

Uniform Grievance Procedure

Students, parents/guardians, employees or community members may file a complaint in accordance with this grievance procedure if they believe that the Perspectives Charter Schools Governing Board or Perspectives Charter Schools employees or agents have violated their rights guaranteed by the state or federal constitution, state or federal statutes, or Perspectives Charter Schools' Policy.

Perspectives is committed to working with families in a timely and transparent way. It is our hope that complaints can be resolved with staff in the building who work most directly with families day to day, however when that is not possible the following outlines additional steps to take.

SCOPE OF POLICY

Claims to be reviewed under this Policy include those arising under the following:

- Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973;
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972;
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act;
- Equal Employment Opportunities Act (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act);
- Sexual harassment (Illinois Human Rights Act, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972);
- Bullying;
- Misuse of funds received for services to improve educational opportunities for educationally disadvantaged or deprived children;
- Curriculum, instructional materials, and/or programs;
- Victims’ Economic Security and Safety Act;
- Illinois Equal Pay Act of 2003;
- Provision of services to homeless students.
- Illinois Whistleblower Act;
- Misuse of genetic information (Illinois Genetic Information Privacy Act and Titles I and II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act); and
- Employee Credit Privacy Act.

Perspectives will endeavor to respond to and resolve complaints without the need to resort to this grievance procedure and, if a complaint is filed, to address the complaint promptly and equitably. If a formal complaint is filed under this procedure, the Complaint Manager will address the complaint promptly and equitably. A student and/or parent guardian filing a complaint under this procedure may forego any information suggestions and/or attempts to resolve it and may proceed directly to the grievance procedure. The Complaint Manager will not

require a student or parent/guardian complaining of any form of harassment to attempt to resolve allegations directly with the accused or the accused's parent/guardian; this includes mediation.

RIGHT TO PURSUE OTHER REMEDIES NOT IMPAIRED

The right of a person to prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint filed hereunder shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies (e.g. criminal complaints, civil actions, etc.). Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies and use of this grievance procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to the pursuit of other remedies. If a person is pursuing another remedy subject to a complaint under this policy, Perspectives will continue with a simultaneous investigation under this policy.

DEADLINES

All deadlines under this procedure may be extended by the Complaint Manager as he or she deems appropriate. As used in this policy, school business days means days on which the Perspectives main office is open.

FILING A COMPLAINT

A person (Complainant) who wishes to avail himself or herself of this grievance procedure may do so by filing a complaint with one of the designated Perspectives Complaint Managers, whose contact information is listed below. The Complainant shall not be required to file a complaint with a particular Complaint Manager and may request a Complaint Manager of the same gender. The Complaint Manager may request the Complainant to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint or require a meeting with the parents/guardians of a student. The Complaint Manager may assist the Complainant in filing a complaint under this grievance procedure.

For bullying and cyber-bullying, the Complaint Manager shall process and review the complaint according to Perspectives' Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment Policy outlined in this handbook in addition to any response required by this policy.

INVESTIGATION

The Complaint Manager will investigate the complaint, or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation on his or her behalf. The Complaint Manager shall ensure that both parties have an equal opportunity to present evidence during an investigation. If the Complainant is a student under 18 years of age, the Complaint Manager will notify his or her parents/guardians as they may attend any investigatory meetings in which their child is involved. The complaint or identity of the Complainant will not be disclosed except (1) as required by law, or (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the Complainant.

The identify of any student witnesses will not be disclosed except: (1) as required by law or any collective bargaining agreement, or (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the parent/guardian of the student witness or by the student if the student is 18 years of age or older.

The Complaint Manager will inform, at regular intervals, the person(s) filing the complaint under this procedure about the status of the investigation.

The Complaint Manager shall file a written report of his or her investigation findings with the Chief Executive Officer within thirty school business days of the date the complaint was filed. The Complaint Manager may request an extension of time.

If a complaint of sexual harassment contains allegations involving the Complaint Manager, the written report shall be filed with the Chief Executive Officer, who shall render a decision in accordance with the procedure set forth below. The Chief Executive Officer will keep the Board informed of all complaints.

DECISION AND APPEAL

Within five school business days after receiving the Complaint Manager's report, the Chief Executive Officer shall mail his or her written decision to the Complainant and the accused via first class U.S. mail, as well as to the Complaint Manager. All decision shall be based on the preponderance of the evidence standard.

Within ten school business days after receiving the Chief Executive Officer's decision, the Complainant or the accused may appeal the decision to the Board by making a written request to the Complaint Manager.

The Complaint Manager shall promptly forward all materials relative to the complaint and appeal to the Board. Within thirty school business days, the Board shall affirm, reverse or amend the Chief Executive Officer's decision or direct the Chief Executive Officer to gather additional information.

