

# CSBA Sample

## Board Policy

Students

BP 5145.7(a)

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

**Cautionary Notice:** The following administrative regulation reflects federal Title IX regulations added by 85 Fed. Reg. 30026, effective August 14, 2020, which establish a process for investigating and resolving allegations of conduct that meets the federal definition of sexual harassment. The federal regulations preempt any conflicting state law or regulations, but the interaction between federal and state law is not always clear. Districts should consult legal counsel if questions about a potential conflict arise. Districts should also note that 18 states, including California, have sued the U.S. Department of Education to stop the implementation of these regulations. A preliminary injunction seeking to postpone the effective date of the regulations and prohibit their enforcement is currently pending. If the court grants the injunction, portions of the following administrative regulation will not take effect.

Note: Education Code 231.5 and 34 CFR 106.8 mandates the district to have written policies on sexual harassment. The following policy addresses harassment by and of students in the school setting. As part of this mandate, the district should also adopt a sexual harassment policy related to employees; see BP/AR 4119.11/4219.11/4319.11 - Sexual Harassment.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 USC 1681-1688) prohibits discrimination based on sex by recipients of federal financial assistance. School districts are responsible under Title IX and the regulations for the issuance of a policy against sex discrimination (34 CFR 106.8). Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination under Title IX and can deny or limit a student's ability to participate in or receive education benefits, services, or opportunities on the basis of that student's sex.

Both federal law (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972) (20 USC 1681-1688; 34 CFR 106.1-106.82) and state law (Education Code 220, 231.5) prohibit sexual harassment and require districts to establish procedures for the prompt and equitable resolution of sexual harassment complaints. Whether a complaint is addressed through the federal Title IX complaint procedures adopted pursuant to 34 CFR 106.44-106.45, as added by 85 Fed. Reg. 30026, or the state uniform complaint procedures adopted pursuant to 5 CCR 4600-4670 is dependent on whether the alleged conduct meets the more stringent federal definition or the state definition of sexual harassment. See the accompanying administrative regulation, BP/AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures, and AR 5145.71 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures.

A district can be held liable for civil damages for the sexual harassment of students pursuant to Title IX and/or Education Code 220, if the district is found to have been "deliberately indifferent" in its response to known sexual harassment. In Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education the U.S. Supreme Court held that a district would be deliberately indifferent if (1) the harasser and the context in which the sexual harassment occurred were within the district's control; (2) the harassment was so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it deprived a student of access to educational opportunities or benefits provided by the district; (3) the district had actual knowledge of the harassment; and (4) the district's conduct was unreasonable considering the surrounding circumstances. This standard was applied by an appellate court in Donovan v. Poway Unified School District based on Education Code 220. Pursuant to 34 CFR 106.30, a district is deliberately indifferent if its response to Title IX sexual harassment is clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

In addition to filing a private civil lawsuit, an alleged victim of sexual harassment may file a complaint with



**SEXUAL HARASSMENT** (continued)

the California Department of Education (CDE) and/or the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR), the federal agency responsible for administrative enforcement of federal laws and regulations that prohibit discrimination in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. OCR applies a different standard than the "deliberate indifference" standard when addressing complaints against a district. Under OCR's enforcement standards, a district may be held to be in violation when a student is subjected to harassing conduct by another student, an employee, or a third party, and (1) the district knows or should know about the harassment, (2) the harassment is sufficiently serious as to create a hostile educational environment for the student, and (3) the district failed to take appropriate responsive actions. In other words, while a district is not responsible for the conduct of the other student or the third party, it may be liable for failing to respond adequately once it has notice. However, if a student is sexually harassed by an employee who was acting in the context of his/her job responsibilities, the district may be in violation of Title IX whether or not it has notice.

CSBA staff met with representatives from CDE and OCR to discuss this policy and the accompanying regulation as they relate to the uniform complaint procedure (UCP) requirements. As a result, the sample policy and regulation have been drafted to go beyond the minimal requirements under California's UCP laws and regulations in an attempt to address issues and concerns raised by CDE and OCR. While CDE and OCR have not approved or signed off on them, CSBA believes that the additional details provided herein may help school districts and county offices of education during any compliance check by CDE or in the event that a CDE or OCR investigation occurs.

