27, 2013

## 5517 - ANTI-HARASSMENT

### General Policy Statement

It is the policy of the School Board to maintain an educational and work environment that is free from all forms of unlawful harassment, including sexual harassment. This commitment applies to all School District operations, programs, and activities. All students, administrators, teachers, staff, and all other school personnel share responsibility for avoiding, discouraging, and reporting any form of unlawful harassment. This policy applies to unlawful conduct occurring on school property, or at another location if such conduct occurs during an activity sponsored by the Board.

The Board will vigorously enforce its prohibition against discriminatory harassment based on the basis traits of sex, race, color, national origin, pregnancy, marital status, age (except as authorized by law) military status, ancestry, religion, or disability, or genetic information which are classes that are protected by State and/or Federal civil rights laws (collectively, "protected classes") (hereinafter referred to as unlawful harassment), and encourages those within the School District community as well as Third Parties, who feel aggrieved to seek assistance to rectify such problems. The Board will investigate all allegations of unlawful harassment and in those cases where unlawful harassment is substantiated, the Board will take immediate steps to end the harassment, prevent its reoccurrence, and remedy its effects. Individuals who are found to have engaged in unlawful harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Further, nothing in this policy shall be construed to abridge the rights of students or school employees that are protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

~~For purposes of this policy, "School District community" means students, administrators, teachers, staff, as well as Board members, agents, volunteers, contractors, or other persons subject to the control and supervision of the Board.~~

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

## **Other Violations of the Anti-Harassment Policy**

The Board will also take immediate steps to impose disciplinary action on individuals engaging in any of the following prohibited acts:

- A. Retaliating against a person who has made a report or filed a complaint alleging unlawful harassment, or who has participated as a witness in a harassment investigation.
- B. Filing a malicious or knowingly false report or complaint of unlawful harassment.
- C. Disregarding, failing to investigate adequately, or delaying investigation of allegations of unlawful harassment, when responsibility for reporting and/or investigating unlawful harassment charges comprises part of one's supervisory duties.

## **Definitions**

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

### **Complainant**

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

### **Respondent**

Respondent is the individual who has been alleged to have engaged in unlawful harassment, regardless of whether the reporting party files a formal complaint or is seeking an informal resolution to the alleged harassment.

### **School District Community**

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

### **Third Parties**

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

### **Day(s)**

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

### **Bullying**

Bullying rises to the level of unlawful harassment when one or more persons systematically and chronically inflict physical hurt or psychological distress on one (1) or more students or employees and that bullying is based upon sex, race, color, national origin, religion, or disability, that is, characteristics that are protected by Federal civil rights laws. It is defined as any unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by an adult or student, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive



educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation and may involve:

- A. teasing;
- B. threats;
- C. intimidation;
- D. stalking;
- E. cyberstalking;
- F. cyberbullying;
- G. physical violence;
- H. theft;
- I. sexual, religious, or racial harassment;
- J. public humiliation; or
- K. destruction of property.

### Harassment

Harassment means any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

- A. places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to ~~their~~his/her person or damage to ~~their~~his/her property;
- B. has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or
- C. has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

### Sexual Harassment

~~For purposes of this policy and consistent with~~Pursuant to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 ~~and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972~~, "sexual harassment" is defined as:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when:

- A. Submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, or status in a class, educational program, or activity.
- B. Submission or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or educational decisions affecting such individual.
- C. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity.

Sexual harassment may involve the behavior of a person of ~~any~~either sexgender against a person of the same or ~~another~~opposite sexgender.

Sexual harassment covered by Policy 2266 - Sexual Discrimination in Education Programs and Activities is not included in this policy. Allegations of such conduct shall be addressed solely by Policy 2266.

Prohibited acts that constitute sexual harassment ~~under this policy~~ may take a variety of forms. Examples of the kinds of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- A. Unwelcome sexual propositions, invitations, solicitations, and flirtations.

