

Some Things to Know

What is Title IX?

Title IX is a federal statute that prohibits gender discrimination in any education program or activity receiving federal funding.

Title IX applies to all school settings in the Auburn School District.

“Sexual Harassment,” “Sexual Assault,” “Dating Violence,” “Domestic Violence,” and “Stalking” are forms of gender discrimination prohibited by Title IX.

These terms have been defined through caselaw and federal statutes.

Who can you contact if you believe you experienced sexual harassment?

Talk to any school staff member (consider starting with whoever you are most comfortable with!). You may use our district’s reporting form to share concerns ([linked here](#)) but reports can be made in writing or verbally. Your report can be made anonymously, if you are uncomfortable revealing your identity, or confidentially if you prefer it not be shared with other students involved with the report. No disciplinary action will be taken against another student based solely on an anonymous or confidential report.

If a staff member is notified of, observes, overhears, or otherwise witnesses harassment or discrimination, they must take prompt and appropriate action to stop the behavior and to prevent it from happening again.

If you believe your school failed to adequately investigate your complaint, you can file a complaint with the appropriate administrator listed in this brochure, or with the **U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights** (OCR).

Filing a complaint with the school does not bar you from filing a complaint with the police.

What can I do if I’m concerned about discrimination or harassment?

Talk to a Coordinator or submit a written complaint. You may contact the following school district staff members to report your concerns, ask questions, or learn more about how to resolve your concerns.

Concerns about discrimination, sex discrimination, sexual harassment involving staff:
Civil Rights and Title IX Coordinator:
Jon Young, jyoung@auburn.wednet.edu
Asst. Superintendent of Human Resources
(253) 931-4932

Concerns about discrimination, sex discrimination, sexual harassment or harassment intimidation, and bullying involving students:
Rhonda Larson, Asst. Superintendent of Student Engagement Services
rlarson@auburn.wednet.edu
(253) 931-4712

Concerns about disability discrimination:
504 Coordinator (Students):
Tami Petrina, Exec. Director of Student Special Services
tpetrina@auburn.wednet.edu
(253) 931-4927

ADA Coordinator (Staff):
Analia Galloway, Asst. Director of Human Resources
agalloway@auburn.wednet.edu
(253) 931-4900

To **submit a written complaint**, describe the conduct or incident that may be discriminatory and send it by mail, fax, email, or hand delivery to the school principal, district superintendent, or civil rights coordinator. Submit the complaint as soon as possible for a prompt investigation, and within one year of the conduct or incident.



Nondiscrimination (Sexual Harassment or Title IX, Discrimination)

and

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB)

**A guide for
students
and
parents.**

Our Schools Protect Students from Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

What is HIB?

HIB is any intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act of a student that:

- Physically harms another student or damages their property;
- Has the effect of greatly interfering with another student's education; or,
- Is so severe, persistent, or significant that it creates an intimidating or threatening education environment for other students.

HIB generally involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated. HIB is not allowed, by law, in our schools.

How can I make a report or complaint about HIB?

Talk to any school staff member (consider starting with whoever you are most comfortable with!). You may use our district's reporting form to share concerns about HIB (linked here) but reports about HIB can be made in writing or verbally. Your report can be made anonymously, if you are uncomfortable revealing your identity, or confidentially if you prefer it not be shared with other students involved with the report. No disciplinary action will be taken against another student based solely on an anonymous or confidential report.

If a staff member is notified of, observes, overhears, or otherwise witnesses HIB, they must take prompt and appropriate action to stop the HIB behavior and to prevent it from happening again. Our district also has a HIB Compliance Officer (Rhonda Larson, Assistant Superintendent of Student Engagement Services, rlarson@auburn.wednet.edu) that supports prevention and response to HIB.

What happens after I make a report about HIB?

If you report HIB, school staff must attempt to resolve the concerns. If the concerns are resolved, then no further action may be necessary. However, if you feel that you or someone you know is the victim of unresolved, severe, or persistent HIB that requires further investigation and action, then you should request an official HIB investigation. Also, the school must take actions to ensure that those who report HIB don't experience retaliation.

Our School Stands Against Discrimination

Discrimination can happen when someone is treated differently or unfairly because they are part of a protected class, including their race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religion, creed, disability, use of a service animal, or veteran or military status.

What is discriminatory harassment?

Discriminatory harassment can include teasing and name-calling; graphic and written statements; or other conduct that may be physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating. Discriminatory harassment happens when the conduct is based on a student's protected class and is serious enough to create a hostile environment. A hostile environment is created when conduct is so severe, pervasive, or persistent that it limits a student's ability to participate in, or benefit from, the school's services, activities, or opportunities.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct or communication that is sexual in nature and substantially interferes with a student's educational performance or creates an intimidating or hostile environment. Sexual harassment can also occur when a student is led to believe they must submit to unwelcome sexual conduct or communication to gain something in return, such as a grade or a place on a sports team.

Examples of sexual harassment can include pressuring a person for sexual actions or favors; unwelcome touching of a sexual nature; graphic or written statements of a sexual nature; distributing sexually explicit texts, e-mails, or pictures; making sexual jokes, rumors, or suggestive remarks; and physical violence, including rape and sexual assault.

Our schools do not discriminate based on sex and prohibit sex discrimination in all of our education programs and employment, as required by Title IX and state law.

What should my school do about discriminatory and sexual harassment?

When a school becomes aware of possible discriminatory or sexual harassment, it must investigate and stop the harassment. The school must address any effects the harassment had on the student at school, including eliminating the hostile environment, and make sure that the harassment does not happen again.

Parent FAQs

Can I file a complaint on behalf of my child?

Parents and guardians of K-12 students have a legal right to file a report and/or a formal complaint on behalf of a minor child and act on behalf of the minor child in any Title IX matter.

Will I be notified if my child is going through an investigation?

If you are the parent of a minor child, the school is required to notify you and your child of any investigation and discuss all options available for your child, including supportive measures.

Will my child be presumed innocent?

Schools must presume that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged misconduct until the decision-maker makes a determination at the conclusion of the Grievance Process. Respondents must receive a fair process before any discipline is imposed. The school, not the student, has the burden of proof.

What standard of proof is used when deciding whether a respondent is guilty of sexual harassment?

Schools have the choice of using either a preponderance of evidence standard or a clear and convincing evidence standard. Schools must notify their students of which standard it is using. Most K-12 schools adopt the preponderance of evidence standard.

- Preponderance of evidence standard: whether it's more likely than not that the violation occurred.
- Clear and convincing evidence standard: whether it is highly probable or reasonably certain that the violation occurred.

For more information about supporting the civil rights of your student we encourage you to check out the following:

⇒ [Auburn School District's Webpage](#)

⇒ [Auburn School District's Bullying Prevention Parent Resource Page](#)

⇒ [State Superintendent of Public Instruction's Information for Families: Civil Rights in Washington Schools](#)