

**NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT**

The Governing Board desires to provide a safe school environment that allows all students equal access and opportunities in the district's academic, extracurricular, and other educational support programs, services, and activities. The Board prohibits, at any district school or school activity, unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying, targeted at any student by anyone, based on the student's actual or perceived race, color, ancestry, national origin, nationality, ethnicity, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or gender expression or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

This policy shall apply to all acts related to school activity or to school attendance occurring within a district school, and to acts which occur off campus or outside of school-related or school-sponsored activities but which may have an impact or create a hostile environment at school.

*(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)*

*(cf. 5131 - Conduct)*

*(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)*

*(cf. 5137 - Positive School Climate)*

*(cf. 5145.9 - Hate-Motivated Behavior)*

*(cf. 5146 - Married/Pregnant/Parenting Students)*

*(cf. 6164.6 - Identification and Education Under Section 504)*

Unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, may result from physical, verbal, nonverbal, or written conduct based on any of the categories listed above. Unlawful discrimination also includes the creation of a hostile environment through prohibited conduct that is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it affects a student's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity; creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive educational environment; has the effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance; or otherwise adversely affects a student's educational opportunities.

Unlawful discrimination also includes disparate treatment of students based on one of the categories above with respect to the provision of opportunities to participate in school programs or activities or the provision or receipt of educational benefits or services.

The Board also prohibits any form of retaliation against any individual who reports or participates in the reporting of unlawful discrimination, files or participates in the filing of a complaint, or investigates or participates in the investigation of a complaint or report alleging unlawful discrimination. Retaliation complaints shall be investigated and resolved in the same manner as a discrimination complaint.

The Superintendent or designee shall facilitate students' access to the educational program by publicizing the district's nondiscrimination policy and related complaint procedures to students, parents/guardians, and employees. He/she shall provide training and information on the scope

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and use of the policy and complaint procedures and take other measures designed to increase the school community's understanding of the requirements of law related to discrimination. The Superintendent or designee shall regularly review the implementation of the district's nondiscrimination policies and practices and, as necessary, shall take action to remove any identified barrier to student access to or participation in the district's educational program. He/she shall report his/her findings and recommendations to the Board after each review.

*(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)*  
*(cf. 1330 - Use of Facilities)*  
*(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)*  
*(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)*  
*(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)*  
*(cf. 6145 - Extracurricular and Cocurricular Activities)*  
*(cf. 6145.2 - Athletic Competition)*  
*(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)*

Regardless of whether a complainant complies with the writing, timeline, and/or other formal filing requirements, all complaints alleging unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, shall be investigated and prompt action taken to stop the discrimination, prevent recurrence, and address any continuing effect on students.

Students who engage in unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying, in violation of law, Board policy, or administrative regulation shall be subject to appropriate consequence or discipline, which may include suspension or expulsion when the behavior is severe or pervasive as defined in Education Code 48900.4. Any employee who permits or engages in prohibited discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying, shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

*(cf. 4118 - Suspension/Disciplinary Action)*  
*(cf. 4119.21/4219.21/4319.21 - Professional Standards)*  
*(cf. 4218 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)*  
*(cf. 5144 - Discipline)*  
*(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)*  
*(cf. 5144.2 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students with Disabilities))*  
*(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)*

**Record-Keeping**

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain a record of all reported cases of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, to enable the district to monitor, address, and prevent repetitive prohibited behavior in district schools.

*(cf. 3580 - District Records)*

*Legal Reference: (see next page)*

**NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT** (continued)

*Legal Reference:*

EDUCATION CODE

200-262.4 *Prohibition of discrimination*  
48900.3 *Suspension or expulsion for act of hate violence*  
48900.4 *Suspension or expulsion for threats or harassment*  
48904 *Liability of parent/guardian for willful student misconduct*  
48907 *Student exercise of free expression*  
48950 *Freedom of speech*  
48985 *Translation of notices*  
49020-49023 *Athletic programs*  
51500 *Prohibited instruction or activity*  
51501 *Prohibited means of instruction*  
60044 *Prohibited instructional materials*

CIVIL CODE

1714.1 *Liability of parents/guardians for willful misconduct of minor*

PENAL CODE

422.55 *Definition of hate crime*  
422.6 *Crimes, harassment*

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

432 *Student record*  
4600-4687 *Uniform complaint procedures*  
4900-4965 *Nondiscrimination in elementary and secondary education programs*