- B. Unwanted physical and/or sexual contact.
- C. Threats or insinuations that a person's employment, wages, academic grade, promotion, classroom work or assignments, academic status, participation in athletics or extra-curricular programs or events, or other conditions of employment or education may be adversely affected by not submitting to sexual advances.
- D. Unwelcome verbal expressions ~~of a sexual nature~~, including graphic sexual commentaries about a person's body, dress, appearance, or sexual activities; the unwelcome use of sexually degrading language, **profanity**, jokes or innuendoes; unwelcome suggestive or insulting sounds or whistles; obscene telephone calls.
- E. Sexually suggestive objects, pictures, **graffiti, videos, posters, videotapes**, audio recordings, or literature, placed in the work or educational environment, **that may reasonably be expected to embarrass or offend individuals.**
- F. Unwelcome and inappropriate touching, patting, or pinching; obscene gestures.
- G. **Asking about, or telling about, sexual fantasies, sexual preferences, or sexual activities.**
- H. **Speculations about a person's sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one's own sexual activities or sexual history.**
- I. **Giving unwelcome personal gifts such as lingerie that suggests the desire for a romantic relationship.**
- J. **Leering or staring at someone in a sexual way, such as staring at a person's breasts, buttocks, or groin.**
- K. A pattern of conduct, which can be subtle in nature, that has sexual overtones and is intended to create or has the effect of creating discomfort and/or humiliation to another.
- L. **Inappropriate boundary invasions by a District employee or other adult member of the School District community into a student's personal space and personal life.** ~~Remarks speculating about a person's sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one's own sexual activities or sexual history.~~
- M. Verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping that does not involve conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment includes sexual violence, which means physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent. A number of acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, and sexual coercion.

Not all behavior with sexual connotations constitutes unlawful sexual harassment. Sex-based or gender-based conduct must be sufficiently severe, pervasive, and persistent such that it adversely affects, limits, or denies an individual's education, or such that it creates a hostile or abusive educational environment, or such that it is intended to, or has the effect of, denying or limiting a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the educational program or activities.

**NOTE:** Any teacher, administrator, coach, or other school authority who engages in sexual conduct with a student may also be guilty of a crime.

### **Sexual Cyberharassment**

Pursuant to Florida law, "sexual cyberharassment" means to publish to an Internet website or disseminate through electronic means to another person a sexually explicit image of a person that contains or conveys the personal identification information of the depicted person without the depicted person's consent, contrary to the depicted person's reasonable expectation that the image would remain private, for no legitimate purpose, with the intent of causing substantial emotional distress to the depicted person. Evidence that the depicted person sent a sexually explicit image to another person does not, on its own, remove their reasonable expectation of privacy for that image. Sexual cyberharassment may be a form of sexual harassment.

### **Race/Color Harassment (Including Anti-Semitism)**

Prohibited racial harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's race or color and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur



where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's race or color, such as racial slurs, nicknames implying stereotypes, epithets, and/or negative references relative to racial customs.

Prohibited anti-Semitism harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's Jewish identity or heritage and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working, and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is based upon a certain perception of the Jewish people, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jewish people, rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism directed toward a person, their property, or toward Jewish community institutional or religious facilities.

Contemporary examples of anti-Semitism may include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

- A. Calling, for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion.
- B. Making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions.
- C. Accusing Jews as a people of being responsible for real or imagined wrongdoing committed by a single Jewish person or group, or even for acts committed by non-Jews.
- D. Denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g. gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust).
- E. Accusing the Jews as a people, or Israel as a state, of inventing or exaggerating the Holocaust.
- F. Accusing Jewish citizens of being more loyal to Israel, or to the alleged priorities of Jews worldwide, than to the interests of their own nations.
- G. Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.
- H. Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.
- I. Using the symbols and images associated with classic antisemitism (e.g., claims of Jews killing Jesus or blood libel) to characterize Israel or Israelis.
- J. Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.
- K. Holding Jews collectively responsible for actions of the state of Israel.