The Governing Board is committed to maintaining a safe school environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. The Board prohibits, at school or at school-sponsored or school-related activities, sexual harassment targeted at any student by anyone. The Board also prohibits retaliatory behavior or action against any person who reports, files a complaint or testifies about, or otherwise supports a complainant in alleging sexual harassment.

*(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)*

*(cf. 5131 - Conduct)*

*(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)*

*(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)*

*(cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)*

**Note:** OCR's January 2001 Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance notes that, regardless of whether a harassed student, his/her parent/guardian, or a third party files a complaint under the district procedures or otherwise requests action on the student's behalf, a school that knows, or reasonably should know, about possible harassment must promptly take action to determine what occurred and then take appropriate steps to resolve the situation. Even where a parent/guardian or student does not wish to disclose the student's identity, there are steps a school can take to limit the effects of alleged harassment and prevent its recurrence without initiating formal action. Such steps may include limited investigative activities and actions to protect the complainant and the school community and prevent recurrence while keeping the identity of the complainant confidential. These actions may include providing services to the complainant, such as counseling services; providing increased monitoring, supervision, or security at locations or activities where the misconduct occurred; providing training and education materials for students and employees; or changing and publicizing the school's policies on sexual violence. OCR has indicated that the principles in its Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance also apply to harassment based on race, color, national origin, disability, or age.



**SEXUAL HARASSMENT** (continued)

34 CFR 106.44, as added by 85 Fed. Reg. 30026, requires the district, when there is actual knowledge of sexual harassment in an education program or activity, to respond promptly in a manner that is not unreasonable in light of the known circumstances. 34 CFR 106.30, as added, defines "actual knowledge" as notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment being submitted to the district's Title IX Coordinator, any official of the district who has authority to institute corrective measures, or any employee of an elementary or secondary school.

It is also important to note that a referral to law enforcement does not relieve a school district of its responsibility to investigate the complaint as a matter of sex discrimination.

The district strongly encourages any students who feels that he/she is they are being or has have been sexually harassed on school grounds or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity by another student or an adult, or who has have experienced off-campus sexual harassment that has a continuing effect on campus, to immediately contact his/her their teacher, the principal, the district's Title IX Coordinator, or any other available school employee. Any employee who receives a report or observes an incident of sexual harassment shall notify the principal or a district compliance officer Title IX Coordinator.

Once notified, the principal or compliance officer Title IX Coordinator shall take the steps to investigate and address the allegation, ensure the complaint is addressed through Title IX complaint procedures or uniform complaint procedures, as applicable, and shall offer supportive measures to the complainant as specified in the accompanying administrative regulation.

*(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)*

*(cf. 1312.1 - Complaints Concerning District Employees)*

*(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)*

*(cf. 5131 - Conduct)*

*(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)*

*(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)*

*(cf. 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting)*

*(cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)*

*(cf. 5145.71 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures)*

*(cf. 6142.1 - Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS Prevention Instruction)*

**Note:** Government Code 12950.1 requires any district with 50 or more employees to provide two hours of sexual harassment training and education to supervisory employees once every two years. See AR 4119.11/4219.11/4319.11 - Sexual Harassment. Education Code 234.6, as added by AB 34 (Ch. 282, Statutes of 2019), requires districts, beginning in the 2020-21 school year, to post the district's written policy on sexual harassment in a prominent location on the district's web site in a manner that is easily accessible to parents/guardians and students.

Education Code 231.6, as added by AB 543 (Ch. 428, Statutes of 2019), requires districts serving students in grades 9-12 to create a poster that notifies students of the district's sexual harassment policy, and to display it prominently and conspicuously in each bathroom and locker room on campus.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

Education Code 231.5, as amended by AB 543, requires the district to provide a copy of the district's sexual harassment policy as part of any orientation program conducted for new and continuing students.

Pursuant to 34 CFR 106.8, the district is required to notify students, parents/guardians, employees, and bargaining units of its policy to not discriminate on the basis of sex as well as its complaint procedures and processes, and to post this information in a prominent location on the district's web site and in student and staff handbooks.

Requirements related to the dissemination of the district's sexual harassment policy and procedures and best practices for reinforcing the policy are addressed in the accompanying administrative regulation.

