
Note: This policy addresses complaints of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and retaliation targeting students. For legally referenced material relating to discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, see FA(LEGAL). For sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and retaliation targeting employees, see DIAA.

**Statement of
Nondiscrimination**

The College District prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any student on the basis of sex or gender. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of College District policy and is prohibited.

Definitions

Discrimination

Discrimination against a student is defined as conduct directed at a student on the basis of sex or gender that adversely affects the student.

*Sexual Harassment
By an Employee*

Sexual harassment of a student by a College District employee includes unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct; or other conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

1. A College District employee causes the student to believe that the student must submit to the conduct in order to participate in a school program or activity, or that the employee will make an educational decision based on whether or not the student submits to the conduct; or
2. The conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it limits or denies the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the College District's educational program.

By Others

Sexual harassment of a student, including harassment committed by another student, includes unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or sexually motivated physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct when the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it limits or denies a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the College District's educational program.

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence includes physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent due to the victim's use of drugs or alcohol or due to an intellectual or other disability.

Examples

Examples of sexual harassment of a student may include sexual advances; touching intimate body parts or coercing physical con-

tact that is sexual in nature; jokes or conversations of a sexual nature; rape; sexual assault as defined by law; sexual battery; sexual coercion; and other sexually motivated conduct, communications, or contact.

Physical contact not reasonably construed as sexual in nature is not sexual harassment.

Gender-Based
Harassment

Gender-based harassment includes physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on the student's gender, the student's expression of characteristics perceived as stereotypical for the student's gender, or the student's failure to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity or femininity. For purposes of this policy, gender-based harassment is considered prohibited harassment if the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct limits or denies a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the College District's educational program.

Examples

Examples of gender-based harassment directed against a student, regardless of the student's or the harasser's actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, may include offensive jokes, name-calling, slurs, or rumors; physical aggression or assault; threatening or intimidating conduct; or other kinds of aggressive conduct such as theft or damage to property.

Dating Violence

"Dating violence" means violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on the reporting party's statement and with consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. For the purposes of this definition, dating violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse. Dating violence does not include acts covered under the Clery Act definition of domestic violence.

Stalking

"Stalking" means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for the person's safety or the safety of others, or suffer substantial emotional distress.

For the purposes of this definition:

1. "Course of conduct" means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about a person, or interferes with a person's property.

2. "Reasonable person" means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the victim.

Prohibited Conduct In this policy, the term "prohibited conduct" includes discrimination, harassment, dating violence, stalking, and retaliation as described by this policy, even if the behavior does not rise to the level of unlawful conduct.

Confidential Employee A "confidential employee" is a person who holds a professional license requiring confidentiality, such as a counselor or medical provider, who is supervised by such a person, or a person who is a nonprofessional counselor or advocate designated in administrative procedures as a confidential source.

**Reporting
Procedures**

Student Report A victim of prohibited conduct has the right to report the incident to the College District and to receive a prompt and equitable resolution of the report.

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited conduct or believes that another student has experienced prohibited conduct should immediately report the alleged acts to the Title IX coordinator or another employee or submit the Student-Employee Report electronically through the College District's website. The submission of an anonymous electronic report may impair the College District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

A victim of a crime has the right to choose whether to report the crime to law enforcement, to be assisted by the College District in reporting the crime to law enforcement, or to decline to report the crime to law enforcement.

It is important that a victim of prohibited conduct go to a hospital for treatment and preservation of evidence, if applicable, as soon as practicable after the incident.

Exception Absent consent or unless required by law, a student designated in administrative regulations as a student advocate to whom another student may speak confidentially concerning prohibited conduct may not disclose any communication made by the other student.

Employee Report Any College District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced prohibited conduct, regardless of when or where the incident occurred, shall immediately notify the Title IX coordinator and shall take any other steps required by this policy. Additionally, the employee may report to the College President or designee.