However, criticism of Israel that is similar to criticism toward any other country may not be regarded as anti-Semitic.

### Religious (Creed) Harassment

Prohibited religious harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's religion or creed and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's religious tradition, clothing, or surnames, and/or involves religious slurs.

### National Origin Harassment

Prohibited national origin harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's national origin and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's national origin, such as negative comments regarding customs, manner of speaking, language, surnames, or ethnic slurs.

### Disability Harassment

Prohibited disability harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's disability and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's disability~~disabling condition~~, such as negative comments about speech patterns, movement, physical impairments or defects/appearances, or the like.

### Pregnancy Harassment



Prohibited pregnancy harassment occurs when unwelcome physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct is based upon an individual's pregnancy and when the conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from a class or an educational program or activity. Such harassment may occur where conduct is directed at the characteristics of a person's pregnancy and condition of pregnancy.

## **Reports and Complaints of Harassing Conduct**

Board and/or District employees are required to promptly report incidents of unlawful harassing conduct to an administrator, supervisor, or other School District official so that the Board may address the conduct before it becomes severe, pervasive, or persistent. Students and all other members of the School District community, as well as ~~Third Parties~~, which includes all staff, are encouraged to promptly report incidents of unlawful harassing conduct to a teacher, administrator, supervisor, or other School District employee or official so that the Board may address the conduct before it becomes severe, pervasive, or persistent. Any teacher, administrator, supervisor, or other District employee or official who receives such a ~~report~~ ~~complaint~~ shall file it with the District's ~~Anti-Harassment~~ Compliance Officer within two (2) days (forty-eight (48) hours) of receiving the report of harassment.

Members of the School District community, which includes students, or ~~Third Parties~~ who believe they have been unlawfully harassed are entitled to utilize the Board's complaint process that is set forth below. Initiating a complaint, whether formally or informally, will not adversely affect the ~~Complainant's~~ ~~complaining individual's~~ employment or participation in educational or extra-curricular programs unless the complaining individual makes the complaint maliciously or with knowledge that it is false. While there are no limits for initiating complaints of harassment under this policy, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint as soon as possible after the conduct occurs while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available.

If, during an investigation of reported act of bullying and/or harassment in accordance with Policy 5517.01 – Bullying and Harassment, the principal or ~~their~~ ~~his/her~~ designee believes that the reported misconduct may have created a hostile learning environment and may have constituted unlawful discriminatory harassment based on sex, race (including anti-Semitism), color, national origin, religion, or disability, the principal or ~~their~~ ~~his/her~~ designee will report the act of bullying and/or harassment to one of the Compliance Officers who shall investigate the allegation in accordance with this policy. If the alleged harassment involves Sexual Harassment as defined by Policy 2266, the matter will be handled in accordance with the grievance process and procedures outlined in Policy 2266. While the Compliance Officer investigates the allegation, or while the matter is being addressed pursuant to Policy 2266, the Principal shall suspend the Policy 5517.01 investigation to await the Compliance Officer's written report or the determination of responsibility pursuant to Policy 2266. The Compliance Officer shall keep the Principal informed of the status of the Policy 5517 investigation and provide the Principal with a copy of the resulting written report. Likewise, the Title IX Coordinator will provide the Principal with the determination of responsibility that results from the Policy 2266 grievance process.

## **Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers**

The superintendent shall designate ~~following~~ individuals to serve as the District's "Anti-Harassment Compliance Officers" (also known as "Civil Rights Coordinators"); for the District. They are hereinafter referred to as the "~~COs~~ Compliance Officers".

Equity and Title IX Compliance Officer  
Dr. Kathleen L. Rodgers  
2757 West Pensacola Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32304  
850-487-7306  
rodgersk@leon.k12.fl.us

504 Specialist  
Dr. Margot Palazesi  
2757 West Pensacola Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32304  
850-487-7161  
palazesim@leon.k12.fl.us

## **Publication Required**

The names, titles, and contact information of the ~~Anti-Harassment~~ Compliance Officers will be published annually in the parent and staff handbooks, in the School District Annual Report to the public, on the School District's web site, on each individual school's web site, and/or in the School District's calendar.

