

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Note: To address prohibited discrimination and violations of state and federal laws governing educational programs, 5 CCR 4621 **mandates** districts to adopt uniform complaint procedures (UCP) consistent with the state's complaint procedures specified in 5 CCR 4600-4670. Pursuant to 5 CCR 4610, as amended by Register 2013, No. 38, districts are required to adopt a uniform system of procedures that meets specified requirements for receiving, investigating, and resolving complaints alleging (1) unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment and intimidation; (2) bullying; (3) a violation of state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs; or (4) noncompliance with state law prohibiting the charging of student fees. Although some bullying incidents may not fall within the provisions of 5 CCR 4610, CSBA's sample policy BP/AR 5131.2 - Bullying strongly recommends that districts use the UCP to investigate and resolve all bullying incidents, regardless of whether there is an allegation of discriminatory bullying, to ensure consistent implementation by district staff. Additionally, it is not always easy or possible for staff to know at the time of the incident whether a student was bullied because of his/her actual or perceived membership in a legally protected class. Districts that are concerned about the capacity of a single district compliance officer to handle a possible increase in the number of UCP complaints, or that prefer to handle certain incidents at the school site level whenever possible, may designate multiple compliance officers in accordance with this policy.

In addition, Education Code 52075, as added by AB 97 (Ch. 47, Statutes of 2013), **mandates** districts, by June 30, 2014, to adopt policies and procedures implementing the use of the UCP to resolve complaints alleging noncompliance with requirements related to the local control and accountability plan. For plan requirements, see BP/AR 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan. Finally, a district should adopt policies and procedures implementing the use of the UCP to resolve complaints alleging retaliation in response to a complaint.

The California Department of Education (CDE) monitors district programs and operations for compliance with these procedures through its Federal Program Monitoring (FPM) process. The FPM consists of a review of written district policies and procedures for required language, including prohibition of discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying, against students pursuant to Education Code 234.1, and of records of required activities, such as annual notification provided to students, parents/guardians, employees, and other school community members.

In addition, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (20 USC 12101-12213), Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC 2000d-2000e-17), Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 (20 USC 1681-1688), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 USC 6101-6107). OCR has issued guidance describing federal requirements for discrimination complaint procedures. OCR requires such procedures to be "prompt and equitable." The factors OCR examines to evaluate each district's procedures are specified in AR 1312.3, including whether and how the procedures (1) provide notice of the procedures to the district's students, parents/guardians, and employees; (2) ensure adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of complaints; (3) contain reasonably prompt timeframes for major stages of the complaint process; (4) provide notice to the complainant of the outcome of the investigation; and (5) provide an assurance that action will be taken to prevent recurrence of any discrimination found and to correct its effects.

CSBA staff met with representatives from CDE and OCR to discuss this policy and the accompanying regulation. 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.

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The Governing Board recognizes that the district has the primary responsibility to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs. The Board encourages the early, informal resolution of complaints whenever possible and appropriate. To resolve complaints which cannot be resolved through such informal process, the Board shall adopt a uniform system of complaint processes specified in 5 CCR 4600-4670 and the accompanying administrative regulation.

The district's uniform complaint procedures (UCP) shall be used to investigate and resolve the following complaints:

1. Any complaint alleging district violation of applicable state or federal law or regulations governing adult education programs, consolidated categorical aid programs, migrant education, career technical and technical education and training programs, child care and development programs, child nutrition programs, and special education programs (5 CCR 4610)

(cf. 3553 - Free and Reduced Price Meals)
(cf. 3555 - Nutrition Program Compliance)
(cf. 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting)
(cf. 5148 - Child Care and Development)
(cf. 6159 - Individualized Education Program)
(cf. 6171 - Title I Programs)
(cf. 6174 - Education for English Language Learners)
(cf. 6175 - Migrant Education Program)
(cf. 6178 - Career Technical Education)
(cf. 6178.1 - Work-Based Learning)
(cf. 6178.2 - Regional Occupational Center/Program)
(cf. 6200 - Adult Education)

2. Any complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, in district programs and activities against any person based on his/her actual or perceived characteristics of race or ethnicity, color, ancestry, nationality, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or genetic information, or any other characteristic identified in Education Code 200 or 220, Government Code 11135, or Penal Code 422.55, or based on his/her association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics (5 CCR 4610)

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)
(cf. 4030 - Nondiscrimination in Employment)
(cf. 4031 - Complaints Concerning Discrimination in Employment)
(cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)
(cf. 5145.7 - Sexual Harassment)

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3. Any complaint alleging bullying in district programs and activities, regardless of whether the bullying is based on a person's actual or perceived characteristics of race or ethnicity, color, ancestry, nationality, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or genetic information, or any other characteristic identified in Education Code 200 or 220, Government Code 11135, or Penal Code 422.55, or based on his/her association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics

(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)

4. Any complaint alleging district violation of the prohibition against requiring students to pay fees, deposits, or other charges for participation in educational activities (5 CCR 4610)

(cf. 3260 - Fees and Charges)

(cf. 3320 - Claims and Actions Against the District)

Note: Item #5 below is **mandated** pursuant to Education Code 52075, as added by AB 97 (Ch. 47, Statutes of 2013).

5. Any complaint alleging that the district has not complied with legal requirements related to the implementation of the local control and accountability plan (Education Code 52075)

(cf. 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan)

Note: 5 CCR 4621 **mandates** that district policy ensure that complainants are protected from retaliation as specified in item #6 below.

6. Any complaint alleging retaliation against a complainant or other participant in the complaint process or anyone who has acted to uncover or report a violation subject to this policy

Note: Pursuant to 5 CCR 4610, a district may, at its discretion, use the UCP to resolve other complaints.

7. Any other complaint as specified in a district policy

Note: 5 CCR 4631 authorizes the district to utilize alternative dispute resolution (ADR) methods, including mediation, to resolve complaints before initiating a formal investigation. However, the district should ensure that any ADR it uses, particularly in-person ADR, is appropriate for the particular situation. For example, in some instances (e.g., sexual assault) face-to-face mediation should not be used even if all parties voluntarily agree given the risk that a student might feel pressured to "voluntarily" agree to it. The following **optional** paragraph provides for a neutral mediator and should be revised to reflect district practice.

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The Board recognizes that alternative dispute resolution (ADR) can, depending on the nature of the allegations, offer a process to reach a resolution to the complaint that is agreeable to all parties. One type of ADR is mediation, which shall be offered to resolve complaints that involve more than one student and no adult. However, mediation shall not be offered or used to resolve any complaint involving sexual assault or where there is a reasonable risk that a party to the mediation would feel compelled to participate. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the use of ADR is consistent with state and federal laws and regulations.

Note: The following paragraph is **mandated** pursuant to 5 CCR 4621. Appropriate disclosure will vary in each case depending on the facts and circumstances.

In filing and investigating complaints, the confidentiality of the parties involved shall be protected as required by law. As appropriate for any complaint alleging retaliation, unlawful discrimination, or bullying, the Superintendent or designee shall keep confidential the identity of the complainant and/or the subject of the complaint, if he/she is different from the complainant, as long as the integrity of the complaint process is maintained.

(cf. 4119.23/4219.23/4319.23 - Unauthorized Release of Confidential/Privileged Information)

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

(cf. 9011 - Disclosure of Confidential/Privileged Information)

When an allegation that is not subject to the UCP is included in a UCP complaint, the district shall refer the non-UCP allegation to the appropriate staff or agency and shall resolve the UCP-related allegation(s) through the district's UCP.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide training to district staff to ensure awareness and knowledge of current law and related requirements, including the steps and timelines specified in this policy and the accompanying administrative regulation.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

Note: It is important to maintain records of all UCP complaints and the investigations of those complaints. If the district is ever investigated by OCR or CDE, these are important documents in demonstrating that the district has complied with federal law, state law, and its own policies and regulations.

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain records of all UCP complaints and the investigations of those complaints. All such records shall be destroyed in accordance with applicable state law and district policy.

(cf. 3580 - District Records)

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Non-UCP Complaints

Note: 5 CCR 4611 details complaint issues that are not subject to the UCP. Such issues include, but are not limited to, allegations of child abuse, health and safety complaints regarding a child development program, allegations of fraud, and employment discrimination complaints. For procedures related to complaints of discrimination in employment, see AR 4031 - Complaints Concerning Discrimination in Employment.

The following complaints shall not be subject to the district's UCP but shall be referred to the specified agency: (5 CCR 4611)

1. Any complaint alleging child abuse or neglect shall be referred to the County Department of Social Services, the County Protective Services Division, and the appropriate law enforcement agency.
2. Any complaint alleging health and safety violations by a child development program shall, for licensed facilities, be referred to Department of Social Services and shall, for licensing-exempt facilities, be referred to the appropriate Child Development regional administrator.
3. Any complaint alleging employment discrimination shall be sent to the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing and the compliance officer shall notify the complainant by first class mail of the transfer.
4. Any complaint alleging fraud shall be referred to the California Department of Education.

Note: Education Code 35186 requires the district to use the UCP, with modifications, to investigate and resolve complaints related to items #1-3 below (i.e., "Williams complaints"). Because Education Code 35186 sets forth different timelines for investigation and resolution of these kinds of complaints than the timelines specified in law for other uniform complaints, the CDE has created a separate uniform complaint process for the Williams complaints. See AR 1312.4 - Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures for the separate procedure.

