

U.S. Department of Education

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Checklist for a Comprehensive Approach to Addressing Harassment

- Board members, district administrators, and the superintendent recognize the urgency of the problem of unlawful harassment and hate crime, identify people and agencies that can help them develop effective prevention and response strategies, and compile a library of useful materials
- School officials select personnel to work on creating an effective anti-harassment program in consultation with parents, students, and community groups
- Compliance coordinators are appointed and trained
- School personnel assess the school climate to determine the prevalence and types of harassment that may exist and the potential for hate-motivated violence
- School district adopts a written anti-harassment policy or reviews and revises existing policies for accuracy, clarity and legal compliance; the policy is clearly communicated to all members of the school community; and school personnel and students are held accountable for their actions
- School district develops a formal grievance procedure and takes steps to make sure it is working properly
- Instructional personnel use or supplement the district's curriculum and pedagogical strategies to foster respect and appreciation for diversity
- School sites institute, improve, or expand age appropriate student activities to prevent or reduce prejudice and conflict
- School district and individual school sites institute specific measures to respond immediately and effectively when harassment occurs to stop the harassment and prevent recurrence
- School officials flexibly apply response mechanisms to both the victim and the perpetrator, taking into account the parties' ages and the context of the behavior
- School personnel continually monitor the school climate and promptly address problems that could lead to harassment or violence or that indicate that harassment could be occurring
- Appropriate school officials become familiar with pertinent civil and criminal laws at the state, local, and federal levels, so that they are able to recognize possible civil rights violations, hate crimes and other criminal acts
- Schools develop guidelines and procedures for collaboration with law enforcement officials, make appropriate referrals to outside agencies, and designate liaison personnel
- Crisis intervention plans are in place to minimize the possibility of violence or disruption of the educational process
- District-level personnel and individual school sites form continuing partnerships with parents and the community to prevent hate crimes and harassing behaviors
- Staff training and professional development programs support the district's anti-harassment efforts
- All harassment incidents are carefully documented and incidents are reported to outside authorities as required
- District regularly assesses the effectiveness of its anti-harassment efforts

Source: Protecting Students from Harassment and Hate Crime, A Guide for Schools, January 1999

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