The names, titles, and/or contact information of the persons presently serving as Compliance Officers may change from time to time, and such changes shall be deemed technical corrections within the meaning of Bylaw 0131.1 and shall be made pursuant to that bylaw.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

A Compliance Officer will be available during regular school/work hours to discuss concerns related to unlawful harassment, to assist students, other members of the School District community, and ~~Third Parties~~ who seek support or advice when informing another individual about "unwelcome" conduct, or to intercede informally on behalf of the student.

Any Board employee who directly observes unlawful harassment of a student is obligated, in accordance with this policy, to report such observations to one of the Compliance Officers within two (2) business days. Thereafter, the Compliance Officer or designee must contact the ~~Complainant student~~, if age eighteen (18) or older, or the ~~Complainant's student's~~ parent/guardians if under the age of eighteen (18), within three (3) business days to advise ~~s/he~~ them of the Board's intent to investigate the alleged misconduct, including the obligation of the compliance officer or designee to conduct an investigation following all the procedures outlined for a formal complaint.

The Compliance Officers are assigned to accept complaints of unlawful harassment directly from any member of the School District community or a visitor to the District, or to receive complaints that are initially filed with a school building administrator. Upon receipt of a complaint either directly or through a school building administrator, a Compliance Officer will begin either an informal or formal process (depending on the request of the member of the School District community alleging harassment or the nature of the alleged harassment), or the Compliance Officer will designate a specific individual to conduct such a process. In the case of a formal complaint, the Compliance Officer will prepare recommendations for the Superintendent or will oversee the preparation of such recommendations by a designee. All members of the School District community must report incidents of harassment that are reported to them to the Compliance Officer within forty-eight (48) hours of learning of the incident.

### **Investigation and Complaint Procedure**

~~Except of Sexual Harassment that is covered by Policy 2266 - Sexual Discrimination in Education Programs and Activities, Any student who believes that they have s/he has been subjected to unlawful harassment may seek resolution of their his/her complaint through the procedures described below. The formal complaint process involves an investigation of the Complainant's claims of harassment or retaliation and a process for rendering a decision regarding whether the charges are substantiated. either the informal or formal procedures as described below. Further, a process for investigating claims of harassment and a process for rendering a decision regarding whether the claim of legally prohibited harassment was substantiated are set forth below.~~

Due to the sensitivity surrounding complaints of unlawful harassment, time lines are flexible for initiating the complaint process; however, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint within sixty (60) days after the conduct occurs while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available. Once the formal complaint process is begun, the investigation will be completed in a timely manner (ordinarily, within twenty (20) ~~business calendar~~ days of the complaint being received).

The ~~informal and formal~~ procedures set forth below are not intended to interfere with the rights of a student to pursue a complaint of unlawful harassment with the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, the Florida Civil Rights Commission, ~~and/or~~ the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

#### **Informal Complaint Procedure**

The goal of the informal complaint procedure is to ~~promptly~~ stop inappropriate behavior and to ~~investigate and~~ facilitate resolution through an informal means, if possible. The informal complaint procedure is provided as a less formal option for a student who ~~alleges unlawful harassment or retaliation~~ believes ~~s/he has been unlawfully harassed~~. This informal procedure is not required as a precursor to the filing of a formal complaint.

Students, other members of the School District community, or ~~Third Parties~~ who believe that they have been unlawfully harassed ~~or retaliated against~~, may initiate their complaint through this informal complaint process, but are not required to do so. The informal process is only available in those circumstances where the ~~Complainant and the Respondent mutually agree to participate in it.~~ ~~parties (alleged target of harassment and alleged harasser(s)) agree to participate in the informal process.~~



~~The Complainant~~ Students, other members of the School District community, or third parties who believe that they have been unlawfully harassed may proceed immediately to the formal complaint process and individuals who seek resolution through the informal procedure may request that the informal process be terminated at any time to move to the formal complaint process.

