

GAEA Racial and Disability Harassment: Employees

The board of education is committed to providing a positive and productive working and learning environment, free from discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color or national origin or disability. Racial and disability harassment will not be tolerated in the school district. Racial or disability harassment of employees or students of the district by board members, administrators, certificated and support personnel, students, vendors, and any others having business or other contact with the school district is strictly prohibited.

Racial harassment is unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin under Titles VI and VII Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Kansas Acts Against Discrimination. Disability harassment is unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. All forms of racial and disability harassment are prohibited at school, on school property, and at all school-sponsored activities, programs or events. Racial or disability harassment against individuals associated with the school is prohibited, whether or not the harassment occurs on school grounds.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, employee or third party (visitor, vendor, etc.) to racially harass or harass on the basis of disability any student, employee, or other individual associated with the school. It shall further be a violation for any employee to discourage a student or another employee from filing a complaint, or to fail to investigate or refer for investigation, any complaint lodged under the provisions of this policy. Violations of this policy by any employee shall result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Harassment prohibited by this policy includes racially or disability-motivated conduct which:

1. Affords an employee different treatment, solely on the basis of race, color, national origin, or disability, in a manner which interferes with or limits the ability of the employee to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or programs of the school;
2. Is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to have the purpose or effect of creating a hostile working environment;
3. Is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent so as to have the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance or employment opportunities.

Racial or disability harassment may result from verbal or physical conduct or written or graphic material.

The district encourages all victims of racial or disability harassment and persons with knowledge of such harassment to report the harassment immediately. Complaints of racial or disability harassment will be promptly investigated and resolved.

Employees who believe they have been subjected to racial or disability harassment should discuss the problem with their immediate supervisor. If an employee's immediate supervisor is the alleged harasser, the employee should discuss the problem with the building administrator or the district compliance coordinator. Employees who do not believe the matter is appropriately resolved through this meeting may file a formal complaint under the district's discrimination complaint procedure. (See KN)

Complaints received will be investigated to determine whether, under the totality of the circumstances, the alleged behavior constitutes racial or disability harassment under the definition outlined above. Unacceptable conduct may or may not constitute racial or disability harassment, depending on the nature of the conduct and its severity, pervasiveness and persistence. Behaviors which are unacceptable but do not constitute harassment may also result in employee discipline.

If discrimination or harassment has occurred, the district will take prompt, remedial action to prevent its reoccurrence.

Any employee who witnesses an act of racial or disability harassment or receives a complaint of harassment or receives a complaint of harassment from another employee or a student shall report the complaint to the building administrator. Employees who fail to report complaints or incidents or racial or disability harassment to appropriate school officials may face disciplinary action. School administrators who fail to investigate and take appropriate corrective action in response to complaints of racial or disability harassment may also face disciplinary action.

Initiation of a complaint of racial or disability harassment in good faith will not adversely affect the job security or status of an employee, nor will it affect his or her compensation. Any act of retaliation against any person who has filed a complaint or testified, assisted, or participated in an investigation of a racial or disability harassment complaint is prohibited. Any person who retaliates is subject to immediate disciplinary action, up to termination of employment.

To the extent possible, confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigation of a complaint. The desire for confidentiality must be balanced with the district's obligation to conduct a thorough investigation, to take appropriate corrective action or to provide due process to the accused.

False or malicious complaints of racial or disability harassment may result in corrective or disciplinary action against the complainant.

A summary of this policy and related materials shall be posted in each district facility. The policy shall also be published in student, parent and employee handbooks as directed by the district compliance coordinator. Notification of the policy shall be included in the school newsletter or published in the local newspaper annually.