



**To:** Emily Parks, Superintendent  
**From:** Allison Borchers, Assistant Superintendent  
**Cc:** Abigail Hanscom, K-12 Director of Student Services  
**Date:** December 4, 2020  
**Re:** Title IX Policy

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In May of 2020, the US Department of Education released its final rule on Title IX, the federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities that receive federal assistance. The final rule went into effect in August and brings with it some changes in how schools are expected to investigate and respond to reports of sexual harassment.

Counsel for the district has recommended the creation of a new policy specific to Title IX instead of revision of the district's existing policies covering harassment and discrimination ([ACAB: Non-Discrimination Policy Including Harassment and Retaliation](#); [Protocol for Reporting and Investigating Discrimination, Harassment & Retaliation](#); and [JICB: Bullying Prevention Policy](#)).

There are two main reasons for this recommendation. First, there is some consensus among school attorneys that the change in administration at the federal level will likely lead to a change in Title IX regulations sometime in the near future. Creating a separate policy will allow Westwood's school committee to respond to any changes to Title IX regulations efficiently. In addition, there are some key differences between definitions and procedural requirements under the state and federal laws and regulations. Creation of a specific Title IX policy and procedure essentially creates a separate track for responding to reports of harassment that specifically meet the definitions in the new Title IX final rule while preserving the district's umbrella policy and clear protocols.

The draft WPS Title IX policy and grievance procedures are now available for reading and review by the Westwood School Committee:

[ACA - TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY](#)

[ACA-R - GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT UNDER TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972](#)