	<p>A report against the College President must also be made directly to the Board. If a report is made directly to the Board, the Board shall appoint an appropriate person to conduct an investigation.</p>
<p><i>Exceptions</i></p>	
<p>Disclosure at Event</p>	<p>A person who received the information solely from a disclosure at a sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking public awareness event sponsored by a postsecondary educational institution or by a student organization affiliated with the institution is not required to report the prohibited conduct.</p>
<p>Employee Subject to Confidentiality Rules</p>	<p>Absent the student's consent, or unless required by law, a confidential employee shall only be required to disclose the type of incident reported and may not disclose information that would violate the student's expectation of privacy. If multiple confidential employees receive information about the same alleged incident, then only one report disclosing the type of incident must be submitted.</p>
<p>Prior Report</p>	<p>A person who has either learned of an incident of prohibited conduct during the course of the College District's review or process, or has confirmed with the person or office overseeing the review or process that the incident has been previously reported, is not required to report the prohibited conduct.</p>
<p>Definition of College District Officials</p>	<p>For the purposes of this policy, College District officials are the Title IX coordinator and the College President.</p>
<p>Title IX Coordinator</p>	<p>Reports of discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment and gender-based harassment, may be directed to the Title IX coordinator. The College District designates the following person to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended:</p> <p>Position: Director of Human Resources Address: 1109 W. Panola, Carthage, TX 75633 Telephone: (903) 693-2021</p>
<p>Other Anti-discrimination Laws</p>	<p>The College President or designee shall serve as coordinator for purposes of College District compliance with all other antidiscrimination laws.</p>
<p>Responsible Employees</p>	<p>All employees, with the exception of confidential employees, are designated as responsible employees for purposes of compliance with Title IX.</p>
<p>Alternative Reporting Procedures</p>	<p>A student shall not be required to report prohibited conduct to the person alleged to have committed the conduct. Reports concerning prohibited conduct, including reports against the Title IX coordinator, may be directed to the College President.</p>

A report against the College President may be made directly to the Board. If a report is made directly to the Board, the Board shall appoint an appropriate person to conduct an investigation.

Timely Reporting

Student-Employee Reports of prohibited conduct shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the College District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

Investigation of the Report

The College District may request, but shall not require, a written report. If a report is made orally, the College District official shall reduce the report to written form.

Initial Assessment

Upon receipt or notice of a Student-Employee Report, the College District official shall determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by this policy. If so, the College District official shall immediately notify the parties to the complaint of the allegations and the formal and informal options for resolution of the complaint.

If the College District official determines that the allegations, if proven, would not constitute prohibited conduct as defined by this policy but may constitute a violation of other College District rules or regulations, the College District official shall refer the complaint for consideration under the appropriate policy.

Request Not to Investigate

The alleged victim may request that the College District not investigate the allegations. If the victim requests that the allegations not be investigated, in deciding whether to initiate the investigation, the College District must consider the factors described by law and any other factors the College District considers relevant.

The College District must promptly notify the alleged victim of the decision regarding whether it will conduct the investigation. If the College District decides not to investigate the allegations, the College District must take reasonable steps to protect the health and safety of the College District community.

Informal Resolution

If the parties voluntarily agree to participate in informal resolution of the complaint, the College District official shall determine if informal resolution is appropriate for the complaint. If the official determines that informal resolution is appropriate, then the official may facilitate that resolution. If the official does not determine informal resolution to be appropriate, then the complaint will be subject to the formal resolution process.

Formal Resolution

If any of the parties decline to participate in informal resolution of the complaint or the College District official finds informal resolution of the complaint to be inappropriate, the College District official

shall authorize or undertake an investigation, except as provided below at Criminal Investigation.

Interim Action

If appropriate and regardless of whether a criminal or regulatory investigation regarding the alleged conduct is pending, the College District shall promptly take interim action calculated to address prohibited conduct and protect the victim from retaliation prior to the completion of the College District's investigation. Examples of possible accommodations and supportive measures include academic accommodations, housing and dining modifications, counseling, and health services.