The Superintendent or designee shall ~~take appropriate actions to reinforce~~ inform students and parents/guardians of the district's sexual harassment policy by disseminating it through parent/guardian notifications, publishing it on the district's web site, and including it in student and staff handbooks. All district staff shall be trained regarding the policy.

### Instruction/Information

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that all district students receive age-appropriate information on sexual harassment. Such instruction and information shall include:

1. What acts and behavior constitute sexual harassment, including the fact that sexual harassment could occur between people of the same sex and could involve sexual violence
2. A clear message that students do not have to endure sexual harassment under any circumstance
3. Encouragement to report observed incidents of sexual harassment even ~~where~~ when the alleged victim of the harassment has not complained

Note: Where sexual harassment or violence occurs in the context of other possible rule violations, students may be reluctant to report sexual harassment or violence. For example, a student who is sexually harassed while ~~he/she is~~ away from school without permission may be reluctant to file a complaint if ~~he/she the student~~ believes ~~that he/she may be~~ disciplined ~~will be imposed~~ for the violation. As such, item #4 below clarifies that any other rule violation will be addressed separately from the sexual harassment complaint in order to encourage students to report the harassment.

4. A clear message that student safety is the district's primary concern, and that any separate rule violation involving an alleged victim or any other person reporting a sexual harassment incident will be addressed separately and will not affect the manner in which the sexual harassment complaint will be received, investigated, or resolved



**SEXUAL HARASSMENT** (continued)

5. A clear message that, regardless of a complainant's noncompliance with the writing, timeline, or other formal filing requirements, every sexual harassment allegation that involves a student, whether as the complainant, respondent, or victim of the harassment, shall be investigated and **prompt** action shall be taken to **stop any respond to** harassment, prevent recurrence, and address any continuing effect on students
6. Information about the district's procedures for investigating complaints and the person(s) to whom a report of sexual harassment should be made
7. Information about the rights of students and parents/guardians to file a civil or criminal complaint, as applicable, including the right to file a civil or criminal complaint while the district investigation of a sexual harassment complaint continues
8. A clear message that, when needed, the district will **take interim implement supportive** measures to ensure a safe school environment for a student who is the complainant or victim of sexual harassment and/or other students during an investigation and that, to the extent possible, when such interim measures are taken, they shall not disadvantage the complainant or victim of the alleged harassment

*Complaint Process and Disciplinary Actions*

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 231.5, the district's policy must contain information on where to obtain the specific procedures for reporting incidents of sexual harassment and pursuing available remedies. In addition, 34 CFR 106.8 requires a district to adopt and publish a complaint procedure providing for a prompt and equitable resolution of student complaints alleging sexual harassment. To avoid confusion that may arise from having a multiplicity of complaint processes for resolving a variety of student complaints, it is recommended that districts use the UCP to investigate and resolve sexual harassment complaints involving students. See AR 1312.3 – Uniform Complaint Procedures for details of these procedures.

Sexual harassment complaints by and against students shall be investigated and resolved in accordance with law and district procedures specified in AR 1312.3 – Uniform Complaint Procedures. Principals are responsible for notifying students and parents/guardians that complaints of sexual harassment can be filed under AR 1312.3 and where to obtain a copy of the procedures.

(cf. 1312.3 – Uniform Complaint Procedures)

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 48900.2, a student in grades 4-12 may be suspended and/or expelled from school for sexual harassment. Education Code 48900.2 also requires the sexual harassment, when considered from the perspective of a reasonable person of the same gender as the alleged victim, to be sufficiently severe or pervasive as to have a negative impact upon the alleged victim's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment for the alleged victim. Under OCR's 2001 Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance interpreting Title IX, a hostile environment is created when the conduct is sufficiently serious that it denies or limits a student's ability to

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

participate in or benefit from the school's program based on sex. OCR considers the conduct from both the subjective perspective of the individual who was harassed and from the perspective of a reasonable person with the same characteristics as the alleged victim. Districts should also note that Education Code 48915(c) requires the Superintendent or designee to recommend expulsion for any student, irrespective of grade, who commits sexual assault or battery as defined in the Penal Code. See AR 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process.

