

**FOSTER-GLOCESTER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
GLOCESTER, RI**

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures and guidelines by which staff and students can operate in an atmosphere free from sexual harassment.

POLICY STATEMENT:

1. All staff and students are to be permitted to work and study in an atmosphere free from sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment shall be defined as unsolicited, deliberate or repeated sexually explicit derogatory statements, gestures or physical contacts which are objectionable to the recipient and which cause discomfort or humiliation. It may involve pressure from a person of either sex against a person of the opposite or same sex, and may occur in any employment relationship.

2. Academic sexual harassment is the misuse of authority to emphasize the sexuality of a student in a manner which prevents or impairs that student's full enjoyment of educational benefits, climate or opportunities.
3. Sexual harassment encompasses any sexual attention that is unwanted. Examples of the verbal or physical conduct prohibited include, but are not limited to:
 - physical assaults or molestations
 - direct or implied threats that submission to sexual advances will be a condition of employment or educational status, grades or letters of recommendation
 - direct or implied propositions of a sexual nature
 - subtle pressure for sexual activity
 - improper touching, patting, embracing, caressing, or pinching
 - a pattern of conduct that would discomfort or humiliate a reasonable person
 - conduct which allows for a hostile environment

4. Sexual harassment is not limited to the school or the school day, and can happen anywhere. It is the relationship between the individuals (e.g., student and teacher) that becomes the basis of the issue.
5. The School Department shall take prompt and appropriate action to eliminate sexual harassment. Such action may include, but need not be limited to, reprimand, warning and other disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

REPORTING PROCEDURES:

1. The following is a recommended procedure for harassed employees to follow:
 - A. Clearly explain to the person(s) harassing you what behavior you find objectionable and ask that it cease.
 - B. Keep a written record of any instances of harassment and the names of any witnesses.
 - C. If the harassment occurs a second time, contact your immediate supervisor to protect your rights. If your immediate supervisor is the source of harassment, contact his/her supervisor.
2. The following is a recommended procedure for harassed students to follow:
 - A. Clearly explain to the person(s) harassing you what behavior you find objectionable and ask that it cease.
 - B. Immediately report the incident to the principal or a teacher, a counselor, or any adult within the school building who will be required to inform the principal. You should also immediately inform your parent or guardian.
 - C. As soon as possible, document any instance of harassment and the names of any witnesses.
3. Any parent or guardian who has knowledge of a sexual harassment situation should bring the issue directly to the school principal and/or superintendent.

INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES:

The principal or investigator shall:

- immediately notify the student (respondent or complainant) and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) or staff member that a claim of sexual harassment has been made
- notify the proper authorities (Police Dept., DCYF) if the situation warrants such obligation

- notify the respondent of the charge against him/her
- interview the complainant with parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or legal representation present (as appropriate)
- interview the respondent with union representation or legal representation present, if requested. In the case of a student, a parent or guardian needs to be present.
- interview the employee who notified the investigator of the claim of sexual harassment
- interview any witnesses to the sexual harassment and
- prepare written determination.

The principal or investigator shall document the statements of the complainant, the respondent, and the witnesses, as to (a) alleged incident; (b) the date(s) of the alleged incident(s); (c) the dates of the meetings with the interested parties; and (d) the persons present at the meetings.

Complainants, respondents and witnesses shall have the opportunity to review their statements and confirm that the investigator has reported their statements and the meetings accurately. The parties shall then sign their statements. In the case of a minor student, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall co-sign the statement.

If action is deemed necessary, the principal or investigator shall follow normal due process procedures and shall make a recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools in the same manner as he/she would in other serious matters. This determination will be shared with both the complainant and the person or persons accused of harassment, condonation of sexual harassment or retaliation.

FOLLOW-UP PROCEDURES:

1. School Services:

Students who have been sexually harassed will be offered the counseling services available in school. Participation in such services is subject to parental approval.

2. Retaliation:

In any situation, it is unlawful to retaliate in any way against an individual who has complained of sexual harassment or cooperated in an investigation of a complaint of sexual harassment. A student and/or an employee may be disciplined, up to and including discharge or suspension, for any such act of retaliation. The appropriate measure of discipline will be determined on the basis of the School Department's assessment of the nature and extent of the retaliation and any other relevant factors brought to the attention of the school administration.

First Reading:	November 2, 1999
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Adoption:	December 7, 1999

Revised: