

## **PROCEDURE 413 – PROHIBITION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE**

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### **I. DEFINITIONS**

#### **A. District employee:**

For purposes of the policy/procedures, district employee includes school board members, school district employees, agents, volunteers, contractors/vendors, or persons subject to the supervision and control of the district.

#### **B. Discriminate:**

The term "discriminate" means to treat a person in a disparate manner because of that persons race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex/gender, age, marital status, familial status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, age, family care leave status or veteran/military status

#### **C. Harassment:**

Harassment is unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex/gender, age, marital status, familial status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, age, family care leave status or veteran/military status. A single incident of harassment may implicate more than one protected class. For example, a student may be targeted because of his race and sexual orientation.

1. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including but not limited to verbal acts and name-calling, as well as nonverbal behavior that is physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating. Harassment includes the use of derogatory language, intimidation, and threats; unwanted physical contact or physical violence; and the use of derogatory language and images in graffiti, pictures or drawings, notes, e-mails, electronic postings and/or phone or text messages related to a person's membership in a protected class. Harassment includes behavior that may not be directed at a particular person, but may instead consist of harassing conduct (e.g. physical, verbal, graphic, or written) that creates a hostile environment for students or employees.
2. Conduct is unwelcome if the student or employee did not request or invite it and considered the conduct to be undesirable or offensive. Submission or failure to complain does not mean that the conduct was welcome; the circumstances must be examined.
3. With respect to students, respect to students, a "hostile environment" exists when harassment is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to interfere with or limit one or more students' abilities to participate in or benefit from the education program.
4. With respect to district employees, a "hostile environment" exists when harassment is sufficiently severe or pervasive so as to alter the conditions of the victim's employment and create an abusive working environment.

D. Sex-Based harassment:

1. "Sex-based harassment" includes both sexual harassment and gender-based harassment.
2. Sexual harassment is harassment of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:
  - a) submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of obtaining or retaining employment, or of obtaining an education; or
  - b) submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment or education; or
  - c) the conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of creating a hostile environment.
3. "Gender-based harassment" means non-sexual harassment of a person because of the person's sex, including harassment based on gender identity and expression. Gender-based harassment includes, but is not limited to, harassment based on the person's nonconformity with gender stereotypes, regardless of the actual or perceived sex, gender identity or sexual orientation of the harasser or target of the harassment.
4. "Gender stereotypes" refers to stereotypical notions of masculinity and femininity or expectations of how boys or girls should act.

E. Sexual Orientation Based Harassment:

1. "Sexual orientation-based harassment" means non-sexual harassment of a person because of the person's actual or perceived sexual orientation or association with or advocacy for a person or group (e.g., family members or friends) who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender ("LGBT").
2. "Sexual orientation" means having or being perceived as having an emotional, physical, or sexual attachment to another person without regard to the sex of that person or having or being perceived as having an orientation for such attachment, or having or being perceived as having a self-image or identity not traditionally associated with one's biological maleness or femaleness.

F. Racial, Color, Creed or National Origin Harassment:

1. Racial, color, creed or national origin harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct based on an individual's perceived or actual race, color, creed or national origin.
2. "National origin" means the place of birth of an individual or of any of the individual's lineal ancestors.

G. Religious Harassment:

Religious harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct based on an individual's perceived or actual religious beliefs.

H. Disability Harassment:

1. Disability harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct based on an individual's perceived or actual disability.
2. A person with a disability is any person who:
  - a) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities;
  - b) has a record of such an impairment; or
  - c) is regarded as having such impairment. This includes students who are protected by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
3. Disability harassment also may deny a student with a disability a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). Harassment of a student based on disability may decrease the student's ability to benefit from his or her education and amount to a denial of FAPE.

I. Other Protected Class Harassment:

Harassment of other protected classes (under state or federal law) of physical or verbal conduct based on an individual's perceived or actual protected class status.

J. Sexual Violence:

Sexual violence is a physical act of aggression or force or the threat thereof that involves the touching of another person's intimate parts, or forcing a person to touch any person's intimate parts. Intimate parts, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 609.341, includes the primary genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttocks or breast, as well as the clothing covering these areas. Sexual violence may include, but is not limited to:

1. touching, patting, grabbing, or pinching another person's intimate parts, whether that person is the same sex or the opposite sex;
2. coercing, forcing or attempting to coerce or force the touching of anyone's intimate parts;
3. coercing, forcing or attempting to coerce or force sexual intercourse or a sexual act on another; or
4. threatening to force or coerce sexual acts, including the touching of intimate parts or intercourse, on another.

K. Racial, Color, Creed or National Origin Violence:

Racial violence is a physical act of aggression or force, an assault, or the threat thereof,

that is directed toward a student or employee based on their perceived or actual race, color, creed, or national origin.