In addition, the district's Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures, AR 1312.4, shall be used to investigate and resolve any complaint related to sufficiency of textbooks or instructional materials, emergency or urgent facilities conditions that pose a threat to the health or safety of students or staff, or teacher vacancies and misassignments. (Education Code 35186)

(cf. 1312.4 - Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures)

Legal Reference: (see next page)

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Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

200-262.4 *Prohibition of discrimination*
8200-8498 *Child care and development programs*
8500-8538 *Adult basic education*
18100-18203 *School libraries*
32289 *School safety plan, uniform complaint procedures*
35186 *Williams uniform complaint procedures*
48985 *Notices in language other than English*
49010-49013 *Student fees*
49060-49079 *Student records*
49490-49590 *Child nutrition programs*
52060-52077 *Local control and accountability plan, especially*
52075 *Complaint for lack of compliance with local control and accountability plan requirements*
52160-52178 *Bilingual education programs*
52300-52490 *Career technical education*
52500-52616.24 *Adult schools*
52800-52870 *School-based program coordination*
54400-54425 *Compensatory education programs*
54440-54445 *Migrant education*
54460-54529 *Compensatory education programs*
56000-56867 *Special education programs*
59000-59300 *Special schools and centers*
64000-64001 *Consolidated application process*

GOVERNMENT CODE

11135 *Nondiscrimination in programs or activities funded by state*
12900-12996 *Fair Employment and Housing Act*

PENAL CODE

422.55 *Hate crime; definition*
422.6 *Interference with constitutional right or privilege*

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

3080 *Application of section*
4600-4687 *Uniform complaint procedures*
4900-4965 *Nondiscrimination in elementary and secondary education programs*

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1221 *Application of laws*
1232g *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act*
1681-1688 *Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972*
6301-6577 *Title I basic programs*
6801-6871 *Title III language instruction for limited English proficient and immigrant students*
7101-7184 *Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act*
7201-7283g *Title V promoting informed parental choice and innovative programs*
7301-7372 *Title V rural and low-income school programs*
12101-12213 *Title II equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities*

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 29

794 *Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973*

Legal Reference continued: (see next page)

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Legal Reference: (continued)

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42

2000d-2000e-17 Title VI and Title VII Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended

2000h-2-2000h-6 Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

6101-6107 Age Discrimination Act of 1975

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 28

35.107 Nondiscrimination on basis of disability; complaints

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

99.1-99.67 Family Educational Rights and Privacy

100.3 Prohibition of discrimination on basis of race, color or national origin

104.7 Designation of responsible employee for Section 504

106.8 Designation of responsible employee for Title IX

106.9 Notification of nondiscrimination on basis of sex

110.25 Notification of nondiscrimination on the basis of age

Management Resources:

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

Questions and Answers on Title IX and Sexual Violence, April 2014

Dear Colleague Letter: Bullying of Students with Disabilities, August 2013

Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence, April 2011

Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying, October 2010

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>

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Note: 5 CCR 4621, as amended by Register 2013, No. 38, **mandates** that the district's uniform complaint procedures (UCP) be consistent with the procedures of 5 CCR 4600-4687. Additionally, Education Code 52075, as added by AB 97 (Ch. 47, Statutes of 2013), **mandates** districts, by June 30, 2014, to adopt policies and procedures implementing the use of the UCP to resolve complaints alleging noncompliance with requirements related to the local control and accountability plan (LCAP); see the accompanying Board policy.

Furthermore, 34 CFR 106.8 **mandates** that districts that receive federal financial assistance adopt procedures for the "prompt and equitable" resolution of complaints of discrimination based on sex. However, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) expects districts to adopt similar procedures in regards to the resolution of any complaint of unlawful discrimination based on any protected status, not just sex. Factors considered by OCR when determining whether a district's procedures are "prompt and equitable" are addressed throughout the following administrative regulation.

Except as the Governing Board may otherwise specifically provide in other district policies, these general uniform complaint procedures (UCP) shall be used to investigate and resolve only the complaints specified in BP 1312.3.

- (cf. 1312.1 - Complaints Concerning District Employees)*
- (cf. 1312.2 - Complaints Concerning Instructional Materials)*
- (cf. 1312.4 - Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures)*
- (cf. 4031 - Complaints Concerning Discrimination in Employment)*

Compliance Officers

Note: 5 CCR 4621 **mandates** the district to identify in its policies and procedures the person(s), position(s), or unit(s) responsible for ensuring compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs, including the receiving and investigating of complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying. During its Federal Program Monitoring (FPM) process, California Department of Education (CDE) staff will check to ensure that the district's procedures list the specific title(s) of the employee(s) responsible for investigating complaints. Districts should identify the specific title(s) of the compliance officer(s) in the space provided below. If a district identifies multiple compliance officers, it is recommended that one be designated the "lead compliance officer."

The district designates the individual(s) identified below as the employee(s) responsible for coordinating the district's response to complaints and for complying with state and federal civil rights laws. The individual(s) also serve as the compliance officer(s) specified in AR 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment as the responsible employee to handle complaints regarding sex discrimination. The individual(s) shall receive and coordinate the investigation of complaints and shall ensure district compliance with law.

- (cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)*
- (cf. 5145.7 - Sexual Harassment)*

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 (title or position)

 (address)

 (telephone number)

 (email)

The compliance officer who receives a complaint may assign another compliance officer to investigate the complaint. The compliance officer shall promptly notify the complainant if another compliance officer is designated to investigate the complaint.

In no instance shall a compliance officer be designated to investigate a complaint if he/she is mentioned in the complaint or has a conflict of interest that would prohibit him/her from fairly investigating the complaint. Any complaint filed against or implicating a compliance officer may be filed with the Superintendent or designee.

Note: 5 CCR 4621 **mandates** that the district's policy provide that employees responsible for compliance and/or investigation of complaints are knowledgeable about the laws and programs they are assigned to investigate. OCR requires that the compliance officer(s) involved in implementing discrimination complaint procedures be knowledgeable about the procedures and be able to explain them to parents/guardians and students. They must also have training or experience in handling discrimination complaints, including appropriate investigative techniques and understanding of the applicable legal standards.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that employees designated to investigate complaints receive training and are knowledgeable about the laws and programs which they are assigned to investigate. Training provided to such designated employees shall include current state and federal laws and regulations governing the program, applicable processes for investigating complaints, including those involving alleged discrimination, applicable standards for reaching decisions on complaints, and appropriate corrective measures. Designated employees may have access to legal counsel as determined by the Superintendent or designee.

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

(cf. 9124 - Attorney)

The compliance officer or, if necessary, any appropriate administrator shall determine whether interim measures are necessary during and pending the results of an investigation. If interim measures are determined to be necessary, the compliance officer or the administrator shall consult with the Superintendent, the Superintendent's designee, or, if appropriate, the

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site principal to implement, if possible, one or more of the interim measures. The interim measures may remain in place until the compliance officer determines that they are no longer necessary or until the district issues its final written decision, whichever occurs first.

Notifications

The district's UCP policy and administrative regulation shall be posted in all district schools and offices, including staff lounges and student government meeting rooms. (Education Code 234.1)

Note: 5 CCR 4622, as amended by Register 2013, No. 38, **mandates** the district to include specified information in the required annual notice of its UCP to students, parents/guardians, employees, and others. During the FPM process, CDE staff will check to ensure that the district's policy contains a statement ensuring annual dissemination of notice of the district's UCP to the persons specified below. A sample of the annual notice is available through the CDE web site. In addition, 28 CFR 35.107, 34 CFR 106.8, and 34 CFR 110.25 require the district to publish its complaint procedures covering unlawful discrimination.

The Superintendent or designee shall annually provide written notification of the district's UCP to students, employees, parents/guardians, the district advisory committee, school advisory committees, appropriate private school officials or representatives, and other interested parties. (Education Code 262.3, 49013, 52075; 5 CCR 4622)

(cf. 0420 - School Plans/Site Councils)

(cf. 1220 - Citizen Advisory Committees)

(cf. 3260 - Fees and Charges)

(cf. 4112.9/4212.9/4312.9 - Employee Notifications)

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

Note: Both federal and state laws contain requirements for translation of certain information and documents. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires school districts to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by persons with limited English proficiency. OCR has interpreted this to require that, whenever information is provided to parents/guardians, districts must notify limited-English-proficient (LEP) parents/guardians in a language other than English in order to be adequate. OCR enforces this requirement consistent with the Department of Justice's 2002 Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons. Under the Guidance, a recipient of federal funds has an obligation to provide language assistance to LEP individuals based on balancing four factors: (1) the number or proportion of LEP individuals likely to encounter the program, (2) the frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program, (3) the nature and importance of the services provided by the program, and (4) the resources available to the recipient. State law is more specific than federal law: Education Code 48985 requires translation of certain information and documents if 15 percent or more of students enrolled in the school speak a single primary language other than English.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that all students and parents/guardians, including students and parents/guardians with limited English proficiency, have access to the relevant information provided in the district's policy, regulation, forms, and notices concerning the UCP.

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If 15 percent or more of students enrolled in a particular district school speak a single primary language other than English, the district's policy, regulation, forms, and notices concerning the UCP shall be translated into that language, in accordance with Education Code 234.1 and 48985. In all other instances, the district shall ensure meaningful access to all relevant UCP information for parents/guardians with limited English proficiency.

Note: During the FPM process, CDE staff will check the notice to ensure that it contains a summary of the complaint procedures as specified in items #1-4 below.

The notice shall:

1. Identify the person(s), position(s), or unit(s) responsible for receiving complaints
2. Advise the complainant of any civil law remedies that may be available to him/her under state or federal discrimination laws, if applicable
3. Advise the complainant of the appeal process, including, if applicable, the complainant's right to take a complaint directly to the California Department of Education (CDE) or to pursue remedies before civil courts or other public agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in cases involving unlawful discrimination.
4. Include statements that:
 - a. The district has the primary responsibility to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs.
 - b. The complaint review shall be completed within 60 calendar days from the date of receipt of the complaint unless the complainant agrees in writing to an extension of the timeline.
 - c. A complaint alleging retaliation, unlawful discrimination, or bullying must be filed not later than six months from the date it occurred, or six months from the date the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination. The time for filing may be extended for up to 90 days by the Superintendent or designee for good cause upon written request by the complainant setting forth the reasons for the extension.

Note: 5 CCR 4622, as amended by Register 2013, No. 38, requires that the following item be included in the district's annual notification.

- d. A student enrolled in a public school shall not be required to pay a fee for his/her participation in an educational activity that constitutes an integral

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fundamental part of the district's educational program, including curricular and extracurricular activities.

Note: Education Code 52075, as added by AB 97 (Ch. 47, Statutes of 2013), requires that information regarding LCAP requirements be included in the district's annual notification. See BP/AR 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan for details of the LCAP and specific requirements for its adoption and implementation.

- e. The Board is required to adopt and annually update a local control and accountability plan (LCAP), in a manner that includes meaningful engagement of parents/guardians, students, and other stakeholders in the development and/or review of the LCAP.

(cf. 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan)

- f. The complainant has a right to appeal the district's decision to the CDE by filing a written appeal within 15 calendar days of receiving the district's decision.
- g. The appeal to the CDE must include a copy of the complaint filed with the district and a copy of the district's decision.

Note: To ensure that the public is made aware of districts' obligation to provide copies of the UCP free of charge pursuant to 5 CCR 4622, CDE staff review the notice during the FPM process.

- h. Copies of the district's UCP are available free of charge.

District Responsibilities

Note: 5 CCR 4631 requires that UCP complaints be investigated and completely resolved within 60 calendar days of the receipt of the complaint. Pursuant to 5 CCR 4640, when a UCP complaint is erroneously sent to the CDE without first being filed with the district, the 60-day period specified in 5 CCR 4631 begins when the district receives the complaint.

All UCP-related complaints shall be investigated and resolved within 60 calendar days of the district's receipt of the complaint unless the complainant agrees in writing to an extension of the timeline. (5 CCR 4631)

The compliance officer shall maintain a record of each complaint and subsequent related actions, including steps taken during the investigation and all information required for compliance with 5 CCR 4631 and 4633.

