

# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PITTSVILLE BOARD POLICY

## BOARD OPERATIONS

### SCHOOL DISTRICT MISSION

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

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The Pittsville School District 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.

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;
- The civil rights provisions associated with the District's participation in federal nutrition programs.

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 the regulations set forth in Chapter 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 in any education program or activity that the District operates. Title IX's requirement not to discriminate in any education program or activity extends to District students, certain admissions processes, and 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.

#### **Designation of Nondiscrimination Coordinator(s)**

Any questions concerning the District's nondiscrimination and equal opportunities policies, the application of any nondiscrimination law to the District, or the District's discrimination-related reporting and complaint procedures should be directed to the ~~Director of Special Education and Pupil Student Services, who is also designated as the District's Title IX Coordinator~~ District's designated nondiscrimination and equal opportunities coordinator. The contact information for this position is as follows

*Danielle Wilke, Director of Student Services*

*School District of Pittsville, 5459 Elementary Avenue, Suite 2, Pittsville, WI 54466*

*715-884-5233 wilkedan@pittsville.k12.wi.us*

In his capacity as a Title IX Coordinator, the above identified individual is authorized to The District's nondiscrimination and equal opportunity coordinator has responsibility for coordinate coordinating the District's efforts to comply with the District's

responsibilities under Title IX and the federal Title IX regulations with the applicable nondiscrimination laws, including coordinating the District's response to any complaint or report alleging noncompliance with, or acts in violation of, any of the applicable laws. The role of the District's nondiscrimination and equal opportunities coordinator includes the following designations made pursuant to specific federal requirements:

- Title IX Coordinator (regarding prohibited sex discrimination).
- Section 504 and Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator (i.e., for disability rights and disability-based discrimination issues).
- Federal Age Discrimination Act Coordinator.

The District's nondiscrimination and equal opportunities coordinator 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.

### **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. As a limited exception, an employee is strongly encouraged, but not strictly obligated, to report information about an incident or situation in which the employee, but **not** any student, was personally subject to conduct that reasonably may constitute unlawful discrimination or prohibited retaliation against that employee.
  - 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.
  - 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. In addition, in some situations, such as under the federal Title IX regulations, applicable law may require the District's designated nondiscrimination and equal opportunity coordinators or other agents of the District to take other specific actions in response to such a complaint.

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. In addition, in some situations, such as under the federal Title IX regulations, applicable law may require a designated nondiscrimination coordinator or other agents of the District to take specific actions in response to being notified of conduct or other reported information or allegations that could reasonably constitute unlawful discrimination.

#### **Any Person May Submit a Complaint or Report of Discrimination to the District**

The District is committed to the appropriate resolution of complaints and reports that allege 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 a District nondiscrimination policy.

Accordingly, except as otherwise required by law, any person (~~including a witness or other~~ a person who has not been harmed/victimized by the alleged conduct or challenged policy) may ~~report a concern or allegation of prohibited discrimination or prohibited retaliation to the Director of Special Education and Pupil Services/Title IX Coordinator, using the contact information provided above and any of the following methods~~ report information about or, if eligible, submit a complaint alleging possible prohibited discrimination or prohibited retaliation as follows:

1. By U.S. mail, by electronic mail, or by telephone, at any time; or
  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 Director of Special Education and Pupil Services/Title IX Coordinator actually receiving the person's verbal or written report, including by submitting the report to the Director of Special Education and Pupil Services/Title IX Coordinator in person (e.g., at an arranged meeting or when the coordinator is otherwise reasonably available during normal working hours). 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 either in person at the District Office; by U.S. mail addressed to 5459 Elementary Avenue, Suite 2; or by electronic mail sent to the District Administrator's District-issued email address.

As an exception to the above reporting procedure, if the report or complaint identifies the Director of Special Education and Pupil Services/Title IX Coordinator as a person responsible for the alleged prohibited conduct, or if the Director of Special Education and Pupil Services/Title IX Coordinator is affected by a conflict of interest or otherwise unavailable, then the person making the report may submit it to the District Administrator either in person, by mail, by telephone, or by electronic mail. The contact information for the District Administrator is as follows:-

*Jason Knott, District Administrator*  
*School District of Pittsville, 5459 Elementary Avenue, Suite 2, Pittsville, WI 54466*  
*715-884-6694 [knottjas@pittsville.k12.wi.us](mailto:knottjas@pittsville.k12.wi.us)*

Individuals submitting a report or complaint of prohibited discrimination under this policy are strongly encouraged to contact the District to confirm that their report was received as intended.

