Title IX – What Do I Need to Know?

What is Title IX?

Title IX is a federal law (and accompanying regulations) that require school districts to properly address any complaints of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct. It requires ***any school employee*** who learns of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct between students (student-to-student), between employees (employee-to-employee), or between employees and students (employee-to-student) to appropriately respond and ***immediately notify the appropriate school district officials***.

What is considered sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual misconduct?

Sex discrimination is any action taken against a person that denies or limits the person's ability to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational program or activities based on the person's sex.

Sexual harassment included: (a) engaging in ***"quid pro quo"*** harassment where an employee explicitly or implicitly conditions the delivery of an educational aid, benefit, or service on a person's participation in unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex *or* (b) creating a ***"hostile environment"*** due to unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would consider to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school district's education program or activity.

Sexual misconduct includes acts of sexual violence, such as sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

If I learn of sex discrimination or sexual harassment, what should I do?

As a school district employee who creates meaningful relationships with students, your role in reporting concerns regarding discrimination and harassment is critical. You should always encourage students to express concerns to you about conduct that may be considered sex discrimination or sexual harassment. You should then ***immediately report any allegations*** of sexual misconduct (of any degree) to the appropriate school district officials (*see box below*). You are not obligated to (and should not) investigate the allegations or seek to resolve the concerns expressed to you.

You can*not* tell the student(s) that you will keep their concerns confidential and will not tell anyone. Again, ***every school district employee has an obligation to report any allegations of sexual misconduct***. You also should take any concerns expressed to you seriously, and should not discount the student's concerns by using "dangerous words" (*see box at right*).

DANGEROUS WORDS

In any investigation into claims of sexual harassment or sex discrimination, certain words or phrases may cause more harm than good. You should AVOID using the following words:

"*Just ignore it*."

"Can't you just accept a compliment?"

"*You must have made them think it was OK*."

"Lighten up." "They wouldn't do that."

"*Sounds like nothing wrong happened*."

Should I still discipline students like I normally do?

Every time you receive a complaint regarding student conduct, you must first consider whether the alleged conduct occurred ***because of the complainant's sex***. If the complaint in any way relates to claims of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct, as outlined above, you must ***STOP*** any discipline you are pursuing and contact the appropriate school district officials (*see box below*).

TITLE IX CONTACTS

If you learn of a complaint of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or sexual misconduct, you should contact:

Jenny Berens
Title IX Coordinator
102 East Main, Box 369
Treynor, IA 51575
(712) 487-3181
jberens@treynorcardinals.org

What can I do to reduce instances of and decrease the impact of sex discrimination and harassment within the school district?

All school employees are prohibited from engaging in any discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of a person's sex. You can*not* provide or deny educational benefits or opportunities on the basis of a person's sex. You also can*not* engage in or tolerate conduct that creates a hostile environment on the basis of a person's sex.

You should take affirmative steps to ensure you provide a welcoming environment for all students and should stop conduct that unfairly targets someone because of their sex. You must always ***act quickly*** when confronted with allegations of sex discrimination and report the allegations consistent with this handout and applicable Board policy.

To access Board policies regarding sex discrimination and sexual harassment, click here.

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I do hereby acknowledge receiving and fully reviewing the above information regarding sex discrimination and sexual harassment. I understand my obligations as a school employee. I recognize that, if I have any questions, I can reach out to my supervisor and/or the person(s) outlined above as Title IX Contacts.

Employee Signature	Employee Name (Printed)	Date

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