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1681-1688 *Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972*  
12101-12213 *Title II equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities*

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 29

794 *Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973*

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42

2000d-2000e-17 *Title VI and Title VII Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended*  
2000h-2-2000h-6 *Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*  
6101-6107 *Age Discrimination Act of 1975*

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 28

35.107 *Nondiscrimination on basis of disability; complaints*

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

99.31 *Disclosure of personally identifiable information*  
100.3 *Prohibition of discrimination on basis of race, color or national origin*  
104.7 *Designation of responsible employee for Section 504*  
106.8 *Designation of responsible employee for Title IX*  
106.9 *Notification of nondiscrimination on basis of sex*

COURT DECISIONS

*Donovan v. Poway Unified School District*, (2008) 167 Cal.App.4th 567  
*Flores v. Morgan Hill Unified School District*, (2003) 324 F.3d 1130

*Management Resources: (see next page)*

**NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)**

*Management Resources:*

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

*Providing a Safe, Nondiscriminatory School Environment for Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Students*, Policy Brief, February 2014

*Final Guidance Regarding Transgender Students, Privacy, and Facilities*, March 2014

*Safe Schools: Strategies for Governing Boards to Ensure Student Success*, 2011

FIRST AMENDMENT CENTER PUBLICATIONS

*Public Schools and Sexual Orientation: A First Amendment Framework for Finding Common Ground*, 2006

NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION PUBLICATIONS

*Dealing with Legal Matters Surrounding Students' Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity*, 2004

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS PUBLICATIONS

*Dear Colleague Letter: Transgender Students*, May 2016

*Examples of Policies and Emerging Practices for Supporting Transgender Students*, May 2016

*Dear Colleague Letter: Title IX Coordinators*, April 2015

*Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying*, October 2010

*Notice of Non-Discrimination*, January 1999

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

California Department of Education: <http://www.cde.ca.gov>

California Safe Schools Coalition: <http://www.casafeschools.org>

First Amendment Center: <http://www.firstamendmentcenter.org>

National School Boards Association: <http://www.nsba.org>

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights: <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr>

Policy  
adopted: February 23, 1999  
revised: August 22, 2000  
revised: September 28, 2004  
revised: July 13, 2010  
revised: August 14, 2012  
revised: October 8, 2013  
revised: October 28, 2014  
revised: June 13, 2017

**VISALIA UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
Visalia, California

**NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT**

The district designates the individual(s) identified below as the employee(s) responsible for coordinating the district's efforts to comply with applicable state and federal civil rights laws, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and to answer inquiries regarding the district's nondiscrimination policies. The individual(s) shall also serve as the compliance officer(s) specified in AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures as the responsible employee to handle complaints alleging unlawful discrimination targeting a student, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, based on the student's actual or perceived race, color, ancestry, national origin, nationality, ethnicity, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or any other legally protected status or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. The coordinator/compliance officer(s) may be contacted at: (Education Code 234.1; 5 CCR 4621)

Director of Student Services  
5000 W. Cypress Avenue  
Visalia, CA 93277  
(559) 730-7573

*(cf. 1312.1 - Complaints Concerning District Employees)*  
*(cf. 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures)*

**Measures to Prevent Discrimination**

To prevent unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, and bullying, of students at district schools or in school activities and to ensure equal access of all students to the educational program, the Superintendent or designee shall implement the following measures:

1. Publicize the district's nondiscrimination policy and related complaint procedures, including the coordinator/compliance officer's contact information, to students, parents/guardians, employees, volunteers, and the general public, posting them on the district's web site and other prominent locations and providing easy access to them through district-supported social media, when available.

*(cf. 1113 - District and School Web Sites)*  
*(cf. 1114 - District-Sponsored Social Media)*

2. Provide to students a handbook that contains age-appropriate information that clearly describes the district's nondiscrimination policy, procedures for filing a complaint, and resources available to students who feel that they have been the victim of any such behavior. (Education Code 234.1)

**NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT** (continued)

3. Annually notify all students and parents/guardians of the district's nondiscrimination policy, including its responsibility to provide a safe, nondiscriminatory school environment for all students, including transgender and gender-nonconforming students. The notice shall inform students and parents/guardians that they may request to meet with the compliance officer to determine how best to accommodate or resolve concerns that may arise from the district's implementation of its nondiscrimination policies. The notice shall also inform all students and parents/guardians that, to the extent possible, the district will address any individual student's interests and concerns in private.

