

Policy 5145.3: Nondiscrimination/Harassment

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 10/01/2014 | **Last Revised Date:** 07/01/2024 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 07/01/2024

CSBA NOTE: The following mandated policy reflects various provisions of state and federal law which prohibit discrimination against students in educational programs and activities based on certain actual or perceived characteristics of an individual. Education Code 220 prohibits discrimination based on disability, race, nationality, immigration status, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, or any other characteristic contained in the definition of hate crimes in Penal Code 422.55. Government Code 11135 prohibits discrimination based on most of the foregoing characteristics and on sex, color, ancestry, age, medical condition, marital status, and an individual's genetic information. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 USC 2000d-2000d-7) prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin. Title IX (20 USC 1681-1688; 34 CFR 106.1-106.82, as amended by 89 Fed. Reg. 33474) prohibits discrimination based on sex; sex stereotypes; sex characteristics; gender; gender identity; sexual orientation; pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or lactation; and, parental, marital, and family status. The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 USC 6101-6107) prohibits discrimination based on age. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (20 USC 12101-12213) and Section 504 (29 USC 794) prohibit discrimination based on disability. Education Code 260 gives the Governing Board primary responsibility for ensuring that district programs and activities are free from discrimination based on age or any of the characteristics listed in Education Code 220. For more information regarding the requirement for district programs and activities to be free from discrimination, see BP 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities.

For policy addressing student sex discrimination and sex-based harassment, see BP/AR 5145.7 - Sex Discrimination and Sex-Based Harassment, and for language regarding Title IX sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, complaint procedures, see AR/E(1) 5145.71 - Title IX Sex Discrimination and Sex-Based Harassment Complaint Procedures.

Education Code 234.1 mandates that districts adopt policy prohibiting discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying based on the actual or perceived characteristics listed above, which applies to all acts related to school activity or school attendance occurring within a school under the jurisdiction of the district, and a process for receiving and investigating such complaints. The California Department of Education (CDE), through its Federal Program Monitoring process, reviews districts' uniform complaint procedures (UCP) and other anti-discrimination policies and processes to ensure compliance with these requirements. In addition, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is responsible for the administrative enforcement of federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the department, and requires the adoption of nondiscrimination policies and complaint procedures.

Education Code 234.1, as amended by AB 1078 (Ch. 229, Statute of 2023), also requires that the district's nondiscrimination policy include a statement that the policy applies to all acts of the Board and the Superintendent in enacting policies and procedures that govern the district. Education Code 234.1, as amended by AB 1078, contains similar language regarding the County Board of Education and the County Superintendent of Schools.

Education Code 243, as added by AB 1078, clarifies when it is unlawful discrimination for the Board to (1) refuse to approve the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or other curriculum for classroom instruction, or any book or resource in a school library or (2) prohibit the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or other curriculum for classroom instruction, or any book or resource in a school library. The Board may not refuse to approve such use on the basis that the material includes a study of the role and contributions of specified individuals or groups, unless the study of the role and contributions reflects adversely upon legally protected groups. Additionally, the Board may not prohibit such use on the basis that the study of the role and contributions contain inclusive or diverse perspectives. In addition, the Board's action to ban or censor a textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or other curriculum for classroom instruction on any of the bases described above may also constitute unlawful discrimination pursuant to Education Code 220. And, pursuant to Education Code 244, as added by SB 153 (Ch. 38, Statutes of 2024), the Board is prohibited from adopting or approving the use of any textbook, instructional material, supplemental instructional material, or curriculum for classroom instruction if the use would subject a student to unlawful discrimination pursuant to Education Code 220. For more information regarding instructional materials adoption, see BP/AR/E(1) 6161.1 - Selection and Evaluation of Instructional materials, CSBA's publication, "Instructional Materials Adoptions: State and local governing board processes, roles, and responsibilities," and corresponding Fact Sheet and Reference, and the California Attorney General's, "Guidance to School Officials re: Legal Requirements for Providing Inclusive Curricula and Books."

OCR has clarified in several publications that conduct that occurs off campus may have an adverse effect on a student at school (e.g., create a "hostile environment" for the student). When that happens, the district has an obligation to investigate and to take steps to protect the student.