College District Investigation

The investigation may be conducted by the College District official or a designee or by a third party designated by the College District, such as an attorney. The investigator shall have received appropriate training regarding the issues related to the complaint and the relevant College District's policy and procedures.

The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the person making the report, the person against whom the report is filed, and others with knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the allegations. The investigation may also include analysis of other information or documents related to the allegations.

Criminal Investigation

If a law enforcement or regulatory agency notifies the College District that a criminal or regulatory investigation has been initiated, the College District shall confer with the agency to determine if the College District's investigation would impede the criminal or regulatory investigation. The College District shall proceed with its investigation only to the extent that it does not impede the ongoing criminal or regulatory investigation. After the law enforcement or regulatory agency has completed gathering its evidence, the College District shall promptly resume its investigation.

Concluding the Investigation

Absent extenuating circumstances, such as a request by a law enforcement or regulatory agency for the College District to delay its investigation, the investigation should be completed within ten College District business days from the date of the report; however, the investigator shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

The investigator shall prepare a written report of the investigation. The report shall be filed with the College District official overseeing the investigation.

Notification of the Outcome

The College District shall provide written notice of the outcome, within the extent permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or other law, to the victim and the person

against whom the complaint is filed. The parties shall be given the opportunity to respond to the report.

**College District
Action**

Prohibited Conduct

The College District shall determine, based on the results of the investigation, whether each individual allegation of misconduct occurred using a preponderance of the evidence standard. If the results of an investigation indicate that prohibited conduct occurred, the College District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary or corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct, in accordance with College District policy and procedures. [See FM and FMA]

Corrective Action

Examples of corrective action may include:

- Providing a training program for those involved in the complaint;
- Providing a comprehensive education program for the College District community;
- Providing counseling for the victim and the student who engaged in prohibited conduct;
- Permitting the victim or student engaged in the prohibited conduct to drop a course in which they both are enrolled without penalty;
- Conducting follow-up inquiries to determine if any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred;
- Involving students in efforts to identify problems and improve the College District climate;
- Increasing staff monitoring of areas where prohibited conduct has occurred; and
- Reaffirming the College District's policy against discrimination and harassment.

Exception

The College District shall minimize attempts to require a student who complains of sexual harassment to resolve the problem directly with the person who engaged in the harassment; however, if that is the most appropriate resolution method, the College District shall be involved in an appropriate manner.

Improper Conduct

If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct, the College District may take disciplinary action in accordance with College District policy and procedures or other corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct.

Confidentiality	To the greatest extent possible, consistent with law, the College District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation and comply with applicable law.
Retaliation	The College District prohibits retaliation against a student who makes a claim alleging to have experienced prohibited conduct or a person who, in good faith, makes a report, serves as a witness, or otherwise participates in an investigation. This prohibition does not apply to discipline of a person who perpetrated or assists in the perpetration of the prohibited conduct.
Examples	Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.
Failure to Report and False Claims	An employee who fails to make a required report or a student or employee who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a College District investigation regarding prohibited conduct shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.
Appeal	A party who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through the applicable grievance policy beginning at the appropriate level. [See DGBA(LOCAL) for employees, FLD(LOCAL) for students, and GB(LOCAL) for community members] A party shall be informed of his or her right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.
Records Retention	Retention of records shall be in accordance with the College District's records retention procedures. [See CIA]
Access to Policy, Procedures, and Related Materials	Information regarding this policy and any accompanying procedures, as well as relevant educational and resource materials concerning the topics discussed in this policy, shall be distributed annually to College District employees and students in compliance with law and in a manner calculated to provide easy access and wide distribution, such as through electronic distribution and inclusion in the employee and student handbooks and other major College District publications. Information regarding the policy, procedures, and related materials shall also be prominently published on the College District's website on a dedicated page accessible through a clear link on the homepage, taking into account applicable legal requirements. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be readily available at the College District's administrative offices and shall be distributed to a student who makes a report.

Panola College
183501

FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION
SEX AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

FFDA
(LOCAL)