Upon **completion of an** investigation of a sexual harassment complaint, any student found to have engaged in sexual harassment or sexual violence in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action. For students in grades 4-12, disciplinary action may include suspension and/or expulsion, provided that, in imposing such discipline, the entire circumstances of the incident(s) shall be taken into account.

*(cf. 5144 - Discipline)*

*(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)*

*(cf. 5144.2 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students with Disabilities))*

Upon investigation of a sexual harassment complaint, any employee found to have engaged in sexual harassment or sexual violence toward any student shall **have his/her employment terminated be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal**, in accordance with law and the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

*(cf. 4117.7/4317.7 - Employment Status Report)*

*(cf. 4118 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)*

*(cf. 4119.11/4219.11/4319.11 - Sexual Harassment)*

*(cf. 4218 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)*

*(cf. 4119.11/4219.11/4319.11 - Sexual Harassment)*

## Record-Keeping

**In accordance with law, t**The Superintendent or designee shall maintain a record of all reported cases of sexual harassment to enable the district to monitor, address, and prevent repetitive harassing behavior in district schools.

*(cf. 3580 - District Records)*

*Legal Reference: (see next page)*

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

### *Legal Reference:*

#### EDUCATION CODE

200-262.4 *Prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex*

48900 *Grounds for suspension or expulsion*

48900.2 *Additional grounds for suspension or expulsion; sexual harassment*

48904 *Liability of parent/guardian for willful student misconduct*

48980 *Notice at beginning of term*

**48985 *Notices, report, statements and records in primary language***

#### CIVIL CODE

51.9 *Liability for sexual harassment; business, service and professional relationships*

1714.1 *Liability of parents/guardians for willful misconduct of minor*

#### GOVERNMENT CODE

12950.1 *Sexual harassment training*

#### CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

4600-4670 *Uniform complaint procedures*

4900-4965 *Nondiscrimination in elementary and secondary education programs*

#### UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

**1092 *Definition of sexual assault***

1221 *Application of laws*

1232g *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act*

1681-1688 *Title IX, ~~discrimination~~ of the Education Amendments of 1972*

#### **UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 34**

**12291 *Definition of dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking***

#### UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42

1983 *Civil action for deprivation of rights*

2000d-2000d-7 *Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964*

2000e-2000e-17 *Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended*

#### CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

99.1-99.67 *Family Educational Rights and Privacy*

106.1-~~106.71~~ **106.82** *Nondiscrimination on the basis of sex in education programs*

#### COURT DECISIONS

*Donovan v. Poway Unified School District*, (2008) 167 Cal.App.4th 567

*Flores v. Morgan Hill Unified School District*, (2003, 9th Cir.) 324 F.3d 1130

*Reese v. Jefferson School District*, (~~2001~~ **2000**, 9th Cir.) 208 F.3d 736

*Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education*, (1999) 526 U.S. 629

*Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent School District*, (1998) 524 U.S. 274

*Oona by Kate S. v. McCaffrey*, (1998, 9th Cir.) 143 F.3d 473

*Doe v. Petaluma City School District*, (1995, 9th Cir.) 54 F.3d 1447

*Management Resources continued: (see next page)*

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)**

### *Management Resources:*

#### CSBA PUBLICATIONS

*Providing a Safe, Nondiscriminatory School Environment for Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Students, Policy Brief, February 2014*

*Safe Schools: Strategies for Governing Boards to Ensure Student Success, 2011*

#### U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS PUBLICATIONS

*Q&A on Campus Sexual Misconduct, September 2017*

*Examples of Policies and Emerging Practices for Supporting Transgender Students, May 2016*

*Dear Colleague Letter: Title IX Coordinators, April 2015*

*Sexual Harassment: It's Not Academic, September 2008*

*Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties, January 2001*

#### WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

California Department of Education: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr>



# CSBA Sample

## Administrative Regulation

Students

AR 5145.7(a)

### SEXUAL HARASSMENT

**Cautionary Notice:** The following administrative regulation reflects federal Title IX regulations added by 85 Fed. Reg. 30026, effective August 14, 2020, which establish a process for investigating and resolving allegations of conduct that meets the federal definition of sexual harassment. However, in June 2020, two motions for a preliminary injunction were filed seeking to postpone the effective date of the regulations and prohibit their enforcement. If the court issues an injunction, portions of this administrative regulation reflecting the Title IX regulations will not be in effect. CSBA will notify districts when the court issues its decision.

