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Approved: 10/22/2025

**DISCOVERY CHARTER SCHOOL
POLICY NO. 4.5.1
TITLE IX GRIEVANCE AND PROCEDURES FOR EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS**

Discovery Charter School prohibits all forms of unlawful discrimination, harassment, violence and other offensive behavior by or toward a student, school district personnel, or third party that occurs on any property owned or controlled by the school or in connection with any activity sponsored by or associated with DCS. Discovery Charter School environments covered include academic, extra-curricular, and co-curricular environments with an approved school association.

The school shall treat complainants and respondents equitably. However, equality or parity with respect to supportive measures provided to complainants and respondents is not required. The school will not impose any disciplinary sanctions or take any other actions against a respondent that do not constitute supportive measures until it has completed this grievance process and the respondent has been found responsible. DCS will provide appropriate remedies to the complainant any time a respondent is found responsible.

I. Reporting a Grievance

- A. Any person who believes they have been the victim of unlawful sex discrimination or sexual harassment, or any person (including the parent of a student) with actual knowledge of conduct which may constitute unlawful sex discrimination or sexual harassment toward a student should report the alleged acts as soon as possible to an appropriate school official designated as the Title IX coordinator. The complaint must be filed within 90 calendar days of the alleged violation.

- B. Any employee of the school who has experienced, has actual knowledge of, or has witnessed unlawful sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, or who otherwise becomes aware of unlawful sex discrimination, including sexual harassment, must promptly report the allegations to the Title IX Coordinator without screening or investigating the report or allegations.

- C. The Human Rights Officer is responsible for receiving oral or written complaints of unlawful discrimination toward an employee or student. However, nothing in

this policy shall prevent any person from reporting unlawful discrimination toward an employee or student directly with the Human Rights Officer, the school board, or other school official.

D. The school board hereby designates the Human Resources Manager, Maria Ramos, 4100 East 66TH Street, Inver Grove Heights, 651-444-8464, mramos@discoverymn.org as the school Human Rights Officer to receive reports, complaints, or grievances of unlawful discrimination. If the complaint involves a Human Rights Officer, the complaint shall be filed directly with the Executive Director.

E. Upon receipt of a complaint, the Human Rights Officer shall immediately notify the Executive Director. If the Director is the subject of the complaint, the Human Rights Officer shall immediately notify the school board.

F. The Human Rights Officer may request a written complaint. Alternative means of filing a complaint, such as through a personal interview, video call or email, shall be made available upon request for qualified persons with a disability. If the complaint is oral, it shall be reduced to writing within 24 hours and forwarded to the Executive Director. The school encourages the reporting party to complete the complaint form for written complaints.

G. The school shall respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses, consistent with the school's legal obligations to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any discovery or disclosure obligations.

II. Responsible Administrators

Any prohibited conduct should be reported to the appropriate responsible administrator as outlined below.

A. Students. A student who is the target of alleged prohibited conduct should make a complaint as follows:

1. If the alleged offender is a student, the conduct should be reported to the Executive Director.

2. If the alleged offender is a school personnel member or third party, the conduct should be reported to the Executive Director. An alternative option is to report the conduct to the Human Resources Manager.

- B. School Personnel members. A school personnel member who is the target of alleged prohibited conduct should make a complaint as follows:
1. If the alleged offender is a student, the conduct should be reported to the Executive Director. An alternative option is to report the conduct to the Human Resources Manager.
 2. If the alleged offender is a school personnel member or third party, the conduct should be reported to the Executive Director. An alternative option is to report the conduct to the Human Resources Manager.
 - i. If the alleged offender is the Executive Director or a member of the Board of Education, the conduct should be reported to the Chair of the Board of Education.
 - ii. If the alleged offender is the Chair of the Board of Education, the conduct should be reported to the Vice-Chair.

C. Third Parties. A third party who is the target of alleged prohibited conduct should make a complaint as follows:

1. If the alleged offender is a student, the conduct should be reported to the school principal. An alternative option is to report the conduct to the Superintendent or Superintendent's designee.
2. If the alleged offender is a school personnel member or third party, the conduct should be reported to the Executive Director. An alternative option is to report the conduct to the Human Resources Manager.

Responsible administrators who receive complaints of alleged prohibited conduct must document all complaints using school provided report forms, which can be obtained from the Human Resources Manager, the Executive Director, or on the school's website.

Nothing in this procedure prevents any individual from reporting alleged prohibited conduct directly to the Executive Director or from using alternative school policies or procedures. For example, employees and students may report sex discrimination to the school's Title IX Coordinator. In addition, to the extent permitted by the agencies, individuals may file complaints with outside agencies including the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (Region V), and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

III. Investigation of a Grievance

- A. The Human Rights Officer, upon receipt of a complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, shall promptly undertake an investigation if deemed appropriate. The investigation may be conducted by the Title IX coordinator for complaints of sex discrimination or the Section 504 Coordinator for complaints of disability discrimination, or a school official or neutral third party designated by the Title IX coordinator, Section 504 coordinator or Human Rights Officer. The investigation shall be completed within 30 days of the complaint, unless impracticable.
- B. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of other methods deemed pertinent by the investigator.
- C. In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the school shall consider the facts and the surrounding circumstances such as the nature of the behavior, past incidents or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incident occurred.
- D. The school may take immediate steps to protect the parties involved in the complaint process, pending completion of an investigation of alleged unlawful discrimination.
- E. The individual accused of the act(s) of harassment or violence shall be allowed the opportunity to present a defense during the investigation or prior to the imposition of discipline or other remedial responses.
- F. The investigation will be completed as soon as practicable. Upon completion of the investigation, the school investigator shall make a written report to the Human Rights Officer. If the complaint involves the Human Rights Officer, the report may be filed directly to the school board. The report shall include the facts, a determination of whether the allegations have been substantiated, whether a violation of this policy has occurred as well as a description of any proposed resolution which may include alternative dispute resolution.
- G. The school shall comply with federal and state law pertaining to retention of records.

