

Discrimination Complaints

It is the policy of the Board of Education 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, disability (including pregnancy), veteran status or gender identity or expression 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, disability (including pregnancy), veteran status or gender identity or expression.

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 Administrative Regulations regarding Non-Discrimination/Students. These regulations accompany Board Policy #5145.4 and are available online at www.bethany-ed.org or upon request from the school's main office or Superintendent's office.

If a complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment based on reasons such as gender/sex or disability, such complaints will be handled under other appropriate policies such as Sex Discrimination, Harassment and Section 504.

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:

Office of the Superintendent of Schools
Bethany Public School District
44 Peck Road
Bethany, CT 06524
(203) 393-1170

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, disability (including pregnancy), veteran status or gender identity or expression. Any such reprisals or retaliation will result in disciplinary action against the retaliator, and other corrective actions as appropriate.

The District will periodically provide staff development for 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/she has been subjected to discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, disability (including pregnancy), veteran status or gender identity or expression, he/she should make a written complaint to the school 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.

The complaint should state the:

1. name of the complainant;
2. date of the complaint;
3. date(s) of the alleged harassment/discrimination;
4. name(s) of the harasser(s) or discriminator(s);
5. location where such harassment/discrimination occurred;
6. names of any witness(es) to the harassment/discrimination;
7. a detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged harassment/discrimination; and
8. 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 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 (provided that such timeframe may be extended by fifteen (15) days during periods of time when school is in session or reasonably extended based on the availability of necessary witnesses and/or participants during the period of time when school is not in session) days from the date the complaint was received by the Superintendent's office. The complainant (and respondent, if applicable) shall be notified of any extension of the investigation timeline. The written notice shall include a finding whether the complaint was substantiated and if so, shall identify, to the extent possible, how the District will remedy the discrimination or harassment, adhering to the requirements of state and federal law;
7. if a complaint is made during the summer recess, the complaint will be reviewed and addressed as quickly as possible given the availability of staff and/or other individuals who may have information relevant to the complaint. If fixed timeframes cannot be met, the complainant (and respondent, if applicable) will receive notice and interim measures may be implemented as necessary (see sub-paragraph 6);
8. whenever allegations are verified, ensure that appropriate corrective action is taken (including, but not limited to, disciplinary action) aimed at preventing the recurrence of the harassment or discrimination. Corrective action should include steps to avoid continuing discrimination;
9. if the complainant (and/or respondent, if applicable) is not satisfied with the findings and conclusions of the investigation, the complainant (and/or respondent, if applicable) may present the complaint and written outcome to the Superintendent within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the findings. Upon review of a written request from the complainant (and/or respondent, if applicable), the Superintendent shall review the investigative results of the investigator and determine if further action and/or investigation are warranted. Such action may include consultation with the investigator and complainant (and/or respondent, if applicable), a meeting with appropriate individuals to attempt to resolve the complaint, or a decision affirming or overruling the investigator's conclusions or findings. The Superintendent shall provide written notice to the complainant (and/or respondent, if applicable) of the proposed actions within fifteen (15) business days (provided that such timeframe may be extended by fifteen (15) days during periods of time when school is in session or reasonably extended based on the availability of necessary witnesses and/or participants during the period of time when school is not in session) following the receipt of the written request for review.

STUDENTS

Regulation 5145.4(d)

Any student and/or parent/guardian may file a complaint with the:

Office for Civil Rights
Boston Office
U.S. Department of Education
8th Floor
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone Number (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:

A complainant may also file a complaint with the:

Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities
450 Columbus Boulevard
Hartford, CT 06103-1835
Telephone (800) 477-5737

Anyone who has questions or concerns about this policy, policies regarding discrimination on the basis of gender/sex or would like a copy of the Board's complaint procedures or complaint forms related to claims of discrimination, may contact:

Colleen Murray
Superintendent of Schools
Title IX Coordinator, Section 504/ADA Coordinator
Bethany Public School District
44 Peck Road
Bethany, CT 06524
Telephone (203) 393-1170

Regulation approved: May 13, 2015
Regulation revised: October 6, 2016
Regulation revised: January 9, 2018

DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT FORM

(For complaints based on race, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability (including pregnancy), veteran status, genetic information, or gender identity or expression.)

Name of the complainant _____

Date of the complaint _____

Date of the alleged discrimination/harassment _____

Name(s) of the discriminator(s) or harasser(s) _____

Location where such discrimination/harassment occurred _____

Name(s) of any witness(es) to the discrimination/harassment _____

Detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged discrimination or harassment

Proposed remedy _____

I certify that the information provided in this complaint is true, correct and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Complainant's Signature

Date

Received By

Date