

HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

It is the intent of the South Portland School Board to provide all students with an equitable opportunity to learn. To that end, the Board has a significant interest in providing a safe, orderly and respectful school environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. Harassment and sexual harassment are detrimental to student learning and achievement

Harassment, as defined in this policy, is not acceptable conduct in South Portland Schools and is prohibited. Harassment of students because of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, ancestry or national origin, disability, or genetic information is prohibited. Such conduct is a violation of Board policy and may constitute illegal discrimination under state and federal laws.

Harassment

Harassment includes but is not limited to verbal abuse based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, ancestry or national origin, disability or genetic information. Harassment that rises to the level of physical assault, battery and/or abuse is also addressed in the Board policy JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes but is not limited to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or pressure to engage in sexual activity, physical contact of a sexual nature, gestures, comments, or other physical, written or verbal conduct that is gender-based that interferes with a student's education. School employees, fellow students, volunteers and visitors to the school, and other persons with whom students may interact in order to pursue school activities are required to refrain from such conduct.

Harassment/sexual harassment of students by school employees is considered grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Harassment/sexual harassment of students by other students is considered grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion. The Superintendent will determine appropriate sanctions for harassment of students by persons other than school employees and students.

The Superintendent or the employee designated as the Title IX Coordinator (business manager) will investigate complaints of harassment in accordance with the Affirmative Action Grievance Procedure. School employees, students, and parents shall be informed of this policy/procedure through handbooks and/or other means selected by the school administration.

Legal Reference: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 USC § 1681, et seq.)
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 [42 USC § 2000 (d)] 5 MRSA §§ 4602; 4681 et seq.
20 MRSA § 6553

Cross Reference: ACAA-R – Student Harassment Complaint Procedure
AC – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action
ACAD – Hazing
JICIA – Weapons, Violence and School Safety
JIC – System-Wide Student Code of Conduct

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