Except as provided below regarding formal complaints of Title IX sexual harassment or as otherwise required by any law, a report or complaint received under this policy will be processed according to the discrimination complaint procedures that the District has established under its student nondiscrimination policies or under its equal employment opportunities policies, as applicable to the facts and circumstances. For reports or complaints of alleged discrimination that are neither student matters nor employment matters, the District will normally process the matter under the complaint procedures that apply to students.

### **Filing a Formal Complaint of Title IX Sexual Harassment**

An individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment under the federal Title IX regulations (i.e., a Title IX “complainant”), or a parent or guardian who has a legal right to act on behalf of such an individual, may file a “formal complaint” of “sexual harassment,” as those terms are defined in 34 C.F.R. §106.30.

No Title IX complainant is obligated to file a formal complaint, but a qualifying formal complaint is necessary for the District to start an investigation of Title IX sexual harassment allegations using the District’s formal Title IX grievance process. Even in the absence of a formal complaint that initiates the formal grievance process, the District still has legal obligations to respond to allegations of Title IX sexual harassment whenever the District has sufficient notice of the allegations (i.e., from any source).

All of the following apply to a formal complaint of Title IX sexual harassment:

1. At the time of filing a formal complaint, the complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the District (including through employment).
2. The formal complaint must be in the form of a document or an electronic submission (e.g., an electronic mail message or a file attached to an email) that:
  - a. Alleges sexual harassment against a respondent (if the identity of the respondent is not known, it is not necessary to identify the respondent by name);
  - b. Requests that the District investigate the allegation(s) of sexual harassment; and
  - c. Contains the complainant’s physical or digital signature, or otherwise indicates that the complainant is the person filing the formal complaint.
3. The formal complaint must normally be **filed with the District’s Title IX Coordinator** by submitting the document or electronic submission either **in person, by U.S. mail, or by electronic mail**, using the District designated contact information listed above in this policy. However, if the formal complaint identifies the Title IX Coordinator as a respondent (i.e., a person reported as a perpetrator of the alleged sexual harassment), or if the Title IX Coordinator is affected by a conflict of interest or is otherwise unavailable, then the complainant may file the document or electronic submission directly with the District Administrator, either in person, by mail, or by electronic mail using the contact information provided above.

When a formal complaint is not filed in person, complainants are strongly encouraged to contact the District to confirm that their complaint was actually received as intended.

If a complainant files a formal complaint of Title IX sexual harassment, or if a Title IX Coordinator signs such a formal complaint on behalf of the District, then:

1. The formal complaint must be resolved according to the federal regulations and District processes that specifically apply to such formal complaints; and
2. Unless otherwise directed by the School Board or this policy, the District Administrator or his/her administrative level designee is expected to designate and assign qualified individuals to perform the roles that are defined for District agents within the District’s grievance process for formal complaints of Title IX sexual harassment. In addition:
  - a. The District Administrator may assign one or more of the roles to a qualified individual who is not an employee of the District, including an outside attorney or other contracted service provider, with notice to the Board.

- b. ~~The Title IX Coordinator and the District Administrator shall ensure that the individual(s) assigned to perform such roles have completed any training required by the federal Title IX regulations.~~
- c. ~~If the District determines that a person assigned to such a role is unavailable, disqualified by a conflict of interest or bias, or otherwise unable to perform the responsibilities of the role, the administration shall assign another qualified individual to perform the role.~~
- d. ~~The Board or a person designated by the Board shall assign such roles with respect to any formal complaint in which the District Administrator is alleged to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute Title IX sexual harassment. The Title IX Coordinator and the District Administrator shall inform the Board of any such need to assign the roles.~~

Filing a formal complaint of Title IX sexual harassment is one way to report such harassment. However, if a Title IX complainant or other person is not eligible to file a qualifying formal complaint, or if they choose not to do so, the person may still submit a report of the allegations to the District as further described above within this policy (i.e., a report that is **not** a formal complaint for purposes of Title IX). Moreover, **any** report of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment under Title IX that causes the District to have actual knowledge of the relevant conduct/allegations requires an appropriate response by the District, even if the reporting procedures defined in this policy were not followed and even if no formal complaint has been or ever is filed.

