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Adopted: 11-5-17

413 HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to maintain a learning and working environment at The Studio School that is free from religious, racial or sexual harassment and violence. The Studio School prohibits any form of religious, racial or sexual harassment and violence.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

- A. It is the policy of the school to maintain learning and working environments that are free from religious, racial or sexual harassment and violence. The school prohibits any form of religious, racial or sexual harassment and violence.
- B. It shall be a violation of this policy for any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel of the school to harass a pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel through conduct or communication of a sexual nature or regarding religion and race as defined by this policy. (For purposes of this policy, school personnel include school board members, school employees, agents, volunteers, contractors or persons subject to the supervision and control of the school .)
- C. It shall be a violation of this policy for any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel of the school to inflict, threaten to inflict, or attempt to inflict religious, racial or sexual violence upon any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel.
- D. The school will act to investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, of religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence, and to discipline or take appropriate action against any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel who is found to have violated this policy.

III. RELIGIOUS, RACIAL AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE DEFINED

A. Sexual Harassment; Definition

- 1. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:
 - a. Submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of obtaining or retaining employment, or of obtaining an education; or
 - b. Submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used as a factor in decisions affecting that individual's employment or education; or

- c. That conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's employment or education, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive employment or educational environment.

2. Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to:

- a. Unwelcome verbal harassment or abuse;
- b. Unwelcome pressure for sexual activity;
- c. Unwelcome, sexually motivated or inappropriate patting, pinching or physical contact, other than necessary restraint of pupil(s) by teachers, administrators or other school personnel to avoid physical harm to persons or property;
- d. Unwelcome sexual behavior or words, including demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's employment or educational status;
- e. Unwelcome sexual behavior or words, including demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's employment or educational status; or
- f. Unwelcome behavior or words directed at an individual because of gender.

B. Racial Harassment; Definition

1. Racial harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct relating to an individual's race when the conduct:
 - a. Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or academic environment;
 - b. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance; or
 - c. Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment or academic opportunities.

C. Religious Harassment; Definition

1. Religious harassment consists of physical or verbal conduct which is related to an individual's religion when the conduct:
 - a. Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or academic environment;
 - b. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance; or
 - c. Otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment or academic opportunities.

D. Sexual Violence; Definition

1. Sexual violence is a physical act of aggression or force or the threat thereof that involves the touching of another's intimate parts, or forcing a person to touch any person's intimate parts. Intimate parts, as defined in Minn. Stat. § 609.341, includes the primary genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttocks or breast, as well as the clothing covering these areas.
2. Sexual violence may include, but is not limited to:
 - a. Touching, patting, grabbing, or pinching another person's intimate parts, whether that person is of the same sex or the opposite sex;
 - b. Coercing, forcing or attempting to coerce or force the touching of anyone's intimate parts;
 - c. Coercing, forcing or attempting to coerce or force sexual intercourse or a sexual act on another; or
 - d. Threatening to force or coerce sexual acts, including the touching of intimate parts or intercourse, on another.

E. Racial Violence; Definition

1. Racial violence is a physical act of aggression or assault upon another because of, or in a manner reasonably related to, race.

F. Religious Violence; Definition

1. Religious violence is a physical act of aggression or assault upon another because of, or in a manner reasonably related to, religion.

G. Assault; Definition

1. Assault is:
 - a. An act done with intent to cause fear in another of immediate bodily harm or death;
 - b. The intentional infliction of or attempt to inflict bodily harm upon another; or
 - c. The threat to do bodily harm to another with present ability to carry out the threat.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURES

- A. Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence by a pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel of the school, or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct which may constitute religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence toward a pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel should report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school official designated by this policy. The school encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the School Director or available from the school office, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well. Nothing in this policy shall prevent any person from reporting harassment or violence directly to a school human rights officer or to the School Director.
- B. The school board hereby designates the School Director to receive reports or complaints of religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence. If the complaint involves the School Director, the complaint shall be filed directly with the Executive Director and the Chair of the Board of Directors. If the complaint involves the Executive Director, the complaint shall be filed directly with the Chair of the Board of Directors.
- C. The school shall conspicuously post the contact information of the School Director including mailing addresses and telephone numbers on the school website.
- D. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence will not affect the complainant or reporter's future employment, grades or work assignments.
- E. Use of formal reporting forms is not mandatory.
- F. The school will respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform to any discovery or disclosure obligations.

V. INVESTIGATION

- A. By authority of the school, the School Director, upon receipt of a report or complaint alleging religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence, shall immediately undertake or authorize an investigation. The investigation may be conducted by school officials or by a third party designated by the school.
- 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 any other methods and documents deemed pertinent by the investigator.

- C. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the school should consider the surrounding circumstances, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.
- D. In addition, the school may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complainant, pupils, teachers, administrators or other school personnel pending completion of an investigation of alleged religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence.
- E. The investigation will be completed as soon as practicable. The school human rights officer shall make a written report to the School Board upon completion of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether the allegations have been substantiated as factual and whether they appear to be violations of this policy.

VI. SCHOOL ACTION

- A. Upon receipt of a report, the school will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination or discharge. School action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, Minnesota and federal law and school policies.
- B. The result of the school's investigation of each complaint filed under these procedures will be reported in writing to the complainant by the school in accordance with state and federal law regarding data or records privacy.

VII. REPRISAL

The school will discipline or take appropriate action against any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel who retaliates against any person who makes a good faith report of alleged religious, racial or sexual harassment or violence or any person who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, or who testifies, assists or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such harassment or violence. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.

VIII. RIGHT TO ALTERNATIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

These procedures do not deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse that may include filing charges with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, initiating civil action or seeking redress under state criminal statutes and/or federal law.



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IX. RIGHT TO ALTERNATIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

- A. Under certain circumstances, alleged harassment or violence may also be possible abuse under Minnesota law. If so, the duties of mandatory reporting under Minn. Stat. § 626.556 may be applicable.
- B. Nothing in this policy will prohibit the school from taking immediate action to protect victims of alleged harassment, violence or abuse.

X. DISSEMINATION OF POLICY AND TRAINING

- A. This policy shall be posted on the school website so it is accessible to pupils and staff members.
- B. This policy shall be given to each school employee and independent contractor at the time of entering into the person's employment contract.
- C. This policy shall be summarized in the student handbook.
- D. The school will develop a method of discussing this policy with students and employees.
- E. This policy shall be reviewed at least annually for compliance with state and federal law.