Within five school business days of the Board's decision, the Chief Executive Officer shall inform the Complainant and the accused of the Board's action.

This grievance procedure shall not be construed to create an independent right to a hearing before the Chief Executive Officer or the Board. The failure to strictly follow timelines in this grievance procedure shall not prejudice any party.

After receipt of the Complaint Manager's investigation report, the Chief Executive Officer shall render a written decision, which shall be provided to the Complainant. In the event the Complainant is not satisfied with the decision, the Complainant may appeal the decision by

making a written request to the Complaint Manager for review by the Chief Executive Officer. The Complaint Manager shall be responsible for forwarding all materials relative to the complaint and appeal to the Chief Executive Officer. Thereafter, the Chief Executive Officer shall render a written decision, which may affirm, modify, or reverse the Chief Executive Officer's decision. A copy of the Chief Executive Officer's decision shall be provided to the Complainant. This grievance procedure shall not be construed to create an independent right to a hearing before the Chief Executive Officer.

Complaint Manager:

Amy Gambrel
Senior Director of Student Supports
Perspectives Charter Schools
1530 S. State St. 2nd Floor
Chicago, IL 60605
312-604-2200

Non-Discrimination, Aggressive Behavior, Bullying, and Harassment Policy

POLICY #1: EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Equal educational and extracurricular opportunities shall be available for all students without regard to race, color, nationality, religion, sex, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, gender identity, age, marital status, citizenship status, military status, unfavorable discharge from the military service, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability (including any mental, psychological or developmental disability including any autism spectrum disorder), status as homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, immigration status, order of protection status, including pregnancy, or any other protected category. Further, the District will not knowingly enter into agreements with any entity or any individual that discriminates against students on the basis of sex or any other protected status, except that Perspectives remains viewpoint neutral when granting access to school facilities. Any student may file a discrimination grievance by using the Uniform Grievance Procedure.

No student shall, based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity be denied access to programs, activities, services or benefits or be limited in the exercise of any right, privilege, advantage, or denied equal access to educational and extracurricular programs and activities. Any student may file a sex equity complaint by using the Uniform Grievance Procedure. No student be subjected to harassment, intimidation, aggressive behavior, bullying or cyberbullying, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that occurs on school property, at all Perspectives sponsored events, field studies, internships, community action projects, all programs held at Perspectives Charter Schools or when a student's actions, whether on- or off-campus, affect the mission or operation of Perspectives Charter Schools, or otherwise have a nexus to school or impact on the school environment.

The Chief Executive Officer shall appoint a Nondiscrimination Coordinator, whom unless otherwise identified will be the Director of Human Resources. The Chief Executive Officer and Building Principal shall use reasonable measures to inform staff members and students of this policy and grievance procedure.

POLICY #2: HARASSMENT POLICY

Bullying, Intimidation and Harassment is Strictly Prohibited

No person, including a Perspectives employee or agent, or student, shall harass, intimidate, or bully a student on the basis of actual or perceived: race; color; national origin; military status; unfavorable discharge status from military service; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity; gender related identity or expression; ancestry; age; religion; physical or mental disability; order of protection status; status of being homeless; actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy; association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics; or any other distinguishing characteristic. Perspectives will not tolerate harassing, intimidating conduct, or bullying whether verbal, physical, sexual, or visual, that affects the tangible benefits of education, that unreasonably interferes with a student's educational performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. Examples of prohibited conduct include name calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment of students is prohibited. This includes any person, including a district employee, agent, or student, who engages in sexual harassment when he/she makes sexual advances, requests sexual favors, and/or engages in other verbal or physical conduct, including sexual violence, or any action that of a sexual nature that:

- Denies or limits the provision of educational aid, benefits, services or treatment; or
- That makes such conduct a condition of the student's academic status; and

Has the purpose or effect of:

- Substantially interfering with a student's educational environment;
- Creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
- Depriving a student of educational aid, benefits, services or treatment; or
- Making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for academic decisions affecting a student.

The terms intimidating, hostile and offensive include conduct that has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment or discomfort. Examples of sexual harassment include touching, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, teasing related to sexual characteristics, and spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities. The term sexual violence includes a number of different acts which include, but are not limited to, rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion.

MAKING A COMPLAINT AND ENFORCEMENT

Students are encouraged to report claims or incidences of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, or any other prohibited conduct to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, School Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean of Students, or a Complaint Manager. A student may choose to report to a person of the student's same sex. Complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible given the need to investigate. Students who make good faith complaints will not be disciplined.

An allegation that a student is a victim of any prohibited conduct perpetrated by another student shall be referred to the School Principal, Assistant Principal, or Dean of Students for appropriate action.