However, all complaints of harassment involving a District employee or any other adult member of the School District community against a student will be formally investigated.

As an initial course of action, if a ~~Complainant feels comfortable and safe~~ ~~student feels that s/he is being unlawfully harassed and s/he is able and feels safe~~ doing so, the individual should tell or otherwise inform the ~~Respondent that the alleged harassing harasser that the conduct is unwelcome and must stop.~~ The ~~Complainant~~ ~~complaining individual~~ should address the allegedly harassing conduct as soon after it occurs as possible. The Compliance Officers is available to support and counsel individuals when taking this initial step or to intervene on behalf of the ~~Complainant individual~~ if requested to do so. ~~A Complainant~~ ~~An individual who is uncomfortable or unwilling to directly approach the Respondent about the allegedly inappropriate conduct may file~~ ~~inform the harasser of his/her complaint is not prohibited from otherwise filing an~~ informal or a formal complaint. In addition, with regard to certain types of unlawful harassment, such as sexual harassment, the Compliance Officer may advise against the use of the informal complaint process.

A ~~Complainant~~ ~~student who believes s/he has been unlawfully harassed~~ may make an informal complaint, either orally or in writing: (1) to a teacher, other employee, or building administrator in the school the student attends; (2) to the Superintendent or other District-level employee; and/or (3) directly to one of the Compliance Officers.

All informal complaints must be reported to the Compliance Officers who will either facilitate an informal resolution as described below ~~on his/her own~~, or appoint another individual to facilitate an informal resolution.

The School District's informal complaint procedure is designed to provide students, other members of the School District community, and third parties who believe they are being unlawfully harassed by a student with a range of options designed to bring about a resolution of their concerns. Depending upon the nature of the complaint and the wishes of the ~~Complainant~~ ~~student claiming unlawful harassment~~, informal resolution may involve, but not be limited to, one or more of the following:

- A. Advising the ~~Complainant individual~~ about how to communicate the unwelcome nature of the behavior to the ~~Respondent~~ ~~alleged harasser~~.
- B. Distributing a copy of ~~this~~ ~~the anti harassment~~ policy as a reminder to the individuals in the school building or office where the ~~Respondent~~ ~~individual whose behavior is being questioned~~ works or attends.
- C. If both parties agree, the Compliance Officers may arrange and facilitate a meeting ~~or a mediate between the Complainant and the Respondent to work out a mutual resolution~~ ~~between the individual claiming harassment and the individual accused of harassment to work out a mutual resolution.~~

While there are no set time limits within which an informal complaint must be resolved, the Compliance Officers or designee ~~is directed will exercise his/her authority~~ to attempt to resolve all informal complaints within fifteen (15) days of receiving the informal complaint. ~~If the Complainant~~ ~~Parties who are dissatisfied with the results of the informal complaint process,~~ ~~the Complainant~~ may proceed to file a formal complaint. And, as stated above, ~~either party~~ ~~parties~~ may request that the informal process be terminated at any time to move to the formal complaint process.

~~All materials generated as part of the informal complaint process will be retained by the Compliance Officers or designee in accordance with the Board's records retention policy. (See Policy 8310 and Policy 8320)~~

### Formal Complaint Procedure

If a complaint is not resolved through the informal complaint process, if one of the parties has requested that the informal complaint process be terminated to move to the formal complaint process, or ~~the Complainant, from the outset, elects to file a formal complaint,~~ or the CO determines the allegations are not appropriate for resolution through the informal process, ~~if the student elects to file a formal complaint initially,~~ the formal complaint process as described below shall be implemented.

This formal complaint process is not intended to interfere with the rights of an student, other member of the School District community, or ~~Third p~~ ~~Party~~ to pursue a complaint of unlawful harassment with the United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, the Florida Civil Rights Commission, or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.