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All parties involved in the allegations shall be notified when a complaint is filed and when a decision or ruling is made. However, the compliance officer shall keep all complaints or allegations of retaliation, unlawful discrimination, or bullying confidential except when disclosure is necessary to carry out the investigation, take subsequent corrective action, conduct ongoing monitoring, or maintain the integrity of the process. (5 CCR 4630, 4964)

Filing of Complaint

Note: Complaints filed under the UCP may be filed directly with a compliance officer or with any site administrator not designated as a compliance officer. If a site administrator not designated as a compliance officer receives a UCP complaint, he/she must notify a compliance officer. A district may also establish a site-level process for receiving informal reports about incidents for which a UCP complaint may be filed and notifying students and parents/guardians of their right to file a UCP complaint. For example, acts of unlawful discrimination may initially be reported to a principal. See AR 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment and AR 5145.7 - Sexual Harassment.

The complaint shall be presented to the compliance officer who shall maintain a log of complaints received, providing each with a code number and a date stamp.

All complaints shall be filed in accordance with the following:

1. A written complaint alleging district violation of applicable state or federal law or regulations governing adult education programs, consolidated categorical aid programs, migrant education, career technical and technical education and training programs, child care and development programs, child nutrition programs, and special education programs may be filed by any individual, public agency, or organization. (5 CCR 4630)

Note: Education Code 49013 **mandates** districts to adopt procedures that allow for anonymous complaints to be filed when a district allegedly violates the prohibition against the charging of student fees. Pursuant to Education Code 52075, as added by AB 97 (Ch. 47, Statutes of 2013), anonymous complaints are permitted with regards to the LCAP, as long as evidence, or information leading to evidence, to support the allegation of noncompliance is provided in the complaint.

2. Any complaint alleging noncompliance with law regarding the prohibition against requiring students to pay student fees, deposits, and charges or any requirement related to the LCAP may be filed anonymously if the complaint provides evidence, or information leading to evidence, to support an allegation of noncompliance. (Education Code 49013, 52075)
3. A complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, may be filed only by a person who alleges that he/she personally suffered unlawful discrimination or by a person who believes that an individual or any specific class of individuals has been subjected to it. The complaint

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shall be initiated no later than six months from the date when the alleged discrimination occurred, or six months from the date when the complainant first obtained knowledge of the facts of the alleged discrimination. The time for filing may be extended for up to 90 days by the Superintendent or designee for good cause upon written request by the complainant setting forth the reasons for the extension. (5 CCR 4630)

4. When a complaint alleging unlawful discrimination or bullying is filed anonymously, the compliance officer shall pursue an investigation or other response as appropriate, depending on the specificity and reliability of the information provided and the seriousness of the allegation.

Note: OCR's Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance and 2011 Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence, as well the FAQs issued in April 2014, indicate 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 still continue to ensure that it provides a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students. This principle would also apply to harassment on other bases, such as race, gender, or disability.

5. When the complainant or alleged victim of unlawful discrimination or bullying requests confidentiality, the compliance officer shall inform him/her that the request may limit the district's ability to investigate the conduct 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.
6. If a complainant is unable to put a complaint in writing due to conditions such as a disability or illiteracy, district staff shall assist him/her in the filing of the complaint. (5 CCR 4600)

Mediation

Note: The following section should be used only by those districts that have decided to establish procedures for attempting to resolve complaints through alternative dispute resolution procedures such as mediation; see the accompanying Board policy. **The following section may be modified to specify the alternative dispute resolution method and timelines used within the district.**

Within three business days after the compliance officer receives the complaint, he/she may informally discuss with all the parties the possibility of using mediation. Mediation shall be offered to resolve complaints that involve more than one student and no adult. However, mediation shall not be offered or used to resolve any complaint involving an allegation of asexual assault or where there is a reasonable risk that a party to the mediation would feel

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compelled to participate. If the parties agree to mediation, the compliance officer shall make all arrangements for this process.

Before initiating the mediation of a complaint alleging retaliation, unlawful discrimination, or bullying, the compliance officer shall ensure that all parties agree to make the mediator a party to relevant confidential information. The compliance officer shall also notify all parties of the right to end the informal process at any time.

If the mediation process does not resolve the problem within the parameters of law, the compliance officer shall proceed with his/her investigation of the complaint.

The use of mediation shall not extend the district's timelines for investigating and resolving the complaint unless the complainant agrees in writing to such an extension of time. If mediation is successful and the complaint is withdrawn, then the district shall take only the actions agreed to through the mediation. If mediation is unsuccessful, the district shall then continue with subsequent steps specified in this administrative regulation.

Investigation of Complaint

Note: 5 CCR 4631, which requires the district to provide the complainant with the opportunity to present relevant information, does not provide any timeline. Thus, **the timeline specified below may be modified to reflect district practice.**

Within 10 business days after the compliance officer receives the complaint, the compliance officer shall begin an investigation into the complaint.

Within one business day of initiating the investigation, the compliance officer shall provide the complainant and/or his/her representative with the opportunity to present the information contained in complaint to the compliance officer and shall notify the complainant and/or his/her representative of the opportunity to present the compliance officer with any evidence, or information leading to evidence, to support the allegations in the complaint. Such evidence or information may be presented at any time during the investigation.

Note: In his/her investigation, the compliance officer should consider all relevant circumstances, such as how the misconduct affected one or more students' education; the type, frequency, and duration of the misconduct; the identity, age, and sex of the individuals involved in and impacted by the conduct and the relationship between them; the number of persons engaged in the conduct and at whom the conduct was directed; the size of the school, location of the incidents, and context in which they occurred; and other incidents at the school involving different individuals.

In conducting the investigation, the compliance officer shall collect all available documents and review all available records, notes, or statements related to the complaint, including any additional evidence or information received from the parties during the course of the

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES (continued)

investigation, shall individually interview all available witnesses with information pertinent to the complaint, and may visit any reasonably accessible location where the relevant actions are alleged to have taken place. To resolve a complaint alleging retaliation, unlawful discrimination, or bullying, the compliance officer shall interview the alleged victim(s), any alleged offenders, and other relevant witnesses privately, separately, and in a confidential manner. As necessary, additional staff or legal counsel may conduct or support the investigation.

Note: 5 CCR 4631 allows the district to dismiss a complaint when the complainant refuses to provide the investigator with relevant documents or otherwise obstructs the investigation. 5 CCR 4631 also provides that, if the district refuses to provide the investigator with access to records or other documents, the investigator may issue a finding in favor of the complainant. During the FPM process, CDE staff will check to ensure that both of these statements regarding the provision of access to information are included in the district's policy or procedures, as specified below.

A complainant's refusal to provide the district's investigator with documents or other evidence related to the allegations in the complaint, failure or refusal to cooperate in the investigation, or engagement in any other obstruction of the investigation may result in the dismissal of the complaint because of a lack of evidence to support the allegation. (5 CCR 4631)

In accordance with law, the district shall provide the investigator with access to records and other information related to the allegation in the complaint and shall not in any way obstruct the investigation. Failure or refusal of the district to cooperate in the investigation may result in a finding based on evidence collected that a violation has occurred and in the imposition of a remedy in favor of the complainant. (5 CCR 4631)

Note: In determining the truth of any allegation, the district should apply the correct standard of proof to the situation. For example, with allegations of discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or retaliation, OCR requires use of the "preponderance of the evidence" (more likely than not) standard. Any standard of proof that is more rigorous than required by law could subject a district to liability.

The compliance officer shall apply a "preponderance of the evidence" standard in determining the veracity of the factual allegations in a complaint. This standard is met if the allegation is more likely to be true than not.

Report of Findings

Note: Pursuant to 5 CCR 4631, the district's written decision must be sent to the complainant within 60 calendar days of receiving the complaint. Option 1 below is for districts that do not allow complainants to appeal the compliance officer's decision to the Governing Board. Option 2 is for districts that allow appeals to the Board, and it requires the compliance officer's decision within 30 calendar days so that the Board's decision can still be given within the 60-day time limit.

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES (continued)

OPTION 1:

Unless extended by written agreement with the complainant, the compliance officer shall prepare and send to the complainant a written report of the district's investigation and decision, as described in the section "Final Written Decision" below, within 60 calendar days of the district's receipt of the complaint. (5 CCR 4631)

OPTION 2:

Unless extended by written agreement with the complainant, a final decision shall be sent to the complainant within 60 calendar days of the district's receipt of the complaint. Within 30 calendar days of receiving the complaint, the compliance officer shall prepare and send to the complainant a written report of the district's investigation and decision, as described in the section "Final Written Decision" below. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the compliance officer's decision, he/she may, within five business days, file his/her complaint in writing with the Board.

The Board may consider the matter at its next regular Board meeting or at a special Board meeting convened in order to meet the 60-day time limit within which the complaint must be answered. The Board may decide not to hear the complaint, in which case the compliance officer's decision shall be final.

If the Board hears the complaint, the compliance officer shall send the Board's decision to the complainant within 60 calendar days of the district's initial receipt of the complaint or within the time period that has been specified in a written agreement with the complainant. (5 CCR 4631)

Final Written Decision

The district's decision shall be in writing and shall be sent to the complainant. (5 CCR 4631)

In consultation with district legal counsel, information about the relevant part of a decision may be communicated to a victim who is not the complainant and to other parties that may be involved in implementing the decision or affected by the complaint, as long as the privacy of the parties is protected.

<p>Note: Education Code 48985 requires that reports sent to parents/guardians be written in their primary language when 15 percent or more of a school's enrolled students speak a single primary language other than English. During the FPM process, CDE staff will check to ensure compliance with this requirement. Based on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, OCR requires districts to ensure meaningful access to all relevant UCP information for parents/guardians with limited English proficiency.</p>

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES (continued)

If the complaint involves a limited-English-proficient student or parent/guardian and the student involved attends a school at which 15 percent or more of the students speak a single primary language other than English, then the decision shall also be translated into that language. In other all other instances, the district shall ensure meaningful access to all relevant information for parents/guardians with limited English proficiency.

Note: 5 CCR 4631 and guidance provided by OCR specify components that should be part of the district's decision. Inclusion of these items will help protect the district's position in case of an appeal to the CDE, a complaint submitted to OCR, or if litigation is filed.

For all complaints, the decision shall include: (5 CCR 4631)

1. The findings of fact based on the evidence gathered. In reaching a factual determination, the following factors may be taken into account:
 - a. Statements made by any witnesses
 - b. The relative credibility of the individuals involved
 - c. How the complaining individual reacted to the incident
 - d. Any documentary or other evidence relating to the alleged conduct
 - e. Past instances of similar conduct by any alleged offenders
 - f. Past false allegations made by the complainant
2. The conclusion(s) of law
3. Disposition of the complaint
4. Rationale for such disposition

For complaints of retaliation or unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, the disposition of the complaint shall include a determination for each allegation as to whether retaliation or unlawful discrimination has occurred.

