

Adopted: February 27, 2017 [NEW]
Contact Person: Executive Director of Human Resources

POLICY 457 RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE

I. PURPOSE

Employees shall not be subjected to disrespectful behavior from co-workers, parents/guardians, or people doing work in the District.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

The District is committed to providing a positive environment in which all staff, members of the public and other doing business with the District are treated with professionalism and respect. Staff shall not engage in unprofessional or disrespectful behavior, or be subjected to unprofessional or disrespectful behavior from co-workers, parents/guardians, or people doing business with the District. No staff of the District shall permit, condone, or tolerate unprofessional or disrespectful behavior.

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I. DEFINITIONS

- A. Disrespectful Behavior - Inappropriate/unprofessional behavior, which is not limited to but includes chronic and continuous badgering and verbal abuse, offensive or inappropriate behavior, an act of bullying, or any act that a reasonable person would find inappropriate. Also defined as interference by a co-worker, parent/guardian or people doing work in the District in the staff's performance of his/her duties and/or to comply with District Policy.
- B. Retaliation - Includes but is not limited to any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment.
- C. School Staff - School Board members, school staff, agents, volunteers and contractors subject to the supervision and control of the District.
- D. Verbal Abuse - Abusive language, screaming, yelling, insults, threats, and profanity.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Staff and all those interacting in the school environment are expected to:
 - 1. Conduct themselves in a manner that demonstrates professionalism and respect for others in the school environment;
 - 2. Use informal means to address issues with the individual(s) involved whenever possible; and
 - 3. Report incidents that may violate this Policy in accordance to the procedures outlined in this Policy.
- B. In addition to their responsibilities as staff as described above, managers and supervisors are also expected to:
 - 1. Inform their staff of the expectations of this Policy;
 - 2. Achieve and maintain compliance with this Policy; and
 - 3. Take timely and appropriate action when a complaint is made alleging violation of this Policy, as outlined.

III. RESPECTFUL AND/OR PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Context is important in understanding the difference between respectful and/or professional behavior and disrespectful and/or unprofessional behavior. Individuals may experience stress or discomfort in the school environment that is not related to disrespectful and/or unprofessional behavior. For example, disrespectful and/or unprofessional behavior does **not** include the following:

- The normal exercise of supervisory or managerial responsibilities, including, but not limited to granting or denying requests of employees, responding to e-mails, performance reviews, work direction, performance management, and disciplinary action provided they are conducted in a respectful, professional manner.
- Disagreements, misunderstandings, miscommunication or conflict situations where the behavior remains professional and respectful.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. Employees or third parties are encouraged to informally resolve concerns whenever possible by having a conversation with the individual who they feel was disrespectful and/or unprofessional. If guidance on how to have that conversation is desired, the Executive Director of Human Resources (EDHR), supervisor, union representative, or Employee Assistance Program representative are all possible sources of guidance.
- B. If a direct informal approach is not possible or does not resolve the concern, a formal complaint should be made. The individual should report that conduct to their supervisor or the Executive Director of Human Resources (EDHR) within three calendar days of the incident, or within three calendar days of the last informal resolution process. While written reports are encouraged, a complaint may be made orally.
- C. In the case of a concern or complaint against a School Board member, the complaining party should make the oral or written report to the School Board chair, or if the complaint is made to a supervisor or EDHR, the School Board chair shall be advised of the complaint in order to begin the investigation. If the complaint is against the School Board chair, the vice chair will be notified of the complaint and begin the investigation. All complaints against School Board members will be investigated and outcome determined by the School Board.
- D. Investigation of a report of respectful behavior will be completed promptly. All reports of disrespectful behavior will be overseen by the EDHR. If a supervisor receives a report of disrespectful behavior, they will develop and implement an investigation plan in collaboration with the EDHR.

- E. The appropriate administrator shall respond in writing to the complaining party concerning the outcome of the investigation of follow-up. The Superintendent shall be copied on the correspondence and consulted in advance of the written response when appropriate. The response to the complaining party shall be consistent with the rights of others pursuant to the applicable provision of Minnesota Statutes, 13 (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act) or other law.
- F. Any District action taken pursuant to this Policy will be consistent with requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements, contracts, Minnesota Statutes, and District policies. The District will take such disciplinary action it deems necessary and appropriate, including warning, suspension or termination to end and prevent any further occurrences of disrespectful behavior. The District reserves the right to determine whether any type of behavior is disrespectful and injurious to the morale of the organization.
- G. Complaints that fall under school District Policy 413: Harassment and Violence should be filed pursuant to that policy.
- H. Retaliation against any person who makes a good faith report under this Policy, or against any person who is included in investigatory interviews regarding a report under this policy is strictly prohibited. The District will take appropriate action with staff that retaliates against anyone, up to and including termination.