This policy shall apply to all acts constituting unlawful discrimination or harassment related to school activity or to school attendance occurring within a district school, to acts which occur off campus or outside of school-related or school-sponsored activities but which may have an impact or create a hostile environment at school, and to all acts of the Governing Board and the Superintendent in enacting policies and procedures that govern the district.

CSBA NOTE: 34 CFR 106.2 and 106.10, as amended by 89 Fed. Reg. 33474, clarify that discrimination on the basis of sex for the purpose of Title IX includes discrimination on the basis of sex stereotypes; sex characteristics; sexual orientation; gender identity; pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or lactation, including related medical conditions or recovery; and parental, marital, and family status.

The Board desires to provide a welcoming, safe, and supportive school environment that allows all students equal access to and opportunities in the district's academic, extracurricular, and other educational support programs, services, and activities. The Board prohibits, at any district school or school activity, unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying, of any student by anyone, based on the student's actual or perceived race; color; ancestry; nationality; national origin; immigration status; ethnic group identification; ethnicity; age; religion; pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy or lactation, including related medical conditions or recovery; parental, marital, and family status; physical or mental disability; medical condition; sex; sex stereotypes; sex characteristics; sexual orientation; gender; gender identity; gender expression; or genetic information; or, association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

CSBA NOTE: OCR's May 2024 Dear Colleague Letter, "Protecting Students from Discrimination, such as Harassment, Based on Race, Color, or National Origin, Including Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics," which expands and clarifies the U.S. Department of Education's 2023, "Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer and Religious Expression in Public Schools," provides that Title VI's protections from race, color, and national origin discrimination extends to students who experience discrimination based on actual or perceived (1) shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics or (2) citizenship or residency in a country with a dominant religion or distinct religious identity. While Title VI does not protect individuals based solely on religious discrimination, it does apply to antisemitism and other forms of discrimination when based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics. The guidance includes clarifying examples regarding existing legal requirements under Title VI.

Additionally, OCR's November 2023 Dear Colleague Letter, "Discrimination, Including Harassment, Based on Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics," states that all students, including students who are or are perceived to be Jewish, Israeli, Muslim, Arab, or Palestinian, as well as students who come from, or are perceived to come from, all regions of the world, are entitled to a school environment free from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin. The Dear Colleague Letter provides that Title VI also protects students from discrimination which is based on (1) actual or perceived citizenship or residency in a country with a dominant religion or distinct religious identity, including Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Christian, and Buddhist students, when the discrimination involves racial, ethnic, or ancestral slurs or stereotypes, (2) a student's skin color, physical features, or style of dress that reflects both ethnic and religious traditions, and (3) where a student came from or is perceived to have come from. Discrimination based on a student's foreign accent, foreign name, or a student speaking a foreign language may also violate Title VI's prohibitions against discrimination.

OCR's August 2023 Dear Colleague Letter, "Race and School Programming," states that a district may not separate students based on race, but may include group discussions or activities that focus on race as part of the curriculum, courses, or programs so long as access or participation is not permitted or limited based on race. OCR's guidance also provides that a school-sponsored program with emphasis on race, such as a student club, that is open to all students, typically would not violate Title VI solely because of its race-related theme.

Unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, may result from physical, verbal, nonverbal, or written conduct based on any of the categories listed above. Unlawful discrimination also occurs when prohibited conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; has the effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance; or otherwise adversely affects a student's educational opportunities.

CSBA NOTE: In addition to the types of prohibited student conduct described above, unlawful discrimination includes different treatment of students with respect to the provision of opportunities to participate in school programs or activities or the provision or receipt of educational benefits or services. See BP 0410 -

Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities.

Unlawful discrimination also includes disparate treatment of students based on one of the categories above with respect to the provision of opportunities to participate in school programs or activities or the provision or receipt of educational benefits or services.

CSBA NOTE: Unlawful discrimination may occur when disciplining students. OCR's guidance, "Supporting Students with Disabilities and Avoiding the Discriminatory Use of Student Discipline under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973," "Resource on Confronting Racial Discrimination in Student Discipline," and "Creating Inclusive and Nondiscriminatory School Environments for LGBTQI Students," address discrimination in the use of discipline based on disability, race, and gender expression.

For more information regarding student discipline, see BP/AR 5144 - Discipline, BP/AR 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process, and AR 5144.2 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students With Disabilities).