The determination of whether a hostile environment exists may involve consideration of the following:

- a. How the misconduct affected one or more students' education

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES (continued)

- b. The type, frequency, and duration of the misconduct
- c. The relationship between the alleged victim(s) and offender(s)
- d. The number of persons engaged in the conduct and at whom the conduct was directed
- e. The size of the school, location of the incidents, and context in which they occurred
- f. Other incidents at the school involving different individuals

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 UCP complaint. 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 unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, districts should be aware that 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 unlawful discrimination, certain information about the sanctions imposed upon the offender when the sanctions directly relate to that student. For instance, if properly remedying the impact of discrimination 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.

- 5. Corrective action(s), including any actions that have been taken or will be taken to address the allegations in the complaint and including, with respect to a student fees complaint, a remedy that comports with Education Code 49013 and 5 CCR 4600

For complaints of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, the notice may, as required by law, include:

- a. The corrective actions imposed on the individual found to have engaged in the conduct that relate directly to the subject of the complaint
- b. Individual remedies offered or provided to the subject of the complaint
- c. Systemic measures the school has taken to eliminate a hostile environment and prevent recurrence

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES (continued)

6. Notice of the complainant's right to appeal the district's decision within 15 calendar days to the CDE and procedures to be followed for initiating such an appeal

The decision may also include follow-up procedures to prevent recurrence or retaliation and for reporting any subsequent problems.

Note: During the FPM process, CDE staff will expect to see a statement detailing a complainant's right to pursue civil law remedies (i.e., action in a court of law) in addition to or in conjunction with the right to pursue administrative remedies from the CDE.
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For complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying, based on state law, the decision shall also include a notice to the complainant that:

1. He/she may pursue available civil law remedies outside of the district's complaint procedures, including seeking assistance from mediation centers or public/private interest attorneys, 60 calendar days after the filing of an appeal with the CDE. (Education Code 262.3)
2. The 60 days moratorium does not apply to complaints seeking injunctive relief in state courts or to discrimination complaints based on federal law. (Education Code 262.3)
3. Complaints alleging discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, gender, disability, or age may also be filed with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights at www.ed.gov/ocr within 180 days of the alleged discrimination.

Corrective Actions

When a complaint is found to have merit, the compliance officer shall adopt any appropriate corrective action permitted by law. Appropriate corrective actions that focus on the larger school or district environment may include, but are not limited to, actions to reinforce district policies, training for faculty, staff, and students, updates to school policies, or school climate surveys.

For complaints involving retaliation, unlawful discrimination, or bullying, appropriate corrective actions that focus on the victim may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Counseling
2. Academic support
3. Health services

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES (continued)

4. Assignment of an escort to allow the victim to move safely about campus
5. Information regarding available resources and how to report similar incidents or retaliation
6. Separation of the victim from any other individuals involved, provided the separation does not penalize the victim
7. Restorative justice
8. Follow-up inquiries to ensure that the conduct has stopped and there has been no retaliation
9. Determination of whether any past actions of the victim that resulted in discipline were related to the treatment the victim received and described in the complaint

For complaints involving retaliation, unlawful discrimination, or bullying, appropriate corrective actions that focus on a student offender may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Transfer from a class or school as permitted by law
2. Parent/guardian conference
3. Education regarding the impact of the conduct on others
4. Positive behavior support
5. Referral to a student success team
6. Denial of participation in extracurricular or co-curricular activities or other privileges as permitted by law
7. Disciplinary action, such as suspension or expulsion, as permitted by law

<p>Note: In its <u>Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence</u> from April 2011 and its <u>Questions and Answers on Title IX and Sexual Violence</u> from April 2014, OCR provides a detailed discussion of remedies for the broader campus community.</p>
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The district may also consider training and other interventions for the larger school community to ensure that students, staff, and parents/guardians understand the types of behavior that constitute unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, that the district does not tolerate it, and how to report and respond to it.

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES (continued)

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 49013 and 5 CCR 4600, if the district, or the CDE on appeal, finds merit in the complaint alleging noncompliance with the law regarding student fees and charges, the district is required to provide a remedy as specified below. Education Code 52075, as added by AB 97 (Ch. 47, Statutes of 2013), contains similar provisions with regard to noncompliance with the requirements for the LCAP.

If a complaint alleging noncompliance with the laws regarding student fees, deposits, and other charges or any requirement related to the LCAP is found to have merit, the district shall provide a remedy to all affected students and parents/guardians. (Education Code 49013, 52075)

For complaints alleging noncompliance with the laws regarding student fees, such remedies, where applicable, shall include reasonable efforts to ensure full reimbursement to affected students and parents/guardians. (Education Code 49013; 5 CCR 4600)

Appeals to the California Department of Education

Note: 5 CCR 4632-4633 provide that any complainant may appeal the district's decision to the CDE, as provided below. Pursuant to Education Code 49013, the district is **mandated** to adopt procedures that include the right to appeal to the CDE, in accordance with 5 CCR 4632, when a complainant is dissatisfied with the district's decision on his/her complaint alleging noncompliance with the law that prohibits districts from requiring students to pay fees, deposits, or charges for their participation in educational activities. Such procedures are also **mandated** by Education Code 52075, as added by AB 97 (Ch. 47, Statutes of 2013), with regards to complaints alleging noncompliance with requirements related to the LCAP.

Any complainant who is dissatisfied with the district's final written decision may file an appeal in writing with the CDE within 15 calendar days of receiving the district's decision. (Education Code 49013, 52075; 5 CCR 4632)

The complainant shall specify the basis for the appeal of the decision and whether the facts are incorrect and/or the law has been misapplied. The appeal shall be accompanied by a copy of the locally filed complaint and a copy of the district's decision. (5 CCR 4632)

Upon notification by the CDE that the complainant has appealed the district's decision, the Superintendent or designee shall forward the following documents to the CDE: (5 CCR 4633)

1. A copy of the original complaint
2. A copy of the decision
3. A summary of the nature and extent of the investigation conducted by the district, if not covered by the decision

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURES (continued)

4. A copy of the investigation file including, but not limited to, all notes, interviews, and documents submitted by the parties and gathered by the investigator
5. A report of any action taken to resolve the complaint
6. A copy of the district's uniform complaint procedures
7. Other relevant information requested by the CDE

Note: The CDE may directly intervene in a complaint without waiting for action by the district when certain conditions exist, including the following: (1) the complaint alleges failure to comply with the UCP, including failure to follow the required timelines and failure to implement the final written decision; (2) the complainant requires anonymity due to the possibility of retaliation and would suffer immediate and irreparable harm if a complaint was filed and the complainant was named; (3) the complainant alleges that he/she would suffer immediate and irreparable harm as a result of an application of a districtwide policy that is in conflict with state or federal law and that filing a complaint would be futile; (4) the complainant alleges failure to comply with the due process procedures established pursuant to special education law and regulation to implement a due process hearing order; (5) the complainant alleges facts that indicate that one or more students may be in immediate physical danger or that the health, safety, or welfare of one or more students is threatened; or (6) the complainant alleges failure to follow a student's individualized education program.

BULLYING

Note: Education Code 234.1 and federal law mandate that the Governing Board adopt policy prohibiting discrimination, harassment, intimidation, retaliation, and bullying based on specified characteristics; see BP 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment for language fulfilling this mandate.

In its October 2010 Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying, the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR) clarified that misconduct that falls under a district's general anti-bullying policy may also trigger responsibilities under one or more federal antidiscrimination laws if the bullying is on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, and/or other legally protected category. If so, federal law requires the district to investigate or otherwise determine what occurred and, if it finds that unlawful discrimination did occur, take prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to end the discrimination, eliminate any hostile environment and its effects, and prevent the discrimination from recurring.

In addition, OCR's August 2013 Dear Colleague Letter: Bullying of Students with Disabilities points out that any bullying of any student with disabilities that results in the student not receiving meaningful educational benefit constitutes a denial of a free appropriate public education and must be remedied under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. As necessary, the school may need to convene the student's individualized education program (IEP) team to determine whether the student's needs have changed as a result of the bullying and, if so, revise the IEP to ensure that the student continues to receive appropriate special education and related services.

Thus, while this policy is intended to prevent and address all types of bullying incidents among students, school officials need to know that when "discriminatory bullying" is committed (i.e., discrimination based on the actual or perceived status of the alleged victim which is protected by law, such as race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, age or disability), and the bullying is sufficiently serious to create a hostile educational environment for the alleged victim or to otherwise deny or limit his/her educational benefits and services, including denial of a free appropriate public education, the alleged victim must be afforded the protections specified under relevant state and/or federal law.

CSBA staff met with representatives from California Department of Education (CDE) and OCR to discuss this policy as it relates to the uniform complaint procedure (UCP) requirements. As a result, this sample policy has 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 recognizes the harmful effects of bullying on student learning and school attendance and desires to provide safe school environments that protect students from physical and emotional harm. District employees shall establish student safety as a high priority and shall not tolerate bullying of any student.

No individual or group shall, through physical, written, verbal, or other means, harass, sexually harass, threaten, intimidate, retaliate, cyberbully, cause bodily injury to, or commit hate violence against any student or school personnel.

(cf. 5131 - Conduct)
(cf. 5136 - Gangs)

BULLYING (continued)

(cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)

(cf. 5145.7 - Sexual Harassment)

(cf. 5145.9 - Hate-Motivated Behavior)

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 48900, the definition of "bullying" for purposes of establishing grounds for suspension or expulsion includes bullying via an electronic act such as posting of messages on social media networks; see AR 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process. AB 256 (Ch. 700, Statutes of 2013) amended Education Code 48900 to redefine "electronic act" to include acts that originate off campus; see the section "Discipline" below.

In addition, Penal Code 653.2 makes it a crime to distribute another person's personally identifiable information electronically with the intent to cause harassment by a third party and to threaten a person's safety or that of his/her family (e.g., placing a person's picture or address online so that he/she receives harassing messages).

Cyberbullying includes the creation or transmission of harassing communications, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images on the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)

Note: Education Code 32282 encourages districts to include bullying prevention policies and procedures in their comprehensive safety plan; see BP 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan. In addition, Education Code 52060-52077, as added by AB 97 (Ch. 47, 2013), requires the Board to adopt and annually update a local control and accountability plan which includes, among other specified state priorities, goals for addressing school climate; see BP/AR 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan. Pursuant to Education Code 52060, school climate should be measured by student suspension and expulsion rates and other local measures, including surveys of students, parents/guardians, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness, as applicable.

