



K-12 Title IX Training- Investigation Specific August 2023



Agenda

1. Brief overview of Title IX;
2. The scope of a K-12 education program or activity;
3. The definition of sexual harassment provided within the regulations;
4. Grievance process including hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes, as applicable;
5. How to conduct an investigation;
6. How to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias;
7. Investigator training on issues of relevance to create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence

Title IX

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”

Overlap of Title IX and Title VII

- ▶ Definition under Title IX is different than interpretation under Title VII—must comply with both.
- ▶ Schools may continue to address harassing conduct that does not meet the new definition of sexual harassment under other provisions of the school's own code of conduct.

Definitions/ Relevant Terms

Respondent means an individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Complainant means an individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

Whether misconduct occurs on campus or off campus is not dispositive

Title IX obligations for sexual harassment in K-12 institutions include incidents that occur off campus if:

- if the off-campus incident occurs as part of the school's "operations" or
- if the school exercised substantial control over the respondent and the context of alleged sexual harassment that occurred off campus.

Scope of “Educational Program or Activity”

- “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”
- Jurisdictional trigger
- “locations, events, or circumstances over which the recipient [the school/district] exercised substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurs . . .”

Definition of “Sexual Harassment”

- Conduct **on the basis of sex** that satisfies one or more of the following:
 - (1) An employee of the school conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the school on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (quid pro quo sexual harassment);
 - (2) Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity; or
 - (3) “Sexual assault”, “dating violence”, “domestic violence”, or “stalking” (as defined under Clery Act)

On the basis of sex

- ▶ Where conduct is sexual in nature, or where conduct references one sex or another, that suffices to constitute conduct “on the basis of sex.”
- ▶ Any individual - irrespective of sexual orientation or gender identity - may be victimized by the type of conduct defined as sexual harassment to which a school must respond under these final regulations.

VAWA Big Four

- ▶ “Sexual assault” means an offense classified as a forcible or nonforcible sex offense under the uniform crime reporting system of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- ▶ “Dating violence” means violence committed by a person—
 - ▶ (A) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and
 - ▶ (B) where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
 - ▶ (i) The length of the relationship.
 - ▶ (ii) The type of relationship.
 - ▶ (iii) The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

VAWA Big Four

- ▶ “Domestic violence” includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction receiving grant monies, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person’s acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction.
- ▶ “Stalking” means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to—
 - ▶ (A) fear for his or her safety or the safety of others; or
 - ▶ (B) suffer substantial emotional distress.

Quid Pro Quo: An employee of the school conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the school on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (quid pro quo sexual harassment)

- Encompasses situations where the quid pro quo nature of the incident is implied from the circumstances.
- Ex: if you do or don't do x, I will or won't do x
- Applies to all of a school's employees
- "unwelcome" as used in the first and second prongs of the definition of sexual harassment is a subjective element

Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity

- “Catch-all”-#2

- Focus factually on the nature of the misconduct itself – not on the victim's response to the misconduct.
- Determinations of severity, pervasiveness, and objective offensiveness depends on a constellation of factors including the ages and numbers of parties involved, disability status, positions of authority of involved parties etc.
- Whether harassing conduct is “objectively offensive” must be evaluated under a reasonable person standard, as a reasonable person in the complainant's position.
- No intent aspect.
- Does not require that a complainant has already suffered loss of education before being able to report sexual harassment

Reports of Sexual Harassment

- **The school is deemed to have actual knowledge of sexual harassment allegations if ANY staff member has knowledge.**
- The School is REQUIRED to respond promptly when it has actual knowledge in a way that is not deliberately indifferent.
- Any person may report sex discrimination, including sexual harassment (whether or not the person reporting is the person alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sex discrimination or sexual harassment)
- Such a report may be made at any time (including during non-business hours) by using the telephone number or electronic mail address, or by mail to the office address, listed for the Title IX Coordinator.

