



Book	Policy Manual
Section	200 Pupils
Title	Unlawful Harassment
Code	248
Status	Active
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Purpose

The Board strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students in the schools. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the district to maintain an educational environment in which harassment in any form is not tolerated.

Authority

The Board prohibits all forms of unlawful harassment of students by all district students and staff members, contracted individuals and vendors, and volunteers in the schools.

The Board encourages students who have been harassed to promptly report such incidents to the designated employees.

The Board directs that complaints of harassment be investigated promptly, and corrective action be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the district's legal and investigative obligations. No reprisals nor retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith charges of harassment.

Definitions

The term **harassment** includes but is not limited to repeated, unwelcome and offensive slurs, jokes, or other verbal, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age or handicap/disability that create an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment.

Ethnic harassment includes the repeated, unwelcome and offensive use of any derogatory word, phrase or action characterizing a given racial or ethnic group that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offense educational environment.

Sexual harassment shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's academic status.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for academic or work decisions affecting the individual.
3. Such conduct deprives a student of educational aid, benefits, services or treatment.
4. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's school performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive education environment.

Examples of **sexual harassment** include but are not limited to sexual flirtations, advances, touching or propositions; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's dress or body; sexually degrading words to describe an individual; jokes, pin-ups, calendars, objects, graffiti, vulgar statements, abusive language, innuendoes, references to sexual activities, overt sexual conduct; or any conduct that has the effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's ability to work or learn or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive learning or working environment.

Delegation of Responsibility

In order to achieve all goals, the Board directs the Assistant Superintendent to assume the responsibility of coordinating all implementing activities as Compliance Officer.

The district shall annually inform students, staff, parents, independent contractors and volunteers that unlawful harassment of students will not be tolerated, by means of: distribution of written policy which will include all grievance procedures, publication in handbooks, presentation at an assembly, training sessions, and/or posting of notice/signs. This correspondence shall include the name, office address, and telephone number of the Compliance Officer. The address and phone number is as follows: Tamaqua Area School District, Box 112, Tamaqua, PA 18252. Phone – 570-668-2570.

The district shall provide training for students and staff concerning all aspects of unlawful harassment.

Each staff member shall be responsible to maintain an educational environment free from all forms of unlawful harassment.

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of their fellow students and to ensure an atmosphere free from all forms of unlawful harassment.

Students shall be informed that they may choose to report harassment complaints to building principals, teachers, counselors, nurses, and/or administrators.

All employees who receive harassment complaints from a student shall report such to the building principal.

If the building principal is the subject of a complaint, the student shall report the complaint directly to the Superintendent or designated administrator.

Guidelines

Rules, regulations, and grievance procedures are published in this Board-approved policy. Copies of this and all Board-approved policies are available at each of the school buildings and district offices. These can be obtained by contacting the respective offices. A copy of

the School Board Policy Manual is available in all school and district offices. Grievance procedures are also published in student and teacher handbooks.

When a student believes that s/he is being harassed, the student should immediately inform the harasser that the behavior is unwelcome, offensive or inappropriate. If the unwelcome, offensive or inappropriate behavior continues, the student shall follow the established complaint procedure.

Complaint Procedure

A complainant has the right to be accompanied by a third party during all steps of this procedure. S/He also has the right to present witnesses and other evidence that is pertinent to the complaint.

Notification of decisions rendered will be communicated to all parties at each phase of the grievance procedure. Copies of the outcome of the complaint shall be provided to the complainant, the accused, the Superintendent, and others directly involved, as appropriate.

1. A student shall report a complaint of harassment, orally or in writing, within thirty (30) calendar days of the occurrence, to the building principal or a designated employee, who shall inform the student of his/her rights and of the complaint process.
2. The building principal immediately shall notify the Superintendent or other designated administrator and shall conduct an impartial, thorough and confidential investigation of the alleged harassment.

In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes harassment, the totality of the circumstances, nature of the conduct, and context in which the alleged conduct occurred shall be investigated.

3. Within ten (10) calendar days after receipt of the complaint, the building principal shall prepare a written report summarizing the investigation and recommending disposition of the complaint. Copies of the report shall be provided to the complainant, the accused, the Superintendent and others directly involved, as appropriate.
4. If not satisfied with the decision, the complainant shall appeal the decision in writing to the Compliance Officer within ten (10) calendar days after receipt of the decision.
5. The Compliance Officer shall conduct a review and issue a decision within ten (10) calendar days after receipt of the appeal.
6. If not satisfied with the decision of the Compliance Officer, the complainant may appeal the decision to the Board at its next regular Board meeting by notifying the Board Secretary in writing within ten (10) calendar days after receipt of the Compliance Officer's decision.
7. The Board shall conduct a review and issue a decision within thirty (30) days following the Board meeting at which the complaint was presented.
8. If the investigation results in a substantiated charge of harassment, the district shall take prompt corrective action to ensure the harassment ceases and will not recur.
9. The Superintendent or his/her designee will ensure that the resolution of the complaint has been implemented.

Discipline

A substantiated charge against a district staff member shall subject such staff member to disciplinary action, including discharge.[1][2][3]

A substantiated charge against a district student shall subject such student to disciplinary action, consistent with the Student Code of Conduct, and may include educational activities and/or counseling services related to unlawful harassment.[4][5]

If it is concluded that a student has made false accusations, such student shall be subject to disciplinary action, consistent with the Student Code of Conduct.[4]

Legal

1. Pol. 317
2. Pol. 417
3. Pol. 517
4. Pol. 218
5. Pol. 233