Districts are also cautioned that the federal regulations preempt any conflicting state law or regulations, but the interaction between federal and state law is not always clear. Districts should consult legal counsel if questions arise.

**Note:** Education Code 231.5 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 USC 1681-1688; 34 CFR 106.1-106.82) prohibit discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment, and mandate that the district adopt and publish complaint procedures. Also see AR 5145.71 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures.

### Title IX Coordinator

**Note:** Pursuant to 34 CFR 106.8, districts that receive federal financial assistance are **mandated** to designate an employee to ensure district compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its implementing regulations, including the investigation of complaints alleging sex discrimination. The following paragraph specifies the position designated as the district's Title IX Coordinator and compliance officer for purposes of complaints alleging sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, filed under that the Title IX Coordinator will be the same person(s) designated to serve as the compliance officer(s) for the district's uniform complaint procedures pursuant to AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures. Districts may modify this regulation to designate separate district employees to serve these functions; the district should modify the following paragraph accordingly.

The district designates the following individual(s) as the responsible employee(s) to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and California Education Code 234.1, as well as to investigate and resolve sexual harassment complaints under AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures. The coordinator/compliance officer(s) **Title IX Coordinator(s)** may be contacted at:

Assistant Superintendent  
(title or position)  
350 East K Street, Benicia, CA 94510  
(address)  
707-747-8300  
(telephone number)  
TitleIX@beniciaunified.org  
(email)

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)

(cf. 5145.71 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures)

**The district shall notify students, parents/guardians, employees, bargaining units, and applicants for employment of the name or title, office address, email address, and telephone number of the district's Title IX Coordinator. (34 CFR 106.8)**

### Prohibited Conduct

Note: Education Code 212.5 defines sexual harassment as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, made by someone in the educational setting. For purposes of suspension and expulsion, Education Code 48900.2 defines sexual harassment as conduct, when considered from the perspective of a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim, that is sufficiently severe or pervasive as to have a negative impact upon the victim's academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment for the victim; see AR 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process. **Conduct that meets the federal definition of sexual harassment in 34 CFR 106.30 (i.e., (1) a district employee conditioning the provision of a district aid, benefit, or service on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct; (2) unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the district's education program or activity; or (3) sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined in 20 USC 1092 and 34 USC 12291) requires investigation and resolution through Title IX regulations; see AR 5145.71 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures.**

Under the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) 2001 Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance interpreting Title IX, sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. A hostile environment is created when the conduct is sufficiently serious that it denies or limits a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the school's program based on sex. OCR considers the conduct from both the subjective perspective of the individual who was harassed and from the perspective of a reasonable person with the same characteristics as the victim.

Prohibited sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, unwanted requests for sexual favors, or other unwanted verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature made against another person of the same or opposite sex in the educational setting, under any of the following conditions: (Education Code 212.5; 5 CCR 4916)

1. Submission to the conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of a student's academic status or progress.
2. Submission to or rejection of the conduct by a student is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting the student.
3. The conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact on the student's academic performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.



**SEXUAL HARASSMENT** (continued)

4. Submission to or rejection of the conduct by the student is used as the basis for any decision affecting the student regarding benefits and services, honors, programs, or activities available at or through any district program or activity.

*(cf. 5131 - Conduct)*

*(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)*

*(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)*

*(cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)*

*(cf. 6142.1 - Sexual Health and HIV/AIDS Prevention Instruction)*

Note: The following list contains common examples of sexual harassment from the OCR January 2001 Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance, and definitions specified in 5 CCR 4916.

Examples of types of conduct which are prohibited in the district and which may constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

1. Unwelcome leering, sexual flirtations, or propositions
2. Unwelcome sexual slurs, epithets, threats, verbal abuse, derogatory comments, or sexually degrading descriptions
3. Graphic verbal comments about an individual's body or overly personal conversation
4. Sexual jokes, derogatory posters, notes, stories, cartoons, drawings, pictures, obscene gestures, or computer-generated images of a sexual nature
5. Spreading sexual rumors
6. Teasing or sexual remarks about students enrolled in a predominantly single-sex class
7. Massaging, grabbing, fondling, stroking, or brushing the body
8. Touching an individual's body or clothes in a sexual way
9. Impeding or blocking movements or any physical interference with school activities when directed at an individual on the basis of sex
10. Displaying sexually suggestive objects
11. Sexual assault, sexual battery, or sexual coercion
12. Electronic communications containing comments, words, or images described above

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT** (continued)

Any prohibited conduct that occurs off campus or outside of school-related or school-sponsored programs or activities will be regarded as sexual harassment in violation of district policy if it has a continuing effect on or creates a hostile school environment for the complainant or victim of the conduct.