Because unlawful discrimination could occur when disciplining students, including suspension and expulsion, the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that staff enforce discipline rules fairly, consistently and in a non-discriminatory manner, as specified in Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5144 - Discipline, Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process, and Administrative Regulation 5144.2 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students With Disabilities).

The Board also prohibits any form of retaliation against any individual who reports or participates in the reporting of unlawful discrimination, files or participates in the filing of a complaint, or investigates, participates, or refuses to participate in the investigation of a complaint or report alleging unlawful discrimination. Retaliation complaints shall be investigated and resolved in the same manner as a discrimination complaint.

CSBA NOTE: Pursuant to Education Code 234.1 and 34 CFR 106.8, a district is required to publicize its nondiscrimination policies to the school community. Additionally, Education Code 234.1, as amended by SB 153, and 234.6 require the district to make readily accessible on its website its nondiscrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying, sex-based harassment, suicide prevention, and other specified policies and information related to specified state and federal laws and resources. In addition, 34 CFR 104.8 requires districts to take "continuing steps" to notify students, parents/guardians, applicants for admission, and employees that it does not discriminate on the basis of disability in its education programs or activities.

For further information regarding specific posting requirements, see "Measures to Prevent Discrimination" in the accompanying administrative regulation.

The Superintendent or designee shall facilitate students' access to the educational program by publicizing the district's nondiscrimination policy and related complaint procedures to students, parents/guardians, and employees. In addition, the Superintendent or designee shall post the district's policies prohibiting discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying and other required information on the district's website in a manner that is easily accessible to parents/guardians and students, in accordance with law and the accompanying administrative regulation. (Education Code 234.1, 234.6; 34 CFR 106.8)

The Superintendent or designee shall provide training and/or information on the scope and use of the policy and complaint procedures and take other measures designed to increase the school community's understanding of the requirements of law related to discrimination. The Superintendent or designee shall regularly review the implementation of the district's nondiscrimination policies and practices and, as necessary, shall take action to remove any identified barrier to student access to or participation in the district's educational program. The Superintendent or designee shall report the findings and recommendations to the Board after each review.

Regardless of whether a complainant complies with the writing, timeline, and/or other formal filing requirements, all complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, shall be investigated and prompt action taken to stop the discrimination, prevent recurrence, and address any continuing effect on students.

CSBA NOTE: Policies related to discrimination must be consistent with the First Amendment right to free speech. Education Code 48950 prohibits a district from subjecting a high school student to disciplinary sanctions solely on the basis of speech or other communication that would be constitutionally protected if engaged in outside of campus. However, Education Code 48950 also specifies that the law does not prohibit discipline for harassment, threats, or intimidation unless constitutionally protected. Whether such speech might be entitled to constitutional protection would be determined on a case-by-case basis, with consideration for the specific words used and the circumstances involved. It is recommended that districts consult CSBA's District and County Office of Education

Legal Services or district legal counsel as necessary.

Students who engage in unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying, in violation of law, Board policy, or administrative regulation shall be subject to appropriate consequence or discipline, which may include suspension or expulsion when the behavior is severe or pervasive as defined in Education Code 48900.4. Any employee who permits or engages in prohibited discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying, shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

CSBA NOTE: The following paragraph may be revised to reflect district practice. Pursuant to Education Code 48900.5, as amended by AB 1165 (Ch. 22, Statutes of 2023), the district is encouraged to have a student who has been suspended, or for whom other means of correction have been implemented pursuant to Education Code 48900.5 for an incident of racist bullying, harassment, or intimidation, as well as the victim, to engage in a restorative justice practice suitable to address the needs of both the victim and the perpetrator, in addition to the other measures specified in the following paragraph; see BP/AR 5131.2 - Bullying.

When a student has been suspended, or other means of correction have been implemented against the student for an incident of racist bullying, harassment, or intimidation, the principal or designee shall engage both the victim and perpetrator in a restorative justice practice suitable to the needs of the students. The principal or designee shall also require the perpetrator to engage in a culturally sensitive program that promotes racial justice and equity and combats racism and ignorance and shall regularly check on the victim to ensure that the victim is not in danger of suffering from any long-lasting mental health issues. (Education Code 48900.5)

When appropriate based on the severity or pervasiveness of the bullying, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the parents/guardians of victims and perpetrators and may contact law enforcement.