~~The Complainant~~ A student who believes she/he has been subjected to offensive conduct/harassment hereinafter referred to as the "complainant", may file a formal complaint, either orally or in writing with a teacher, principal, or other District employee at the student's school, the Compliance Officer, Superintendent, or other District employee who works at another school or at the District level. Due to the sensitivity surrounding complaints of unlawful harassment, time lines are flexible for initiating the complaint process; however, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint within sixty (60) days after the conduct occurs while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available. If a eComplainant informs a teacher, principal, or other District employee at the student's school, the Compliance Officer, Superintendent, or other District employee, either orally or in writing, about any complaint of harassment, that employee must report such information to the Compliance Officer or designee within two (2) business days.

Throughout the course of the process as described herein, the Compliance Officer should keep the parties reasonably informed of the status of the investigation and the decision making process.

All formal complaints must include the following information to the extent known it is available: the identity of the Respondent individual believed to have engaged in, or engaging in, offensive conduct/harassment; a detailed description of the facts upon which the complaint is based (i.e., when, where, and what occurred); and a list of potential witnesses; and the resolution sought by the Complainant.

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

Upon receiving a formal complaint, the Superintendent will determine whether the complaint contains an allegation of unlawful harassment. If the complaint does not contain an allegation of unlawful harassment, the matter shall be referred back to the immediate supervisor for appropriate disposition. If the complaint is found to contain an allegation of unlawful harassment, it shall be returned to the Compliance Officer who will proceed with the formal investigation of the complaint.

Upon receiving a formal complaint, the Compliance Officer will consider whether any action should be taken in the investigatory phase to protect the eComplainant from further harassment or retaliation including but not limited to a change of class or schedule for the eComplainant and/or the Respondent alleged harasser, or possibly a change of school for either or both of the parties. In making such a determination, the Compliance Officer should consult the eComplainant to assess whether the individual agrees his/her agreement to any action deemed appropriate. If the eComplainant is unwilling to consent to any change that is deemed appropriate by the Compliance Officer, the Compliance Officer may still take whatever actions deemed he deem appropriate in consultation with the Superintendent and/or Board Attorney.

Within three (3) business days of receiving a formal complaint, the Compliance Officer will inform the Respondent individual alleged to have engaged in the harassing conduct, hereinafter referred to as the "respondent", that a formal complaint has been received. The Respondent will be informed about the nature of the allegations and a copy of any relevant policies and/or these administrative procedures and the Board's anti-harassment policy shall be provided to the respondent at that time. The respondent must also be informed of the opportunity to submit a written response to the complaint within five (5) business days.

Within five (5) business days of receiving the complaint, the Compliance Officer or a designee will initiate a formal investigation to determine whether the eComplainant has been subject to offensive conduct/harassment. The principal will not conduct an investigation unless directed to do so by the Compliance Officer.

Although certain cases may require additional time, the Compliance Officer or a designee will attempt to complete an investigation into the allegations of harassment within twenty (20) business calendar days of receiving the formal complaint. The investigation will include:

- A. interviews with the eComplainant;
- B. interviews with the Respondent;
- C. interviews with any other witnesses who may reasonably be expected to have any information relevant to the allegations;
- D. consideration of any documentation or other evidence presented by the eComplainant, Respondent, or any other witness which is reasonably believed to be relevant to the allegations.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the Compliance Officer or the designee shall prepare and deliver a written report to the Superintendent which summarizes the evidence gathered during the investigation and provides recommendations based on the evidence and the definition of unlawful harassment as provided in Board policy and State and Federal law as to

whether the Respondent engaged in unlawful harassment/retaliation of the Complainant. ~~complainant has been subject to unlawful harassment.~~ In determining if discriminatory harassment or retaliation ~~discrimination~~ occurred, a preponderance of evidence standard will be used. The Compliance Officer's recommendations must be based upon the totality of the circumstances, including the ages and maturity levels of those involved. The Compliance Officer may consult with the Board Attorney before finalizing the report to the Superintendent.