Grievance Procedure for Sexual Harassment "Formal Complaints"

- ▶ Report
- ▶ Supportive measures and information on formal complaint
- ▶ Formal complaint
- ▶ Written notice to parties
- ▶ Investigation
- ▶ Inspection and review of evidence
- ▶ Investigative report with review and written response
- ▶ Question and Answer period
- ▶ Written determination
- ▶ Appeal on certain bases
- ▶ Notice of appeal and opportunity to respond
- ▶ Final written decision on appeal

When a Report is Received

Title IX Coordinator must promptly reach out to the complainant and/or parent to:

1. discuss the availability of supportive measures,
2. consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures,
3. inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a formal complaint, and
4. explain to the complainant the process for filing a formal complaint.

Supportive Measures

- *Supportive measures*” means non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent.
- Such measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to the School’s education program or activity without unreasonably burdening the other party, including measures designed to protect the safety of all parties or the School’s educational environment, or deter sexual harassment.
- Supportive measures may include counseling, extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments, modifications of work or class schedules, campus escort services, mutual restrictions on contact between the parties, changes in work locations, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus, and other similar measures.
- The School must maintain as confidential any supportive measures provided to the complainant or respondent, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair the ability of the School to provide the supportive measures.

Formal Complaint

- “*Formal complaint*” means a document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the School investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.
- At the time of filing a formal complaint, a complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the School with which the formal complaint is filed.

Overarching Requirements for Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure

1. Have Presumption that Respondent is Not Responsible
2. Exclude Privileged Information
3. Follow Grievance Procedure Before Imposing Sanctions
4. No Bias or Conflict of Interest
5. Consider All Relevant Evidence Under Proper Standard (Preponderance or Clear and Convincing)
6. Include Range of Possible Sanctions/Remedies and Describe Supportive Measures
7. Follow Reasonably Prompt Timelines
8. Removal/Administrative Leave Permitted in Certain Instances
9. Remember Grounds for Dismissal
10. Informal Resolution Process After Formal Complaint Is Optional
11. Train Staff
12. Keep Records
13. No Retaliation
14. Maintain Confidentiality

Title IX Team Members

Position	Scope of Responsibility	Requirements
Title IX Coordinator	Person designated to coordinate and conduct intake reports and complaints, initiate formal complaints, and implement supportive measures, as necessary.	N/A
Investigator	Person designated to investigate, gather evidence, and compile an investigation report.	May be the Title IX Coordinator.
Decision-Maker	Person who evaluates evidence, rules on relevancy during hearing (if any), issues a written determination regarding responsibility.	Must not be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator or the Investigator.
Appeal Designee	Person designated to handle appeal, if any.	Must not be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator, Investigator, or Decision-Maker.

Good Cause Delay—With Written Notice

- Good cause may include considerations such as:
 - The absence of a party, a party's advisor, or a witness;
 - Concurrent law enforcement activity; or
 - The need for language assistance or accommodation of disabilities.

Emergency Removal

- BEFORE removal
 - Undertake an individualized safety and risk analysis, and
 - Determine that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal.
- Provide the respondent with notice and an opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal.
- Follow the IDEA and Section 504 before any removals.

Dismissal

- ▶ “If the conduct alleged in the formal complaint would not constitute sexual harassment as defined . . . then the recipient must dismiss the formal complaint with regard to that conduct for purposes of sexual harassment under title IX”
- ▶ BUT such a dismissal does not preclude action under another provision of the recipient’s code of conduct.

Grounds for Dismissal

- The School MUST investigate the formal complaint
- If the conduct alleged in the formal complaint
 1. would not constitute sexual harassment even if proved,
 2. did not occur in the School's education program or activity, or
 3. did not occur against a person in the United States,then the School must dismiss the formal complaint with regard to that conduct for purposes of sexual harassment under Title IX.
- However, such a dismissal does not preclude action under another provision of the School's code of conduct.

Permissive Grounds for Dismissal

The School may also dismiss the formal complaint or any allegations therein, if at any time during the investigation:

1. a complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein;
2. the respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the School; or
3. specific circumstances prevent the School from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein.

Informal Resolution

- Cannot require that the student or employee waive their right to the grievance process
- Cannot go forward with an informal process for sexual harassment allegations prior to there being a formal complaint
- Obtain voluntary written consent
- Not permitted for allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student
- Written notice to the parties is required, disclosing:
 1. the allegations,
 2. the requirements of the informal resolution process including the circumstances under which it precludes the parties from resuming a formal complaint arising from the same allegations,
 3. that at any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, any party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the grievance process with respect to the formal complaint, and
 4. any consequences resulting from participating in the informal resolution process, including the records that will be maintained or could be shared

Recordkeeping

- Keep for 7 years
- Investigation Records
- Appeal Records
- Informal Resolution Records
- Training Materials
- Response to all reports and formal complaints

No Retaliation Provision Added For All Sex Discrimination Complaints

- No recipient or other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce, or discriminate against any individual for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by title IX or this part, or because the individual has made a report or complaint, testified, assisted, or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under this part.
- Intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination, including charges against an individual for code of conduct violations that do not involve sex discrimination or sexual harassment, but arise out of the same facts or circumstances as a report or complaint of sex discrimination, or a report or formal complaint of sexual harassment, for the purpose of interfering with any right or privilege secured by title IX or this part, constitutes retaliation.
- Complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the grievance procedures for sex discrimination complaints not alleging sexual harassment

Maintain Confidentiality

- The recipient must keep confidential the identity of any individual who has made a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including any individual who has made a report or filed a formal complaint of sexual harassment, any complainant, any individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of sex discrimination, any respondent, and any witness, except as may be permitted by [FERPA], or as required by law, or to carry out the purposes of [Title IX], including the conduct of any investigation, hearing, or judicial proceeding arising thereunder.

Timeline and Notices

- ▶ Reasonably prompt” (30 working days to gather the evidence).
- ▶ Temporary delays can be granted for good cause.
- ▶ Investigation should start immediately.
- ▶ Written notice of the details regarding investigative meetings, including the purpose.

Written Notice to Parties

- Upon receipt of a formal complaint (or later as additional allegations become known), the Title IX Coordinator will provide the following written notice to the parties who are known
 1. Notice of the School's grievance process that complies with this section, including any informal resolution process.
 2. Notice of the allegations of sexual harassment potentially constituting sexual harassment, including sufficient details known at the time and with sufficient time to prepare a response before any initial interview.
 3. Notice that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.
 4. Notice to the parties that they may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney, and may inspect and review evidence.
 5. Notice of any provision in the School's code of conduct that prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information during the grievance process.

Presumption of Non-Responsibility 106.45(b)(1)(iv)

- Include in written notice to the parties a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility at the conclusion of the grievance process.

The Investigation

Duty to Avoid Prejudgment, Bias, And Conflicts of Interest

- Your focus is the integrity of the process.
- Truth-seeking objective.
- Focus is not on reaching an outcome.
- Disclose all potential and actual conflicts.
- Recognize and understand what your biases are so that you can put them aside.
- Cultural competency – understand your unconscious bias.
- Check ego at the door.

The Investigator's Responsibility

- Evidence
- Relevancy
- Written Report

Conducting the Investigation

- Requirement 1: Trained Investigator
- Requirement 2: Equitable Treatment of Parties
- Requirement 3: Impartial Assessment (no prejudgment, no bias, no conflict of interest)
- Requirement 4: Objective Evaluation of the Evidence Detailed
- Requirement 5: Written Investigative Report
- Requirement 6: Detailed Written Decision-Maker Report

The Duty to Investigate

- The thoroughness of the investigation is critical to the school's ability to determine whether or not misconduct or harassment occurred and which type of disciplinary action, if any, is required as a matter of law or organizational policy.
- Failure to carry out an adequate investigation may contribute to potential liability for the district.

Guidelines for Talking to Complainant

- Take the complaint seriously
- Listen objectively, without personal bias
- Focus on the facts and relevant details
- Document details

Ask Questions, such as:

- “Please describe the situation.”
- “Where/when did the behavior/incident occur?”
- “Who was involved?”
- “Were there any witnesses?”
- “Did you talk w/ anyone else about it?”
- “Has this happened to you before?”
- “To anyone else you know of?”
- “What would you like to see happen?”

Guidelines for Interviewing Witnesses

- Explain purpose of meeting
- Describe the circumstances generally (time & location only)
- Do not identify victim or harasser initially
- Focus on witness' observations, not opinions Talk w/ all witnesses in quick succession

Ask Questions to determine if the witness:

- was in the location where harassment alleged?
- observed any potentially harassing conduct?
- knows who was involved in the incident?
- can identify others who were present?
- was also target of unwelcome behavior?
- discussed the alleged incident with the complainant before the complaint was filed?

Document all the information provided by the witnesses.

Guidelines for Talking to Respondent

- Ensure that the meeting place is private.
- Explain the purpose of the meeting.
- Be serious and to the point.
- Explain meeting is confidential.
- Focus on the behavior, not intentions.
- Do not identify witnesses, at least initially.
- Be unbiased. Listen and be nonjudgmental.
- Ask for separate response to each allegation.
- Document the meeting.

Maintaining Confidentiality

- Section 106.71 requires schools to keep party and witness identities confidential except as permitted by law or FERPA, and as needed to conduct an investigation or hearing (30316)

Burden of Proof 106.45(b)(5)(i)

- ▶ Schools cannot restrict either party's ability to discuss the allegations or gather and present evidence, HOWEVER . . .
- ▶ Burden of proof sufficient to reach a determination regarding responsibility, rest on the school.
- ▶ Burden of proof is on school to conduct investigation, interview witnesses, gather evidence.

Impartiality Regarding Burden of Proof

- ▶ The school and investigator must remain neutral and impartial during the investigative process.
- ▶ Schools should not act as police to try to uncover evidence to prove guilt.
- ▶ Schools should not act as defense attorney to try to get alleged perpetrators cleared.
- ▶ Objective is truth-seeking mission.

Emphasis on Impartiality

- ▶ It is critically important that those individuals designated as Investigator, Decision- Maker, and Appeal Designee understand their duty to serve impartially during the process.
 - ▶ Individuals must treat parties equitably
 - ▶ Individuals must avoid prejudgment of the facts at issue.
 - ▶ Individuals must avoid conflicts of interest and recuse themselves when conflicts occur.
 - ▶ Individuals must avoid bias in the process in favor of either Complainants or Respondents.

Being Impartial

DO . . .

- treat parties equitably
- acknowledge unfair societal biases
- acknowledge unfair personal biases
- have awareness of your own biases
- ensure that the evidence is considered in its entirety, without outside influence or preconceived notions.

DON'T . . .

- act in favor of either party
- base credibility determinations on a person's status as complainant, respondent, witness, etc.
- base credibility determinations on a person's demographic or personal characteristics
- judge a party "due to inability to recount each specific detail of an incident, whether such inability is due to trauma, the effects of drugs or alcohol, or simple fallibility of human memory." (Preamble 30323)

Treating Parties Equitably

106.45(b)(1)(i)

Treat complainants and respondents equitably:

- Complainants = Provide remedies to a complainant where a determination of responsibility for sexual harassment has been made against the respondent.
- Respondents = Follow a grievance process that complies with Title IX before the imposition of any disciplinary sanctions or other actions that are not supportive measures against a respondent.

Avoiding Prejudgment of the Facts at Issue

To pass judgment prematurely or without sufficient reflection or investigation.

- Avoid rumors and speculation regarding alleged incident.
- Keep an open mind and listen to all the facts presented.
- Let the evidence and standard of proof guide your determination.
- Avoid filling in evidentiary gaps with statistics, personal beliefs, or information about trauma.
- Each case is unique and different.

106. 45(b)(1)(iii) Title IX Personnel Must be Conflict of Interest And Bias Free

(iii) Require that any individual designated by a recipient as a Title IX Coordinator, investigator, decision-maker, or any person designated by a recipient to facilitate an informal resolution process not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or an individual complainant or respondent. A recipient must ensure that Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process receive training on the definition of sexual harassment in § 106.30, the scope of the recipient's education program or activity ...

