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102: Equal Educational Opportunity

Centennial School District Policy #102

REPLACED POLICY #5000, #6000

Adopted: 12/15/14

Revised: 09/19/16; 11/13/18 ; 9/27/21; 11/15/21; 01/24/22

102 EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that equal educational opportunity is provided for all students of the school district.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. The policy of the school district is to provide equal educational opportunity for all students. The school district does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, parental status, status with regard to public assistance, disability, sexual orientation, including gender identity and expression, or age. Students with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education that includes general education, special education, and/or related aids and services.

B. The school district prohibits harassment and discrimination of any individual based on any of the protected classifications listed above. For information about the types of conduct that constitute violation of the school district's policy on harassment and violence and the school district's procedures for addressing such complaints, refer to the school district's policy on harassment and violence ([Policy 413](https://www.isd12.org/about/district/school-board/district-policies-handbooks/employeespersonnel-series-400-499/413) (<https://www.isd12.org/about/district/school-board/district-policies-handbooks/employeespersonnel-series-400-499/413>)).

C. The school district prohibits discrimination of students with a disability, within the intent of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504"), who need services, accommodations, or programs in order to receive a free appropriate public education. For information as to protections that may apply pursuant to Section 504 and the school district's corresponding procedures for addressing disability discrimination complaints, refer to the school district's policy on student disability nondiscrimination ([Policy 521](https://www.isd12.org/about/district/school-board/district-policies-handbooks/students-series-500-599/521-student-0) (<https://www.isd12.org/about/district/school-board/district-policies-handbooks/students-series-500-599/521-student-0>)).

D. The school district prohibits sexual harassment discrimination of any individual on the basis of sex in its education programs or activities. For information as to the protections that apply pursuant to Title IX and school district's corresponding procedures and processes for addressing sexual harassment and discrimination, refer to the school district's policy on Title IX sex nondiscrimination ([Policy 522](https://www.isd12.org/about/district/school-board/district-policies-handbooks/students-series-500-599/522-student-sex) (<https://www.isd12.org/about/district/school-board/district-policies-handbooks/students-series-500-599/522-student-sex>)).

E. This policy applies to all areas of education including academics, coursework, co-curricular and extracurricular activities, or other rights or privileges of enrollment.

F. Every school district employee shall be responsible for complying with this policy.

III. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

A. Any student, parent or guardian having a question regarding this policy should discuss it with the appropriate school district official as provided by policy. In the absence of a specific designee, an inquiry or a complaint should be referred to the superintendent.

B. Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of unlawful discrimination or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute unlawful discrimination shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy. The complaint must be filed within 90 calendar days of the alleged violation.

C. The Human Rights Officer is responsible for receiving oral or written complaints of unlawful discrimination toward an employee or student. However, nothing in this policy shall prevent any person from reporting unlawful discrimination toward an employee or student directly with the Human Rights Officer, the school board or other school district official.

D. The school board hereby designates Dan Melde, 4707 North Road, Circle Pines, MN, 763-792-6009, dmelde@isd12.org (<mailto:dmelde@isd12.org>) as the school district Human Rights Officer(s) to receive reports, complaints, or grievances of unlawful discrimination. If the complaint involves a Human Rights Officer, the complaint shall be filed directly with [a different staff member, such as the superintendent or school board chair, designated by the school board].

E. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Human Rights Officer shall immediately notify the superintendent. If the superintendent is the subject of the complaint, the Human Rights Officer shall immediately notify the school board.

F. The Human Rights Officer may request but not insist upon a written complaint. Alternative means of filing a complaint, such as through a personal interview or by tape recording, shall be made available upon request for qualified persons with a disability. If the complaint is oral, it shall be reduced to writing within 24 hours and forwarded to the superintendent. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. The school district encourages the reporting party to complete the complaint form for written complaints. It is available from the principal of each building or the school district office.

G. The school district shall respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses, consistent with the school district's legal obligations to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any discovery or disclosure obligations.

