

August 31, 2023

Dear District Staff,

As the Affirmative Action Officer, it is my responsibility to provide annual training to all staff members. This Google Slides presentation is posted on the district website and covers all areas required by law. This presentation may be viewed at any time at home or in school.

The presentation should take approximately ten (10) minutes to review. **Please view the presentation and print and sign the Acknowledgment Form (slide 21) by Thursday, September 28, 2023.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me via email. Your continued cooperation is appreciated!

Yours in education,

Joseph C. Colangelo

Affirmative Action Officer

Hasbrouck Heights Public Schools

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

2023-2024 School Year

What is Affirmative Action?

Affirmative Action is a belief or a conviction that all staff and students have a right to be treated with equal fairness and to have the maximum opportunity to reach their fullest potential.



WITH TRAINING COMES RESPONSIBILITY

- We must be a part of the solution.
- We must address the issue in our classrooms.
- We must address the issue in our schools.
- We must protect our students and staff.



Who is your Affirmative Action Officer?

Mr. Joseph Colangelo
Lincoln School Principal
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201-393-8182



What is the function of the affirmative action officer?

- Provide annual training for all staff.
- Oversee the district's affirmative action/equity plan.
- Distribute information about affirmative action and grievance procedures.
- Monitor compliance to the laws.
- Investigate grievances and provide solutions.
- Maintain records and reports.
- Attend conferences and training.

The History of Affirmative Action

- 1972

Congress passed Title IX of the Education Amendments and created a law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex for every educational institution that receives federal funding.

- 1975

State of NJ passed Title VI, Equality in Educational Programs which expanded on Title IX, thereby banning discrimination on the basis of sex, affectional or sexual orientation, (real or perceived) race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, social or economic status, or age.

What does affirmative action cover?

I. Sexual Harassment

- Unwelcome sexual attention, humiliation, or offensive behavior to the victim.
- Physical touching.
- Suggestive comments or jokes.
- Requests for sex.
- Displays of clearly sexual material and or photos.

Sexual Harassment does not have to be repeated or ongoing to be against the law.

Sexual Harassment is Against the Law

Federal Law:

The federal law prohibiting sexual harassment in schools is Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits any person, on the basis of sex, to be subjected to discrimination in an educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. The law applies to any academic, extracurricular (student organizations and athletics), research, occupational training, and other educational programs from pre-school to graduate school that receives or benefits from federal funding. The entire institution falls under Title IX even if only one program or activity receives federal funds.

Under Title IX, a school is required to have and distribute a policy against sex discrimination, particularly one that addresses sexual harassment. Such a policy lets students, parents, and employees know that sexual harassment will not be tolerated. A school is also required to adopt and publish grievance procedures for resolving sex discrimination complaints, including complaints of sexual harassment. This provides an effective means for promptly and appropriately responding to sexual harassment complaints.

Title IX also requires that schools evaluate current policies and practices to ensure the institution is in compliance with Title IX. Schools are also required to appoint at least one employee responsible for coordinating Title IX compliance efforts.

Finally, it is illegal to intimidate, threaten, or coerce a person who has taken action under Title IX.

Sexual Harassment at School: Know Your Rights

WHAT IS SEXUAL HARASSMENT?

Sexual harassment is a serious problem for students at all educational levels. Students in elementary and secondary schools, as well as vocational schools, apprenticeship programs, colleges and universities can be victims of sexual harassment. This problem is more common than you might think because many students are scared or too embarrassed to report sexual harassment. It is different from flirting, playing around, or other types of behavior that you enjoy or welcome. Sexual harassment can be requests for sexual favors or unwelcome sexual behavior that is bad enough or happens often enough to make you feel uncomfortable, scared or confused and that interferes with your schoolwork or your ability to participate in extracurricular activities or attend classes.

Sexual harassment can be verbal (comments about your body, spreading sexual rumors, sexual remarks or accusations, dirty jokes or stories), physical (grabbing, rubbing, flashing or mooning, touching, pinching in a sexual way, sexual assault) or visual (display of naked pictures or sex-related objects, obscene gestures). Sexual harassment can take place as a text message, IM message, web posting, or email. Sexual harassment can happen to girls and boys. Sexual harassers can be fellow students, teachers, principals, janitors, coaches, and other school officials.

