

## CSBA Sample | AR 5145.3 Students

**Nondiscrimination/Harassment**

Note: The following mandated administrative regulation provides measures that may be implemented by a district to comply with state and federal law and regulations prohibiting, at school or in any school activity related to school attendance or under the authority of the district, discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying against students based on actual or perceived characteristics, as specified in the accompanying Board policy.

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 receiving and investigating complaints alleging noncompliance or discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying. 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. This individual may be the same person designated in the district's uniform complaint procedures to ensure compliance with specified programs and to receive complaints; see AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures. In addition, districts may designate more than one person to receive complaints (e.g., one person at each school).

The following position is designated Coordinator for Nondiscrimination to handle complaints regarding discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying and to answer inquiries regarding the district's nondiscrimination policies: (Education Code 234.1; 5 CCR 4621)

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(position title)

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(address)

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(telephone number)

(cf. 1312.1 - Complaints Concerning District Employees)

(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)

To prevent discrimination, harassment, intimidation, 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: In its October 2010 Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights identifies training of the school community as one of the key measures for minimizing discriminatory and harassing behavior in school.

Item #1 below is optional and may be modified to reflect district practice.

1. Provide to employees, volunteers, and parents/guardians training and information regarding the district's nondiscrimination policy; what constitutes prohibited discrimination, harassment, intimidation, 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)

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)

3. Annually notify all students and parents/guardians of the district's nondiscrimination policy and of the opportunity to inform the Coordinator whenever a student's participation in a sex-segregated school program or activity together with another student of the opposite biological sex 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 Coordinator shall meet with the student and/or parent/guardian to determine how best to accommodate the student.

(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)

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

4. 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)

5. When 15 percent or more of a school's students speak a single primary language other than English, translate the nondiscrimination policy, related complaint procedures, and all forms for use in the complaint process into that other language. (Education Code 234.1, 48985)

6. At the beginning of each school year, inform school employees that any employee who witnesses any act of discrimination, 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 is optional and should be revised to reflect district practice. In some situations, the district may need to provide individualized accommodation 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 accommodation(s) to protect students' privacy rights and ensure their safety from threatened or potentially harassing, intimidating, or discriminatory behavior.

#### Process for Initiating and Responding to Complaints

Note: Education Code 234.1 requires that districts adopt a process for receiving and investigating complaints of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, 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.

Any student who feels that he/she has been subjected to discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying should immediately contact the Coordinator, the principal, or any other staff member. In addition, any student who observes any such incident should report the incident to the Coordinator or principal, whether or not the victim files a complaint.

Any school employee who observes an incident of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying or to whom such an incident is reported shall immediately report the incident to the Coordinator or principal, whether or not the victim files a complaint.

Upon receiving a complaint of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, the Coordinator shall immediately investigate the complaint in accordance with the district's uniform complaint procedures specified in AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures.

## 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. However, an attempt is currently in progress to qualify a referendum on AB 1266 for the November 2014 ballot. Even as the eventual outcome is unknown as of this writing, the following guidelines are designed to implement other existing state and federal laws that prohibit discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying against students based on their real or perceived gender identity and/or gender expression regardless of whether or not the referendum attempt is successful. 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 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 Interim 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 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.

Gender expression means a person's gender-related appearance and behavior, whether or not stereotypically associated with the person's assigned sex at birth. (Education Code 210.7)

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

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

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.

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 consent, except when the disclosure is otherwise required by law or is necessary to preserve the student's physical or mental 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 Coordinator for Nondiscrimination. 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 law or district policy, and shall inform the student that it may be impossible to accommodate 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 Coordinator, the employee shall do so within three school days.

As appropriate, the Coordinator shall discuss 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 on campus. Any decision to disclose the student's status to others shall be based on the student's best interest.

(cf. 1340 - Access to District Records)

(cf. 3580 - District Records)

2. Determining a Student's Gender Identity: The Coordinator 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 Coordinator 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 Coordinator 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 Coordinator 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.

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. 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. However, 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)

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