CSBA NOTE: Pursuant to 34 CFR 106.11 and 106.44, as amended by 89 Fed. Reg. 33474, a district with knowledge of alleged conduct, which occurs in a district program or activity on or after August 1, 2024, that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination under Title IX, including sex-based harassment, is required to follow the Title IX grievance procedures when investigating and resolving the complaint. A complaint may also fall within the complaint process adopted by the district pursuant to Education Code 234.1 for receiving and investigating complaints of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, and bullying that is consistent with the district's UCP specified in 5 CCR 4600-4670. It is unclear whether districts would additionally be required to follow the UCP when investigating and resolving such a complaint. Due to this uncertainty, it is recommended that districts consult CSBA's District and County Office of Education Legal Services or district legal counsel prior to utilizing the UCP for this purpose. For more information regarding the Title IX grievance procedures, see AR 5145.71 - Title IX Sex Discrimination and Sex-Based Harassment Complaint Procedures.

Allegations of unlawful discrimination in district programs and activities shall be brought, investigated, and resolved in accordance with Board Policy 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures, when required by law. However, complaints alleging sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, under Title IX shall be investigated and resolved in accordance with the procedures specified in 34 CFR 106.44 and 106.45 and Administrative Regulation 5145.71 - Title IX Sex Discrimination and Sex-Based Harassment Complaint Procedures.

Record-Keeping

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain a record of all reported cases of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, to enable the district to monitor, address, and prevent repetitive prohibited behavior in district schools.

Policy Reference Disclaimer: These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

State References

5 CCR 432

5 CCR 4600-4670

5 CCR 4900-4965

Civ. Code 1714.1

Description

Student records

Uniform complaint procedures

Nondiscrimination in elementary and secondary educational programs receiving state or federal financial assistance

[Liability of parent or guardian for act of willful misconduct by a minor](#)

State References

Ed. Code 17585
Ed. Code 200-262.4
Ed. Code 33353
Ed. Code 35292.5
Ed. Code 48900.3
Ed. Code 48900.4
Ed. Code 48900.5
Ed. Code 48904
Ed. Code 48907
Ed. Code 48950
Ed. Code 48985
Ed. Code 49020-49023
Ed. Code 49060-49079
Ed. Code 51204.5
Ed. Code 51500
Ed. Code 51501
Ed. Code 60010
Ed. Code 60040-60052
Gov. Code 11135
Pen. Code 422.55
Pen. Code 422.6

Federal References

20 USC 1681-1688
28 CFR 35.107
29 USC 794
34 CFR 100.3
34 CFR 104.7
34 CFR 104.8
34 CFR 106.1-106.82
34 CFR 110.25
34 CFR 99.31
42 USC 12101-12213
42 USC 2000d-2000e-17
42 USC 2000h-2-2000h-6
42 USC 6101-6107

Management Resources References

34 CFR 106.30
CA Office of the Attorney General Publication

Description

School modernization project; all-gender restroom
[Prohibition of discrimination](#)
California Interscholastic Federation; standardized incident form
School restrooms; all-gender restrooms
[Suspension or expulsion for act of hate violence](#)
[Suspension or expulsion for harassment, threats, or intimidation](#)
Suspension; other means of correction
[Liability of parent/guardian for willful student misconduct](#)
[Exercise of free expression; time, place, and manner rules and regulations](#)
[Speech and other communication](#)
[Notices to parents in language other than English](#)
[Athletic programs](#)
[Student records](#)
[Social sciences instruction; contributions of specified groups](#)
[Prohibited instruction or activity](#)
[Nondiscriminatory subject matter](#)
[Instructional materials; definition](#)
[Requirements for instructional materials](#)
[Prohibition of discrimination](#)
[Definition of hate crime](#)
[Crimes; harassment](#)

Description

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; discrimination based on sex
Nondiscrimination on basis of disability; complaints
Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Section 504
Prohibition of discrimination on basis of race, color or national origin
Section 504; Designation of responsible employee and adoption of grievances procedures
Notice of Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap
Discrimination on the basis of sex; effectuating Title IX
Prohibition of discrimination based on age
Disclosure of personally identifiable information
Americans with Disabilities Act
Title VI and Title VII Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended
Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
Age Discrimination Act of 1975

