

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE MENOMONIE AREA**

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**NONDISCRIMINATION IN DISTRICT PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, AND OPERATIONS**

The School District of the Menomonie Area prohibits all forms of unlawful discrimination against students, employees, and other persons in all aspects of the District's programs, activities, and operations. The term "unlawful discrimination" encompasses any unlawful policy, practice, conduct, or other unlawful denial of rights, benefits, or privileges that is based on any legally protected status or classification (e.g., race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age, etc.).

Various state and federal laws establish the actions that do (and do not) constitute unlawful discrimination with respect to each protected status or classification. Where applicable, unlawful harassment that is based on a legally-protected status is one form of unlawful discrimination. To the extent encompassed by the applicable laws, discrimination based on "sex" can include any unlawful discrimination that is based on sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, or gender identity or gender expression (including transgender and gender nonconforming students).

The District requires and will enforce nondiscrimination in a manner that is consistent with applicable constitutional provisions and with the rights and obligations that are established under all applicable state and federal civil rights laws, including but not limited to the current provisions of the following federal laws, which jointly serve to identify and protect the rights of students, employees, and other persons:

- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex discrimination).
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (disability discrimination).
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (including both the employment-related provisions of the ADA as well as Title II of the ADA, which broadly prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in state and local government services).
- Titles IV and VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (addressing discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, or religion).
- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (age discrimination).
- The nondiscrimination provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

There are a significant number of additional state and federal nondiscrimination laws that are not listed above that further establish the rights of students and/or employees. In recognition of such laws, the District maintains additional nondiscrimination policies and rules that specifically and uniquely cover students (see, for example, [Policy 411 and Policy 411.1] within the District's policy manual) and all aspects of employment and personnel administration within the District (see, for example, [Policy 511 and Policy 512]).

**Special Statement Regarding Sex Discrimination under Title IX**

As mandated by the federal Title IX statutes and by the regulations set forth in Part 106 of Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations ("the federal Title IX regulations"), the District does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits all forms of unlawful sex discrimination in any education program or activity that the District operates. Title IX's requirement not to discriminate on the basis of sex in any education program or activity includes, but is not limited to, discrimination affecting students and discrimination in District employment. Inquiries regarding how Title IX and the federal Title IX regulations apply to the District may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator (as designated below), to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education, or to both.

**Title IX Coordinator.** The individual in the following position serves as the District's designated Title IX Coordinator, who has responsibility for coordinating the District's efforts to comply with and carry out the District's responsibilities under Title IX and the federal Title IX regulations, including serving as the primary point of contact for any reports, complaints, questions, or concerns related to unlawful sex discrimination in any education program or activity of the District:

***District Title IX Coordinator***

Samantha Hoyt  
Director of Human Resources  
215 Pine Avenue NE  
Menomonie, WI 54751  
715-232-1542, X- 11062  
[samantha\\_hoyt@msd.k12.wi.us](mailto:samantha_hoyt@msd.k12.wi.us)

The Title IX Coordinator is also an appropriate person to contact regarding (1) reports, complaints, questions, or concerns regarding sex discrimination as prohibited under any other applicable state or federal law that applies to the District; and (2) any concern or allegation of prohibited retaliation that arises in connection with a report, allegation, investigation, or proceeding related to sex discrimination or possible sex discrimination.

**Section 504/ADA Coordinator.** The individual in the following position serves as the District's designated Section 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator (for disability rights and disability-based discrimination issues).

***District 504 Coordinator***

Tonia Kowieski  
Director of Student Services  
215 Pine Avenue NE  
Menomonie, WI 54751  
715-233-3217  
[tonia\\_kowieski@msd.k12.wi.us](mailto:tonia_kowieski@msd.k12.wi.us)

The Section 504/ADA Coordinator is also an appropriate person to contact regarding reports, complaints, questions, or concerns regarding unlawful discrimination based on disability as defined under any other applicable state or federal law.

