

# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OKALOOSA COUNTY

# NOTICE

- Policies of Non-Discrimination - Harassment/Bullying
- Complaint Procedures
- Notification of Contacts



The School District of Okaloosa County adheres to a policy of prohibiting discrimination in employment, programs, services and activities. The district strives to provide equal opportunity for all and to identify and overcome potential barriers to recruitment, employment, training, or promotional opportunities for its staff and applicants. Violations of this policy will not be tolerated.

## ADULTS (6-28) EQUITY POLICY

- A. Harassment concerning an individual's race, color, sex, age, religious beliefs, national or ethnic origin, marital status, or disability is a form of misconduct which undermines the integrity of the employment relationship.
- B. Adverse remarks or epithets and other forms of harassment concerning an individual's race, color, sex, age, relation, national or ethnic background or disability are strictly prohibited. A disability exists when an individual has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of the individual's major life activities.

## STUDENTS (4-34) EQUITY POLICY


- A. It is the policy of the School Board of Okaloosa County to offer students the opportunity to participate in appropriate programs, services and activities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, parenthood, pregnancy, disability, sexual orientation, or social and family background.
- B. Students, while they are in school or participating in school-related activities, are entitled to an environment free of discrimination and/or harassment by other students or adult employees or volunteers, or persons with whom the district contracts for services.
- C. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes harassment or discrimination, the totality of the circumstances, the nature of the conduct and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred will be investigated.


Sexual harassment by an employee or student to another individual (**student or adult**) is strictly prohibited by School Board Policies 6-28 and 4-34. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

## SCHOOL BOARD POLICY 4-43

- Bullying means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by a student or adult, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidation, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation.

## COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

 If an **adult** needs to report an alleged violation of these policies, an informal Equity Complaint should be made to a principal or department director. If the situation cannot be resolved informally, a Formal Equity Grievance (MIS 5139, Rev 10/00), in compliance with School Board Policy 6-29, should be directed to the Superintendent's designee listed below. Employees have the option of filing a grievance through appropriate Master Contract procedures in lieu of the Formal Equity Grievance.

 If a **student** needs assistance with a situation involving these policies, a Student Equity Complaint should be filed in writing and submitted to a teacher or an administrator at the school. If the situation cannot be resolved at the school level, a formal complaint may be filed with one of the Superintendent's designees.

**CONTACT INFORMATION, Okaloosa School District, Bay Area Office, 120 Lowery Place, Fort Walton Beach, FL**

**Superintendent's Designees:**

- **Arden Farley, (850) 833-5803 - Information regarding Equity Policies and Procedures**
- **Melody Sommer, (850) 833-3164 - Section 504**
- **Jerry Sansom, (850) 833-5861 - Safe Schools Bullying Representative**

*This Notice must be posted in all work locations of the school district and available to students, employees and public. This policy is in accordance with the Florida Education Equity Act (FEEA) and the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other applicable law and rules.*