

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

The School Board desires to maintain an academic environment in which all students are treated with respect and dignity. A vital element of this atmosphere is the Board's commitment to equal opportunities and the eradication of discriminatory practices including sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is specifically prohibited by state and federal law and instances of harassment may result in both civil and criminal liability on the part of the individual harasser as well as the School Board. Sexual harassment's destructive impact wastes human potential, demoralizes students, and perpetuates the tendency to further unacceptable behavior. For these reasons, the School Board forbids harassment against any student on the basis of sex. The Board will not tolerate sexual harassment activity by any of its students.

DEFINITION

Sexual harassment consists of any unwelcome verbal and/or physical gestures which may be interpreted as sexual in nature. It includes sexual advances and/or requests for sexual favors to an unwilling person whether or not physical contact occurs. Because these actions create an intimidating, offensive or hostile learning environment they will not be tolerated by the administration of this Technical College and may result in immediate disciplinary actions. Behaviors that may result in administrative actions include any such actions that occur on campus, at off-campus school sites, or at any and all district or school-sponsored events.

EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment may include but are not limited to the following:

- Verbal harassment or abuse of a sexual nature;
- Subtle pressure for sexual activity;
- Repeated remarks to a person with sexual or demeaning implications (e.g., a person's body, clothes or sexual activity);
- Unwelcome or inappropriate physical contact such as patting, pinching, or unnecessary touching;
- Suggesting or demanding sexual involvement accompanied by implied or explicit threats;
- Display of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or written materials.
- Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments or welcomed interactions of a socially acceptable nature.

SPECIFIC PROHIBITION

It is sexual harassment for a student to subject another student or a school employee to any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature on school property or at a school-sponsored event. Students who engage in such conduct shall be subject to penalties as described herein.

PROCEDURES

Any student who alleges sexual harassment by another student should complain to the director, assistant director or instructor. Filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting sexual harassment will not affect the student's status, extracurricular activities, grade, or any other assignments. The complaint should: be in writing, state the act or acts, state the date(s), state the names of witnesses, and be signed by the complainant.

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected, consistent with the Board's legal obligations and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment, the totality of the circumstances, nature of the conduct and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred will be investigated. The Superintendent or designee has the responsibility of investigating and resolving complaints of sexual harassment.

PENALTIES

A substantiated charge against a student shall subject that student to corrective action.

COMPLIANCE WITH TITLE IX, SECTION 504, ADA AND THE FLORIDA EDUCATIONAL EQUITY ACT:

No person shall, on the basis of race, color, gender, age, ethnic or national origin, marital status, disability, political or religious beliefs be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity, or in any employment conditions or practices conducted by this School District, except as provided by law. The School Board Policy and the Procedures, related to: the prohibition of discrimination and the grievance procedures for resolution of a complaint, are available upon request in the Florida Panhandle Technical College Director's Office, the PAEC Office and in the Superintendent's Office.