**Notifications**

A copy of the district's sexual harassment policy and regulation shall:

1. Be included in the notifications that are sent to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year (Education Code 48980; 5 CCR 4917)

*(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)*

2. Be displayed in a prominent location in the main administrative building or other area where notices of district rules, regulations, procedures, and standards of conduct are posted (Education Code 231.5)

**Note:** Education Code 231.6, as added by AB 543 (Ch. 428, Statutes of 2019), requires districts serving students in grades 9-12 to create a poster that notifies students of the district's sexual harassment policy, and to display it, as specified below. The district may partner with local, state, or federal agencies, or nonprofit organizations, for the purposes of the design and content of the poster.

3. Be summarized on a poster which shall be prominently and conspicuously displayed in each bathroom and locker room at each school. The poster may be displayed in public areas that are accessible to and frequented by students, including, but not limited to, classrooms, hallways, gymnasiums, auditoriums, and cafeterias. The poster shall display the rules and procedures for reporting a charge of sexual harassment; the name, phone number, and email address of an appropriate school employee to contact to report a charge of sexual harassment; the rights of the reporting student, the complainant, and the respondent; and the responsibilities of the school. (Education Code 231.6)

**Note:** Education Code 234.6, as added by AB 34 (Ch. 282, Statutes of 2019), requires districts, beginning in the 2020-21 school year, to post on the district's web site the district's written policy on sexual harassment as well as other state and federal law requirements, in the manner specified below. 34 CFR 106.8 also requires districts that have web sites to prominently display the contact information for the Title IX Coordinator and the district's nondiscrimination policy on its web site.

4. Be posted in a prominent location on the district's web site in a manner that is easily accessible to parents/guardians and students. This shall include the name or title, office address, email address, and telephone number of the employee(s) designated as the district's Title IX Coordinator. (Education Code 234.6; 34 CFR 106.8)



## SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

(cf. 1113 - District and School Web Sites)

(cf. 1114 - District-Sponsored Social Media)

**Note:** Education Code 231.5, as amended by AB 543, requires the district to provide a copy of the district's sexual harassment policy as part of any orientation program conducted for new and continuing students.

3-5. Be provided as part of any orientation program conducted for new and continuing students at the beginning of each quarter, semester, or summer session (Education Code 231.5)

4.6. Appear in any school or district publication that sets forth the school's or district's comprehensive rules, regulations, procedures, and standards of conduct (Education Code 231.5)

~~Note: Items #5 and #6 #7-8 below are optional.~~

5-7. Be included in the student **any** handbook **provided to students, parents/guardians, employees, or employee organizations (34 CFR 106.8)**

6. Be provided to employees and employee organizations

## Reporting ~~Complaints-Process and Complaint Investigation and Resolution~~

~~Note: The following reporting process details site-level steps to be taken by students and others for reporting sexual harassment incidents. In its January 2001 Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance, OCR acknowledges that procedures adopted by districts to address student harassment complaints will vary considerably depending on a number of factors, including the size of the district.~~

Pursuant to Education Code 231.5, the district's policy must contain information on where to obtain the specific procedure for reporting incidents of sexual harassment and pursuing available remedies. In addition, 34 CFR 106.8 requires a district to adopt and publish a complaint procedure providing for a "prompt and equitable" resolution of student complaints alleging sexual harassment. To avoid confusion that may arise from having a multiplicity of complaint processes for resolving a variety of student complaints, it is recommended that districts use their uniform complaint procedures (UCP) to investigate and resolve sexual harassment complaints involving students and to track complaints through a districtwide system. See AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures for details of these procedures.

