

Students

Non-Discrimination

The Board of Education complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws prohibiting the exclusion of any person from any of its educational programs or activities, or the denial of any person of the benefits of any of its educational programs or activities because of race, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability (including pregnancy), genetic information, veteran status or gender identity or expression, except in the case of a bona fide occupational qualification.

It is the policy of the Board of Education that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability (including pregnancy), genetic information, veteran status or gender identity or expression, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law is prohibited, whether by students, Board employees or third parties subject to the control of the Board. The Board's prohibition of discrimination or harassment in its educational programs or activities expressly extends to academic, nonacademic and extracurricular activities, including athletics. It is also the policy of the Board of Education to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics such as race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, disability (including pregnancy), veteran status or gender identity or expression.

For the purposes of this policy, "genetic information" means the information about genes, gene products, or inherited characteristics that may derive from an individual or a family member. "Genetic information" may also include an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

For the purposes of this policy, "veteran" means any person honorably discharged from, or released under honorable conditions from active service in, the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Air Force and any reserve component thereof, including the Connecticut National Guard.

For the purposes of this policy, "gender identity or expression" means a person'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 person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown

by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose.

Any employee wishing to file a complaint regarding discrimination may obtain a copy of the Board's complaint procedures and complaint form which are included in the Board's Administrative Regulations Regarding Non-Discrimination/Personnel. These regulations accompany Board Policy #4118.11 / 4218.12 and are available online at www.stafford.k12.ct.us/board_of_education/board_of_education_policies or upon request from the main office of any district school.

If a complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment based on reasons such as gender/sex or disability, such complaints will be handled under other appropriate policies, as follows: Policy #4118.12 / 4218.12- Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace; Policy #5145.6- Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment (Students); Policy #4118.14 / 4218.14- Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Disabilities (Personnel), and Policy #5145.7 (a)-(b)- Section 504/ADA (Students).

Any employee also may file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education ("OCR"):

Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office
U.S. Department of Education
8th Floor
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109- 3921
(617) 289-0111
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>

Employees may also file a complaint regarding employment discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Boston Area Office
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
(800-669-4000)

Employees may also file a complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities:

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
450 Columbus Blvd.
Hartford, CT 06103-1835
(800-477-5737)

Anyone who has questions or concerns about this policy, or would like a copy of the Board's complaint procedures or complaint forms related to claims of discrimination, may contact:

Superintendent's Office
16 Levinthal Run
Stafford Springs, CT 06076
(860) 684-2208

Anyone who has questions or concerns about the Board's policies regarding discrimination on the basis of gender/sex may contact the Board's Title IX Coordinator:

Director of Pupil Services
11A Levinthal Run
Stafford Springs, CT 06076
(860) 684-4212

Anyone who has questions or concerns about the Board's policies regarding discrimination on the basis of disability may contact the Board's Section 504/ADA Coordinator:

Director of Pupil Services
11A Levinthal Run
Stafford Springs, CT 06076
(860) 684-4212

Director of Pupil Services

Legal References:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.
 Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.
 Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.
 Age Discrimination in Employment Act, 29 U.S.C. § 621
 Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101
 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794
 Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008,
 Pub.L.110-233, 42 U.S.C. § 2000ff; 29 CFR 1635.1 et seq.
 Connecticut General Statutes § 10-153. Discrimination on basis of marital
 status
 Connecticut Fair Employment Practices Act, Connecticut General Statutes
 § 46a-60
 Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-81a Discrimination on basis of sexual
 orientation: Definitions
 Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-81c Sexual orientation discrimination:
 Employment
 Public Act 17-127, An Act Concerning Discriminatory Practices Against
 Veterans, Leaves of Absence for National Guard Members, Application
 for Certain Medicaid Programs, and Disclosure of Certain Records to
 Federal Military Law Enforcement.

Policy adopted: July 13, 2015
 Policy revised: May 7, 2019

STAFFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 Stafford Springs, Connecticut

Students

Administrative Regulations Regarding Discrimination Complaints

It is the policy of the Stafford Board of Education that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of protected characteristics such as race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, disability (including pregnancy), genetic information, veteran status or gender identity or expression is forbidden, whether by students, Board employees or third parties subject to the control of the Board.

Students, Board employees and third parties are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful of the rights of all members of the school community.

It is the express policy of the Board to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics such as race, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability (including pregnancy), genetic information, veteran status or gender identity or expression.

If a complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment based on reasons such as gender/sex or disability, such complaints will be handled, as appropriate, in accordance with other Board policies, as follows: Policy #4118.12 / 4218.12- Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace; Policy #5145.6- Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment (Students); Policy #4118.14 / 4218.14- Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Disabilities (Personnel), and Policy #5145.7 (a)-(b)-Section 504/ADA (Students).

Preferably, Complaints should be filed within thirty (30) calendar days of the alleged occurrence. Timely reporting of complaints facilitates the investigation and resolution of such complaints. The district will investigate such complaints promptly and equitably, and will take corrective action when allegations are verified.

The district will not tolerate any reprisals or retaliation that occur as a result of the good faith reporting of charges of harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, disability (including pregnancy), genetic information, gender identity or expression, or veteran status. Any such reprisals or retaliation will result in disciplinary action against the retaliator, and other corrective actions as appropriate.

