

Community Relations

Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of the Waterford Board of Education that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, alienage, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability (including pregnancy), gender identity or expression, veteran status, status as a victim of domestic violence or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law (Protected Class) is prohibited in the Waterford Public School District, whether by students, Board employees, Board members or third parties subject to the control of the Board. The Board's prohibition of discrimination or harassment in its educational programs or activities expressly extends to academic, nonacademic and extracurricular activities, including athletics, school-based activities as well as the district website.

The Board further prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any individual who reports incidents in good faith that may be a violation of this policy, or who participates in the investigation of such reports.

Discrimination and/or harassment against any individual on the basis of that individual's association with someone in a Protected Class may also be considered a form of Protected Class discrimination and/or harassment and is therefore prohibited by this policy.

I. Definitions:

The following definitions apply for purposes of this policy:

- A. **Discrimination:** Discrimination in violation of this policy occurs when an individual is denied participation in, or the benefits of, a program or activity of the Board because of such individual's actual or perceived membership in a Protected Class.
- B. **Harassment:** Harassment is a form of Protected Class discrimination that is prohibited by law and by this policy. Harassment constitutes unlawful discrimination when it creates a hostile environment, which occurs when the harassment is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by the District.

Although not an exhaustive list, the following are examples of the types of conduct that may be considered Protected Class harassment and can lead to a hostile environment, and are therefore prohibited by this policy:

Community Relations

- objectively offensive racial, ethnic, or religious epithets (or epithets commonly associated with any Protected Class membership);
- other words or phrases considered demeaning or degrading on the basis of Protected Class membership;
- display of images or symbols commonly associated with discrimination against individuals on the basis of their membership in a Protected Class;
- graphic, written or electronic communications that are harmful or humiliating based on Protected Class membership;
- bigoted conduct or communications; or
- physical, written, electronic or verbal threats based on Protected Class membership.

Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents.

Sexual harassment is a form of harassment that is prohibited by law and Board policy. For more information regarding harassment based on sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or gender identity or expression, contact the District's Title IX Coordinator at:

Assistant Superintendent
15 Rope Ferry Road
Waterford, CT 06385

- C. Gender identity or expression” refers to a person’s gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose.
- D. Veteran: A veteran” ~~means~~ is any person honorably discharged from, released under honorable conditions from or released with an other than honorable discharge based on a qualifying condition from active service in, the United States Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and Air Force and any reserve component thereof, including the Connecticut National Guard. “Qualifying condition” means (A) a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury made by an individual licensed to provide health care services at a United States Department of Veterans Affairs facility, (B) an experience of military sexual trauma disclosed to an individual licensed to provide health care services at a United States Department of Veterans Affairs facility, or (C) a determination that sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression was more likely than not the primary reason for an other than honorable discharge, as determined in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. §§ 27-103(c), (d).

Community Relations

- E. „Race: The term “race” is inclusive of ethnic traits historically associated with race, including but not limited to, hair texture and protective hairstyles. “Protective hairstyles” includes, but is not limited to, wigs, headwraps and hairstyles such as individual braids, cornrows, locs, twists, Bantu knots, afros and afro puffs.

- F. Domestic violence: Domestic violence means (1) a continuous threat of present physical pain or physical injury against a family or household member, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46b-38a; (2) stalking, including but not limited to, stalking as described in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-181d, of such family or household member; (3) a pattern of threatening, including but not limited to, a pattern of threatening as described in Conn. Gen. Stat. § 53a-62, of such family or household member or a third party that intimidates such family or household member; or (4) coercive control of such family or household member, which is a pattern of behavior that in purpose or effect unreasonably interferes with a person's free will and personal liberty. “Coercive control” includes, but is not limited to, unreasonably engaging in any of the following: (a) isolating the family or household member from friends, relatives or other sources of support; (b) depriving the family or household member of basic necessities; (c) controlling, regulating or monitoring the family or household member's movements, communications, daily behavior, finances, economic resources or access to services; (d) compelling the family or household member by force, threat or intimidation, including, but not limited to, threats based on actual or suspected immigration status, to (i) engage in conduct from which such family or household member has a right to abstain, or (ii) abstain from conduct that such family or household member has a right to pursue; (e) committing or threatening to commit cruelty to animals that intimidates the family or household member; or (f) forced sex acts, or threats of a sexual nature, including, but not limited to, threatened acts of sexual conduct, threats based on a person's sexuality or threats to release sexual images.

II. Reporting:

It is the policy of the Board to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging Protected Class discrimination or harassment. Any individual 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 Board’s Administrative Regulations Regarding Non-Discrimination. These regulations accompany Board Policy # 1000 and are available online at <http://waterfordschools.org> or upon request from the main office of any district school.

If a complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment based on sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or gender identity or expression, such complaints will be handled in accordance with (e.g., Policy #4448/4860, Sex Discrimination/Harassment in the Workplace ; Policy #5170, Sex Discrimination and Sexual Harassment (Students); Policy #4336/4800, Nondiscrimination (Personnel), and Policy #5160, Section 504/ADA (Students)).

Community Relations

Individuals also may file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education (“OCR”):

Office for Civil Rights, Boston Office
U.S. Department of Education
8th Floor
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109-3921
(617) 289-0111
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html>

Individuals may also file a complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities:

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

Anyone who has questions or concerns about this policy, or would like a copy of the Board’s complaint procedures or complaint forms related to claims of discrimination may contact:

Assistant Superintendent, 15 Rope Ferry Road, Waterford, CT 06238, 860-444-5854

Anyone who has questions or concerns about the Board’s policies regarding discrimination on the basis of gender/sex may contact the Board’s Title IX Coordinator is:

Assistant Superintendent, 15 Rope Ferry Road, Waterford, CT 06238, 860-444-5854

Anyone who has questions or concerns about the Board’s policies regarding discrimination on the basis of disability may contact the Board’s Section 504/ADA Coordinator is:

Assistant Superintendent, 15 Rope Ferry Road, Waterford, CT 06238, 860-444-5854

Community Relations

Legal References:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq.
 Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq. Age Discrimination in Employment Act, 29 U.S.C. § 621
 Americans with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. § 12101
 Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794
 Connecticut General Statutes § 10-153. Discrimination on basis of marital status
Connecticut General Statutes § 1-1n, “Gender Identity or Expression” defined
 Connecticut Fair Employment Practices Act, Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-60
 Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-81a Discrimination on basis of sexual orientation: Definitions
 Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-58 Deprivation of Rights
 Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-81c Sexual orientation discrimination: Employment.

Public Act No. ~~2122-7982~~, “An Act Concerning Online Dating Operators, the Creation of a Grant Program to Reduce Occurrences of Online Abuse and the Provision of Domestic Violence Training and Protections for Victims of Domestic Violence”

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