Any student or parent/guardian who believes that he/she the student has been subjected to sexual harassment by another student, an employee, or a third party or who has witnessed sexual harassment is strongly encouraged to report the incident to his/her a teacher, the principal, the district's Title IX Coordinator, or any other available school employee. Within one school day of receiving such a report, the principal or other school employee shall forward the report to the principal or the district's compliance officer identified in AR 1312.3 Title IX Coordinator. In addition, any Any school employee who observes an

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT** (continued)

incident of sexual harassment involving a student shall, within one school day, report ~~his/her~~ **the** observation to the principal or ~~a district compliance officer~~ **Title IX Coordinator**, **regardless of** ~~The employee shall take these actions~~, whether ~~or not~~ the alleged victim files a **formal** complaint.

*(cf. 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting)*

When a report or complaint of sexual harassment involves off-campus conduct, the ~~principal~~ **Title IX Coordinator** shall assess whether the conduct may create or contribute to the creation of a hostile school environment. If ~~he/she~~ **the Title IX Coordinator** determines that a hostile environment may be created, the complaint shall be investigated and resolved in the same manner as if the prohibited conduct occurred at school.

When a verbal or informal report of sexual harassment is submitted, the ~~principal or compliance officer~~ **Title IX Coordinator** shall inform the student or parent/guardian of the right to file a formal written complaint in accordance with ~~the applicable~~ **the applicable** district's ~~uniform~~ complaint procedures. ~~Regardless of whether a formal complaint is filed, the principal or compliance officer shall take steps to investigate the allegations and, if sexual harassment is found, shall take prompt action to stop it, prevent recurrence, and address any continuing effects.~~

**Complaint Procedures**

**All complaints of sexual harassment by and against students shall be investigated and resolved in accordance with law and district procedures. The Title IX Coordinator shall review the allegations to determine the applicable procedure for responding to the complaint. All complaints that meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX shall be investigated and resolved in accordance with AR 5145.71 - Title IX Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures. Other sexual harassment complaints shall be investigated and resolved pursuant to AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures.**

~~If a complaint of sexual harassment is initially submitted to the principal, he/she shall, within two school days, forward the report to the compliance officer to initiate investigation of the complaint. The compliance officer shall contact the complainant and investigate and resolve the complaint in accordance with law and district procedures specified in AR 1312.3.~~

~~In investigating a sexual harassment complaint, evidence of past sexual relationships of the victim shall not be considered, except to the extent that such evidence may relate to the victim's prior relationship with the respondent.~~

~~In any case of sexual harassment involving the principal, compliance officer, or any other person to whom the incident would ordinarily be reported or filed, the report may instead be~~



**SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)**

submitted to the Superintendent or designee who shall determine who will investigate the complaint.

(cf. 5141.4—Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting)

**Confidentiality**

Note: Pursuant to 5 CCR 4964, districts are required to keep complaints and allegations of sexual harassment confidential, except when disclosure is necessary to further the investigation, other needed remedial action, or ongoing monitoring.

All complaints and allegations of sexual harassment shall be kept confidential except as necessary to carry out the investigation or take other subsequent necessary action. (5 CCR 4964)

Note: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 USC 1232g; 34 CFR 99.1-99.67) protects student privacy, including student records such as the description of the corrective actions taken in response to a complaint of sexual harassment. Thus, districts are advised to consult legal counsel in determining what information must be included in the final written decision sent to the complainant and what information must not be included.

In determining what information to include and not include in the final written decision for complaints regarding sexual harassment, districts should be aware that current law (20 USC 1221) states that nothing in FERPA is to "be construed to affect the applicability of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972, Title V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act, or other statutes prohibiting discrimination, to any applicable program." OCR has interpreted these provisions to mean that FERPA permits a district to disclose to a student, who was subjected to sexual harassment, certain information about the sanctions imposed upon the offender when the sanctions directly relate to the student. For instance, if properly remedying the impact of sexual harassment would require disclosing to the alleged victim certain information on how the district disciplined the alleged student offender (e.g., a stay away order), OCR would require the district to disclose that information.