Strategies for addressing bullying in district schools shall be developed with involvement of key stakeholders, including students, parents/guardians, and staff, and may be incorporated into the comprehensive safety plan, the local control and accountability plan, and other applicable district and school plans.

(cf. 0420 - School Plans/Site Councils)

(cf. 0450 - Comprehensive Safety Plan)

(cf. 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan)

(cf. 1220 - Citizen Advisory Committees)

(cf. 1400 - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)

(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)

BULLYING (continued)

Note: Because bullying is not limited to one environment, collaboration among a variety of community agencies and organizations that serve youth may be helpful in preventing and responding to bullying. For further information about building a collaborative, see CSBA's publications Safe Schools: Strategies for Governing Boards to Ensure Student Success and Building Healthy Communities: A School Leader's Guide to Collaboration and Community Engagement.

As appropriate, the Superintendent or designee may collaborate with law enforcement, courts, social services, mental health services, other agencies, and community organizations in the development and implementation of joint strategies to promote safety in schools and the community and to provide services for alleged victims and perpetrators of bullying.

(cf. 1020 - Youth Services)

Bullying Prevention

To the extent possible, district schools shall focus on the prevention of bullying by establishing clear rules for student conduct and implementing strategies to promote a positive, collaborative school climate. Students shall be informed, through student handbooks and other appropriate means, of district and school rules related to bullying, mechanisms available for reporting incidents or threats, and the consequences for engaging in bullying.

(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)

Note: California content standards related to student education about bullying and violence prevention (e.g., recognizing the characteristics of bullying, examining the effects of bullying on others, demonstrating what to say and do when witnessing bullying) are addressed within the health education content standards adopted by the State Board of Education.

47 USC 254 mandates districts that receive e-rate discounts to adopt a policy which addresses educating students about appropriate online behavior, including the interaction with other individuals on social networking web sites and in chat rooms, as well as providing information about cyberbullying awareness and response. See BP 6163.4 - Student Use of Technology for language implementing this mandate.

As appropriate, the district shall provide students with instruction, in the classroom or other educational settings, that promotes effective communication and conflict resolution skills, social skills, character/values education, respect for cultural and individual differences, self-esteem development, assertiveness skills, and appropriate online behavior.

(cf. 6142.8 - Comprehensive Health Education)
(cf. 6142.94 - History-Social Science Instruction)
(cf. 6163.4 - Student Use of Technology)

Note: Education Code 32283.5, as added by AB 1993 (Ch. 418, Statutes of 2014), requires the CDE to develop an online training module to assist all school staff, school administrators, parents/guardians, students, and community members in increasing their knowledge of the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including, but not limited to, identifying acts of bullying or cyberbullying and implementing strategies to address such acts.

BULLYING (continued)

Staff shall receive related professional development, including information about early warning signs of harassing/intimidating behaviors and effective response.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

Based on an assessment of bullying incidents at school, the Superintendent or designee may increase supervision and security in areas where bullying most often occurs, such as classrooms, playgrounds, hallways, restrooms, and cafeterias.

Intervention

Students are encouraged to notify school staff when they are being bullied or suspect that another student is being victimized. In addition, the Superintendent or designee shall develop means for students to report threats or incidents confidentially and anonymously.

Note: Although Education Code 234.1 requires the district to adopt a policy requiring school personnel who witness acts of unlawful discrimination, harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying against students based on the actual or perceived status of the student belonging to a protected class to take immediate steps to intervene when it is safe to do so, it is recommended that districts apply this policy equally to all students; also see AR 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment.

School staff who witness an act of bullying shall immediately intervene to stop the incident when it is safe to do so. (Education Code 234.1)

When appropriate based on the severity or pervasiveness of the bullying, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the parents/guardians of victims and perpetrators and may contact law enforcement.

Note: Education Code 48900.9, as added by AB 1455 (Ch. 229, Statutes of 2014), authorizes referrals to case management, counseling, and restorative justice programs, as provided below.

The Superintendent, principal, or principal's designee may refer a victim, witness, perpetrator, or other student affected by an act of bullying to a school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, child welfare attendance personnel, school nurse, or other school support service personnel for case management, counseling, and/or participation in a restorative justice program as appropriate. (Education Code 48900.9)

(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)

Complaints and Investigation

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 234.1, districts are required to adopt a process for receiving and investigating complaints involving unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory bullying, based on

BULLYING (continued)

race or ethnicity, nationality, gender, sex, sexual orientation, religion, or any other characteristic contained in the definition of hate crimes in Penal Code 422.55. 5 CCR 4600-4633, as amended by Register 2013, No. 38, provide that the UCP utilizing compliance officer(s) must be used for this purpose. In addition, federal regulations require districts to adopt procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory bullying, on the basis of sex (34 CFR 106.8), disability (34 CFR 104.7 and 28 CFR 35.107), and age (34 CFR 110.25).

Although some bullying incidents may not fall within the provisions of Education Code 234.1 or federal civil rights regulations, CSBA strongly recommends that districts use the UCP to investigate and resolve all bullying incidents (whether discriminatory or nondiscriminatory) to ensure consistent implementation by district staff. Additionally, it is not always easy or possible for staff to know at the time of the incident whether a student was bullied because of his/her actual or perceived membership in a legally protected class. Districts that are concerned about the capacity of a single district compliance officer to handle a possible increase in the number of UCP complaints, or that prefer to handle certain incidents at the school site level whenever possible, may designate multiple compliance officers in accordance with AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures.

The following **optional** paragraph provides that all complaints regarding bullying will be investigated and resolved using the district's UCP. Districts that choose to use another complaint procedure for bullying incidents that are not covered by Education Code 234.1 should revise the following paragraph accordingly.

Any complaint of bullying, whether it is discriminatory or nondiscriminatory, shall be investigated and resolved in accordance with law and the district's uniform complaint procedures specified in AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures.

(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)

Note: The following reporting process may be revised to reflect district practice.

Any student, parent/guardian, or other individual who believes that a student has been subjected to bullying or who has witnessed bullying may report the incident to a teacher, the principal, a compliance officer, or any other available school employee. Within one business day of receiving such a report, a staff member shall notify the principal of the report, whether or not a uniform complaint is filed. Within two business days of receiving a report of bullying, the principal shall notify a district compliance officer identified in AR 1312.3. In addition, any school employee who observes an incident of bullying involving a student shall, within one business day, report his/her observation to the principal or a district compliance officer, whether or not the alleged victim files a complaint.

Note: Districts have the authority to monitor student use of the district's Internet system and to conduct individual searches of student accounts if there is reasonable suspicion that a user has violated district policy or the law; see BP/AR 5145.12 - Search and Seizure and BP/AR 6163.4 - Student Use of Technology.

When the circumstances involve cyberbullying, individuals with information about the activity shall be encouraged to save and print any electronic or digital messages that they feel

BULLYING (continued)

constitute cyberbullying and to notify a teacher, the principal, or other employee so that the matter may be investigated. When a student uses a social networking site or service to bully or harass another student, the Superintendent or designee may file a request with the networking site or service to suspend the privileges of the student and to have the material removed.

When a report of bullying is submitted, the principal or a district compliance officer shall inform the student or parent/guardian of the right to file a formal written complaint in accordance with AR 1312.3. The student who is the alleged victim of the bullying shall be given an opportunity to describe the incident, identify witnesses who may have relevant information, and provide other evidence of bullying.

Discipline

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 48900-48900.4, "bullying" is a ground for suspension or expulsion; see AR 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process.

The courts have generally upheld discipline for off-campus student conduct that posed an identifiable threat to the safety of other students, staff, or school property or presented a risk of substantial disruption of school activities, provided that the district was able to document the impact or disruption that the conduct had, or could be expected to have, on school activities (e.g., Wynar v. Douglas County School District, Lavine v. Blaine School District). In addition, courts have analyzed the reasonableness of the district's policy and whether the disciplinary action taken by the district was in proportion to the student's misbehavior. For example, the court in J.C. v. Beverly Hills Unified School District found that the district would be able to discipline a student for a video recorded off campus and posted on YouTube, but that the discipline imposed on this particular student was not justified since the district did not present evidence of specific facts that led school officials to predict that the video would cause substantial disruption (e.g., the video was not violent or threatening nor did it lead to any confrontations between the students).

Consistent with these interpretations, AB 256 (Ch. 700, Statutes of 2013) amended Education Code 48900 to define bullying by means of an electronic act to include creation or transmission originating on or off the school site. Thus, for purposes of determining whether the conduct may be subject to suspension or expulsion, the act does not necessarily need to have been committed while at school, while coming to or from school, or during a school-sponsored activity. Nevertheless, the act needs to satisfy the criteria specified in the definition of "bullying" in Education Code 48900 (i.e., a severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of placing a reasonable student in fear of harm to his/her person or property, causing a substantially detrimental effect on his/her physical or mental health, causing substantial interference with his/her academic performance, or causing substantial interference with his/her ability to participate in or benefit from school services, activities, or privileges).

When the conduct does not rise to the level specified in Education Code 48900, the district may implement interventions other than suspension or expulsion to address the bullying. For further information, see CSBA's policy brief Cyberbullying: Policy Considerations for Boards. Also see BP 5131 - Conduct and BP 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression.

BULLYING (continued)

Additionally, districts should note that, in the context of discriminatory bullying on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability, federal law and regulations require school districts to impose discipline on students, up to and including suspension and expulsion, where necessary to remedy the effects of a hostile environment and prevent the discrimination from recurring.

Corrective actions for a student who commits an act of bullying of any type may include counseling, behavioral intervention and education, and, if the behavior is severe or pervasive as defined in Education Code 48900, may include suspension or expulsion in accordance with district policies and regulations.