**Nondiscrimination Coordinator(s) in other Areas.** Except for matters relating to unlawful sexbased or disability-based discrimination that have been assigned to the specific coordinators identified above, any other questions concerning the District's nondiscrimination and equal opportunities policies, general compliance with the District's nondiscrimination obligations, the application of a state and/or federal nondiscrimination law to the District, or the District's discrimination reporting and complaint procedures may be directed to the following District designated nondiscrimination and equal opportunity coordinator:

***Nondiscrimination Coordinator***

Tonia Kowieski  
Director of Student Services  
215 Pine Avenue NE  
Menomonie, WI 54751

The nondiscrimination and equal opportunity coordinator identified immediately above is also designated to receive any student discrimination complaints arising under section 118.13 of the state statutes and Chapter PI 9 of the Wisconsin Administrative Code. The individual is also specifically designated to coordinate the District's efforts to comply with and carry out the District's responsibilities under the federal Age Discrimination Act.

**District Responses to Information, Reports, and Complaints about Unlawful Discrimination**

Applicable laws require the District, the District's designated nondiscrimination coordinator(s), and all District employees to be responsive to known information about possible unlawful discrimination or any related acts of prohibited retaliation. The Board's general expectations for responding to such information include the following:

1. Any time the District has knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute unlawful discrimination or prohibited retaliation occurring within the District's programs, activities, or operations, the District—primarily through the District's designated nondiscrimination coordinators and the Board's other administrative-level and supervisory agents—will respond promptly and effectively in a manner that is consistent with District policies and procedures and with the specific obligations that are defined in applicable state and federal nondiscrimination laws.
  - a. Some of the District's legal duties and obligations apply based solely on the District having sufficient notice of the conduct, even if no complaint is ever submitted/pursued.
  - b. When a District-designated Title IX Coordinator has been notified of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination or prohibited retaliation under Title IX, the Title IX Coordinator must perform, or ensure that another authorized agent of the District who is acting as a designee performs, all applicable Title IX Coordinator duties specified in the Title IX regulations, including the duties specified in section 106.44(f) of the regulations.
2. All District employees are required to notify the appropriate nondiscrimination coordinator when the employee has information about conduct that reasonably may constitute unlawful discrimination (or any related acts of prohibited retaliation) within the District's programs, activities, or operations.
  - a. If an employee has information concerning possible sex discrimination in violation of Title IX, the employee shall fulfill the obligation described in the previous paragraph by notifying a District Title IX Coordinator of the information.

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  - b. In a situation in which the employee believes the appropriate coordinator would have a conflict of interest, such as in a situation where the coordinator is alleged to have personally engaged or participated in prohibited conduct, the employee shall directly notify the District Administrator of the relevant information.

A report of possible unlawful discrimination or prohibited retaliation under this policy is to be treated as a "complaint" if (1) the report can be objectively understood as a request for the District to investigate and make a determination about alleged unlawful discrimination or prohibited retaliation under one of the District's anti-discrimination complaint/grievance procedures, and (2) the person making the report is authorized by law or by District policy to initiate the applicable complaint/grievance procedures.

The Board's general expectations for responding to complaints and other reports of conduct that reasonably may constitute unlawful discrimination or prohibited retaliation include the following:

1. If a report constitutes a "complaint," then the complaint will be processed according to the anti-discrimination complaint/grievance procedures that the District determines are most applicable to the facts and circumstances. Such procedures may allow for the use of an informal resolution process in some circumstances.
2. For other "reports" of possible unlawful discrimination or retaliation (e.g., when the person reporting the information is not requesting an investigation and determination or when the person reporting the information is not authorized by law or District policy to use a complaint to initiate any of the District's complaint/grievance procedures), the following apply:
  - a. The District is not required to (but may sometimes choose to) initiate district established complaint/grievance procedures based on the person's report.
  - b. If the information reported by such a person could reasonably constitute unlawful discrimination or retaliation, then the expectation is that the District—usually through a designated nondiscrimination coordinator—will at least respond to the information/allegations(s) in a prompt and reasonable manner that is calculated to further determine whether unlawful discrimination may be occurring and, if so, to take prompt and effective steps intended to ensure that any discrimination is ended and does not recur.