*(cf. 5145.6 - Parental Notifications)*

4. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that students and parents/guardians, including those with limited English proficiency, are notified of how to access the relevant information provided in the district's nondiscrimination policy and related complaint procedures, notices, and forms in a language they can understand.

If 15 percent or more of students enrolled in a particular district school speak a single primary language other than English, the district's policy, regulation, forms, and notices concerning nondiscrimination shall be translated into that language in accordance with Education Code 234.1 and 48985. In all other instances, the district shall ensure meaningful access to all relevant information for parents/guardians with limited English proficiency.

5. Provide to students, employees, volunteers, and parents/guardians age-appropriate training and information regarding the district's nondiscrimination policy; what constitutes prohibited discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying; how and to whom a report of an incident should be made; and how to guard against segregating or stereotyping students when providing instruction, guidance, supervision, or other services to them. Such training and information shall include details of guidelines the district may use to provide a discrimination-free environment for all district students, including transgender and gender-nonconforming students.

*(cf. 1240 - Volunteer Assistance)*

*(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)*

*(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)*

*(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)*

6. At the beginning of each school year, inform school employees that any employee who witnesses any act of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, against a student is required to intervene if it is safe to do so. (Education Code 234.1)

## **NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT (continued)**

7. At the beginning of each school year, inform each principal or designee of the district's responsibility to provide appropriate assistance or resources to protect students' privacy rights and ensure their safety from threatened or potentially discriminatory behavior.

### **Enforcement of District Policy**

The Superintendent or designee shall take appropriate actions to reinforce BP 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment. As needed, these actions may include any of the following:

1. Removing vulgar or offending graffiti

*(cf. 5131.5 - Vandalism and Graffiti)*

2. Providing training to students, staff, and parents/guardians about how to recognize unlawful discrimination, how to report it or file a complaint, and how to respond
3. Disseminating and/or summarizing the district's policy and regulation regarding unlawful discrimination
4. Consistent with the laws regarding the confidentiality of student and personnel records, communicating the school's response to students, parents/guardians, and the community

*(cf. 4112.6/4212.6/4312.6 - Personnel Files)*

*(cf. 4119.23/4219.23/4319.23 - Unauthorized Release of Confidential/Privileged Information)*

*(cf. 5125 - Student Records)*

5. Taking appropriate disciplinary action against students, employees, and anyone determined to have engaged in wrongdoing in violation of district policy, including any student who is found to have filed a complaint of discrimination that he/she knew was not true

*(cf. 4118 - Suspension/Disciplinary Action)*

*(cf. 4218 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)*

*(cf. 5144 - Discipline)*

*(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)*

*(cf. 5144.2 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students with Disabilities))*

*(cf. 6159.4 - Behavioral Interventions for Special Education Students)*

### **Process for Initiating and Responding to Complaints**

Any student who feels that he/she has been subjected to unlawful discrimination described above or in district policy is strongly encouraged to immediately contact the compliance officer,

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principal, or any other staff member. In addition, any student who observes any such incident is strongly encouraged to report the incident to the compliance officer or principal, whether or not the alleged victim files a complaint.

Any school employee who observes an incident of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying, or to whom such an incident is reported shall report the incident to the compliance officer or principal within a school day, whether or not the alleged victim files a complaint.

Any school employee who witnesses an incident of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying, shall immediately intervene to stop the incident when it is safe to do so. (Education Code 234.1)

When a verbal report of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying, is made to or received by the principal or compliance officer, he/she shall make a note of the report and encourage the student or parent/guardian to file the complaint in writing, pursuant to the provisions in AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures. Once notified verbally or in writing, the principal or compliance officer shall begin the investigation and shall implement immediate measures necessary to stop the discrimination and ensure that all students have access to the educational program and a safe school environment. Any interim measures adopted to address unlawful discrimination shall, to the extent possible, not disadvantage the complainant or a student who is the victim of the alleged unlawful discrimination.

Any report or complaint alleging unlawful discrimination by the principal, compliance officer, or any other person to whom a report would ordinarily be made or complaint filed shall instead be made to or filed with the Superintendent or designee who shall determine how the complaint will be investigated.