IV. Appeal Process

If the grievance has not been resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, the complainant may appeal to the Human Rights Officer within ten (10) school days of receipt of the findings of the school investigation. The school investigator shall conduct a review of the appeal and within ten (10) school days of receipt of the appeal, shall affirm, reverse, or modify the findings of the report. The decision of the school investigator is final but does not preclude pursuit of alternative complaint procedures noted in the section entitled "Right to Alternative Complaint Procedures."

V. School District Action

- A. Upon conclusion of the investigation and receipt of the findings, the school shall take appropriate action. If it is determined that a violation has occurred, such action may include, but is not limited to, restorative practices, remediation, warning, suspension, expulsion, transfer or termination. School action taken for violation of this policy shall be consistent with the requirements of applicable agreements, Minnesota and federal law and school policies.
- B. The result of the school's investigation of each complaint filed under these procedures shall be reported in writing to the complainant by the school in accordance with state and federal law regarding data or records privacy.
- C. In order to prevent or respond to acts of harassment or violence committed by or directed against a child with a disability, the school shall, where determined appropriate by the child's individualized education program (IEP) or Section 504 team, allow the child's IEP or Section 504 plan to be drafted to address the skills and proficiencies the child needs as a result of the child's disability to allow the child to respond to or not to engage in acts of harassment or violence.

VI. Retaliation

DCS shall take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator or other school personnel who retaliates against any person who reports alleged unlawful discrimination toward an employee or student or any person who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation or hearing relating to such unlawful discrimination. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation or harassment.

VII. Conflict of Interest

If there is a conflict of interest with respect to any party affected by this policy, appropriate action shall be taken such as, but not limited to, appointing or contracting

with a neutral third party investigator to conduct the investigation or recusal from the process the person for whom a conflict or potential conflict of interest exists.

VIII. Dissemination of Procedures

- A. This policy shall be made available to all students, parents/guardians of students, and school employees.
- B. DCS shall conspicuously post the name of the Title IX Coordinator, including office address, telephone number, and work e-mail address on its website and in each handbook that it makes available to parents, employees, students, or applicants.
- C. The school must provide applicants for admission and employment, students, parents or legal guardians with the following:
 - 1. The name or title, office address, electronic mail address, and telephone number of the Title IX Coordinator;
 - 2. Notice that the school does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the education program or activity that it operates, and that it is required by Title IX not to discriminate in such a manner;
 - 3. A statement that the requirement not to discriminate in the education program or activity extends to admission and employment, and that inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the United States Department of Education, or both; and
 - 4. Notice of the school's grievance procedures and grievance process contained in this policy, including how to report or file a complaint of sex discrimination, how to report or file a formal complaint of sexual harassment, and how the school district will respond.

IX. District Grievance Contacts

Human Rights Officer

Human Resources Manager, Maria Ramos
4100 East 66th Street
Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota 55076
651-444-8464
mramos@discoverymn.org

Title IX Coordinator/504 Coordinator

Dr. Heather Lines
4100 East 66th Street
Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076
651-306-7826
hlines@discoverymn.org

X. Right to Alternative Complaint Procedures

These procedures do not deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse, which may include filing charges with the agencies listed below or initiating action in state or federal court.

Claims of discrimination may also be pursued through the following agencies where appropriate:

U.S. Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights, Region V
500 W. Madison Street – Suite 1475
Chicago, IL 60661
Tel: 312-730-1560
TDD: 312-730-1609

MN Department of Human Rights
190 E 5th Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
800.657.3704
651.296.5663
TDD 651.296.1283

For complaints of employment discrimination:

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
330 S. 2nd Avenue
Suite 430
Minneapolis, MN 55401
800.669.4000
612.335.4040
TDD 612.335.4045

This is general information and is not to be a substitute for legal advice. Changes in the law, including timelines for filing a complaint, may affect your rights.

DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND VIOLENCE REPORT FORM

Discovery Charter School maintains a firm policy prohibiting all forms of discrimination, harassment, or violence against students or employees, or groups of students or employees, on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, familial status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, including gender identity and expression, or disability. All persons are to be treated with respect and dignity. Harassment or violence by any student, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel, which creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Use of this reporting form is encouraged but not required. Reports may be made orally or in writing, including via electronic mail.

Person completing report: _____

Home address: _____

Work address: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

Date of alleged incident(s): _____

Basis of Alleged Harassment/Violence - circle as appropriate: race \ color \ creed \ religion \ sex \ national origin \ gender \ age \ marital status \ familial status \ status with regard to public assistance \ sexual orientation, including gender identity and expression \ disability

Name of person(s) you believe harassed or was violent toward you or another person.

If the alleged harassment or violence was toward another person(s), identify that person(s).

Where and when did the incident(s) occur? _____

Describe the incident(s) as clearly as possible, including such things as: what force, if any, was used; any verbal statements (e.g., threats, requests, demands); what, if any, physical contact was involved; or other relevant information. Attach additional pages if necessary.

List any witnesses to the incident(s). _____

My signature below shows that the information I have provided in this document is true, correct, and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. Signature:

_____ Date _____ Received

by: _____ Date _____ Please

Submit to the Executive Director or the Human Resources Manager.