#### **Any Person May Report Discrimination to the District**

The District is committed to the appropriate resolution of any complaint or other report that alleges or otherwise presents information to the District about conduct, or about a District policy or practice, that may reasonably constitute (1) unlawful discrimination or a violation of a District nondiscrimination policy, including any form of prohibited harassment that is based on a legally protected status; or (2) any type of retaliation that is prohibited by a nondiscrimination law or under a District nondiscrimination policy.

Accordingly, unless otherwise specified by a state or federal law, any person (including a person who is not claiming to have been personally harmed/victimized by the alleged conduct or challenged policy) may report information about or, if eligible, submit a complaint alleging possible prohibited discrimination or prohibited retaliation as follows:

1. To the appropriate District nondiscrimination coordinator, as designated in this policy, using the contact information provided above and any of the following methods:
  - a. By in-person delivery (whether the report is made verbally or in writing);
  - b. By U.S. mail;
  - c. By telephone; or
  - d. By electronic mail.
2. By any other means that results in the applicable nondiscrimination coordinator actually receiving the person's verbal, written or online report. For example, a person may arrange to have an agent or other intermediary submit their report to a District-designated nondiscrimination or equal opportunity coordinator on their behalf.
3. If the report would identify a District nondiscrimination coordinator as being personally responsible for alleged discrimination or retaliation, then the report may be filed directly with the District Administrator.

4. When a report of possible unlawful discrimination or retaliation is not submitted in person directly to one of the District's designated nondiscrimination coordinators, the person submitting the report is strongly encouraged to contact the District to confirm that their report was actually received as intended.

#### **Deadline for Filing an Initial Report or Complaint**

There is no absolute deadline for the initial filing of a report or complaint of discrimination under this policy. The District always has an interest in being made aware of potential concerns with prohibited discrimination, harassment, or retaliation. However, any person who has a complaint or concern involving such a matter is encouraged to notify the District or pursue a complaint as soon as reasonably possible after the occurrence of the relevant events. A material gap in pursuing a complaint or concern can affect the extent to which it is practical to investigate the matter, and a delay may also limit the range of remedies and resolutions that are reasonably available.

The following apply to any report or complaint of discrimination or retaliation that has been filed under this policy, except for complaints of possible unlawful sex discrimination (including sexbased harassment) or prohibited retaliation under Title IX, which are instead subject to the dismissal and appeal provisions of the grievance procedures that the District has adopted for such complaints:

1. At least one of the following administrators, acting in consultation as needed with District legal counsel, must authorize the dismissal or other alternative disposition of a report or complaint due to a lack of timeliness: District Administrator, Director of Student Services, Director of Human Resources or Director of Curriculum and Instruction.
2. Any actual party in interest to the allegations raised by a complaint (i.e., a person alleged to have been subjected to or alleged to be responsible for prohibited conduct) may appeal a decision to dismiss the complaint under the previous paragraph to the District Administrator. Or, if the District Administrator authorized the initial decision to dismiss the complaint, then the party may request reconsideration.

#### **Confidentiality of Reports and Complaints**

Although absolute confidentiality cannot be assured, the District will maintain the confidentiality of discrimination reports and complaints, and especially personally-identifiable information obtained in the course of responding to a report or complaint, to the extent required by applicable law, and the District will otherwise make efforts to maintain confidentiality where nondisclosure does not interfere with the District's ability to appropriately process and respond to the report or complaint. Nonetheless, investigating or otherwise responding to a matter often involves disclosing (directly or indirectly) the identity of persons involved in the particular events/issues. Individuals who have specific concerns about confidentiality should arrange to discuss those concerns with the District as early as possible in the process.

#### **Retaliation Prohibited**

No official, employee, or agent of the District, student, or any other person over whom the District exercises some authority may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or unlawfully discriminate against any individual (1) for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by any nondiscrimination statute or related regulation, or (2) because the individual has made a report or complaint, or testified, assisted, participated, or exercised a legal right to refuse to participate in any manner in an investigation or proceeding conducted under this policy or any other District nondiscrimination policy. This non-retaliation provision does not preclude the District from (1) requiring an employee or other authorized agent of the District to participate as a witness in, or otherwise assist with, an investigation, proceeding, or hearing; or (2) imposing

consequences for an employee's or agent's refusal to cooperatively participate or otherwise assist in such matters.

### **Prohibition on Bad Faith Conduct/Abuse of Process**

To the extent permitted by law, the District prohibits and reserves authority to appropriately address and impose consequences for bad-faith conduct by individuals who make a report or complaint, testify, assist, or participate in any manner in an investigation or proceeding conducted under this policy or any other District nondiscrimination policy. For example, the District may impose lawful consequences for making a materially false statement in bad faith in the course of any proceeding that is conducted under this policy or any other District nondiscrimination policy. Examples of abuse of process include, but are not limited to, the pursuit of allegations that the complaining party knows to be wholly frivolous or the use of dilatory tactics that have the purpose or reasonably foreseeable result of unreasonably interfering with a prompt and equitable resolution of alleged discrimination or retaliation.

### **Consequences for Violations**

Any person who is determined to be responsible for any form of unlawful discrimination, any act of prohibited retaliation, or other violation of this policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary action and/or other appropriate consequences that are within the District's lawful authority. In addition, any employee or authorized agent of the District who, considering the duties, responsibilities, and expectations established for their position/role, fails to reasonably respond to complaints or reports of alleged discrimination or retaliation, or who otherwise fails to reasonably act on their knowledge of a possible violation of a nondiscrimination law or a District nondiscrimination policy, is also subject to possible disciplinary action.

#### LEGAL REF:

##### Wisconsin Statutes

Subch. III of Ch. 106

[state equal rights programs, some of which can apply to school districts in at least some circumstances]

Subch. II of Ch. 111

[the state fair employment and nondiscrimination statutes, including specific prohibited bases of discrimination (sections 111.31 to 111.395)]

Section 118.13

[student nondiscrimination; policy/procedures required]

Section 118.134

[race-based nicknames, logos, mascots]

Section 118.195

[discrimination against teachers with disabilities]

Section 118.20

[teacher/administrator discrimination prohibited]

##### Wisconsin Administrative Code

PI 9

[student nondiscrimination; policy, procedures, notices, and reporting required] ]

PI 41

[accommodating student religious beliefs; policy required]

##### Federal Laws

20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq.

[Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, prohibiting sex discrimination in federally-supported educational programs; implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. Part 106]

20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq.

[The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, providing for programs, Services, and rights for students with disabilities; implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R Part 300]

20 U.S.C. §6312(e)(3)(D)	[addressing nondiscrimination in admission to federally-assisted education programs on the basis of surname or language-minority status]
42 U.S.C. §2000e et seq.	[Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, prohibiting employment discrimination based race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, and religion; implementing regulations at 29 C.F.R. Ch. XIV]
42 U.S.C. §2000d et seq.	[Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in any program or activity that receives federal funds; implementing regulations at 28 C.F.R. Part 42, Subpart C]
42 U.S.C. §12111 et seq.	[The Americans with Disabilities Act, Title I, as amended, prohibiting employment discrimination based on a qualifying disability; implementing regulations at 29 C.F.R. Part 1602 and Part 1630]
42 U.S.C. §12131 et seq.	[The Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II, as amended, nondiscrimination based on disability by state and local governments; implementing regulations at 28 C.F.R. Part 35]
29 U.S.C. §794 et seq.	[Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, prohibiting discrimination based on a qualifying disability by recipients of federal funds; implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. Part 104, 28 C.F.R. Part 42, Subpart G, and 29 C.F.R. Part 1640]
42 U.S.C. §6101 et seq.	[the federal Age Discrimination Act, as applicable to federally assisted programs; implementing regulations at 34 C.F.R. Part 110]
29 U.S.C. §621 et seq.	[Age Discrimination in Employment Act, as amended; implementing regulations at 29 C.F.R. Parts 1625 to 1627]
8 U.S.C. §1324b(a)	[prohibiting employment discrimination based on national origin and citizenship status; implementing regulations at 28 C.F.R. Part 44]
42 U.S.C. §2000gg et seq.	[Pregnant Workers Fairness Act; implementing regulations at 29 C.F.R. Part 1636]

APPROVED: August 10, 2020

REVISED: September 9, 2024

/s/Dominique Stewart

Clerk