### **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 that has been filed under this policy, except for formal complaints of Title IX sexual harassment **possible unlawful sex discrimination (including sex-based harassment) or prohibited retaliation under Title IX,** (which are instead subject to the dismissal and appeal provisions of the grievance process 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.**

*Jason Knott, District Administrator*

*School District of Pittsville, 5459 Elementary Avenue, Suite 2, Pittsville, WI 54466*

*715-884-6694 — [knottjas@pittsville.k12.wi.us](mailto:knottjas@pittsville.k12.wi.us)*

2. Any actual party in interest to the allegations raised by the report or complaint (i.e., **any alleged victim or any a person alleged to subjected to or alleged to be responsible for prohibited conduct**) may appeal a decision **authorized 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**, 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 any applicable law, and the District will otherwise make efforts to maintain confidentiality where non-disclosure does not interfere with the District's ability to appropriately process and respond to the report or complaint. Nonetheless, investigating **or otherwise responding** 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 the 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.

### **Nondiscrimination Notices; Dissemination of Policy and Complaint/Reporting Procedures**

The District Administrator and the District's designated nondiscrimination coordinators share joint responsibility for ensuring that the District prepares and issues, on a timely basis, all legally-required general notices of (1) the rights of students, employees, and other persons under the state and federal nondiscrimination laws; (2) the District's nondiscrimination policies; and (3) applicable reporting and complaint procedures. Beyond meeting legal requirements and any local policy requirements, the administration is encouraged to further disseminate such information using such methods as the administration deems appropriate.

### **Maintenance of Complaint Records; Report Preparation**

The District Administrator and the District's designated nondiscrimination coordinators share joint responsibility for ensuring that the District maintains adequate records of reports and complaints of discrimination and retaliation, including records of the District's response and disposition. Such records shall meet applicable legal requirements for documentation and records retention. The District Administrator and the applicable coordinators shall also direct and oversee the timely preparation of all annual or other reports and evaluations regarding nondiscrimination initiatives/compliance that the District is required to provide to the Department of Public Instruction or to any other oversight entity. prepares and issues, on a timely basis, all legally-required general notices of (1) the rights of students, employees, and other persons under the state and federal nondiscrimination laws; (2) the District's nondiscrimination policies; and (3) applicable reporting and complaint procedures. Beyond meeting legal requirements and any local policy requirements, the administration is encouraged to further disseminate such information using such methods as the administration deems appropriate.

## **LEGAL REFERENCES:**

### **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 <a href="#">34 C.F.R. Part 106</a> ]
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 <a href="#">34 C.F.R. Part 300</a> ]
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 <a href="#">29 C.F.R. Ch. XIV</a> ]
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 <a href="#">28 C.F.R. Part 42, Subpart C</a> ]
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. <a href="#">Part 1602</a> and <a href="#">Part 1630</a> ]
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 <a href="#">28 C.F.R. Part 35</a> ]
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 <a href="#">34 C.F.R. Part 104</a> , <a href="#">28 C.F.R. Part 42, Subpart G</a> , and <a href="#">29 C.F.R. Part 1640</a> ]
29 U.S.C. §621 et seq.	[Age Discrimination in Employment Act, as amended; implementing regulations at <a href="#">29 C.F.R. Parts 1625 to 1627</a> ]
8 U.S.C. §1324b(a)	[prohibiting employment discrimination based on national origin and citizenship status; implementing regulations at <a href="#">28 C.F.R. Part 44</a> ]
<a href="#">42 U.S.C. §2000gg et seq.</a>	[Pregnant Workers Fairness Act; implementing regulations at <a href="#">29 C.F.R. Part 1636</a> ]

*First Reading of Updates:* \_\_\_\_\_ *August 8, 2022*

*Second Reading/Approval of Updates:* \_\_\_\_\_ *September 12, 2022*

*First Reading/Approval of Updates:* \_\_\_\_\_ *July 8, 2024*