

## **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The Board of Education recognizes that harassment of students, employees (including all staff, applicants for employment, both paid and unpaid interns, exempt and non-exempt status, part-time, seasonal, and temporary workers, regardless of immigration status) and certain “non-employees” (which include appointees, contractors, subcontractors, vendors, consultant and other persons providing services pursuant to a contract, or their employees) on the basis of sex, gender and/or sexual orientation is abusive and illegal behavior that harms targets and negatively impacts the school culture by creating an environment of fear, distrust, intimidation and intolerance. The Board further recognizes that preventing and remedying such harassment in schools is essential to ensure a healthy, nondiscriminatory environment in which students can learn and employees and non-employees can work productively.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination and is unlawful under federal, state, and (where applicable) local law. Sexual harassment includes harassment on the basis of actual or perceived or self-identified sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and transgender status. Sexual harassment of a student can deny or limit the student’s ability to participate in or to receive benefits, services, or opportunities from the school’s program.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome conduct which is either of a sexual nature, or which is directed at an individual because of that individual's sex, when:

- a. submission to that conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or a student's education;
- b. submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for decisions affecting an individual’s employment or a student's education; or
- c. the conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee's or non-employee’s work or student's school performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or educational environment, even if the complaining individual is not the intended target of the sexual harassment;

Sexual harassment can include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, or verbal, nonverbal or physical aggression, intimidation or hostility that is based on actual or perceived gender and sexual stereotypes.

The Board is committed to providing an educational and working environment that promotes respect, dignity and equality and that is free from all forms of sexual harassment. To this end, the Board condemns and strictly prohibits all forms of sexual harassment on school grounds, school buses and at all school-sponsored activities, programs and events, including those that take place at locations outside the district, or outside the school setting if the harassment impacts the individual’s education or employment in a way that violates their legal rights, including when employees and non-employees travel on district business, or when harassment is done by electronic means (including on social media). For employees, sexual harassment is considered a form of employee

misconduct. Sanctions will be enforced against all those who engage in sexual harassment, and against supervisory and managerial personnel who knowingly allow such behavior to continue or engage in retaliation.

Sexual harassment may subject the district to liability for harm done to targets. Harassers may also be individually subject to civil liability if sued in a court of law or criminal liability if prosecuted. Under various state and federal laws, students, employees, and non-employees have legal protections against sexual harassment in the school environment as described above. Those laws are listed in the references section. Additionally, local laws (e.g., county, city, town, and/or village) may apply to the district. The district's Code of Conduct also addresses appropriate behavior in the school environment. Sexual harassment can occur between persons of all ages and genders. Because sexual harassment can occur staff to student, staff to staff, student to student, student to staff, male to female, female to male, male to male or female to female, it shall be a violation of this policy for any student, employee, or non-employee to sexually harass any student or employee.

In order for the Board to effectively enforce this policy and to take prompt corrective measures, it is essential that all targets of sexual harassment and persons with knowledge of sexual harassment report the harassment immediately. The district will promptly investigate all complaints of sexual harassment, either formal or informal, verbal or written. To the extent possible, all complaints will be treated in a confidential manner. Limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation. If the complainant reports that they feel unsafe at school due to the nature of the complaint, the district will determine if accommodations need to be made until the issue is resolved.

If, after appropriate investigation, the district finds that a student, an employee, or non-employee has violated this policy, prompt corrective action will be taken in accordance with the applicable collective bargaining agreement, contract, district policy and state, federal and/or local law.

All complainants and those who participate in sexual harassment complaints or the investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment have the right to be free from retaliation of any kind, when they do so with a good faith belief that sexual harassment has occurred. Such prohibited retaliation can include, but is not limited to, discipline, discrimination, demotion, denial of privileges, or any action that would keep a person from coming forward to make or support a sexual harassment claim.

This policy shall be posted in a prominent place in each district facility, on the district's website, and shall also be published in student registration materials, student, parent and employee handbooks, and other appropriate school publications.

The Board shall periodically review this policy's effectiveness and compliance with applicable state, federal and/or local law and recommend revisions to Board.

Ref:

Education Amendments of 1972, Title IX, 20 U.S.C. §1681 *et seq.*

Title VII of Civil Rights Act (1964), 42 U.S.C. §2000-e; 34 CFR §100 *et seq.* Executive Law §296-d (prohibition of sexual harassment of non-employees) Labor Law §201-g (required sexual

harassment policy and training)

General Obligations Law §5-336 (nondisclosure agreements optional)

*Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education*, 526 U.S. 629, 652 (1999)

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

*Faragher v. City of Boca Raton*, 524 U.S. 775 (1998)

*Burlington Industries v. Ellerth*, 524 U.S. 742 (1998)

*Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Services, Inc.*, 523 U.S. 75 (1998)

*Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools*, 503 U.S. 60 (1992)

*Meritor Savings Bank, FSB v. Vinson*, 477 U.S. 57 (1986)

Office for Civil Rights *Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance (January 19, 2001)*

Office for Civil Rights, *Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Harassment Issues (2006)*

Office for Civil Rights, *Dear Colleague Letter: Bullying (October 26, 2010)*

Inter-municipal Agreement between Yonkers Public Schools and the City of Yonkers, filed June 16, 2014

Adoption date: May 8, 2007

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Revision date: January 16, 2019