Absent extenuating circumstances, within twenty (20) business days of receiving the report of the Compliance Officer or the designee, the Superintendent must either issue a ~~written~~ final decision regarding whether or not the complaint of harassment has been substantiated or request further investigation. A copy of the Superintendent's final decision will be delivered to both the ~~e~~Complainant and the ~~r~~Respondent.

If the Superintendent requests additional investigation, the Superintendent must specify the additional information that is to be gathered, and such additional investigation must be completed within ten (10) business days. At the conclusion of the additional investigation, the Superintendent must issue a final written decision as described above.

A ~~e~~Complainant or ~~r~~Respondent who is dissatisfied with the final decision of the Superintendent may appeal to the Board by filing a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within fifteen (15) business days of the date of the Superintendent's ~~final~~ decision.

In an attempt to resolve the complaint, the Board shall meet with the concerned parties and their representatives within twenty (20) business days of the receipt of such an appeal. A copy of the Board's disposition of the appeal shall be sent to each party within ten (10) business days of this meeting. The decision of the Board will be final.

~~Upon receipt of a notice of appeal of the final decision of the Superintendent, the Board shall review the matter at its next regularly scheduled meeting, which is scheduled to occur at least ten (10) days after the Superintendent's receipt of the appeal notice, to review the matter. Following their review of the matter, the Board will affirm or reject the final decision of the Superintendent. The decision of the Board will be final.~~

~~If either the complainant or the respondent is not satisfied with the Superintendent's decision, either party will have an additional sixty (60) days to appeal the decision to the United States Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, Florida Commission on Human Relations, or the Equal Educational Opportunity Commission.~~

The Board reserves the right to investigate and resolve a complaint or report of unlawful harassment regardless of whether the member of the School District community or ~~t~~Third ~~p~~Party alleging the unlawful harassment pursues the complaint. The Board also reserves the right to have the formal complaint investigation conducted by an external person in accordance with this policy or in such other manner as deemed appropriate by the Board or its designee.

The parties may be represented, at their own cost, at any of the above-described meetings/hearings.

The right of a person to a prompt and equitable resolution of the complaint shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies such as the filing of a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights, the filing of charges with local law enforcement, or the filing of a civil action in court. Use of this internal complaint process is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies.

### Privacy/Confidentiality

The School District will ~~employ~~make all reasonable efforts to protect the rights of the ~~e~~Complainant, ~~and the~~ ~~r~~Respondent, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the Board's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under the terms of this policy and related administrative procedures shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law. ~~The School District will respect the privacy of the complainant, the respondent, and all witnesses in a manner consistent with the School District's legal obligations under State and Federal law. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed however. Additionally, the Respondent must provide be provided the Complainant's identity. All complainants proceeding through the formal investigations process should be advised that their identities may be disclosed to the respondent.~~

During the course of a formal investigation, the Compliance Officer or ~~their~~his/~~her~~ designee will instruct all members of the School District community and third parties who are interviewed about the importance of maintaining confidentiality. Any individual who is interviewed as part of a harassment investigation is expected not to disclose any information that ~~is~~ learned or ~~provided~~s/he learns or that s/he provides during the course of the investigation.

All public records created as a part of an investigation of a complaint of harassment will be maintained by the Compliance Officer in accordance with the Board's records retention policy. Any records which are considered student records in accordance with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* will be maintained in a manner consistent with the provisions of the Federal law.



## Sanctions and Monitoring

The Board shall vigorously enforce its prohibitions against unlawful harassment/retaliation by taking appropriate action reasonably calculated to stop the harassment and prevent further such harassment. While observing the principles of due process, a violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including the discharge of an employee or the suspension/expulsion of a student. All disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with applicable State law and the terms of the relevant collective bargaining agreement(s). When imposing discipline, the Superintendent shall consider the totality of the circumstances involved in the matter, including the ages and maturity levels of those involved. In those cases where unlawful harassment is not substantiated, the Board may consider whether the alleged conduct nevertheless warrants discipline in accordance with other Board policies, consistent with the terms of the relevant collective bargaining agreement(s).

