

Note: For provisions regarding bullying, see FFI. Note that FFH should be used in conjunction with FFI for certain alleged conduct.

Please see the student handbook for further information and resources on child sexual abuse, including awareness, prevention, and appropriate action.

Initial Assessment

The following guidelines apply when addressing any student complaint of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation committed by an employee or another adult associated with the District or a complaint of student-to-student harassment or dating violence when the allegations presented, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by District policy at FFH.

In the event that the allegations, if proven, would not constitute prohibited conduct as defined by District policy at FFH, the Superintendent or designee may then need to refer to policies and procedures at FFI, regarding bullying, or the Student Code of Conduct for other improper conduct.

Investigative Procedures

General Considerations

The investigator must maintain confidentiality to the extent possible and as allowed by law and must advise the complainant that limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation. Records of the investigation must be maintained in accordance with FB(LOCAL).

If possible, when investigating allegations of discrimination and/or gender-based harassment, the investigator should be the same sex as the student. During the investigative process, the student should be permitted to be accompanied by a parent, friend, or advisor.

In the course of the investigation, the investigator may also need to determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute bullying as defined by District policy. If the allegations would constitute bullying, the investigator will need to make a determination about the bullying incident in accordance with policies and procedures at FFI.

Guidelines

In conducting the investigation, the investigator will:

1. Take immediate action to protect the student from the alleged situation.
2. Notify parents of the allegations, explain to them the purpose of the investigation, and keep them apprised during the process.
3. Assure complainant of protection from retaliation.

4. Advise complainant that the District does not tolerate discrimination, harassment, dating violence, or retaliation and help the complainant feel secure about presenting allegations of wrongdoing.
5. Notify Child Protective Services of the Department of Family and Protective Services or local law enforcement within 48 hours if there is cause to believe the student has been sexually abused or neglected or has been a victim of indecency with a child.
6. If a law enforcement or regulatory agency notifies the District that a criminal or regulatory investigation has been initiated, confer with the agency to determine if the District investigation would impede the criminal or regulatory investigation and proceed only to the extent that the District's investigation does not impede the ongoing agency investigation. After the law enforcement or regulatory agency has completed gathering its evidence, the District will promptly resume its investigation.
7. Reduce all complaints to writing. If the student refuses to make or sign a written complaint, the administrator will carefully document the allegations in writing and record the date and circumstances of the interview.
8. Take a sworn statement if at all possible.
9. Secure any physical evidence.
10. Interview the complainant first, proceeding chronologically through the allegations.
11. Interview the alleged victim if that person is not also the complainant. Assure the alleged victim of protection from retaliation.
12. Interview any witnesses.
13. Maintain detailed notes of all interviews. Notes will be read to witnesses to verify details and to ensure accuracy. Record facts, not conclusions. In addition, the interviewer may audio-record the interview.
14. Develop a summary of interview notes, which should be signed by witnesses to verify the accuracy of their statements. If a witness declines to sign the summary or to allow the use of his or her name, the interviewer will note that restriction and retain the unsigned document.
15. Interview the alleged harasser and take a written or sworn statement, if possible. The alleged harasser will be presented with each allegation and provided an opportunity to respond.

16. Advise the alleged harasser that retaliation against the victim, the complainant, or any witnesses is strictly prohibited by District policy.
17. Not concede the truth or falsehood of the allegations during the course of the investigation.
18. Not divulge information regarding the identity of the victim or alleged perpetrator unnecessarily when interviewing other witnesses.
19. Document all efforts made to investigate the alleged harassment.
20. Prepare a written report of the investigation.

Investigation Report

The Superintendent or designee will communicate the results of the investigation to the alleged victim, the alleged victim’s parents, the alleged harasser, and the alleged harasser’s parents, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

The investigation report should include any determinations made by the investigator regarding prohibited conduct and bullying and the actions to be taken in response to such determinations.

Dismissal of Complaint

If upon completion of the investigation, the investigator determines that dismissal of the complaint is warranted, he or she will follow up with the alleged victim, the alleged harasser, the complainant, and the witnesses, if possible, to ensure that behavior giving rise to the allegations does not recur.

The investigator will advise the alleged victim and his or her parents, the harasser, and the complainant of their right to appeal the investigator’s decision through the student complaint process at FNG(LOCAL), beginning at Level Two, as well as notify them of their right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

Disciplinary Action

Against an Employee

If, upon completion of the investigation, the investigator determines that disciplinary action against an employee is warranted, the investigator will notify the principal and the Superintendent.

The District must notify SBEC if an educator’s employment is terminated or if the educator resigns, and reasonable evidence supports a recommendation to terminate based on a determination that the educator engaged in certain criminal misconduct. [See DF]

Against a Student

If upon completion of the investigation the investigator determines that disciplinary action against a student is warranted, the investigator will proceed with the appropriate course of action, in accordance with the District’s Student Code of Conduct.