IV. APPEAL

If the grievance has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, s/he may appeal to the Human Rights Officer within ten (10) school days of receipt of the findings of the school district investigation. The school district investigator shall conduct a review of the appeal and within ten (10) school days of receipt of the appeal, shall affirm, reverse, or modify the findings of the report. The decision of the school district investigator is final but does not preclude pursuit of alternative complaint procedures noted in the section entitled "Right to Alternative Compliant Procedures."

V. SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTION

A. Upon conclusion of the investigation and receipt of the findings, the school district shall take appropriate action. If it is determined that a violation has occurred, such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, expulsion, transfer, remediation or termination.

B. School district action taken for violation of this policy shall be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, Minnesota and federal law and school district policies.

C. The result of the school district's investigation of each complaint filed under these procedures shall be reported in writing to the complainant by the school district in accordance with state and federal law regarding data or records privacy.

VI. RETALIATION

The school district shall take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel who retaliates against any person who reports alleged unlawful discrimination toward an employee or student or any person who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation or hearing relating to such unlawful discrimination. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation or harassment.

VII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

If there is a conflict of interest with respect to any party affected by this policy, appropriate action shall be taken such as, but not limited to, appointing or contracting with a neutral third party investigator to conduct the investigation or recusal from the process by the person for whom a conflict or potential conflict of interest exists.

VIII. DISSEMINATION OF POLICY

The school district shall adopt and publish these procedures.

TITLE IX COORDINATOR

SECTION 504 COORDINATOR

Dan Melde

Kathy Zwonitzer

4707 North Road

4707 North Road

Circle Pines, MN 55014

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763-792-6009

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kzwonitzer@isd12.org (mailto:kzwonitzer@isd12.org)

IX. RIGHT TO ALTERNATIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

These procedures do not deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse, which may include filing charges with the agencies listed below or initiating action in state or federal court.

Claims of discrimination may also be pursued through the following agencies where appropriate:

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
John C. Kluczynski Federal Building
230 S. Dearborn Street, 37th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604

Tel: 312-730-1560
TDD: 800-877-8339
Email: OCR.Chicago@ed.gov (<mailto:OCR.Chicago@ed.gov>)

MN Department of Human Rights
540 Fairview Avenue N, Suite 201
St. Paul, MN 55104
800-657-3704
651-539-1100
MN Relay 711 or 800-627-3529

For complaints of employment discrimination:

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
330 S. 2nd Avenue
Suite 720
Minneapolis, MN 55401
800-669-4000
612-552-7306
TTY 800-669-6820

This document provides general information and is not to be a substitute for legal advice. Changes in the law, including timelines for filing a complaint, may affect your rights.

Legal References:

34 C.F.R. Section 104.7(b) (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act)
34 C.F.R. Section 106.8(b) (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972)

Resources:

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
John C. Kluczynski Federal Building
230 S. Dearborn Street, 37th Floor
Chicago, IL 60604
Tel: 312-730-1560
TDD: 800-877-8339
Email: OCR.Chicago@ed.gov (<mailto:OCR.Chicago@ed.gov>)

Reading Room, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/publications.html>
(<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/publications.html>)

Students with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education that includes general education, special education, and/or related aids and services.

Legal References:

Minn. Stat. § 121A.03, Subd. 2 (Sexual, Religious, and Racial Harassment and Violence Policy)

Minn. Stat. Ch. 363A (Minnesota Human Rights Act)

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

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

42 U.S.C. § 12101 *et seq.* (Americans with Disabilities Act)

Cross References:

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 413 (Harassment and Violence)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 521 (Student Disability Nondiscrimination)

MSBA/MASA Model Policy 522 (Title IX Sex Nondiscrimination Policy, Grievance Procedure and Process)

District Office: 4707 North Road, Circle Pines, MN 55014

District Office Hours:

Monday-Friday: 7:30am-3:30pm

Phone: 763.792.6000

Serving the communities of Blaine, Centerville, Circle Pines, Lexington and Lino Lakes in Minnesota

Centennial School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or disability in its programs and activities. Click [here \(/academics/non-discrimination-statement\)](#) for contact information regarding non-discrimination policies.

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