L. Religious Violence:

Religious violence is a physical act of aggression or force, an assault, or the threat thereof, that is directed toward a student or employee based on their perceived or actual religion.

M. Disability Violence:

Disability violence is a physical act of aggression or force, an assault, or the threat thereof, that is directed toward a student or employee based on a perceived or actual disability.

N. Other Protected Class Violence:

Other Protected Class violence is a physical act of aggression or assault on another based on their actual or perceived protected class status.

O. Assault is:

1. an act done with intent to cause fear in another of immediate bodily harm or death;
2. the intentional infliction of or attempt to inflict bodily harm on another; or
3. the threat to do bodily harm to another with present ability to carry out the threat.

## II. NOTICE AND PUBLICATION OF REPORTING PROCEDURES

The school district will post complaint procedures regarding protected status discrimination, harassment and violence reports on its website and in employee and student handbooks.

## III. REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR INCIDENTS OF HARASSMENT AND/OR DISCRIMINATION AGAINST DISTRICT EMPLOYEES

### A. Reporting Complaints

1. Any school district employee who believes he or she has experienced harassment, violence or discrimination on the basis of his or her actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex/gender, marital status, familial status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, age, family care leave status or veteran status, or any person with knowledge of or belief of conduct which may constitute harassment, violence, or discrimination, should report this information immediately, or as soon as possible, to an appropriate district official designated by these procedures.
2. Although the school district encourages the alleged target or other reporting party to use a district formal reporting form, use of the formal reporting form is not required. Oral reports shall be considered complaints as well. The form will be available from the principal of each building, the district office, and on the district's website. Upon request for qualified persons with a disability, alternative

means of filing a complaint, such as through a personal interview or by tape recording, will be made available.

3. The district designates the Executive Director of Human Resources as the school district human rights officer to receive employee reports or complaints of harassment, violence and discrimination at:

Mailing address:  
11200 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North  
Maple Grove, MN 55369  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

If the complaint involves the Human Rights Officer, the complaint shall be filed directly with the Superintendent at:

Mailing address:  
11200 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North  
Maple Grove, MN 55369  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

If the complaint involves the Superintendent, the complaint shall be filed directly with the School Board:

Mailing address:  
11200 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North  
Maple Grove, MN 55369  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

If the complaint involves a School Board Member, the complaint shall be filed directly with the School Board Chair:

Mailing address:  
11200 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North  
Maple Grove, MN 55369  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

If the complaint involves the School Board Chair, the complaint shall be filed directly with the School Board Vice Chair:

Mailing address:  
11200 93<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North  
Maple Grove, MN 55369  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

4. In each school building the school principal is the person responsible for receiving oral or written reports of alleged harassment, violence or discrimination at the school level. Supervisors of itinerant staff or other employees not supervised by a building principal will also be responsible for receiving oral or written reports of alleged harassment, violence or discrimination. Any school district employee who receives a report shall inform their supervisor or their building principal immediately. If the supervisor or principal is not available on the date of the

report, then the employee must forward the oral or written report/complaint directly to the human rights officer. If the complaint involves the supervisor or principal, the employee will provide his or her report directly to the school district human rights officer. Upon receipt of a report, the supervisor or principal must notify the school district human rights officer immediately, without screening or investigating the credibility of the report. The supervisor or principal may request, but may not insist on, a formal written complaint. If the report is verbal, the supervisor or principal shall prepare and provide to the human rights officer a written statement of the facts alleged within 24 hours of receiving the report. Failure to forward a complaint under these procedures may result in disciplinary action against the responsible party.

5. Nothing in these procedures shall prevent a school district employee from reporting alleged harassment, violence, or discrimination directly to the school district human rights officer or to the superintendent.
6. The complaint (verbal or written) should be reported immediately, or as soon after the incident as possible; delays between the date of the alleged incident and the reporting date may make investigations more difficult.
7. The willful filing of a false report will be considered to be a violation of school district policy and may result in disciplinary action.
8. Although confidentiality cannot be assured, the school district will respect the privacy of the alleged target, the reporter (if someone other than the alleged target), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, to take appropriate action, and to conform with any discovery or disclosure obligations.

#### B. Investigation – District Employees

1. The human rights officer, upon receipt of a report or complaint, will promptly undertake or authorize an investigation. The investigation may be conducted by school district officials or by a neutral third party designated by the school district.
2. The investigation will be completed within thirty (30) calendar days from receipt of the complaint, unless impracticable.
3. The investigation may, as appropriate, consist of personal interviews with the alleged target, the reporter (if someone other than the alleged target), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of any other methods (e.g. review of documents and electronic media) deemed pertinent by the investigator.
4. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes a violation of the policy/procedures the school district will consider the facts and surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of the policy/procedures requires a determination

based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.