(cf. 5138 - Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation)
(cf. 5144 - Discipline)
(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
(cf. 5144.2 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students with Disabilities))
(cf. 6159.4 - Behavioral Interventions for Special Education Students)

Any employee who permits or engages in bullying or retaliation related to bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

(cf. 4117.3 - Dismissal)
(cf. 4118 - Suspension/Disciplinary Action)
(cf. 4119.21/4219.21/4319.21 - Professional Standards)
(cf. 4218 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

200-262.4 Prohibition of discrimination
32282 Comprehensive safety plan
32283.5 Bullying; online training
35181 Governing board policy on responsibilities of students
35291-35291.5 Rules
48900-48925 Suspension or expulsion
48985 Translation of notices
52060-52077 Local control and accountability plan

PENAL CODE

422.55 Definition of hate crime
647 Use of camera or other instrument to invade person's privacy; misdemeanor
647.7 Use of camera or other instrument to invade person's privacy; punishment
653.2 Electronic communication devices, threats to safety

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

4600-4687 Uniform complaint procedures

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 47

254 Universal service discounts (e-rate)

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 28

35.107 Nondiscrimination on basis of disability; complaints

Legal Reference continued: (see next page)

BULLYING (continued)

Legal Reference: (continued)

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

104.7 Designation of responsible employee for Section 504

106.8 Designation of responsible employee for Title IX

110.25 Notification of nondiscrimination on the basis of age

COURT DECISIONS

Wynar v. Douglas County School District, (2013) 728 F.3d 1062

J.C. v. Beverly Hills Unified School District, (2010) 711 F.Supp.2d 1094

Lavine v. Blaine School District, (2002) 279 F.3d 719

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

Final Guidance: AB 1266, Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students, Privacy, Programs, Activities & Facilities, Legal Guidance, March 2014

Providing a Safe, Nondiscriminatory School Environment for Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Students, Policy Brief, February 2014
Addressing the Conditions of Children: Focus on Bullying, Governance Brief, December 2012

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

Building Healthy Communities: A School Leaders Guide to Collaboration and Community Engagement, 2009

Cyberbullying: Policy Considerations for Boards, Policy Brief, July 2007

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

Health Education Content Standards for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 2008

Bullying at School, 2003

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

Dear Colleague Letter: Bullying of Students with Disabilities, August 2013

Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying, October 2010

WEB SITES

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

California Department of Education, Safe Schools Office: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/lss/>

Common Sense Media: <http://www.commonsensemedia.org>

National School Safety Center: <http://www.schoolsafety.us>

ON[the]LINE, digital citizenship resources: <http://www.onthelineca.org>

U.S. Department of Education: <http://www.ed.gov>

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

Note: The following **mandated** policy reflects various provisions of state and federal law which prohibit discrimination against students in educational programs and activities based on certain actual or perceived characteristics of an individual, including Education Code 220, which prohibits discrimination based on race, nationality, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation, religion, or any other characteristic contained in the definition of hate crimes in Penal Code 422.55; Title VI (42 USC 2000d-2000e-17), which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin; Title IX (20 USC 1681-1688), which prohibits discrimination based on sex, gender, and gender identity; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 USC 6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination based on age; and Title II (20 USC 12101-12213) and Section 504 (29 USC 794), which prohibit discrimination based on disability. Education Code 260 gives the Governing Board primary responsibility for ensuring that district programs and activities are free from discrimination based on age or any of these characteristics. See also BP 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities.

Moreover, the right of a transgender student to participate in sex-segregated educational programs and use facilities consistent with his/her gender identity is specified in Education Code 221.5, as amended by AB 1266 (Ch. 85, Statutes of 2013). The guidelines included in this Board policy and the accompanying administrative regulation to accommodate the needs of transgender and gender-nonconforming students reflect best practices based on existing state and federal law. Districts with questions about the rights of transgender and gender-nonconforming students should consult legal counsel as appropriate. For more information on the rights of transgender students, see CSBA's policy brief [Providing a Safe, Nondiscriminatory School Environment for Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Students](#) and its [Final Guidance Regarding Transgender Students, Privacy, and Facilities](#).

Education Code 234.1 **mandates** that districts adopt policy prohibiting, at school or in any school activity related to school attendance or under the authority of the district, discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying, based on the foregoing characteristics. The California Department of Education (CDE), through its Federal Program Monitoring process, reviews districts' uniform complaint procedures (UCP) and other policies and practices to ensure compliance with these requirements. In addition, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is responsible for the administrative enforcement of federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the department, and requires the adoption of nondiscrimination policies and complaint procedures.

CSBA staff met with representatives from CDE and OCR to discuss this policy and the accompanying regulation as they relate to the 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 desires to provide a safe school environment that allows all students equal access and opportunities in the district's academic and other educational support programs, services, and activities. The Board prohibits, at any district school or school activity, unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying of any student based on the student's actual or perceived race, color, ancestry, national origin, nationality, ethnicity, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)

This policy shall apply to all acts related to school activity or to school attendance occurring within a district school. (Education Code 234.1)

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

(cf. 5131 - Conduct)

(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)

(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)

(cf. 5145.9 - Hate-Motivated Behavior)

(cf. 5146 - Married/Pregnant/Parenting Students)

(cf. 6164.6 - Identification and Education Under Section 504)

Unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, includes physical, verbal, nonverbal, or written conduct based on any of the categories listed above. Unlawful discrimination also shall include the creation of a hostile environment when the prohibited conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; has the effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance; or otherwise adversely affects a student's educational opportunities.

Note: In addition to the types of prohibited student conduct described below, prohibited conduct also includes different treatment of students with respect to the provision of opportunities to participate in school programs or activities or the provision or receipt of educational benefits or services. See BP 0410 - Nondiscrimination In District Programs And Activities.

Unlawful discrimination also includes disparate treatment of students based on one of the categories above with respect to the provision of opportunities to participate in school programs or activities or the provision or receipt of educational benefits or services.

The Board also prohibits any form of retaliation against any individual who files or otherwise participates in the filing or investigation of a complaint or report regarding an incident of discrimination. Retaliation complaints shall be investigated and resolved in the same manner as a discrimination complaint.

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 234.1 and 34 CFR 106.8, a district is required to adopt and publicize its nondiscrimination policies to the school community. The following paragraph may be modified to reflect district practice.

In addition, in its October 2010 Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying, OCR identifies training of the school community as one of the key measures for minimizing discriminatory and harassing behavior in school. See the accompanying administrative regulation for specific measures to prevent discrimination and facilitate students' access to the educational program.

The Superintendent or designee shall facilitate students' access to the educational program by publicizing the district's nondiscrimination policy and related complaint procedures to

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)

students, parents/guardians, and employees. He/she shall provide training and information on the scope and use of the policy and complaint procedures and take other measures designed to increase the school community's understanding of the requirements of law related to discrimination. The Superintendent or designee shall regularly review the implementation of the district's nondiscrimination policies and practices and, as necessary, shall take action to remove any identified barrier to student access to or participation in the educational program. He/she shall report his/her findings and recommendations to the Board after each review.

(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)
(cf. 1330 - Use of Facilities)
(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)
(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)
(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)
(cf. 6145 - Extracurricular and Cocurricular Activities)
(cf. 6145.2 - Athletic Competition)
(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)

Note: Policies related to discrimination must be consistent with the First Amendment right to free speech. Education Code 48950 prohibits a district from subjecting a high school student to disciplinary sanctions solely on the basis of speech or other communication that would be constitutionally protected if engaged in outside of campus. However, Education Code 48950 also specifies that the law does not prohibit discipline for harassment, threats, or intimidation unless constitutionally protected. Whether such speech might be entitled to constitutional protection would be determined on a case-by-case basis, with consideration for the specific words used and the circumstances involved. The district should consult legal counsel as necessary.

Students who engage in unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying, in violation of law, Board policy, or administrative regulation shall be subject to appropriate consequence or discipline, which may include suspension or expulsion for behavior that is severe or pervasive as defined in Education Code 48900.4. Any employee who permits or engages in prohibited discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying, shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

(cf. 4118 - Suspension/Disciplinary Action)
(cf. 4119.21/4219.21/4319.21 - Professional Standards)
(cf. 4218 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)
(cf. 5144 - Discipline)
(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
(cf. 5144.2 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students with Disabilities))
(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)

Legal Reference: (see next page)

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

200-262.4 *Prohibition of discrimination*
48900.3 *Suspension or expulsion for act of hate violence*
48900.4 *Suspension or expulsion for threats or harassment*
48904 *Liability of parent/guardian for willful student misconduct*
48907 *Student exercise of free expression*
48950 *Freedom of speech*
48985 *Translation of notices*
49020-49023 *Athletic programs*
51500 *Prohibited instruction or activity*
51501 *Prohibited means of instruction*
60044 *Prohibited instructional materials*

CIVIL CODE

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

PENAL CODE

422.55 *Definition of hate crime*
422.6 *Crimes, harassment*

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

432 *Student record*
4600-4687 *Uniform complaint procedures*
4900-4965 *Nondiscrimination in elementary and secondary education programs*

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1681-1688 *Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972*
12101-12213 *Title II equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities*

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 29

794 *Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973*

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42

2000d-2000e-17 *Title VI and Title VII Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended*
2000h-2-2000h-6 *Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*
6101-6107 *Age Discrimination Act of 1975*

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 28

35.107 *Nondiscrimination on basis of disability; complaints*

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

100.3 *Prohibition of discrimination on basis of race, color or national origin*
104.7 *Designation of responsible employee for Section 504*
106.8 *Designation of responsible employee for Title IX*
106.9 *Notification of nondiscrimination on basis of sex*

COURT DECISIONS

Donovan v. Poway Unified School District, (2008) 167 Cal.App.4th 567
Flores v. Morgan Hill Unified School District, (2003) 324 F.3d 1130

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

Providing a Safe, Nondiscriminatory School Environment for Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Students, Policy Brief, February 2014
Final Guidance Regarding Transgender Students, Privacy, and Facilities, March 2014
Safe Schools: Strategies for Governing Boards to Ensure Student Success, 2011

Management Resources continued: (see next page)

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)

Management Resources: (continued)

FIRST AMENDMENT CENTER PUBLICATIONS

Public Schools and Sexual Orientation: A First Amendment Framework for Finding Common Ground, 2006

NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION PUBLICATIONS

Dealing with Legal Matters Surrounding Students' Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, 2004

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

Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying, October 2010

Notice of Non-Discrimination, January 1999

WEB SITES

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

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

California Safe Schools Coalition: <http://www.casafeschools.org>

First Amendment Center: <http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org>

National School Boards Association: <http://www.nsba.org>

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

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT

Note: The following **mandated** administrative regulation provides measures that may be implemented by a district to comply with state and federal laws and regulations prohibiting, at school or in school-sponsored or school-related activities, unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying, against students based on actual or perceived race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression, or any other legally protected category or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. Federal and state law also prohibit retaliation against those who engage in activity to protect civil rights.

5 CCR 4621 **mandates** the district to identify in its policies and procedures the person(s), position(s), or unit(s) responsible for ensuring compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs, including the receiving and investigating of complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying. In addition, 34 CFR 106.8 **mandates** districts that receive federal financial assistance to adopt procedures for the "prompt and equitable" resolution of student and employee discrimination complaints, including the designation of one or more responsible employees to ensure district compliance with state and federal laws and regulations governing the district's educational programs.

During the Federal Program Monitoring process, California Department of Education (CDE) staff will check to ensure that the district's procedures list the specific title(s) of the employee(s) responsible for investigating complaints. The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is the agency responsible for the administrative enforcement of federal antidiscrimination laws and regulations in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the department. In reviewing a district's discrimination policies and procedures, OCR will examine whether the district has identified the employee(s) responsible for coordinating compliance with federal civil rights laws, including the investigation of complaints.