There are two kinds of sexual harassment: quid pro quo and hostile environment.



Quid pro quo (in Latin it means “this for that”) sexual harassment occurs when a teacher or school employee offers you a better grade or treats you better if you do something sexual. It could also be a threat to lower your grade or treat you worse than other students if you refuse to go along with a request for a sexual favor. For example, if your teacher says, “I’ll give you an ‘A’ if you go out with me,” or “I’ll fail you in this class if you don’t have sex with me,” this is sexual harassment.

Hostile environment sexual harassment occurs when unwanted sexual touching, comments, and/or gestures are so bad or occur so often that it interferes with your schoolwork, makes you feel uncomfortable or unsafe at school, or prevents you from participating in or benefiting from a school program or activity. This type of harassment does not have to involve a threat or promise of benefit in exchange for a sexual favor. The harassment can be from your teacher, school officials, or other students.



What is Harassment?

- *Humiliating or abusive behavior that gives a victim torment. (Repeated attacks) This can be verbal comments, actions or gestures*
- *Hate speech -comments that are probably false yet targeted towards a particular person or group.*
- *It is done persistently*
- *It is a disturbance, an irritation, and/or a persecution*
- *Harassment is based on the point of view of the person receiving the harassment*

Categories for Those Involved in Sexual Harassment/Harassment

- Student on Student
- Employee on Student
- Student on Employee
- Employee on Employee
- Employee on Parent
- Parent on Employee



What else does
affirmative action cover?

Intolerance

Unwillingness or refusal to tolerate or respect contrary opinions or beliefs of different races or backgrounds.

What else does affirmative action cover?

Bullying

- *Repeated and systematic harassment and attacks on others.*
- *Bullying includes physical or verbal and non-verbal attacks (isolation).*
- *Bullying can take place as a text message, IM message, web posting, email.*
- *Behavior is repeated over time.*
- *The bully intends harm.*
- *There is an imbalance of power.*
- *Bullies are not remorseful.*
- *Bullying can be perpetrated by individuals or groups.*



Bullying....we must be part of the solution however we must know what to look for....

Direct Bullying

- Boys tend to be direct
- Teasing, name calling, unfair verbal criticism
- Stare downs
- Taking belongings
- Threats - with or without weapons
- Obscene gestures

Indirect Bullying

- Girls tend to use this more frequently
- More hurtful, devastating effects and can be linked with suicide attempts
- Spreading rumors, anonymous threats, exclusion from activities
- Cyber bullying newest form and hardest for schools to address
- Includes: chat rooms, text messaging, websites, Instagram, Facebook, cell phone cameras, etc.

Who does affirmative action protect? EVERYONE

- Teachers
- Administrators
- Secretaries
- Custodians
- Paraprofessionals
- Students



Staff may file a formal grievance related to sexual harassment. The affirmative action officer will receive all complaints and carry out a thorough investigation and will protect the rights of both the person making the complaint and the alleged harasser.



Steps of the Grievance Procedure

- Grievance Procedure (4111.1/4211.1)
 - The individual shall submit in writing and identify the affirmative action area being violated
 - Supervisor
 - Affirmative Action Officer
 - Superintendent
 - Board of Education
 - Office of Civil Rights
 - Grievant can be a student, employee, and/or parent

Hasbrouck Heights BOE Affirmative Action

- Please click on the following link below to access our Affirmative Action homepage:
<https://www.hhschools.org/domain/309>
- All forms, policies, and regulations that apply to Affirmative Action are posted for your use.
- Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

**Affirmative Action Google Slides Training
Acknowledgment Form
Return by 9/28/2023**

I have also reviewed and understand the **Affirmative Action** and **HIB Policy, Resources, & Grades** link(s) on the www.hhschools.org website.

Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Staff member's signature

Date: 09/28/2023

Print your name