

Administrative Regulations – 4110A

Personnel -

PROCEDURE FOR EMPLOYEE COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL, RACIAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT

The Board of Education promotes a working environment free from unlawful harassment and does not tolerate the harassment of any applicant, employee, independent contractor, or volunteer based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, ancestry, genetic information or any other basis prohibited by law.

Employees who believe they have been subjected to unlawful harassment as defined by Board Policy 4110A are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to a Building Principal or the district's Title IX Coordinator. Timely reporting of incidents of unlawful harassment enables the school district to properly investigate and resolve such complaints.

Complaints will be investigated promptly and corrective action will be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent practical. Any reprisals or retaliations found to have occurred as a result of reporting harassment may result in disciplinary action against the retaliator. All reports of conduct that violates this policy shall be reviewed regardless of whether the report has been made in writing.

The school district will provide staff development for new district administrators and will publish its policy and complaint procedure and orient students and employees in an effort to maintain an environment free of sexual, racial and other unlawful harassment.

Responsibilities of Personnel

All Employees. Any staff member who feels that he or she is a victim of sexual, racial or other unlawful harassment is strongly urged to immediately report the incident to the Building Principal or Title IX Coordinator. If possible, the victim is also urged to firmly and immediately notify the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome and request that it stop. It is extremely important for victims to report any form of harassment to the Building Principal or Title IX Coordinator even if the offender has been told that his or her behavior is unwelcome and has been asked to stop the unwelcome conduct. If the Building Principal is the subject of the complaint, then the employee must make the complaint to the Title IX Coordinator. If the Title IX Coordinator is the subject of the complaint, then the employee must make the complaint to the Superintendent.

Administrators and supervisors who fail to report possible violations of this policy may be subject to discipline.

Any employee who has not been victimized but is aware of or has observed a possible violation of the Board's policy on sexual, racial and other unlawful harassment is

required to report such information verbally or in writing to the Building Principal or Title IX Coordinator. Administrators and supervisors who fail to report possible violations of this policy may be subject to discipline.

Administrators. Any complaint or other communication from an applicant for employment, an employee, a volunteer, an independent contractor, a visitor, a government agency, or an attorney concerning potential harassment should be immediately shared with the Title IX Coordinator. If notification to the Title IX Coordinator is impractical or inappropriate under the circumstances, the Superintendent should be contacted. Any and all investigations should be conducted with the guidance of the Title IX Coordinator or Superintendent or his or her designee.

Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator shall be responsible for the investigation of all verbal and written complaints of alleged discrimination including unlawful harassment. The Title IX Coordinator shall ensure a prompt and equitable resolution of all complaints.

Reporting a Complaint of Unlawful Harassment

Any applicant or employee who feels that he/she has been harassed on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, ancestry, or genetic information should immediately bring his/her complaint to the attention of one of the following school officials: Building Principal or district's Title IX Coordinator.

The district's Title IX Coordinator is:

**Director of Special Services
Regional School District #14
5 Minortown Road
Woodbury, CT 06798
203-263-0416**

Upon any notice from an employee or other individual that illegal harassment may be occurring, the school official taking the complaint should inform such person of the school district's policy and regulations, including the school district's legal obligation to investigate every report even where the complainant is hesitant to pursue the complaint.

Although there is no requirement that the complaint be in writing, the school official should encourage the complainant to commit the complaint to writing and may assist the complainant in writing the complaint.

The written complaint should state the following (the form in Appendix A may be provided for the convenience of the complainant, but is not required):

1. name of the complainant;
2. date that the complaint was made;

3. name(s) of the alleged harasser(s);
4. date and place of the alleged harassment;
5. names of any witnesses, if any;
6. list of documentary evidence, if any;
7. statement of the facts supporting this complaint of harassment.

The school official should document the complaint even if the complainant refuses to commit the complaint to writing. In such instance, the school official should ask the complainant to review the complaint for accuracy and ask the complainant sign. If the complainant chooses not to sign, the school official should note so on the official's report of the complaint.