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

## Retaliation

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

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

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

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

## Allegations Constituting Criminal Conduct: Child Abuse/Sexual Misconduct

State law requires any teacher or school employee who knows or suspects that a child with a disability under the age of twenty-one (21) or that a child under the age of eighteen (18) is a victim of child abuse or neglect to immediately report that knowledge or suspicion to the Department of Children and Family Services. If, during the course of a harassment investigation, the Compliance Officer or a designee has reason to believe or suspect that the alleged conduct reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the eComplainant, a report of such knowledge must be made in accordance with State law and Board policy.

If the Compliance Officer or a designee has reason to believe that the eComplainant has been the victim of criminal conduct as defined under Florida law, such knowledge should be reported to local law enforcement.

Any reports made to the local child protection service or to local law enforcement shall not terminate the Compliance Officer's or a designee's obligation and responsibility to continue to investigate a complaint of harassment. While the Compliance Officers or a designee may work cooperatively with outside agencies to conduct concurrent investigations, in no event shall the harassment investigation be inhibited by the involvement of outside agencies without good cause after consultation with the Superintendent.

## Mandatory Reporting of Misconduct by Certificated Employees

The Superintendent is required by State law and Board Policy 8141 to report alleged misconduct by certificated employees of the District that affects the health, safety, or welfare of a student. In accordance with Board policy and State law, the Superintendent shall investigate each allegation of such conduct and, if confirmed, shall report such misconduct pursuant to Policy 8141 – Mandatory Reporting of Misconduct by Certified Employees.

## Education and Training



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

## **Retention of Investigatory Records and Materials**

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

- A. all written reports/allegations/complaints/statements;
- B. narratives of all verbal reports/allegations/complaints/statements;
- C. a narrative of all actions taken by District personnel or individuals contracted or appointed by the Board to fulfill its responsibilities;
- D. any written documentation of actions taken by District personnel;
- E. written witness statements;
- F. narratives of, notes from, or audio, video, or digital recordings of witness statements;
- G. all documentary evidence;
- H. e-mails, texts, or social media posts pertaining to the investigation;
- I. contemporaneous notes in whatever form made (e.g., handwritten, keyed into a computer or tablet, etc.) pertaining to the investigation;
- J. written disciplinary sanctions issued to students or employees and a narrative of verbal disciplinary sanctions issued to students or employees for violations of the policies and procedures prohibiting discrimination or harassment;
- K. dated written determinations to the parties;
- L. dated written descriptions of verbal notifications to the parties;
- M. written documentation of any supportive measures offered and/or provided to the Complainant and/or the Respondent, including no contact orders issued to both parties, the dates issued, and the dates the parties acknowledged receipt;
- N. documentation of all actions taken, both individual and systemic, to stop the discrimination or harassment, prevent its recurrence, eliminate any hostile environment, and remedy its discriminatory effects;
- O. documentation of any supportive measures offered and/or provided to the Complainant and/or the Respondent, including no contact orders issued to both parties, the dates the no contact orders were issued, and the dates the parties acknowledged receipt of the no contact orders;
- P. copies of the Board policy and/or procedures/guidelines used by the District to conduct the investigation, and any documents used by the District at the time of the alleged violation to communicate the Board's expectations to students and staff with respect to the subject of this policy (e.g., Student Code of Conduct and/or Employee Handbooks);
- Q. copies of any documentation that memorializes any formal or informal resolutions to the alleged discrimination or harassment; and
- R. documentation of any training provided to District personnel related to this policy, including but not limited to, notification of the prohibitions and expectations of staff set forth in this policy and the role and responsibility of all District personnel involved in enforcing this policy, including their duty to report alleged violations of this policy and/or conducting an investigation of an alleged violation of this policy.

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

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

### **Notification of Policy**

~~Notification of this policy and the name of the District Equity Officer shall be made to the general public. Notice shall also be placed in the Employee Handbook and the Student Code of Conduct Book.~~

Effective 9/5/12  
Revised 8/27/13

© Neola 2013