5. The school district, at its discretion, may take immediate steps, based on the severity of the allegations, to protect the parties involved in the complaint process pending completion of an investigation.

#### C. School District Action – District Employees

1. Upon completion of the investigation, the school district or neutral third party designated investigator will make a written report to the human rights officer. If the complaint involves the human rights officer, the report must be filed directly with the superintendent. If the complaint involves the superintendent, the report must be filed directly with the school board. The report will include the facts, a determination of whether the allegations have been substantiated/not substantiated or are inconclusive and whether a violation of the policy/procedure has occurred.
2. Upon completion of the investigation, the human rights officer will inform the alleged target of his or her right to review the written report at the school building where the target is employed or enrolled, in accordance with state and federal law regarding data or records privacy.
3. In the event a complaint is substantiated, the school district will take appropriate and effective action depending on the circumstances. Such action may include, but is not limited to, training, counseling, warning, suspension, transfer, remediation, or termination. School district action taken for violation of this will be consistent with requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, Minnesota and federal law, and school district policies.

### IV. REPORTING PROCEDURES FOR INCIDENTS OF HARASSMENT AND/OR DISCRIMINATION AGAINST STUDENTS

#### A. Reporting a Complaint

1. Any student who believes she/he has experienced harassment, violence or discrimination on the basis of his or her actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex/gender, marital status, familial status, disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, age, family care leave status or veteran status should report the alleged acts immediately, or as soon as possible to their building principal or a staff member in their school.
2. Any District employee who observes an act or receives a report of alleged harassment, violence or discrimination toward a student shall intervene to attempt to stop the act and shall report it to the building principal or principal's designee in their school immediately, or as soon as possible.
3. The complaint (verbal or written) should be reported immediately, or as soon after the incident as possible; delays between the date of the alleged incident and the reporting date may make investigations more difficult.

4. The district designates the building principal or their designee to monitor and receive student reports or complaints of alleged harassment, violence and discrimination against students.
5. If the complaint involves a principal, the complaint should be filed directly with the Assistant Superintendent that supervises the Principal. If a complaint involves the Assistant Superintendent, the complaint shall be filed directly with the Superintendent. If the complaint involves the Superintendent, the complaint shall be filed directly with the School Board.
6. If the complaint involves a School Board member, the complaint shall be filed directly with the School Board Chair. If the complaint involves the school board chair, the complaint shall be filed directly with the School Board Vice Chair.
7. Although the school district encourages the reporting student to use the report form set forth in this, use of formal reporting forms is not required. Oral reports shall be considered complaints as well. The form will available in the counseling and administrative office of each school, the district office, and on the district's website.
8. Alternative, accessible means of filing a complaint, such as through a personal interview or by tape recording, will be made available for individuals with disabilities.

#### B. Investigation – Students

1. Upon receipt of a report or complaint, the district shall promptly undertake or authorize an investigation. The investigation will be completed within thirty (30) days from receipt of the complaint, unless impracticable.
2. The investigation may, as appropriate, consist of personal interviews with the alleged target, the reporter (if someone other than the alleged target), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of any other methods and documents deemed pertinent by the investigator.
3. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes a violation of the policy/procedures, the school district will consider the age and level of understanding of the student(s) involved, the facts and surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of the policy/procedures requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.
4. The school district and building administration may, at its discretion, take immediate steps, based on the severity of the allegations, to protect the parties involved in the complaint process pending completion of an investigation.
5. The intentional filing of a false report will be considered to be a violation of the student discipline policy and may result in disciplinary action.



#### C. School District Action – Students

1. The investigator shall document his or her findings within five school days of concluding the investigation.
2. Upon conclusion of the investigation and receipt of the findings, and if harassment is found to have occurred, the school district will take appropriate and effective action with respect to the target and the offender, and document the action taken. If the investigator determined that a violation of the policy/procedures has occurred, such appropriate action may include, but is not limited to, an education component, alternative dispute resolution, training, counseling, warning, class transfer, suspension, expulsion, or transfer. If both the target and the alleged offender agree to attempt to mediate the complaint using the school's formal mediation process, this will be encouraged.

#### D. Timelines and Notification to Parents / Guardians

1. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the target and/or the alleged offenders of bullying, harassment, violence or discrimination should be notified of the report before the close of the current school day, but not later than two school days of the report being filed, unless otherwise directed by law enforcement or required by law, or if in the professional judgment of the District notification is not warranted. The parents/guardians of both the target and the alleged offender(s) shall be notified if there is a physical assault, unless otherwise directed by law enforcement or required by law.
2. Following the investigation, the person handling the complaint or a representative of the District will communicate with the target regarding the outcome of the investigation.
  - a) This communication will include the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the student at the parent's/guardian's request if the student is under age 18, or at the student's request if over 18.
  - b) If the investigation has not been completed within ten school days, a verbal summary of the progress of the investigation will be given to the target at that time.
3. The privacy and data privacy rights of all persons involved must be respected in accordance with current state and federal laws.