The school official should advise the employee that confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible. The school official cannot make a blanket promise of complete confidentiality since information gained from the investigation may have to be disclosed to other school personnel or may be needed in subsequent government or court proceedings.

The school official should carefully document his or her knowledge of all communications and efforts concerning employee complaints, including any employee failure to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the school district's policy and procedure. Such documentation should be maintained in a separate investigative file.

The Building Principal shall immediately forward the complaint to the district's Title IX Coordinator without screening or investigating the report.

If the Title IX Coordinator is the subject of the complaint, the complaint should be submitted to the Superintendent, who shall investigate or appoint a designee to do so. If the Superintendent is the subject of the complaint, it shall be submitted to the Board of Education and the Board shall appoint the investigator.

Investigation of the Complaint

Investigator: The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for investigating any complaints unlawful harassment. The advice of legal counsel should be sought as necessary.

Interim measures: The investigator shall assess whether there is a necessity to take immediate interim measures to prevent further allegations of unlawful harassment or retaliation of any kind while the investigation is pending.

Investigation: The investigation shall be conducted with objectivity and completed in a timely manner. The investigator shall consult with all individuals believed to have relevant information including the complainant, the person(s) accused of the unlawful harassment, potential witnesses and other possible victims of the alleged harassment. The investigation shall be carried on discreetly, maintaining confidentiality insofar as possible while still conducting an effective and thorough investigation. Throughout the

investigative process, the due process rights of the alleged harasser(s) shall be preserved. The investigator shall keep the complainant apprised of the status of the investigation on a periodic basis.

Documentation: The investigator should carefully document all aspects of the investigation. Documentation should be maintained in an investigative file. Documentation of disciplinary actions taken should be maintained in the employee's personnel file or the student's disciplinary file.

Written Report: After an impartial and prompt investigation of the complaint, the investigator should ascertain (1) whether the alleged conduct occurred, and (2) whether such conduct constitutes a violation of the Board's policy. In determining whether there is a violation of the policy, the investigator should consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and context in which the incidents occurred. If there is a violation, the investigator should determine what remedial action is necessary to eradicate the harassment and prevent any recurrence of such conduct in the future. The investigator should commit the findings and recommendations to writing and forward the report to the Superintendent of Schools. Unless unusual circumstances exist, the written report shall be completed within 10 school days of receipt of the complaint. If the Superintendent is the subject of the investigation, the Board of Education shall receive the findings and recommendations.

Notification of Results of Investigation: The results of the investigation will be communicated to the parties involved in a manner consistent with state and federal laws regarding data and records privacy.

Request for Review: If the complainant is unsatisfied with the results of the investigation, he/she may request a review by the Superintendent of Schools within 10 school days of the notification of the results of the investigation. The Superintendent (or designee) shall review the investigator's written report and further investigation may be conducted if necessary. The complainant may present additional evidence or witnesses for the reviewer to consider. Absent unusual circumstances, the review process shall be completed within 20 days of the request for the review. The Superintendent shall promptly notify the complainant in writing of the results of his/her review.

Corrective Action: If unlawful harassment in violation of Board policy is determined to have occurred, the school district will take prompt corrective action that is reasonably calculated to stop the harassment and prevent any recurrence of such behavior. As part of such remedial action, the offender may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action which may include, but is not limited to one or a combination of the following: counseling, awareness training, warning, reprimand, reassignment, transfer, suspension, termination or expulsion. School district action taken for violation of this policy shall be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, state and federal law, and other school district policies.

Alternative Complaint Procedures

The federal and state agencies that investigate complaints of unlawful harassment of employees are the U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Connecticut Commission of Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO). If you believe you have been subject to unlawful harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, ancestry, or genetic information, you may file a complaint with the CHRO, located at 21 Grand Street, Hartford, CT 06106 (860-541-5737). If you believe you have been subjected to unlawful harassment because of your race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, or disability, you may file a complaint with the EEOC located at John F. Kennedy Federal Building, 475 Government Center, Boston, MA 02203, 1-800-669-4000. The EEOC and CHRO apply a statute of limitation of one hundred and eighty (180) days to such complaints.