Bias and Conflict of Interest: Concerns Raised in Comments in Preamble

- Does decision-maker with financial and reputational interests aligned with the school create a conflict?
- Are all paid staff of school biased in favor of the school that employs them?
- Would the Title IX Coordinator directly supervising the decision-maker create a conflict?
- Would past tweets or public comments that appear to support complainants or respondents be sufficient to show bias?
- Does past advocacy create conflict or bias?
- Perceived conflicts of interest and biases versus actual?

Adequate And Unbiased Training

- Investigators and decision-makers must be free from bias or conflicts of interest.
- There is a heavy emphasis in the regulations on training the individuals involved in the investigation and the hearing process.
- A recipient must ensure that Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process receive training on how to serve impartially, including by avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, conflicts of interest, and bias.

Avoiding Conflicts of Interests

- Conflicts of interests are not specifically defined in the regulations.
- A situation in which the concerns or aims of two different parties are incompatible, such as when a person could derive a financial, professional, personal, or other benefit from his official actions or decisions.
- If there are any potential or actual conflicts of interests, the impacted Title IX Coordinator, Decision-Maker, Appeals Designee should recuse themselves or be removed.

Avoiding Bias

- Prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another.
- No bias against a particular complainant or respondent.
- No bias against complainants or respondents generally.
- Must not rely on gender, racial, economic, other stereotypes.
- Examples of stereotypes in the comments to the regulations (30253):
 - Women have regret sex and lie about sexual assaults;
 - Men are sexually aggressive or likely to perpetrate sexual assault;
 - Certain marginalized groups more likely to be victimized.(30259-30260)

Examples of Bias

- Situation where investigator or decision-maker has prior involvement or knows complainant, respondent, or witness and has made a credibility determination regarding that person.
- Situation where information “gleaned” by the investigator is shared with the decision-maker outside the investigation report (in meetings to discuss pending cases, in passing while at work, etc.).
- Other biases exhibited during grievance process.

Race Ethnicity Gender	Sexual Orientation Socio-economic Class Age
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Required Multiple-Investigator Model

- No more single-investigator (34 CFR 106.45(b)(7)(i)).
- The decision-maker at a hearing cannot be the same person(s) who served as the Title IX Coordinator or investigator.
- Title IX Coordinator may serve as investigator.
- Cost issue for smaller institutions.

Evidence

- Objective evaluation of all relevant evidence including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence
- Credibility determinations may not be based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness.
- The standard of evidence to be used to determine responsibility must be either the clear and convincing evidence standard or the preponderance of the evidence standard.

Evidence And Investigative Report

- Prior to completion of investigative report, school must send to the parties and their advisors all evidence (inculpatory and exculpatory) compiled that is directly related to the allegations and provide at least 10 days to review and respond in writing. (FERPA)
 - Inculpatory = evidence that tends to incriminate
 - Exculpatory = evidence that tends to clear someone of guilt
- The investigator shall prepare an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence and share the report (10 days prior to the hearing) with the parties and their advisors for review and response.

Related-to vs. Relevant Evidence

- **Related-to =**
- Investigator must collect all evidence that is related to the allegations whether or not relevant
 - Includes evidence otherwise excluded under rape shield protections
 - Excludes evidence subject to privilege, medical records
- **Relevant =**
- Relevant evidence is all evidence related to, except that which is protected under the rape shield provisions (and not otherwise privileged, medical records)
- Evidence pertinent to proving whether facts material to the allegation are more or less likely to be true

What is Relevant? (NOT based on Rules of Evidence)

- Any fact, testimony, other evidence related to a material issue involving the Complainant's allegation or the Respondent's defense that helps the decision makers come to a determination under the standard of evidence.
- Under preponderance of the evidence standard, ask does this fact, testimony, or evidence help me determine whether there was more likely than not a violation?

