

# CSBA Sample

## Board Policy

### Uniform Complaint Procedures

BP 1312.3

#### Community Relations

\*\*\*Note: To address prohibited discrimination and violations of state and federal laws governing educational programs, 5 CCR 4621 mandates districts to adopt uniform complaint procedures (UCP) consistent with the state's complaint procedures specified in 5 CCR 4600-4670. Pursuant to 5 CCR 4610, as amended by Register 2013, No. 38, districts are required to adopt a uniform system of procedures that meets specified requirements for receiving, investigating, and resolving complaints alleging (1) unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment and intimidation; (2) bullying; (3) a violation of state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs; or (4) noncompliance with state law prohibiting the charging of student fees. Although some bullying incidents may not fall within the provisions of 5 CCR 4610, CSBA's sample policy BP/AR 5131.2 - Bullying strongly recommends that districts use the UCP to investigate and resolve all bullying incidents, regardless of whether there is an allegation of discriminatory bullying, to ensure consistent implementation by district staff. Additionally, it is not always easy or possible for staff to know at the time of the incident whether a student was bullied because of his/her actual or perceived membership in a legally protected class. Districts that are concerned about the capacity of a single district compliance officer to handle a possible increase in the number of UCP complaints, or that prefer to handle certain incidents at the school site level whenever possible, may designate multiple compliance officers in accordance with this policy. \*\*\*

\*\*\*Note: In addition, Education Code 52075, as added by AB 97 (Ch. 47, Statutes of 2013), mandates districts, by June 30, 2014, to adopt policies and procedures implementing the use of the UCP to resolve complaints alleging noncompliance with requirements related to the local control and accountability plan. For plan requirements, see BP/AR 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan. Finally, a district should adopt policies and procedures implementing the use of the UCP to resolve complaints alleging retaliation in response to a complaint. \*\*\*

Comment [WT1]: New Update

\*\*\*Note: The California Department of Education (CDE) monitors district programs and operations for compliance with these procedures through its Federal Program Monitoring (FPM) process. The FPM consists of a review of written district policies and procedures for required language, including prohibition of discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, and bullying, against students pursuant to Education Code 234.1, and of records of required activities, such as annual notification provided to students, parents/guardians, employees, and other school community members. \*\*\*

\*\*\*Note: In addition, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (20 USC 12101-12213), Title VI of the Civil Rights

Act of 1964 (42 USC 2000d-2000e-17), Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 (20 USC 1681-1688), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 USC 6101-6107). OCR has issued guidance describing federal requirements for discrimination complaint procedures. OCR requires such procedures to be "prompt and equitable." The factors OCR examines to evaluate each district's procedures are specified in AR 1312.3, including whether and how the procedures (1) provide notice of the procedures to the district's students, parents/guardians, and employees; (2) ensure adequate, reliable, and impartial investigation of complaints; (3) contain reasonably prompt timeframes for major stages of the complaint process; (4) provide notice to the complainant of the outcome of the investigation; and (5) provide an assurance that action will be taken to prevent recurrence of any discrimination found and to correct its effects. \*\*\*

\*\*\***Note:** CSBA staff met with representatives from CDE and OCR to discuss this policy and the accompanying regulation. As a result, the sample policy and regulation have been drafted to go beyond the minimal requirements under California's UCP laws and regulations in an attempt to address issues and concerns raised by CDE and OCR. While CDE and OCR have not approved or signed off on them, CSBA believes that the additional details provided herein may help school districts and county offices of education during any compliance check by CDE or in the event that a CDE or OCR investigation occurs. \*\*\*

Comment [WT2]: Update information

The Governing Board recognizes that the district has the primary responsibility to ensure compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations governing educational programs. The Board encourages the early, informal resolution of complaints whenever possible and appropriate. To resolve complaints which cannot be resolved through such informal process, the Board shall adopt a uniform system of complaint processes specified in 5 CCR 4600-4670 and the accompanying administrative regulation.