OCR's Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance indicates that if a complainant in a sexual harassment case requests that his/her name or that of the victim not be revealed to the alleged perpetrator or asks that the complaint not be pursued, the district should first inform the complainant that honoring the request may limit its ability to respond and pursue disciplinary action against the alleged perpetrator. However, in all instances, the district must continue to ensure that it provides a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students. If there is a high risk of harm to the complainant or others (e.g., if the district has information that the alleged perpetrator is a repeat offender) and the district cannot respond adequately to the risk without disclosing the complainant's identity, then in such limited circumstances the district may be required to investigate the incident and disclose the complainant's identity. If the district determines that it will respect the confidentiality request, it should nevertheless take all reasonable steps to investigate and respond to the complaint. Such steps may include limited investigative activities that do not require the district to reveal the complainant's identity; providing services to the complainant, such as counseling services; providing increased monitoring, supervision, or security at locations or activities where the misconduct occurred; providing training and education materials for students and employees; or changing and publicizing the district's policies on sexual violence.



**SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)**

However, when a complainant or victim of sexual harassment notifies the district of the harassment but requests confidentiality, the compliance officer shall inform him/her that the request may limit the district's ability to investigate the harassment or take other necessary action. When honoring a request for confidentiality, the district will nevertheless take all reasonable steps to investigate and respond to the complaint consistent with the request.

When a complainant or victim of sexual harassment notifies the district of the harassment but requests that the district not pursue an investigation, the district will determine whether or not it can honor such a request while still providing a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students.

*(ef. 4119.23/4219.23/4319.23—Unauthorized Release of Confidential/Privileged Information)*  
*(ef. 5125—Student Records)*

**Response Pending Investigation**

Note: The following reporting process may be revised to reflect district practice. In its Q&A on Campus Sexual Misconduct, OCR cautions that schools are responsible for redressing a hostile environment that occurs on campus even if it relates to off-campus activities.

When an incident of sexual harassment is reported, the principal or designee, in consultation with the compliance officer, shall determine whether interim measures are necessary pending the results of the investigation. The principal/designee or compliance officer shall take immediate measures necessary to stop the harassment and protect students and/or ensure their access to the educational program. To the extent possible, such interim measures shall not disadvantage the complainant or victim of the alleged harassment. Interim measures may include placing the individuals involved in separate classes or transferring a student to a class taught by a different teacher, in accordance with law and Board policy. The school should notify the individual who was harassed of his/her options to avoid contact with the alleged harasser and allow the complainant to change academic and extracurricular arrangements as appropriate. The school should also ensure that the complainant is aware of the resources and assistance, such as counseling, that are available to him/her. As appropriate, such actions shall be considered even when a student chooses to not file a formal complaint or the sexual harassment occurs off school grounds or outside school-sponsored or school-related programs or activities.

**Notifications**

Note: In its January 2001 Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance, OCR states that a procedure for sexual harassment complaints cannot be prompt or equitable unless it is widely disseminated and written in language appropriate to the age of the school's students. Examples include having a copy of the procedures available throughout the school, publishing the procedures in the student handbook, and identifying individuals who can explain the procedure.



**SEXUAL HARASSMENT** (continued)

A copy of the district's sexual harassment policy and regulation shall:

1. Be included in the notifications that are sent to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year (Education Code 48980; 5 CCR 4917)

*(cf. 5145.6 – Parental Notifications)*

Note: In its April 2015 Dear Colleague Letter: Title IX Coordinators, OCR recommends that districts use web posting and social media to disseminate their nondiscrimination notices, policies, and procedures and communicate the contact information for current compliance officer(s) to students, parents/guardians, and employees. Item #2 below may be modified to reflect the means used by the district to disseminate its sexual harassment policy and regulation.

2. Be displayed in a prominent location in the main administrative building or other area where notices of district rules, regulations, procedures, and standards of conduct are posted (Education Code 231.5)

A copy of the district's sexual harassment policy and regulation shall be posted on district and school web sites and, when available, on district-supported social media.

*(cf. 1113 – District and School Web Sites)*

*(cf. 1114 – District Sponsored Social Media)*

3. Be provided as part of any orientation program conducted for new students at the beginning of each quarter, semester, or summer session (Education Code 231.5)

4. Appear in any school or district publication that sets forth the school's or district's comprehensive rules, regulations, procedures, and standards of conduct (Education Code 231.5)

Note: Items #5 and #6 below are optional.

5. Be included in the student handbook

6. Be provided to employees and employee organizations

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