

## Harassment by a Student

### Definition of Harassment

**In General.** Harassment includes communications such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct which offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.

By law, the particular communication or conduct is viewed from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may reasonably be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to others when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

### Complaints Made by Students or Staff Involving Harassment By A Student

Upon receiving a complaint, the Principal or Assistant Principal shall confer with the Complainant to gain an understanding and statement of the alleged facts. If it is determined that such facts, if true, would constitute harassment as defined above, the complaint officer shall take appropriate steps to investigate and/or resolve the complaint. Such steps may include, but are not limited to those listed below.

- 1 . Meet with the person charged (such person is hereinafter referred to as "Respondent") to obtain a response to the complaint;
- 2 . Conduct interviews of possible witnesses to the alleged events;
- 3 . Report the matter to local police if criminal activity is involved (see Mass. Gen. Laws, c. 265, §43, which prohibits stalking);
- 4 . Subject to the requirements of due process, take disciplinary action against Respondent, including without limitation, a letter of reprimand or warning or a suspension of one to ten days;
- 5 . Refer Respondent to the Principal or Superintendent for further disciplinary action.

### Retaliation

Respondent and his/her associates are prohibited from retaliating in any manner against a Complainant or any party involved in the complaint procedure. Substantiated acts of retaliation will result in immediate disciplinary action, including, but not limited to suspension and/or recommendation to the Superintendent for further disciplinary action.

ADOPTED: June 11, 2007