The following paragraphs identify the employee(s) designated to coordinate the district's efforts to comply with state and federal civil rights laws (e.g. Title IX and Section 504 coordinators), including the investigation and resolution of discrimination complaints under AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures. Note also that a district may designate more than one employee to coordinate compliance and/or receive and investigate complaints, although each employee designated as a coordinator/compliance officer must be properly trained.

The district designates the individual(s) identified below as the employee(s) responsible for coordinating the district's efforts to comply with state and federal civil rights laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and to answer inquiries regarding the district's nondiscrimination policies. The individual(s) shall also serve as the compliance officer(s) specified in AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures as the responsible employee to handle complaints regarding unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, based on actual race, color, ancestry, national origin, nationality, ethnicity, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or any other legally protected status; the

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)

perception of one or more of such characteristics; or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. The coordinator/compliance officer(s) may be contacted at: (Education Code 234.1; 5 CCR 4621)

(title or position)

(address)

(telephone number)

(email)

(cf. 1312.1 - Complaints Concerning District Employees)

(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)

Measures to Prevent Discrimination

To prevent unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, and bullying, of students at district schools or in school activities and to ensure equal access of all students to the educational program, the Superintendent or designee shall implement the following measures:

Note: As part of its responsibility to monitor district compliance with legal requirements concerning discrimination pursuant to Education Code 234.1, CDE is required to ensure that the district posts its nondiscrimination policies in all schools, offices, staff lounges, and student government meeting rooms.

In addition, federal regulations enforced by OCR require the district to notify students, parents/guardians, and employees of its policies prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex (34 CFR 106.8), disability (34 CFR 104.7 and 28 CFR 35.107), and age (34 CFR 110.25) and of related complaint procedures. In its April 2011 Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence, OCR recommends that nondiscrimination notices be prominently posted on school web sites and at various locations throughout campus, and published in electronic and printed publications of general distribution that provide information to students, parents/guardians, and employees about the school's policies.

Item #1 below may be revised to specify the means by which the district posts its nondiscrimination policies and complaint procedures.

1. Publicize the district's nondiscrimination policy and related complaint procedures to students, parents/guardians, employees, volunteers, and the general public and post them on the district's web site and other locations that are easily accessible to students. (Education Code 234.1)

(cf. 1113 - District and School Web Sites)

(cf. 1114 - District-Sponsored Social Media)

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)

2. Provide to students a handbook that contains age-appropriate information that clearly describes the district's nondiscrimination policy, procedures for filing a complaint, and resources available to students who feel that they have been the victim of any such behavior. (Education Code 234.1)

Note: In its October 2010 Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying, OCR identifies training of the school community as one of the key measures for minimizing discriminatory and harassing behavior in school. Item #3 below may be modified to reflect district practice.

3. Annually notify all students and parents/guardians of the district's nondiscrimination policy. The notice shall inform students and parents/guardians of the possibility that students will participate in a sex-segregated school program or activity together with another student of the opposite biological sex, and that they may inform the compliance officer if they feel such participation would be against the student's religious beliefs and/or practices or a violation of his/her right to privacy. In such a case, the compliance officer shall meet with the student and/or parent/guardian who raises the objection to determine how best to accommodate that student. The notice shall inform students and parents/guardians that the district will not typically notify them of individual instances of transgender students participating in a program or activity.

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

Note: Both federal and state laws contain requirements for translation of certain information and documents. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires school districts to ensure meaningful access to their programs and activities by persons with limited English proficiency. OCR has interpreted this to require that, whenever information is provided to parents/guardians, districts must notify limited-English-proficient (LEP) parents/guardians in a language other than English in order to be adequate. OCR enforces this requirement consistent with the Department of Justice's 2002 Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons. Under the Guidance, a recipient of federal funds has an obligation to provide language assistance to LEP individuals based on balancing four factors: (1) the number or proportion of LEP individuals likely to encounter the program, (2) the frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program, (3) the nature and importance of the services provided by the program, and (4) the resources available to the recipient. State law is more specific than federal law: Education Code 48985 requires translation of certain information and documents if 15 percent or more of students enrolled in the school speak a single primary language other than English.

4. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that all students and parents/guardians, including students and parents/guardians with limited English proficiency, are notified of how to access the relevant information provided in the district's nondiscrimination policy and related complaint procedures, notices, and forms in a language they can understand.

If 15 percent or more of students enrolled in a particular district school speak a single

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)

primary language other than English, the district's policy, regulation, forms, and notices concerning nondiscrimination shall be translated into that language in accordance with Education Code 234.1 and 48985. In all other instances, the district shall ensure meaningful access to all relevant information for parents/guardians with limited English proficiency.

5. Provide to students, employees, volunteers, and parents/guardians age-appropriate training and information regarding the district's nondiscrimination policy; what constitutes prohibited discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying; how and to whom a report of an incident should be made; and how to guard against segregating or stereotyping students when providing instruction, guidance, supervision, or other services to them. Such training and information shall include guidelines for addressing issues related to transgender and gender-nonconforming students.

(cf. 1240 - Volunteer Assistance)

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

Note: Item #6 below is required pursuant to Education Code 234.1 and recommended as a best practice by OCR.

6. At the beginning of each school year, inform school employees that any employee who witnesses any act of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, against a student is required to intervene if it is safe to do so. (Education Code 234.1)

Note: Item #7 below may be revised to reflect district practice. In some situations, the district may need to provide assistance to a student to protect him/her from harassment or bullying. Each situation will need to be analyzed to determine the most appropriate course of action to meet the needs of the student, based on the circumstances involved.

7. At the beginning of each school year, inform each principal or designee of the district's responsibility to provide appropriate assistance or resources to protect students' privacy rights and ensure their safety from threatened or potentially discriminatory behavior.

Enforcement of District Policy

The Superintendent or designee shall take appropriate actions to reinforce BP 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment. As needed, these actions may include any of the following:

1. Removing vulgar or offending graffiti

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)

(cf. 5131.5 - Vandalism and Graffiti)

2. Providing training to students, staff, and parents/guardians about how to recognize unlawful discrimination and how to respond
3. Disseminating and/or summarizing the district's policy and regulation regarding unlawful discrimination
4. Consistent with the laws regarding the confidentiality of student and personnel records, communicating the school's response to students, parents/guardians, and the community

(cf. 4112.6/4212.6/4312.6 - Personnel Files)

(cf. 4119.23/4219.23/4319.23 - Unauthorized Release of Confidential/Privileged Information)

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

5. Taking appropriate disciplinary action against perpetrators and anyone determined to have engaged in wrongdoing, including any student who is found to have made a complaint of discrimination that he/she knew was not true

(cf. 4118 - Suspension/Disciplinary Action)

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

(cf. 5144 - Discipline)

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

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

(cf. 6159.4 - Behavioral Interventions for Special Education Students)

Process for Initiating and Responding to Complaints

Note: Education Code 234.1 requires that districts adopt a process for receiving and investigating complaints of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, and bullying, based on specified actual or perceived characteristics. Such a process, which is required to be consistent with the uniform complaint procedures specified in 5 CCR 4600-4687, must include (1) a requirement that school personnel who witness an act take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so, (2) a timeline for investigating and resolving complaints, (3) an appeal process, and (4) translation of forms when required by Education Code 48985. In addition, federal regulations require districts to adopt procedures providing for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints of discrimination on the basis of sex (34 CFR 106.8), disability (34 CFR 104.7 and 28 CFR 35.107), and age (34 CFR 110.25).

OCR guidance on federal civil rights requirements notes that districts may have a responsibility to respond to notice of discrimination whether or not a formal complaint is filed. In addition, in its April 2011 Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence, OCR cautions that districts may have an obligation to respond to notice of sexual harassment of students which occurs off school grounds or outside school-sponsored or school-related programs or activities, since the sexual harassment may still create a hostile environment at school. This principle would also apply to harassment on other bases, such as race, gender, or disability.

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)

Any student who feels that he/she has been subjected to unlawful discrimination described above or in district policy is strongly encouraged to immediately contact the compliance officer, principal, or any other staff member. In addition, any student who observes any such incident is strongly encouraged to report the incident to the compliance officer or principal, whether or not the alleged victim files a complaint.

Any school employee who observes an incident of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying, or to whom such an incident is reported shall report the incident to the compliance officer or principal within a school day, whether or not the alleged victim files a complaint.

Any school employee who witnesses an incident of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying, shall immediately intervene to stop the incident when it is safe to do so. (Education Code 234.1)

When any report of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying, is submitted to or received by the principal or compliance officer, he/she shall inform the student or parent/guardian of the right to file a formal complaint pursuant to the provisions in AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures. Any report of unlawful discrimination involving the principal, compliance officer, or any other person to whom the complaint would ordinarily be reported or filed shall instead be submitted to the Superintendent or designee. Even if the student chooses not to file a formal complaint, the principal or compliance officer shall implement immediate measures necessary to stop the discrimination and to ensure all students have access to the educational program and a safe school environment.

Upon receiving a complaint of discrimination, the compliance officer shall immediately investigate the complaint in accordance with the district's uniform complaint procedures specified in AR 1312.3.

(cf. 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting)

Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Students

Note: The following section may be modified to reflect district practice. Pursuant to Education Code 221.5, as amended by AB 1266 (Ch. 85, Statutes of 2013), a district is required to permit a student to use facilities and participate in sex-segregated school programs and activities consistent with the student's gender identity, regardless of the gender listed on his/her educational records. The following guidelines are designed to implement AB 1266 and other existing state and federal laws that prohibit discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, and bullying, against students based on their real or perceived gender identity and/or gender expression. The guidelines address certain issues and circumstances that may arise in relation to the needs of transgender and gender-nonconforming students, and are by no means exhaustive. Consequently, each instance or situation should be addressed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the safety, privacy, and other concerns of all students involved are appropriately addressed. For

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)

more information on the rights of transgender students, see CSBA's policy brief [Providing a Safe, Nondiscriminatory School Environment for Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Students](#) and its [Final Guidance Regarding Transgender Students, Privacy, and Facilities](#). Districts should consult legal counsel about applicable standards for determining a student's gender identity.

Gender identity means a student's gender-related identity, appearance, or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance, or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the student's physiology or assigned sex at birth.

Gender expression means a student's gender-related appearance and behavior, whether stereotypically associated with the student's assigned sex at birth. (Education Code 210.7)

Gender transition refers to the process in which a student changes from living and identifying as the sex assigned to the student at birth to living and identifying as the sex that corresponds to the student's gender identity.

Gender-nonconforming student means a student whose gender expression differs from stereotypical expectations.

Transgender student means a student whose gender identity or gender expression is different from that traditionally associated with the assigned sex at birth.

Acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility that are based on sex, gender identity, or gender expression, regardless of whether they are sexual in nature, where the act 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 are prohibited under state and federal law. Examples of types of conduct which are prohibited in the district and which may constitute gender-based harassment include, but are not limited to:

1. Refusing to address a student by a name and the pronouns consistent with his/her gender identity
2. Disciplining or disparaging a transgender student because his/her mannerisms, hairstyle, or style of dress correspond to his/her gender identity, or a non-transgender student because his/her mannerisms, hairstyle, or style of dress do not conform to stereotypes for his/her gender or are perceived as indicative of the other sex
3. Blocking a student's entry to the bathroom that corresponds to his/her gender identity because the student is transgender or gender-nonconforming
4. Taunting a student because he/she participates in an athletic activity more typically favored by a student of the other sex

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)

5. Revealing a student's transgender status to individuals who do not have a legitimate need for the information
6. Use of gender-specific slurs
7. Physical assault of a student motivated by hostility toward him/her because of his/her gender, gender identity, or gender expression

The district's uniform complaint procedures (AR 1312.3) shall be used to report and resolve complaints alleging discrimination against transgender and gender-nonconforming students. Examples of bases for complaints include, but are not limited to, the above list as well as improper rejection by the district of a student's asserted gender identity, denial of access to facilities that correspond with a student's gender identity, improper disclosure of a student's transgender status, discriminatory enforcement of a dress code, and other instances of gender-based harassment.

To ensure that transgender and gender-nonconforming students are afforded the same rights, benefits, and protections provided to all students by law and Board policy, the district shall address each situation on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the following guidelines:

Note: Timelines included in items #1-2 below may be modified to reflect district practice.
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1. **Right to privacy:** A student's transgender or gender-nonconforming status is his/her private information and the district will only disclose the information to others with the student's prior written consent, except when the disclosure is otherwise required by law or when the district has compelling evidence that disclosure is necessary to preserve the student's physical or mental well-being. In the latter instance, the district shall limit disclosure to individuals reasonably believed to be able to protect the student's well-being. Any district employee to whom a student discloses his/her transgender or gender-nonconforming status shall seek the student's permission to notify the compliance officer. If the student refuses to give permission, the employee shall keep the student's information confidential, unless he/she is required to disclose or report the student's information pursuant to this procedure, and shall inform the student that honoring the student's request may limit the district's ability to meet the student's needs related to his/her status as a transgender or gender-nonconforming student. If the student permits the employee to notify the compliance officer, the employee shall do so within three school days.

As appropriate given the physical, emotional, and other significant risks to the student, the compliance officer may consider discussing with the student any need to disclose the student's transgender or gender-nonconformity status to his/her parents/guardians and/or others, including other students, teacher(s), or other adults

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)

on campus. The district shall offer support services, such as counseling, to students who wish to inform their parents/guardians of their status and desire assistance in doing so.

(cf. 1340 - Access to District Records)

(cf. 3580 - District Records)

2. **Determining a Student's Gender Identity:** The compliance officer shall accept the student's assertion unless district personnel present a credible basis for believing that the student's assertion is for an improper purpose. In such a case, the compliance officer shall document the improper purpose and, within seven school days of receiving notification of the student's assertion, shall provide a written response to the student and, if appropriate, to his/her parents/guardians.
3. **Addressing a Student's Transition Needs:** The compliance officer shall arrange a meeting with the student and, if appropriate, his/her parents/guardians to identify potential issues, including transition-related issues, and to develop strategies for addressing them. The meeting shall discuss the transgender or gender-nonconforming student's rights and how those rights may affect and be affected by the rights of other students and shall address specific subjects related to the student's access to facilities and to academic or educational support programs, services, or activities, including, but not limited to, sports and other competitive endeavors. In addition, the compliance officer shall identify specific school site employee(s) to whom the student may report any problem related to his/her status as a transgender or gender-nonconforming individual, so that prompt action could be taken to address it. Alternatively, if appropriate and desired by the student, the school may form a support team for the student that will meet periodically to assess whether the student's arrangements are meeting his/her educational needs and providing equal access to programs and activities, educate appropriate staff about the student's transition, and serve as a resource to the student to better protect the student from gender-based discrimination.
4. **Accessibility to Sex-Segregated Facilities, Programs, and Activities:** The district may maintain sex-segregated facilities, such as restrooms and locker rooms, and sex-segregated programs and activities, such as physical education classes, intermural sports, and interscholastic athletic programs. A student shall be entitled to access facilities and participate in programs and activities consistent with his/her gender identity. If available and requested by any student, regardless of the underlying reason, the district shall offer options to address privacy concerns in sex-segregated facilities, such as a gender-neutral or single-use restroom or changing area, a bathroom stall with a door, an area in the locker room separated by a curtain or screen, access to a staff member's office, or use of the locker room before or after the other students. However, the district shall not require a student to utilize these options

NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)

because he/she is transgender or gender-nonconforming. In addition, a student shall be permitted to participate in accordance with his/her gender identity in other circumstances where students are separated by gender, such as for class discussions, yearbook pictures, and field trips. A student's right to participate in a sex-segregated activity in accordance with his/her gender identity shall not render invalid or inapplicable any other eligibility rule established for participation in the activity.

(cf. 6145 - Extracurricular and Cocurricular Activities)

(cf. 6145.2 - Athletic Competition)

(cf. 6153 - School-Sponsored Trips)

(cf. 7110 - Facilities Master Plan)

5. **Student Records:** A student's legal name or gender as entered on the mandatory student record required pursuant to 5 CCR 432 shall only be changed pursuant to a court order. However, at the written request of a student or, if appropriate, his/her parents/guardians, the district shall use the student's preferred name and pronouns consistent with his/her gender identity on all other district-related documents.

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

(cf. 5125.1 - Release of Directory Information)

6. **Names and Pronouns:** If a student so chooses, district personnel shall be required to address the student by a name and the pronouns consistent with his/her gender identity, without the necessity of a court order or a change to his/her official district record. However, inadvertent slips or honest mistakes by district personnel in the use of the student's name and/or consistent pronouns shall not constitute a violation of this administrative regulation or the accompanying district policy.

7. **Uniforms/Dress Code:** A student has the right to dress in a manner consistent with his/her gender identity, subject to any dress code adopted on a school site.

(cf. 5132 - Dress Code)

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Note: Education Code 231.5 **mandates** the district to have written policies on sexual harassment. The following policy addresses harassment by and/or of students; for policy addressing the sexual harassment by and/or of 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.

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.

In addition to filing a private civil lawsuit, an alleged victim of sexual harassment may file a complaint with 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. See BP/AR 4119.11/4219.11/4319.11 - Sexual Harassment.

In April 2011, OCR issued its Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence to supplement its January 2001 Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance on federal Title IX requirements as they pertain to sexual harassment. In the letter, OCR clarifies that sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, and sexual coercion, is a form of sexual harassment that must be addressed by districts using the same procedures used to address other forms of sexual harassment, such as unwelcome sexual advances.

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.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

The Governing Board is committed to maintaining a safe school environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. The Board prohibits sexual harassment of students at school or at school-sponsored or school-related activities. 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.

Note: OCR's January 2001 Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance and 2011 Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence note 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.

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 student who feels that he/she is being or has been sexually harassed on school grounds or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity by another student or an adult to immediately contact his/her teacher, the principal, 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.

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

(cf. 1312.1 - Complaints Concerning District Employees)

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

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 231.5, the district's policy must contain information on where to obtain a 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 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 (continued)

Complaints regarding sexual harassment 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: 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. In addition, in its April 2011 Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence, OCR underlies the importance of training in preventing and responding to sexual harassment and encourages districts to provide training to all segments of the school community.

The Superintendent or designee shall take appropriate actions to reinforce the district's sexual harassment 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

Note: In its April 2011 Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence, OCR acknowledges that, 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 believes that he/she may be disciplined 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.

3. Encouragement to report observed incidents of sexual harassment even where the alleged victim of the harassment has not complained
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. Information about the district's procedure for investigating complaints and the person(s) to whom a report of sexual harassment should be made

Note: In its April 2011 Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence, OCR restates the requirement that a district's procedure for investigating sexual harassment complaints must be widely disseminated and be written in language appropriate to the age of the school's students. Examples include having copies of the procedure available throughout the school, publishing the procedure in the student handbook, and identifying individuals who can explain the procedure.

6. Information about the rights of students and parents/guardians to file a civil or criminal complaint, as applicable

Disciplinary Actions

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 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.

Any student who engages in sexual harassment or sexual violence at school or at a school-sponsored or school-related activity is in violation of this policy and 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))

Any staff member found to have engaged in sexual harassment or sexual violence toward any student shall be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal in accordance with applicable policies, laws, and/or collective bargaining agreements.

(cf. 4117.4 - Dismissal)

(cf. 4117.7 - Employment Status Report)

(cf. 4118 - Suspension/Disciplinary Action)

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

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

SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

Record-Keeping

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:

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

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

4600-4687 Uniform complaint procedures

4900-4965 Nondiscrimination in elementary and secondary education programs

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1221 Application of laws

1232g Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

1681-1688 Title IX, discrimination

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 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, 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: (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

Questions and Answers on Title IX and Sexual Violence, April 2014

Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence, April 4, 2011

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>

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

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 AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures. 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) may be contacted at:

(title or position)

(address)

(telephone number)

(email)

(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)

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.

Under OCRs 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)

SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

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.
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 U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights' (OCR) April 2011 Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence , its January 2001 Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance , and definitions specified in 5 CCR 4916.
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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

SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

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

Reporting 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 April 2011 Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence and 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 who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment or who has witnessed sexual harassment is strongly encouraged to report the incident to his/her teacher, the principal, or any other available school employee. Within one school day of receiving such a report, the school employee shall forward the report to the principal or the district's compliance officer identified in AR 1312.3. In addition, any school employee who observes an incident of sexual harassment involving a student shall, within one school day, report his/her observation to the principal or a district compliance officer. The employee shall take these actions, whether or not the alleged victim files a complaint.

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 submitted the Superintendent or designee.

(cf. 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting)

When a report of sexual harassment is submitted, the principal or compliance officer shall inform the student or parent/guardian of the right to file a formal written complaint in accordance with the district's 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.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)**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](#) and 2011 [Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence](#), as well the FAQs issued in April 2014 indicate 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.

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.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

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.

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

Response Pending Investigation

Note: The following reporting process may be revised to reflect district practice. In its April 2011 Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence, OCR cautions that districts may have an obligation to respond to notice of sexual harassment of students which occurs off school grounds or outside school-sponsored or school-related programs or activities, since the sexual harassment may still create a hostile environment at school.

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. Such 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.

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*)

SEXUAL HARASSMENT (continued)

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, including school web sites (Education Code 231.5)

(cf. 1113 - District and School Web Sites)

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