Rape Shield Law - Complainants

- 34 CFR 45(b)(6)(i)
- Evidence and questions regarding complainants sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant.
- Unless
 - Offered to prove someone else committed alleged conduct
 - Offered to prove past sexual relationship with Respondent to establish consent

Rape Shield Law - Respondents

- Rape shield protection does not apply to Respondents.
- Evidence of sexual behavior of respondents may be included.
- “The Department reiterates that the rape shield language . . . Does not pertain to the sexual predisposition or sexual behavior of respondents, so evidence of a pattern of inappropriate behavior by an alleged harasser must be judged for relevance as any other evidence must be.”

Privileged Evidence Excluded 106.45(b)(1)(x)

- Precludes a recipient from using information or evidence protected by a legally recognized privilege unless the holder of the privilege has waived the privilege.
 - Medical records
 - Mental health treatment records
 - Attorney-client communications
 - Spousal privilege

Investigation Report

- Institution must create a written report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence.
- The parties must have an equal opportunity to inspect the investigative report and the evidence (inculpatory or exculpatory) at least 10 days prior to the hearing.
- The parties must be allowed to provide a written response to anything in the record.

Contents of Investigative Report

1. Summarize all relevant evidence.
 2. Evaluate all relevant evidence objectively, including both inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
 3. Provide credibility determinations (must not be based on an individual's status as a Complainant, Respondent, or witness).
- Submit final report to the Decision-maker for a determination of responsibility.

Investigative Report

- Prior to completion of their investigative report, send to each party and the party's advisor, if any, the evidence subject to inspection and review in an electronic format or a hard copy.
- The parties must have at least ten (10) business days to submit a written response, which the investigator will consider prior to completion of the investigative report.
- Create an investigative report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence.
- Send investigative report to each party at least 10 days prior to the determination regarding responsibility.
- Allow for review and written response.

Question and Answer Period

- **K-12 schools do not have to hold a hearing,** though they may choose to add a hearing to their grievance procedure.
- With or without a hearing, the decision-maker must still afford each party the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.

Standard of Proof

- The regulations require that districts select the standard of evidence to determine responsibility within grievance process (preponderance of the evidence or clear and convincing).
 - Preponderance of the evidence = more likely than not to be true (30373, fn. 1409), i.e., 51% or more likely that conduct did or did not occur
- Must apply same standard to all formal complaints of sexual harassment whether the respondent is a student or an employee (including tenured employee).

Written Determination...Following Investigation Report- Next Steps

- Provided simultaneously to the parties;
- Identification of the allegations potentially constituting sexual harassment;
- A description of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the formal complaint through the determination;
- Findings of fact supporting the determination;
- Conclusions regarding the application of the School's code of conduct to the facts;
- A statement of, and rationale for, the result as to each allegation
 - A determination regarding responsibility,
 - any disciplinary sanctions the School imposes on the respondent,
 - whether remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to the School's education program or activity will be provided by the School to the complainant;
- Procedures and permissible bases for appeal.

Decision-Maker Written Determination Section 106.45(b)(7)

- The decision-maker (who cannot be the same person as the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator) must issue a written determination regarding responsibility, including:
 1. findings of fact;
 2. conclusions regarding whether the alleged conduct occurred;
 3. rationale for the result as to each allegation;
 4. any disciplinary sanctions imposed on the respondent; and
 5. whether remedies will be provided to the complainant.
- The written determination must be sent simultaneously to the parties along with information about how to file an appeal.

Appeal Bases

- (A) Procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
- (B) New evidence that was not reasonably available at the time the determination regarding responsibility or dismissal was made, that could affect the outcome of the matter;
- (C) The Title IX Coordinator, investigator(s), or decision-maker(s) had a conflict of interest or bias for or against complainants or respondents generally or the individual complainant or respondent that affected the outcome of the matter; or
- (D) Any other bases allowed equally to either party.

Appeal

- Different decision-maker
- Notice to the other party
- Opportunity for both parties to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, outcome
- Written decision describing the result of the appeal and the rationale for the result and provided simultaneously to the parties
- Make sure no conflict of interest or bias
- Train

Questions ?