Any Perspectives employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any Perspectives student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with the discipline policy. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge with regard to employees or suspension and expulsion with regard to students.

Non-Discrimination Coordinator and Complaint Manager:

Non-Discrimination Coordinator

Ana Abonce

Senior Director of Human Resources

Perspectives Charter Schools

1530 S. State St. 2nd Floor

Chicago, IL 60605

312-604-2200

Complaint Manager

Amy Gambrel

Senior Director of Student Supports

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AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

Aggressive behavior includes behavior in which an individual student or a group of students, through the improper use of real or perceived power, or the use of threats, extortion, exclusion, or by any other method, inflicts, attempts, or intends to inflict, either physical or psychological harm on another student or group of students.

POLICY #3: PREVENTION OF AND RESPONSE TO BULLYING, INTIMIDATION AND HARASSMENT

Bullying, intimidation and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important goals of Perspectives.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, military status, unfavorable discharge from the military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or action or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited in each of the following situations:

During any school sponsored education program or activity;

While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school sanctioned events or activities;

- Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment;
- Through the transmission of information from a computer that is access at a non-school-related location, activity, function or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the School District or a school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This applies only when a school administration or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred; it does not require staff members to monitor any non-school-related activity, function or program.

Bullying Defined

Bullying includes cyber-bullying. Bullying is defined as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed towards a student or students that has, or can be reasonably predicted to have, the effect of one or more of the following:

- Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
- Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
- Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
- Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is also prohibited.

Bullying may involve any of the following: physical, verbal, or psychological attacks, intimidation, sexual harassment or sexual violence directed against another individual or writings, messages or pictures delivered using multimedia communications or devices, harassment, threats, stalking, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. Physical bullying includes, but is not limited to, punching, shoving, poking, or hair pulling. Verbal or psychological bullying includes, but is not limited to, name calling, teasing, gossip, humiliation, threats, manipulating social relationships, engaging in social exclusion, or other similar behaviors, whether engaged directly toward the target of such behavior, or through third parties.

Cyberbullying Defined

Cyberbullying includes the use of technology or any electronic communication including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation email messages Internet communications, instant messaging, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the author assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posted of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Response to Bullying

Students who engage in cyberbullying off-campus may be subject to discipline if the conduct affects the mission and/or operation of Perspectives Charter Schools, or otherwise have a nexus to school or a school activity, which includes after school events.

Perspectives Charter Schools works to prevent bullying of all kinds and provide a safe space for students. All Perspectives Employees who witness bullying or school violence, or who possess reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of bullying must:

Intervene immediately in a manner that is appropriate to the context and ensures the safety of all persons involved. Report the incident of bullying or retaliation to the Principal/Designee as soon as practicable, but within 24 hours via a Bullying Complaint form and cooperate fully in an investigation of the incident and implementation of a safety plan developed by the Principal/Designee.

Parents and students should report Perspectives Charter Schools Employees who are contributing to, commenting on and engaging in fighting, bullying, and in appropriate activities via social media.

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the Complaint Manager or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the Complaint Manager or any staff member. Anonymous reports are also accepted.

Consistent with federal and state laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the School Principal, or designee, shall promptly inform the parents/guardians of every student involved in

an alleged incident of bullying and discuss, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures.

The School Principal, or designee, shall promptly investigate and address reports of bullying by, among other things:

- Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within ten school days after the date the report of a bullying incident was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported bullying incident;
- Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process;
- Consistent with federal and state law rules governing student privacy rights, providing parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the Principal or school administrator or his or her designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

The School Principal or designee shall investigate whether a reported incident of bullying is within the permissible scope of Perspectives' jurisdiction and shall require Perspectives to provide the victim with information regarding services that are available from Perspectives and from community resources, such as counseling, support services, and other programs.

The School Principal or designee shall use interventions to address bullying, that may include, but are not limited to, school social work services, restorative measures, and social emotional skill building, counseling, school psychological services, and community based services.

A reprisal or retaliation who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. A student's act or reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the District's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for the purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

Discipline for Policy Violation

Aggressive behavior, bullying, cyberbullying, or harassment, constitutes negative behaviors that are aligned to Perspectives Charter Schools Student Code of Conduct. Students, who engage in aggressive behavior, bullying, or harassment, will be subject to discipline in accordance with

the Student Code of Conduct. If bullying is found to be based on a student's status or protected characteristic, the matter may be treated as an act of discrimination or harassment.

Reporting Behaviors

Witnesses or victims of aggressive behavior, harassment, or bullying should report the issue to the school principal. If the issue hasn't been resolved, contact:

Amy Gambrel

Senior Director of Student Supports

Perspectives Charter Schools

1530 South State Street

Chicago, IL 60605

312-604-2200 | studentcomplaints@pcsedu.org