

## **PITTSFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT**

### **HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS**

The school district prohibits harassment of students on the basis of:

- Race;
- Sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions;
- Parental, family, or marital status;
- Color;
- Religion;
- Ancestry or national origin; and
- Disability.

Such conduct is a violation of Board policy and may constitute illegal discrimination under state and/or federal laws.

School employees, fellow students, volunteers, visitors to the schools, and other individuals with whom students may interact in order to pursue or engage in education programs and activities, are required to refrain from such conduct.

#### **A. Harassment**

Harassment includes but is not limited to, verbal abuse and other unwelcome, offensive conduct based on the protected categories listed above. Harassment that rises to the level of physical assault, battery, and/or abuse, and/or bullying behavior are also addressed in Board Policies *JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety* and *JICK – Bullying*.

#### **B. Sexual/Sex-Based Harassment**

Sexual Harassment and other forms of Sex-Based Harassment are addressed under federal and state laws/regulations. The scope and definitions of sexual/sex-based harassment under these laws differ, as described below.

##### **1. Sex-Based Harassment Under Title IX**

Under the federal Title IX law and its accompanying regulations, sex-based harassment includes harassment on the basis of sex, including sexual orientation, gender identity, sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy, or related conditions, that is:

- a. “Quid pro quo” harassment by a school employee, agent, or other person authorized by the school district to provide aid, benefit, or service under an

education program or activity, explicitly or impliedly conditioning the provision of such aid, benefit, or service (such as a better grade or college recommendation) on the individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.

- b. "Hostile environment" harassment: Unwelcome sex-based conduct that, based on the totality of the circumstances, is subjectively and objectively offense, and is so severe or pervasive that it limits or denies an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from the school district's education program or activity (i.e., creates a hostile environment). Whether a hostile environment has been created is a fact-based inquiry that includes consideration of a number of factors (identified in *ACAA-R2 – Student Sex Discrimination/Harassment Complaint Procedure*).
- c. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, as these terms are defined in applicable federal laws/regulations.

## **2. Sexual Harassment Under New Hampshire Law**

Under New Hampshire law, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature in the following situations:

- a. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's educational benefits;
- b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions on educational benefits; or
- c. Such conduct has the purpose and effect of substantially interfering with a student's academic performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

## **C. Reports and Complaints of Harassment**

All employees (except employees designated by the school district as "confidential employees" in regard to sexual/sex-based harassment complaints) are required to report possible incidents of harassment involving students to the Human Rights Officer/Title IX Coordinator. Failure to report such incidents may result in disciplinary action.

Students, parents/guardians, and other individuals are strongly encouraged to report possible incidents of harassment involving students to the Human Rights Officer/Title IX Coordinator so that they can be appropriately addressed.

The Human Rights Officer/Title IX Coordinator is also available to answer questions and provide assistance to any individual who is unsure whether harassment has occurred.

Reports of discrimination and harassment of students shall be addressed through *ACAA-R1 – Discrimination and Harassment of Students Complaint Procedure*. Reports of sex discrimination, including sexual/sex-based harassment, are addressed in *ACAA-R2 – Student Sex Discrimination/Harassment Complaint Procedure*.

Legal References: Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101-12213, as amended by 28 C.F.R. § 35.107.  
 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504), 29 U.S.C. § 794, as amended by 34 C.F.R. § 104.7.  
 Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681-1688, as amended by 34 C.F.R. § 106.  
 Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000c to 2000c-9.  
 New Hampshire Human Rights Act, RSA 354-A:7, RSA 354-A:27-28.

Cross Reference: ACAA-R1 – Student Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Procedure  
 ACAA-R2 – Student Sex Discrimination/Harassment Complaint Procedure  
 AC – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Human Rights  
 ACAB – Harassment of Employees  
 ACAB-R1 – Employee Discrimination and Harassment Complaint Procedure  
 ACAB-R2 – Employee Sex Discrimination/Harassment Complaint Procedure  
 ACAD – Hazing  
 GBEB – Staff Conduct with Students  
 JFCK – Student Use of Cellular Telephones and Other Electronic Devices  
 JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety  
 JICK – Bullying  
 JIE – Pregnant Students

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