*(cf. 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting)*

**Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Students**

*Gender identity* of a student means the student's gender-related identity, appearance, or behavior as determined from the student's internal sense of his/her gender, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance, or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the student's physiology or assigned sex at birth.

*Gender expression* means a student's gender-related appearance and behavior, whether stereotypically associated with the student's assigned sex at birth. (Education Code 210.7)



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*Gender transition* refers to the process in which a student changes from living and identifying as the sex assigned to the student at birth to living and identifying as the sex that corresponds to the student's gender identity.

*Gender-nonconforming student* means a student whose gender expression differs from stereotypical expectations.

*Transgender student* means a student whose gender identity is different from the gender he/she was assigned at birth.

Regardless of whether they are sexual in nature, acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility that are based on sex, gender identity, or gender expression, or that have the purpose or effect of producing a negative impact on the student's academic performance or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment are prohibited. Examples of types of conduct which are prohibited in the district and which may constitute gender-based harassment include, but are not limited to:

1. Refusing to address a student by a name and the pronouns consistent with his/her gender identity
2. Disciplining or disparaging a student or excluding him/her from participating in activities for behavior or appearance that is consistent with his/her gender identity or that does not conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity, as applicable
3. Blocking a student's entry to the bathroom that corresponds to his/her gender identity
4. Taunting a student because he/she participates in an athletic activity more typically favored by a student of the other sex
5. Revealing a student's transgender status to individuals who do not have a legitimate need for the information, without the student's consent
6. Use of gender-specific slurs
7. Physical assault of a student motivated by hostility toward him/her because of his/her gender, gender identity, or gender expression

The district's uniform complaint procedures (AR 1312.3) shall be used to report and resolve complaints alleging discrimination against transgender and gender-nonconforming students.

Examples of bases for complaints include, but are not limited to, the above list, as well as improper rejection by the district of a student's asserted gender identity, denial of access to

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facilities that correspond with a student's gender identity, improper disclosure of a student's transgender status, discriminatory enforcement of a dress code, and other instances of gender-based harassment.

To ensure that transgender and gender-nonconforming students are afforded the same rights, benefits, and protections provided to all students by law and Board policy, the district shall address each situation on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with the following guidelines:

1. **Right to privacy:** A student's transgender or gender-nonconforming status is his/her private information and the district shall only disclose the information to others with the student's prior written consent, except when the disclosure is otherwise required by law or when the district has compelling evidence that disclosure is necessary to preserve the student's physical or mental well-being. In any case, the district shall only allow disclosure of a student's personally identifiable information to employees with a legitimate educational interest as determined by the district pursuant to 34 CFR 99.31. Any district employee to whom a student's transgender or gender-nonconforming status is disclosed shall keep the student's information confidential. When disclosure of a student's gender identity is made to a district employee by a student, the employee shall seek the student's permission to notify the compliance officer. If the student refuses to give permission, the employee shall keep the student's information confidential, unless he/she is required to disclose or report the student's information pursuant to this procedure, and shall inform the student that honoring the student's request may limit the district's ability to meet the student's needs related to his/her status as a transgender or gender-nonconforming student. If the student permits the employee to notify the compliance officer, the employee shall do so within three school days.

As appropriate given the student's need for support, the compliance officer may discuss with the student any need to disclose the student's transgender or gender-nonconformity status or gender identity or gender expression to his/her parents/guardians and/or others, including other students, teacher(s), or other adults on campus. The district shall offer support services, such as counseling, to students who wish to inform their parents/guardians of their status and desire assistance in doing so.

*(cf. 1340 - Access to District Records)*

*(cf. 3580 - District Records)*

2. **Determining a Student's Gender Identity:** The compliance officer shall accept the student's assertion of his/her gender identity and begin to treat the student consistent with his/her gender identity unless district personnel present a credible and supportable basis for believing that the student's assertion is for an improper purpose.

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2. **Addressing a Student's Transition Needs:** The compliance officer shall arrange a meeting with the student and, if appropriate, his/her parents/guardians to identify and develop strategies for ensuring that the student's access to education programs and activities is maintained. The meeting shall discuss the transgender or gender-nonconforming student's rights and how those rights may affect and be affected by the rights of other students and shall address specific subjects related to the student's access to facilities and to academic or educational support programs, services, or activities, including, but not limited to, sports and other competitive endeavors. In addition, the compliance officer shall identify specific school site employee(s) to whom the student may report any problem related to his/her status as a transgender or gender-nonconforming individual, so that prompt action could be taken to address it.

