

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

All persons associated with the Acton Public and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Districts including, but not necessarily limited to, the Committees, the administration, staff, and students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting, as a member of the school community, will be in violation of this policy. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

Because the School Committees take allegations of sexual harassment seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of sexual harassment and where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting a workplace and school environment that is free of sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace or school conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

Definition of Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment where:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment or educational development.
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or education decisions affecting such individual.
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

The Grievance Officer:

For Students:  
Nancy Kolb  
Director of Pupil Services  
16 Charter Road  
Acton, MA 01720  
978-264-4700

For Staff:  
George Frost  
Deputy Superintendent  
16 Charter Road  
Acton, MA 01720  
978-264-4700

The Committees will annually appoint a sexual harassment grievance officer who will be vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedure set out below:

Complaint Procedure:

1. Any member of the school community who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment will report the incident (s) to the grievance officer. All complaints shall be investigated promptly and resolved as soon as possible.

2. The grievance officer will attempt to resolve the problem in an informal manner through the following process:
  - a. The grievance officer will confer with the charging party in order to obtain a clear understanding of that party's statement of the facts, and may interview any witnesses.
  - b. The grievance officer will then attempt to meet with the charged party in order to obtain his/her response to the complaint.
  - c. The grievance officer will hold as many meetings with the parties as is necessary to establish the facts.
  - d. On the basis of the grievance officer's perception of the situation he/she may:
    - Attempt to resolve the matter informally through reconciliation.
    - Report the incident and transfer the record to the Superintendent or his/her designee, and so notify the parties by certified mail.
3. After reviewing the record made by the grievance officer, the Superintendent or designee may attempt to gather any more evidence necessary to decide the case, and thereafter impose any sanctions deemed appropriate, including a recommendation to the committee for termination or expulsion. At this stage of the proceedings the parties may present witnesses and other evidence, and may also be represented. The parties, to the extent permissible by law, shall be informed of the disposition of the complaint. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct.
4. The grievance officer, upon request, will provide the charging party with government agencies that handle sexual harassment matters.

LEGAL REFS.: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended 45  
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission  
Education Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq. (Title IX)  
Board of Education 603 CMR 26:00

CROSS REF.: GBAA, Sexual Harassment toward Employees  
JBA, Sexual Harassment toward Students