

Section 8000 – Students

8018-R Discriminatory Harassment of Students

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Procedural Steps

If students, their parents/guardians, or anyone else on their behalf believe that students have been subjected to discriminatory harassment, including but not limited to harassment related to the students race, height, weight, color, religion, national origin, age, marital status, disability or veteran status by school board members, employees, other students, vendors, contractors or other persons doing business with the District, it should be immediately reported to the building principal, assistant principal school counselor, or Civil Rights Coordinator or, in the case of a Board member, to the Superintendent or Civil Rights Coordinator.

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The Civil Rights Coordinator
Office of Public Safety and School Security
Grand Rapids Public Schools
1331 Franklin SE., PO Box 117
Grand Rapids, MI 49501-0117
Phone: (616) 819-2000

If students, their parents/guardians, or anyone else on their behalf believe they have been subjected to discriminatory harassment, including but not limited to harassment related to the students' sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and expression, or pregnancy by school district elected officials, employees, other students, vendors, contractors or other persons doing business with the District, it should be immediately reported to the building principal, assistant principal, school counselor, or Title IX Coordinator or, in the case of a Board member, to the Superintendent or Title IX Coordinator.

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The Title IX Coordinator
Department of Athletics
Grand Rapids Public Schools
1331 Franklin SE., PO Box 117
Grand Rapids, MI 49501-0117
Phone: (616) 819-2000

Notwithstanding the above, students, their parents/guardians, and/or anyone else acting on their behalf have the right to file a complaint of discriminatory harassment,

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directly with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights or the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education. Complaints may also be made to the Ethics Hotline at <https://reportanissue.com/grps/welcome.php>, or call 1-800-345-7377.

A prompt and thorough investigation of the complaint shall be conducted as follows:

- The lead principal or immediate supervisor will notify the Civil Rights Coordinator and/or Title IX Coordinator (depending on the allegation) about the complaint.
- If the complaint only involves students, the lead principal or immediate supervisor will conduct an initial investigation in coordination with the GRPS Public Safety Office.
- If the complaint involves an adult, the investigation will be conducted by the GRPS Public Safety Office and/or the GRPS Human Resources Department or designee.
- All complaints, interviews, and investigations will be treated with the strictest confidentiality allowed under the law. Only those Board members, employees, or students whose participation in the investigation is required will be informed of it.
- The Superintendent may use external investigators when appropriate.
- The following investigative procedures must be used:
 - Arrange for no contact between the parties involved
 - Offer counseling and other appropriate emotional and/or academic support to the student during the investigation period. Discuss support options with the complainant and parent/guardian.
 - Keep the identity of the complainant confidential if possible, but don't guarantee confidentiality as the investigation may call for identification.
 - Obtain victim statements (clear, concise, with as much detail as possible in)
 - Obtain witness statements (clear, concise, with as much detail as possible)
 - Notify student, parent/guardian and anyone else who reported discrimination that they have the right to provide witnesses and other evidence.

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- Question those involved or have knowledge of involvement separately and document
- Review the student records/files for any history of problems or any other applicable documents
- Keep complainants parents/guardians apprised of the progress of the investigation if it cannot be concluded within 5 business days and let him/her know how soon the investigation will be completed.
Investigations should be completed within 10 school/business days.
- HR will review the personnel file if an employee is involved to determine if there were any prior incidents
- Compile all documents and prepare in report format the results of the investigation and provide to HR and the Civil Rights Coordinator and/or Title IX Coordinator.

If the investigation shows that the complaint has merit, the following action will be taken:

1. For cases involving only students, the Civil Rights or Title IX Coordinator will confer with the Assistant Superintendent or Executive Director and the building principal and/or student services to determine what action is necessary to resolve the complaint and prevent recurrence and notify the superintendent.
 - a. The complainant should be made whole: in the case of a student, lost educational opportunities, extracurricular opportunities, student records updated etc.;
 - b. The potential for continuing problems should be alleviated by reassignment of the offender if possible or other appropriate action including appropriate actions requested by the student or parent/guardian. Appropriate action may also include additional training for students and staff regarding the anti-discrimination policies and reporting procedures.
2. For cases involving staff, the Civil Rights or Title IX Coordinator will confer with human resources and the superintendent.
3. The parties and anyone who needs to know will be advised of the results of the investigation and the actions to be taken.

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4. Appropriate discipline will be imposed, as required by the strength of the evidence, the severity of the incident, and the position and prior record of the offender.
5. All actions will be documented and a record placed in the offender's student discipline records or permanent personnel file.
6. The Board's policy regarding discriminatory and/or sexual harassment and non-retaliation and the mechanism for complaint resolution will be reiterated to all employees, and/or students and parent/guardians involved in the investigation.
7. All documentation regarding the complaint and the investigation will be maintained in a separate confidential file maintained by either the Civil Rights Coordinator or Title IX Coordinator as appropriate in the event that litigation is commenced or a charge is filed with the Office for Civil Rights or the Michigan Department of Civil Rights within legal timelines.
8. The principal, immediate supervisor or designee will periodically check in with the complainant and/or their parents/guardians to ensure that no further acts of discrimination are occurring.

If the investigation shows that the complaint is without merit, the following action will be taken:

1. The investigation will be closed.
2. The Civil Rights or Title IX Coordinator's findings and reasons for them will be documented in a final report and provided to the complainant, parent/guardian and anyone else with a need to know.
3. All references to the complaint will be removed from the accused's student record.
4. The Board's policy regarding discriminatory and/or harassment and non-retaliation and the mechanism for complaint resolution will be reiterated to all Board Members, employees or students involved in the investigation.
5. All documentation regarding the complaint and the investigation will be maintained in a separate confidential file in the event that litigation is commenced

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or a charge is filed with the Office for Civil Rights or the Michigan Department of Civil Rights.

All complaints, interviews, and investigations will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and utmost discretion. Only those Board members, employees, or students whose participation in the investigation of a complaint was essential to its resolution will be informed of it.

The Board reserves the right to contact outside investigators for complaints of harassment.

If the complainant wishes to appeal the decision of the Civil Rights or Title IX Coordinator, they may appeal in writing to the Superintendent within five business days after receipt of the Civil Rights or Title IX Coordinator's response.

The Superintendent shall meet with all parties involved, attempt to arrive at a solution, and respond in writing to the complainant within five school days.

No student, parent/guardian, employee, or member of the public shall be retaliated for filing a complaint of discrimination or participating in the investigation of the complaint.

Rules Accepted: August 2016