The district's uniform complaint procedures (UCP) shall be used to investigate and resolve the following complaints:

Comment [WT3]: Updated with more specificity

1. Any complaint alleging district violation of applicable state or federal law or regulations governing adult education programs, consolidated categorical aid programs, migrant education, career technical and technical education and training programs, child care and development programs, child nutrition programs, and special education programs (5 CCR 4610)

(cf. 3553 - Free and Reduced Price Meals)  
(cf. 3555 - Nutrition Program Compliance)  
(cf. 5141.4 - Child Abuse Prevention and Reporting)  
(cf. 5148 - Child Care and Development)  
(cf. 6159 - Individualized Education Program)  
(cf. 6171 - Title I Programs)  
(cf. 6174 - Education for English Language Learners)  
(cf. 6175 - Migrant Education Program)  
(cf. 6178 - Career Technical Education)  
(cf. 6178.1 - Work-Based Learning)

(cf. 6178.2 - Regional Occupational Center/Program)  
(cf. 6200 - Adult Education)

2. Any complaint alleging unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, or bullying, in district programs and activities against any person based on his/her actual or perceived characteristics of race or ethnicity, color, ancestry, nationality, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or genetic information, or any other characteristic identified in Education Code 200 or 220, Government Code 11135, or Penal Code 422.55, or based on his/her association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics (5 CCR 4610)

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)  
(cf. 4030 - Nondiscrimination in Employment)  
(cf. 4031 - Complaints Concerning Discrimination in Employment)  
(cf. 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination/Harassment)  
(cf. 5145.7 - Sexual Harassment)

3. Any complaint alleging bullying in district programs and activities, regardless of whether the bullying is based on a person's actual or perceived characteristics of race or ethnicity, color, ancestry, nationality, national origin, ethnic group identification, age, religion, marital or parental status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, or genetic information, or any other characteristic identified in Education Code 200 or 220, Government Code 11135, or Penal Code 422.55, or based on his/her association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics

(cf. 5131.2 - Bullying)

4. Any complaint alleging district violation of the prohibition against requiring students to pay fees, deposits, or other charges for participation in educational activities (5 CCR 4610)

(cf. 3260 - Fees and Charges)  
(cf. 3320 - Claims and Actions Against the District)

\*\*\*Note: Item #5 below is mandated pursuant to Education Code 52075, as added by AB 97 (Ch. 47, Statutes of 2013). \*\*\*

5. Any complaint alleging that the district has not complied with legal requirements related to the implementation of the local control and accountability plan (Education Code 52075)

Comment [WT4]: Addition, LCAP

(cf. 0460 - Local Control and Accountability Plan)

\*\*\*Note: 5 CCR 4621 mandates that district policy ensure that complainants are protected from retaliation as specified in item #6 below. \*\*\*

6. Any complaint alleging retaliation against a complainant or other participant in the complaint process or anyone who has acted to uncover or report a violation subject to this policy

\*\*\*Note: Pursuant to 5 CCR 4610, a district may, at its discretion, use the UCP to resolve other complaints. \*\*\*

7. Any other complaint as specified in a district policy

\*\*\*Note: 5 CCR 4631 authorizes the district to utilize alternative dispute resolution (ADR) methods, including mediation, to resolve complaints before initiating a formal investigation. However, the district should ensure that any ADR it uses, particularly in-person ADR, is appropriate for the particular situation. For example, in some instances (e.g., sexual assault) face-to-face mediation should not be used even if all parties voluntarily agree given the risk that a student might feel pressured to "voluntarily" agree to it. The following optional paragraph provides for a neutral mediator and should be revised to reflect district practice. \*\*\*

**Comment [WT5]:** New option. The district has not utilized an ADR in the past, however believes the option to be appropriate if needed.

The Board recognizes that alternative dispute resolution (ADR) can, depending on the nature of the allegations, offer a process to reach a resolution to the complaint that is agreeable to all parties. One type of ADR is mediation, which shall be offered to resolve complaints that involve more than one student and no adult. However, mediation shall not be offered or used to resolve any complaint involving sexual assault or where there is a reasonable risk that a party to the mediation would feel compelled to participate. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the use of ADR is consistent with state and federal laws and regulations.

\*\*\*Note: The following paragraph is mandated pursuant to 5 CCR 4621. Appropriate disclosure will vary in each case depending on the facts and circumstances. \*\*\*

In filing and investigating complaints, the confidentiality of the parties involved shall be protected as required by law. As appropriate for any complaint alleging retaliation, unlawful discrimination, or bullying, the Superintendent or designee shall keep confidential the identity of the complainant and/or the subject of the complaint, if he/she is different from the complainant, as long as the integrity of the complaint process is maintained.