#### E. Who is Responsible for Investigation and Reporting Procedure

1. When a report is made or referred to the building principal, that person or his or her designee is responsible for carrying out and documenting this reporting procedure.
2. When a report is made or referred to the Assistant Superintendent, that person or his or her designee, is responsible for carrying out and documenting this reporting procedure.

3. When a report is made to the Superintendent, that person or his or her designee is responsible for carrying out and documenting this reporting procedure.
4. Incidents that include violence as defined in this procedure should also be referred to the police liaison officer serving the building for a possible separate criminal investigation.
5. When the report involves alleged harassment, violence or discrimination by a district employee or employee of an agency contracted by the District against a student, the investigation will be performed by the District Human Rights Officer.

#### F. Harassment or Violence Abuse

1. Under certain circumstances, alleged harassment or violence may also be possible abuse under Minnesota law. If so, the duties of mandatory reporting under Minnesota Statutes section 626.556 may be applicable.
2. Nothing in these procedures will prevent or prohibit the district from taking immediate action to protect victims of alleged harassment, violence or abuse.

#### V. NO REPRISAL

There will be no retaliation against any target or reporter of the alleged harassment, violence or discrimination under the policy/procedures, nor against any person who participates in an investigation. The school district will take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other district employee who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report, who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, or who testifies, assists or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to the report. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.

#### VI. APPEAL

If the report or grievance has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the alleged target of harassment, violence or discrimination, s/he may appeal.

- A. Appeals of Alleged Prohibited Acts by Employee: If the alleged target of harassment, violence or discrimination believes that they are aggrieved by the actions taken by the school district in Section III.C. of these procedures, they may appeal to the district's general counsel.
- B. Appeals of Alleged Prohibited Acts by Student: If the alleged target of harassment, violence or discrimination believes that they are aggrieved by the actions by the school district in Section IV.C. of these procedures, they may appeal to the Assistant Superintendent that supervises their school, site or program.

Appeals must be made in writing within ten (10) business days of receipt of written findings under Sections III. C. or IV.C. The person designated to hear the appeal will conduct a review and issue a decision within ten (10) business days of receiving notice of the appeal. The decision issued under this section is final.

## VII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

If there is a conflict of interest with respect to any party affected by the policy, appropriate accommodations will be made, such as, but not limited to, appointing or contracting with a neutral third-party investigator to conduct the investigation, or recusing from the process the person for whom a conflict or potential conflict of interest exists.

## VIII. RIGHT TO ALTERNATIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

These procedures do not deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse which may include filing charges with the agencies identified below, or initiating an action in state or federal court.

Minnesota Department of Human Rights  
Freeman Building  
625 Robert Street North St.  
Paul, MN 55155  
toll free: 800.657.3704  
tty: 651.296.1283  
fax: 651.296.9042  
[www.humanrights.state.mn.us](http://www.humanrights.state.mn.us)

U.S. Department of Education Office for  
Civil Rights, Region V 500  
W. Madison Street - Suite 1475  
Chicago IL 60661  
Tel: 312.730.1560 TDD: 312.730.1609

## IX. DISSEMINATION OF THE POLICY

- A. Each school will ensure that the policy and procedures are discussed at the start of each school year with all staff and with each student in a manner appropriate to his/her age and level of understanding and the principal or a designee will document the date it was discussed in each classroom.
- B. These procedures, including possible consequences for a violation, will be in the employee handbook and student handbook of every school.

Procedure 413 Revised:	4/17/18	(Procedures 413 & 548 combined)
Procedure 413 Revised:	9/27/16	
Procedure 413 Revised:	9/10/13	
Procedure 413 Revised:	1/25/12	
Procedure 413 Revised:	5/17/10	
Procedure 413 Revised:	10/16/01	
Procedure 413 Revised:	2/2/99	(formerly Procedure 4153 & 4253)
Procedure Revised:	2/1/94	
Procedure Revised:	4/3/90	
Procedure Adopted:	8/20/85	

**Cross References:**

Policy 414 – Mandated Reporting of Child Neglect or Physical or Sexual Abuse  
Policy 506 – Student Discipline  
Policy 548 – Harassment and Violence

**Legal References:**

M.S. 121A.03, Subd. 2  
M.S. 363A  
M.S. 609.341-609.345  
M.S. 609.321-609.324  
M.S. 617.246  
M.S. 626.556

**Notification Statement:**

School Board  
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT 279  
Maple Grove, Minnesota