

High Point Regional High School

Anti-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Handbook

2019-20 Affirmative Action Team:

Seamus Campbell, Affirmative Action Officer

Gib Carter, Affirmative Action Team Member

High Point Regional High School declares it to be the policy of this district to provide equal and bias free access to all school facilities, courses, programs, activities, and services, regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital or domestic partnership or civil union status, sex, gender identity or expression, affectional or sexual orientation, social or economic status, or disability. In keeping with this policy (and state and federal affirmative action guidelines) all staff members are reminded that aspects of these requirements will be monitored for compliance and documented as part of our record keeping. For further information, refer to High Point Board Policies: 1550, 2260, 3362, 4360, 5751 and 5512.

If you have any questions regarding the Affirmative Action/Equity Programs and Policies, please contact an Affirmative Action Team member. All of the Equity Policies and Procedures are important in maintaining a non-hostile educational environment and workplace. The High Point Board of Education, in accordance with state and federal law, shall guarantee equal employment opportunity throughout the district. Refer to Board Policies 1530 and 1550. The district has a Grievance Procedure to provide for the resolution of complaints of discrimination/harassment.

In the event that information is received by a staff member that indicates a student may have been subject to sexual abuse/misconduct/contact of any kind in violation of criminal statutes, an immediate report must be made by such staff member to the New Jersey Department of Children and Families, and then to the Principal. The Principal must then make an immediate report to the Superintendent, to Police or County Prosecutor, and to the Affirmative Action Officer. After a report to law enforcement, staff is not permitted to conduct any investigation of the charge(s) until local law enforcement and the New Jersey Department of Children and Families have specifically authorized that the District may conduct the same. In the meantime, the District will hold the affirmative action investigation in abeyance.

High Point Regional High School will not tolerate sexual or any other type of harassment in the workplace and educational environment by staff or students. Any student or school employee who believes he/she has been a victim of sexual harassment, or harassment based on race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital or domestic partnership or civil union status, sex, gender identity or expression, affectional or sexual orientation, social or economic status, or disability by a student or other school personnel of the district is encouraged to immediately report the alleged act to a member of the Affirmative Action Team or to the Principal. Based on the nature of the report, The Affirmative Action Team will advise the individual making the report to follow the

formal affirmative action grievance procedures (enclosed), or to contact an administrator so that disciplinary measures or steps toward conflict resolution may be considered. Regardless of the Affirmative Action Team's recommendation, individuals are always permitted to file a formal affirmative action grievance.

The Affirmative Action Team will receive all formal, written grievances and carry out a thorough investigation, protecting the rights of both the person making the complaint and the person alleged to have engaged in harassment or inappropriate behavior related to affirmative action. When investigating affirmative action grievances, it is not always possible to honor a person's request for confidentiality. If you believe that you have been unlawfully discriminated against or harassed, the Board strongly encourages you to report the incident(s) and/or to file a formal grievance. The Board strictly prohibits any form of retaliation against a student or employee for filing a complaint.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

PURPOSE:

To provide students, employees, and parents a procedure by which they can seek a remedy for alleged violations related to discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, marital or domestic partnership or civil union status, sex, gender identity or expression, affectional or sexual orientation, social or economic status, or disability

DEFINITIONS:

Affirmative Action Grievance: A complaint for alleged violation(s) related to discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, affection or sexual orientation, sex, ancestry, national origin, or socioeconomic status.

Grievant: Any student, employee, or parent aggrieved by a decision or condition falling under the guidelines of federal and/or state anti-discrimination laws.

Affirmative Action Officer: The district employee designated to coordinate efforts with anti-discrimination legislation and charged with the responsibility of investigating complaints.

PROCEDURE:

Step #1: The grievant shall submit the complaint in written form to the Affirmative Action Officer (Grievant Report Form A).

Step #2: The Affirmative Action Team will investigate and respond to the grievant within seven school days (response portion of Grievant Report Form A). A copy of this response will also be submitted to the Superintendent.

Step #3: If not satisfied with the Affirmative Action Team's response, the grievant may appeal within seven working days to the Superintendent or designee (Appeal - Form B).

Step #4: Response by the Superintendent or designee shall be provided within seven working days. (Superintendent to use the space provided on Appeal - Form B).

Step #5: If the grievant is not satisfied at this level, an appeal may be made within ten working days to the Board of Education which will hear the complaint at the next regular meeting or within thirty calendar days (Appeal - form C). The Board hearing shall be conducted so as to accord due process to all parties in the complaint such as written notice of hearing dates, right to counsel, right to present witnesses, right to cross-examine and to present written statement. The decision of the Board shall be by majority of the members at a public meeting.

Step #6: The Board of Education shall respond to the grievant within thirty calendar days. (Use the space provided for an Appeal - Form C).

Step #7: If the grievant is not satisfied with the Board's decision, the grievant can have it referred to the County Superintendent of Schools.

Step #8: The grievant maintains the right to bypass the grievance procedure and to submit the complaint directly to any or all of the following agencies:

1. The Commissioner of Education
Bureau of Controversies and Disputes
New Jersey Department of Education
P.O. Box 500
Trenton, NJ 08625 Phone: 609-292-5705
2. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Newark District Office
1 Newark Center, 21st Floor
Newark, NJ 07102 Phone: 800-669-4000 or 973-645-6383
3. U.S. Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
32 Old Slip, 26th Floor
New York, NY 100052500
Phone: 646-428-3900 TDD: 877-521-2172
Email: OCR.NewYork@ed.gov
4. New Jersey Division on Civil Rights
140 East Front Street, 6th Floor
P.O. Box 090
Trenton, NJ 086250090 Phone: 609-292-4605 TDD: 609-292-1785

GRIEVANCE REPORT - FORM A

STEP #1

FROM: _____, Grievant

TO: _____, Affirmative Action Officer

DATE: _____

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT: (use additional paper if necessary)

Number of pages attached: _____

(Signature of Grievant)

(This portion to be used by Affirmative Action Officer ONLY)

STEP #2

Grievance Number _____

TO : _____, Grievant

FROM: _____, Affirmative Action Officer

DATE: _____

RESPONSE TO GRIEVANT:

(Date Grievance was Received)

(Signature of Affirmative Action Officer)

APPEAL - FORM B

Step #3

Grievance Number _____

FROM: _____, Grievant

TO: _____, Superintendent

DATE: _____

“Grievance Report Form A is hereby attached for APPEAL to the Superintendent.”

(Signature of Grievant)

(This portion to be used by the Superintendent ONLY)

STEP #4

Grievance Number _____

TO : _____, Grievant

FROM: _____, Superintendent DATE: _____

RESPONSE TO GRIEVANT’S APPEAL:

(Date Appeal Received)

(Signature of Superintendent)

SECOND APPEAL - FORM C

Step #5

Grievance Number _____

FROM: _____, Grievant

TO: _____, Board President DATE: _____

The attached Grievance Forms A and B, are hereby submitted for the Board of Education's review pertaining to my complaint and appeal.

(Signature of Grievant)

(This portion to be used by Board of Education President ONLY)

STEP #6

Grievance Number _____

TO : _____, Grievant

FROM: _____, Board President DATE: _____

RESPONSE TO SECOND APPEAL:

(Date Appeal Received)

(Signature: Board of Education President)