Description

Discrimination on the basis of sex; definitions
[Guidance to School Officials re: Legal Requirements for Providing Inclusive Curricula and Books, January 2024](#)

Management Resources References

Description

CA Office of the Attorney General Publication	Promoting a Safe and Secure Learning Environment for All: Guidance and Model Policies to Assist California's K-12 Schools in Responding to Immigration Issues, April 2018
California Department of Education Publication	California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) Update FLASH #158: Guidance for Changing a Student's Gender in CALPADS, July 2019
Court Decision	Donovan v. Poway Unified School District (2008) 167 Cal.App.4th 567
Court Decision	Flores v. Morgan Hill Unified School District (2003, 9th Cir.) 324 F.3d 1130
CSBA Publication	Reference: State Roles, Responsibilities, and Process for Instructional Materials Adoption, February 2024
CSBA Publication	Fact Sheet: Instructional Materials Adoption: Local governing board responsibilities, February 2024
CSBA Publication	Instructional Materials Adoptions: State and local governing board processes, roles, and responsibilities, February 2024
CSBA Publication	Legal Guidance on Rights of Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students in Schools, October 2022
Federal Register	Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance, April 29, 2024, Vol. 89, No. 83, pages 33474-33896
U.S. DOE, Office for Civil Rights Publication	Resolution Agreement Between the Arcadia USD, US Dept of Ed, OCR, & the US DOJ, CRD (2013) OCR 09-12-1020, DOJ 169-12C-70
U.S. Department of Education Publication	Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer and Religious Expression in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, May 2023
U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services Publication	Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons, August 2013
U.S. DOE & U.S. DOJ Civil Rights Divisions Pub	Dear Colleague Letter: Resource on Confronting Racial Discrimination in Student Discipline, May 2023
U.S. DOE, Office for Civil Rights Publication	Dear Colleague Letter: Protecting Students from Discrimination, such as Harassment, Based on Race, Color, or National Origin, Including Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics, May 2024
U.S. DOE, Office for Civil Rights Publication	Dear Colleague Letter: Discrimination, Including Harassment, Based on Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics, November 2023
U.S. DOE, Office for Civil Rights Publication	Enforcement of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 With Respect to Discrimination Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Light of Bostock v. Clayton County, June 2021
U.S. DOE, Office for Civil Rights Publication	Dear Colleague Letter: Addressing Discrimination Against Jewish Students, May 2023
U.S. DOE, Office for Civil Rights Publication	U.S. Department of Education Toolkit: Creating Inclusive and Nondiscriminatory School Environments for LGBTQI+ Students, June 2023
U.S. DOE, Office for Civil Rights Publication	Questions and Answers on the Title IX Regulations on Sexual Harassment, June 2022
U.S. DOE, Office for Civil Rights Publication	Supporting Students with Disabilities and Avoiding the Discriminatory Use of Student Discipline under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
U.S. DOE, Office for Civil Rights Publication	Dear Colleague Letter: Race and School Programming, August 2023
Website	CSBA District and County Office of Education Legal Services
Website	First Amendment Center
Website	California Interscholastic Federation
Website	California Office of the Attorney General

Management Resources References

Website	California Safe Schools Coalition
Website	CSBA
Website	California Department of Education
Website	U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights

Cross References

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0450	Comprehensive Safety Plan
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3515.4	Recovery For Property Loss Or Damage
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4218	Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action
4218	Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action
4219.11	Sex Discrimination and Sex-Based Harassment
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5116.2	Involuntary Student Transfers
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Description[Comprehensive Health Education](#)[Courses Of Study](#)[Courses Of Study](#)[Controversial Issues](#)[Extracurricular And Cocurricular Activities](#)[Extracurricular And Cocurricular Activities](#)[Athletic Competition](#)[Athletic Competition](#)[School-Sponsored Trips](#)[School-Sponsored Trips](#)[Behavioral Interventions For Special Education Students](#)[Selection And Evaluation Of Instructional Materials](#)[Selection And Evaluation Of Instructional Materials](#)[Selection And Evaluation Of Instructional Materials](#)[Supplementary Instructional Materials](#)[Library Media Centers](#)[Student Use Of Technology](#)[Student Use Of Technology](#)[Guidance/Counseling Services](#)[Education For Foster Youth](#)[Education For Foster Youth](#)[Facilities Master Plan](#)