(cf. 4119.23/4219.23/4319.23 - Unauthorized Release of Confidential/Privileged Information)  
(cf. 5125 - Student Records)  
(cf. 9011 - Disclosure of Confidential/Privileged Information)

When an allegation that is not subject to the UCP is included in a UCP complaint, the district shall refer the non-UCP allegation to the appropriate staff or agency and shall resolve the UCP-related allegation(s) through the district's UCP.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide training to district staff to ensure awareness and knowledge of current law and related requirements, including the steps and timelines specified in this policy and the accompanying administrative regulation.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)  
(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)  
(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

\*\*\*Note: It is important to maintain records of all UCP complaints and the investigations of those complaints. If the district is ever investigated by OCR or CDE, these are important documents in demonstrating that the district has complied with federal law, state law, and its own policies and regulations. \*\*\*

The Superintendent or designee shall maintain records of all UCP complaints and the investigations of those complaints. All such records shall be destroyed in accordance with applicable state law and district policy.

(cf. 3580 - District Records)

#### Non-UCP Complaints

Comment [WT6]: New section

\*\*\*Note: 5 CCR 4611 details complaint issues that are not subject to the UCP. Such issues include, but are not limited to, allegations of child abuse, health and safety complaints regarding a child development program, allegations of fraud, and employment discrimination complaints. For procedures related to complaints of discrimination in employment, see AR 4031 - Complaints Concerning Discrimination in Employment. \*\*\*

Comment [WT7]: Update

The following complaints shall not be subject to the district's UCP but shall be referred to the specified agency: (5 CCR 4611)

1. Any complaint alleging child abuse or neglect shall be referred to the County Department of Social Services, the County Protective Services Division, and the appropriate law enforcement agency.
2. Any complaint alleging health and safety violations by a child development program shall, for licensed facilities, be referred to Department of Social Services and shall, for licensing-exempt facilities, be referred to the appropriate Child Development regional administrator.
3. Any complaint alleging employment discrimination shall be sent to the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing and the compliance officer shall notify the complainant by first class mail of the transfer.
4. Any complaint alleging fraud shall be referred to the California Department of Education.

\*\*\*Note: Education Code 35186 requires the district to use the UCP, with modifications, to investigate and resolve complaints related to items #1-3 below (i.e., "Williams complaints"). Because Education Code 35186 sets forth different timelines for investigation and resolution of these kinds of complaints than the timelines specified in law for other uniform complaints, the CDE has created a separate uniform complaint process for the Williams complaints. See AR

1312.4 - Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures for the separate procedure. \*\*\*

In addition, the district's Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures, AR 1312.4, shall be used to investigate and resolve any complaint related to sufficiency of textbooks or instructional materials, emergency or urgent facilities conditions that pose a threat to the health or safety of students or staff, or teacher vacancies and misassignments. (Education Code 35186)

(cf. 1312.4 - Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

200-262.4 Prohibition of discrimination  
8200-8498 Child care and development programs  
8500-8538 Adult basic education  
18100-18203 School libraries  
32289 School safety plan, uniform complaint procedures  
35186 Williams uniform complaint procedures  
48985 Notices in language other than English  
49010-49013 Student fees  
49060-49079 Student records  
49490-49590 Child nutrition programs  
52060-52077 Local control and accountability plan, especially  
52075 Complaint for lack of compliance with local control and accountability plan requirements  
52160-52178 Bilingual education programs  
52300-52490 Career technical education  
52500-52616.24 Adult schools  
52800-52870 School-based program coordination  
54400-54425 Compensatory education programs  
54440-54445 Migrant education  
54460-54529 Compensatory education programs  
56000-56867 Special education programs  
59000-59300 Special schools and centers  
64000-64001 Consolidated application process

GOVERNMENT CODE

11135 Nondiscrimination in programs or activities funded by state  
12900-12996 Fair Employment and Housing Act

PENAL CODE

422.55 Hate crime; definition  
422.6 Interference with constitutional right or privilege

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

3080 Application of section  
4600-4687 Uniform complaint procedures  
4900-4965 Nondiscrimination in elementary and secondary education programs

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1221 Application of laws  
1232g Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act  
1681-1688 Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972  
6301-6577 Title I basic programs  
6801-6871 Title III language instruction for limited English proficient and immigrant students  
7101-7184 Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act  
7201-7283g Title V promoting informed parental choice and innovative programs  
7301-7372 Title V rural and low-income school programs  
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  
99.1-99.67 Family Educational Rights and Privacy  
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  
110.25 Notification of nondiscrimination on the basis of age

Management Resources:

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

Questions and Answers on Title IX and Sexual Violence, April 2014

Dear Colleague Letter: Bullying of Students with Disabilities, August 2013

Dear Colleague Letter: Sexual Violence, April 2011

Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying, October 2010

Revised Sexual Harassment Guidance: Harassment of Students by School Employees, Other Students, or Third Parties, January 2001

WEB SITES

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

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

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