

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES REGARDING NON-DISCRIMINATION, SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

NON-DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

The Governing Board desires to provide a positive work environment where employees and job applicants are assured of equal access and opportunities and are free from harassment in accordance with law. The Board prohibits district employees from discriminating against any other district employee or job applicant on the basis of the person's actual or perceived race, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, medical condition, genetic information, veteran status, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sex or sexual orientation.

Prohibited discrimination consists of the taking of any adverse employment action against a person, including termination or denial of promotion, job assignment, or training, or in discriminating against the person in compensation, terms, conditions, or other privileges of employment based on any of the prohibited categories of discrimination listed above.

The prohibition against discrimination based on the religious creed of an employee or job applicant includes any discrimination based on the person's religious dress or grooming practices or any conflict between the person's religious belief, observance, or practice and an employment requirement. The prohibition against discrimination based on the sex of an employee or job applicant shall include any discrimination based on the person's pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, or any related medical conditions.

Harassment consists of any unwelcome verbal, physical, or visual conduct that is based on any of the prohibited categories of discrimination listed above and that is so severe or pervasive that it adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities, has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

The Board also prohibits retaliation against any district employee or job applicant who complains, testifies, assists, or in any way participates in the district's complaint procedures instituted pursuant to this policy.

Any district employee who engages in prohibited discrimination, harassment, or retaliation or who aids, abets, incites, compels or coerces another to engage or attempt to engage in such behavior in violation of this policy and shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

The following position is designated as Coordinator for Nondiscrimination in Employment:

**Assistant Superintendent of Administration and Human Resources, 2690 Cienega Road, Hollister, CA 95023
(831) 630-6307**

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Governing Board prohibits sexual harassment of district employees and job applicants. The Board also prohibits retaliatory behavior or action against district employees or other persons who complain, testify or otherwise participate in the complaint process established pursuant to this policy and administrative regulation.

The Superintendent or designee shall take all actions necessary to ensure the prevention, investigation, and correction of sexual harassment, including but not limited to:

1. Providing training to employees in accordance with law and administrative regulation

2. Publicizing and disseminating the district's sexual harassment policy to staff
3. Ensuring prompt, thorough, and fair investigation of complaints
4. Taking timely and appropriate corrective/remedial action(s), which may require interim separation of the complainant and the alleged harasser and subsequent monitoring of developments.

All complaints and allegations of sexual harassment shall be kept confidential to the extent necessary to carry out the investigation or to take other subsequent necessary actions.

Any district employee or job applicant who feels that he/she has been sexually harassed or who has knowledge of any incident of sexual harassment by or against another employee, a job applicant or a student, shall immediately report the incident to his/her supervisor, the principal, district administrator or Superintendent. A supervisor, principal or other district administrator who receives a harassment complaint shall promptly notify the Superintendent or designee.

An employee may bypass his/her supervisor in filing a complaint where the supervisor is the subject of the complaint.

Any district employee who engages or participates in sexual harassment or who aids, abets, incites, compels, or coerces another to commit sexual harassment against a district employee, job applicant, or student is in violation of this policy and is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Any complaint by an employee or job applicant alleging discrimination or harassment shall be addressed in accordance with the following procedures:

1. Notice and Receipt of Complaint: Any employee or job applicant (the "complainant") who believes he/she has been subjected to prohibited discrimination or harassment shall promptly inform his/her supervisor, the district's Coordinator for Nondiscrimination in Employment, or the Superintendent. The complainant may file a written complaint in accordance with this procedure, or if he/she is an employee, may first attempt to resolve the situation informally with his/her supervisor. A supervisor or manager who has received information about an incident of discrimination or harassment, or has observed such an incident, shall report it to the Coordinator, whether or not the complainant files a written complaint. The written complaint should contain the complainant's name, the name of the individual who allegedly committed the act, a description of the incident, the date and location where the incident occurred, any witnesses who may have relevant information, other evidence of the discrimination or harassment, and any other pertinent information which may assist in investigating and resolving the complaint.

2. Investigation Process: The Coordinator shall initiate an impartial investigation of an allegation of discrimination or harassment within five school days of receiving notice of the behavior, regardless of whether a written complaint has been filed or whether the written complaint is complete. The Coordinator shall meet with the complainant to describe the district's complaint procedure and discuss the actions being sought by the complainant in response to the allegation. The Coordinator shall inform the complainant that the allegations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, but that some information may be revealed as necessary to conduct an effective investigation. If the Coordinator determines that a detailed fact-finding investigation is necessary, he/she shall begin the investigation immediately. As part of this investigation, the Coordinator should interview the complainant, the person accused, and other persons who could be expected to have relevant information. When necessary to carry out his/her investigation or to protect employee or student safety, the Coordinator may discuss the complaint with the Superintendent or designee, district legal counsel, or the district's risk manager. The Coordinator also shall determine whether interim measures, such

as scheduling changes, transfers, or leaves, need to be taken before the investigation is completed to ensure that further incidents do not occur. The Coordinator shall ensure that such interim measures do not constitute retaliation.

3. Written Report on Findings and Corrective Action: No more than 30 days after receiving the complaint, the Coordinator shall conclude the investigation and prepare a written report of his/her findings. This timeline may be extended for good cause. If an extension is needed, the Coordinator shall notify the complainant and explain the reasons for the extension.

4. The report shall include the decision and the reasons for the decision and shall summarize the steps taken during the investigation. If a determination has been made that discrimination or harassment occurred, the report also shall include any corrective action(s) that have been or will be taken to address the behavior, correct the effect on the complainant, and ensure that retaliation or further discrimination or harassment does not occur. The report shall be presented to the complainant, the person accused, and the Superintendent or designee.

5. Appeal to the Governing Board: The complainant or the person accused may appeal any findings to the Board within 10 working days of receiving the written report of the Coordinator's findings. The Superintendent or designee shall provide the Board with all information presented during the investigation. Upon receiving an appeal, the Board shall schedule a hearing as soon as practicable. Any complaint against a district employee shall be addressed in closed session in accordance with law. The Board shall render its decision within 10 working days.

Other Remedies

In addition to filing a discrimination or harassment complaint with the district, a person may also file a complaint with either the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The time limits for filing such complaints are as follows:

1. To file a valid complaint with DFEH, within one year of the alleged discriminatory act(s), unless an exception exists pursuant to Government Code 12960
2. To file a valid complaint directly with EEOC, within 180 days of the alleged discriminatory act(s) (42 USC 2000e-5)
3. To file a valid complaint with EEOC after first filing a complaint with DFEH, within 300 days of the alleged discriminatory act(s) or within 30 days after the termination of proceedings by DFEH, whichever is earlier.

The following position is designated as Coordinator for Nondiscrimination in Employment:

**Assistant Superintendent of Administration and Human Resources, 2690 Cienega Road, Hollister, CA 95023
(831) 630-6307**