The school district will periodically provide staff development for district administrators and periodically distribute this Policy and implementing Administrative Regulations to staff and students in an effort to maintain an environment free of harassment and discrimination.

Complaint Procedure

As soon as an individual feels that he or she has been subjected to discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, disability (including pregnancy), genetic information, gender identity or expression, or veteran status he/she should make a written complaint to the Superintendent, or his/her designee. The individual and any respondent (if applicable) will be provided a copy of the Board's policy and regulation and made aware of his/her rights.

The complaint should state the:

- A. Name of the complainant,
- B. Date of the complaint,
- C. Date(s) of the alleged harassment/discrimination,
- D. Name(s) of the alleged harasser(s) or discriminator(s),
- E. Location where such alleged harassment/discrimination occurred,
- F. Names of any witness(es) to the alleged harassment/discrimination,
- G. Detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged harassment/discrimination; and
- H. Proposed remedy.

Any individual who makes an oral complaint of harassment or discrimination will be provided a copy of this regulation and will be requested to make a written complaint pursuant to the above procedure. If an individual is unable to make a written complaint, the staff member receiving the oral complaint will either reduce the complaint to writing or assist the individual with completing the written complaint form.

All complaints received by staff members are to be forwarded immediately to the Superintendent or his/her designee. Upon receipt of a complaint alleging harassment or discrimination under this complaint procedure, the Superintendent or his/her designee shall promptly investigate the complaint. During the course of the investigation, the investigator shall interview or consult with all individuals reasonably believed to have relevant information, including the complainant, the alleged harasser/discriminator ("respondent") and any witnesses to the conduct. Complaints will be investigated promptly within the timeframes identified below. Timeframes may be extended as needed given the complexity of the investigation, availability of individuals with relevant information and other extenuating circumstances.

Confidentiality will be maintained by all persons involved in the investigation to the extent possible, as determined by the investigator.

Upon receipt of a written complaint of discrimination, the investigator should follow the steps detailed below:

1. Offer to meet with the complainant and respondent (if applicable) within ten (10) business days (provided that such timeframe may be reasonably extended based on the availability of necessary witnesses and/or participants during periods of time when school is not in session) to discuss the nature of the complaint, identify individuals of the complainant believes has relevant information, and obtain any relevant documents the complainant may have;
2. Provide the complainant and respondent (if applicable) with a copy of the Board's non-discrimination policy and accompanying regulations;
3. Investigate the factual basis of the complaint, including, as applicable, conducting interview with individual deemed relevant to the complaint;
4. Conduct an investigation that is adequate, reliable, and impartial. Investigate the factual basis for the complaint, including conducting interviews with individuals with information and review of documents relevant to the complaint;
5. Maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable throughout the investigative process, in accordance with state and federal law;
6. Communicate the outcome of the investigation in writing to the complainant and respondent (if any) (to the extent permitted by state and federal confidentiality requirements), within thirty (30) business days (provided that such timeframe may be extended by fifteen (15) business days during periods of time when school is in session or reasonably extended based on the availability of necessary witnesses and/or participants during period of time when school is not in session) from the date the complaint was received by the Superintendent's office. The complainant and respondent (if any) shall be notified of any extension of the investigation timeline. The written notice shall include a finding whether the complaint was substantiated and if so, shall identify, to the extent possible, how the district will remedy the discrimination or harassment, adhering to the requirements of state and federal law;
7. If a complaint is made during summer recess, the complaint will be reviewed and addressed as quickly as possible given the availability of staff and/or other individuals who may have information relevant to the complaint. If fixed timeframes cannot be met, the complainant and respondent (if any) will receive a notice and interim measures may be implemented as necessary (see sub-

paragraph 6);respondent (ifany) will receive a notice and interim measures may be implemented as necessary (see sub- paragraph 6);

8. Whenever allegations are verified, ensure that appropriate corrective action is taken (including, but not limited to, disciplinary action) aimed at preventing the recurrence of the harassment or discrimination. Corrective action should include steps to avoid continuing discrimination;
9. If either party to the complaint is not satisfied with the findings and conclusions of the investigation, the complainant may present the complaint and written outcome to the Superintendent within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the findings. Upon review of a written request from the party requesting an appeal, the Superintendent shall review the investigative results of the investigator and determine if further action and/or investigation is warranted. Such action may include consultation with a designated investigator (if applicable), complainant, and respondent (if any) and meeting with appropriate individuals to attempt to resolve the complaint, or a decision affirming or overruling a designated investigator's conclusions or findings (if applicable). The Superintendent shall provide written notice to the complainant and respondent (if any) of the proposed actions within fifteen (15) business days (provided that such timeframe may be reasonably extended based on the availability of necessary witnesses and/or participants during periods of time when school is not in session) following the receipt of the written request for review.

A complainant alleging race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age discrimination may file a formal complaint with the Boston Office, Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 8th Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02109-3921 {TELEPHONE NUMBER: 617-289-0111}.

A complainant may also file a complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, 450 Columbus Blvd., Hartford, CT 06103-1835 (TELEPHONE NUMBER: 800-477-5737).

An employee alleging discrimination related to their employment may also file a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Boston Area Office. John F. Kennedy Federal Building, 475 Government Center, Boston, MA 02203 (TELEPHONE NUMBER: 800-669-4000).

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