

Series 5000
Students

NON-DISCRIMINATION (STUDENTS)

The Board of Education (the “Board”) 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 to any person of the benefits of any of its educational programs or activities because of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, or veteran status, subject to the conditions and limitations established by law.

It is the policy of the Board that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, or veteran status, 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 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, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, or veteran status.

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.

For the purposes of this policy, “race” is inclusive of ethnic traits historically associated with race, including but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles. “Protective hairstyles” includes, but is not limited to, wigs, headwraps and hairstyles such as individual braids, cornrows, locs, twists, Bantu knots, afros and afro puffs.

Any student and/or parent/guardian 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/Students. These regulations accompany Board Policy # _____ **[Insert Policy # for Students/Non-Discrimination Policy]** and are available online at **[Insert website address for Board 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, disability, or pregnancy, such complaints will be handled under other appropriate policies Series 5000, Students/Sex Discrimination and Harassment and Section 504/ADA).

Any student and/or parent/guardian 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>

Any student and/or parent/guardian 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:

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:

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:

Legal References:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681, et seq.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d, et seq.

Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794, et seq.

Connecticut General Statutes § 1-1n, “Gender Identity or Expression”
defined

Connecticut General Statutes § 10-15c

Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-51, Definitions

Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-58, Deprivation of rights

Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-81a, et seq.

Approved by the Ashford Board of Education: June 3, 2021

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS REGARDING DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS (STUDENTS)

It is the policy of the Ashford Board of Education (the “Board”) 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, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, or veteran status 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 also the 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, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, or veteran status.

Any student and/or parent/guardian 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/Students. These regulations accompany Board Policy Series 5000 Students/Non-Discrimination and are available online at www.ashfordct.org 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, disability, or pregnancy, such complaints will be handled under other appropriate policies Series 5000, Students/Sex Discrimination and Harassment and Students Section 504/ADA).

All other complaints by a student or parents/guardians alleging discrimination against a student on the basis of the protected characteristics listed herein should file a written complaint with:

The Office of the Superintendent of Schools
440 Westford Rd. Ashford, CT 06278
860-429-1927

Preferably, complaints should be filed within thirty (30) 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, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, 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 the implementing administrative regulations to staff and students in an effort to maintain an environment free of harassment and discrimination.

Complaint Procedure

As soon as a student 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, alienage, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, gender identity or expression, or veteran status, he/she should make a written complaint to **[INSERT HERE THE NAMES OF APPROPRIATE SCHOOL PERSONNEL]** or to the building principal, or his/her designee. The student will be provided a copy of the Board's policy and regulation and made aware of his or her rights. In the event the **[INSERT NAME OF APPROPRIATE SCHOOL PERSONNEL]** receives a complaint alleging discrimination or harassment based on gender/sex or disability, the **[INSERT NAME OF APPROPRIATE SCHOOL PERSONNEL]** shall follow the procedures identified in the appropriate Board policies ((e.g., Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment (Students); Policy # _____ **[Insert Policy #]**, Section 504/ADA (Students)), where applicable, rather than the complaint procedures provided in this policy

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

Any student who makes an oral complaint of harassment or discrimination to any of the above-mentioned personnel will be provided a copy of this regulation and will be

requested to make a written complaint pursuant to the above procedure. If a student (or individual acting on behalf of the student) is unable to make a written complaint, the administrator receiving the oral complaint will either reduce the complaint to writing or assist the student (individual acting on behalf of the student) in completing the written complaint form.

All complaints 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 shall designate a district or school administrator to 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 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:

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 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 interviews with individuals 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 applicable) (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