Alternatively, if appropriate and desired by the student, the school may form a support team for the student that will meet periodically to assess whether the arrangements for the student are meeting his/her educational needs and providing equal access to programs and activities, educate appropriate staff about the student's transition, and serve as a resource to the student to better protect the student from gender-based discrimination.

4. **Accessibility to Sex-Segregated Facilities, Programs, and Activities:** When the district maintains sex-segregated facilities, such as restrooms and locker rooms, or offers sex-segregated programs and activities, such as physical education classes, intermural sports, and interscholastic athletic programs, students shall be permitted to access facilities and participate in programs and activities consistent with their gender identity. To address any student's privacy concerns in using sex-segregated facilities, the district shall offer available options such as a gender-neutral or single-use restroom or changing area, a bathroom stall with a door, an area in the locker room separated by a curtain or screen, access to a staff member's office, or use of the locker room before or after the other students. However, the district shall not require a student to utilize these options because he/she is transgender or gender-nonconforming. In addition, a student shall be permitted to participate in accordance with his/her gender identity in other circumstances where students are separated by gender, such as for class discussions, yearbook pictures, and field trips. A student's right to participate in a sex-segregated activity in accordance with his/her gender identity shall not render invalid or inapplicable any other eligibility rule established for participation in the activity.

*(cf. 6145 - Extracurricular and Cocurricular Activities)*

*(cf. 6145.2 - Athletic Competition)*

*(cf. 6153 - School-Sponsored Trips)*

*(cf. 7110 - Facilities Master Plan)*

**NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT** (continued)

5. Student Records: A student's legal name or gender as entered on the mandatory student record required pursuant to 5 CCR 432 shall only be changed pursuant to a court order. However, at the written request of a student or, if appropriate, his/her parents/guardians, the district shall use the student's preferred name and pronouns consistent with his/her gender identity on all other district-related documents. Such preferred name may be added to the student's record and official documents as permitted by law.

*(cf. 5125 - Student Records)*

*(cf. 5125.1 - Release of Directory Information)*

6. Names and Pronouns: If a student so chooses, district personnel shall be required to address the student by a name and the pronouns consistent with his/her gender identity, without the necessity of a court order or a change to his/her official district record. However, inadvertent slips or honest mistakes by district personnel in the use of the student's name and/or consistent pronouns shall not constitute a violation of this administrative regulation or the accompanying district policy.
7. Uniforms/Dress Code: A student has the right to dress in a manner consistent with his/her gender identity, subject to any dress code adopted on a school site.

*(cf. 5132 - Dress Code)*

**NONDISCRIMINATION/HARASSMENT****Interventions & Discipline (Grades K-12)****Clarification of Discipline Responses for Grades 7-12: For First and Second Offenses:**

Applies to all racial slurs or harassing remarks based on actual or perceived sexual orientation.

**Unhateful  
Remarks**

On the **first offense** when a racial slur or harassing remark is used in an unhateful way, even when said by a student of the same race and/or among friends or relatives, it results in a documented conference with student, warning, mandatory parent contact and referral to counselor. Contact parents of other student(s) involved to clarify and emphasize expectation that no such use of racial or harassing slurs will be tolerated at school. On the **second offense** if a racial slur or harassing remark continues to be used even in an unhateful way, it will result in a minimum one-day suspension from school.

**Hate-  
Motivated  
Remarks**

When racial, harassing remarks are made with derogatory intent, the potential for harm and inciting anger are greatly increased. This is defined as a “**hate-motivated**” act. On the **first offense** when a racial slur or harassing remark is used in a hate-motivated way, it results in a minimum one-day suspension. On the **second offense** if a racial slur or harassing remark continues to be used in a hate-motivated way, it will result in a minimum two-day suspension from school. In administering either of these suspensions, the school will make mandatory contact with the parent of student being disciplined. Make mandatory referral of involved students to be seen by their school counselor/learning director. Make mandatory contact with parent of the victim to explain what transpired, what the school has done and how their student can access further help and/or support if necessary.

Approved: 8/1/05

Revised: 5/1/06