

Slide 1: Welcome to the Galloway Township School's Affirmative Action Training. As noted in the Galloway Township Staff handbook, it is the responsibility of each staff member to review the district's Affirmative Action policies and procedures. Additionally, all new staff are trained on the district's policies and procedures within one calendar year of their hire date. This video recording and corresponding transcript are available to all staff members for reference throughout the year and available on the district website.

Slide 2: During today's presentation you will learn about Affirmative Action, the role of the district's Affirmative Action Officer, what constitutes an Affirmative Action grievance, and what to do if you believe you have a grievance.

As a reminder, the Galloway Township School District is an equal-opportunity employer. Additionally, the Galloway Township Schools are committed to resolving problems associated with the student achievement gap and other inequities arising from prejudice on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender, religion, disability or socioeconomic status as outlined in administrative code.

Slide 3: So what is Affirmative Action? Affirmative Action is a belief or conviction that all staff and students have the right to be treated fairly and are provided with equal opportunities to reach their full potential.

Slide 4: Affirmative Action has a long legal history and New Jersey continues to have some of the strongest anti-discriminatory laws in the country. NJLAD or the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination was first established in the 1940s to prohibit discrimination and bias-based harassment based on protected classes in employment, housing, and other places of public accommodation. Later the law was expanded under Title XI to ban discrimination on the basis of sex.

Title VI, Equality in Educational Programs, further expanded on Title IX, thereby banning discrimination on the basis of sex, affectional or sexual orientation (real or perceived), race, color, creed, religion, ancestry, national origin, or social or economic status.

Slide 5: You may or may not be aware that in addition to my role as curriculum director serve as the district's Affirmative Action Officer and Title IX Officer. My office is housed in the central office building attached to Reeds Road. You can always contact me via email or at my district extension 1009.

Slide 6: As the district's Affirmative Action officer I work collectively with members of our school community to monitor compliance with district policies and laws that support Affirmative Action. Compliance with our policies and laws includes providing training such as this one. I ensure that staff are aware of our grievance procedures and I will, when needed, investigate grievances and make recommendations for next steps or solutions.

Additionally, I help to prepare, monitor, and oversee the district's Comprehensive Equity Plan.

Slide 7: In my role as Affirmative Action Officer, I also promote and help to ensure that the district meets expectations for being an Equal Opportunity Employer. Additionally, I work to ensure equitable outcomes for all students. I do this by monitoring the district curriculum to ensure that it is both a window and a mirror. In other words, our curriculum materials and practices allow our students to feel seen while also allowing students to gain insights into others. From an employment standpoint, I collaborate with our managers and administrators to ensure that our employment practices are fair and equitable. As an Affirmative Action Officer, I look to ensure that we are not discriminating against individuals based on federally or NJLAD-protected characteristics when we are recruiting, hiring, and awarding contracts.

Slide 8: As the district's Affirmative Action Officer and Title IX Officer, my work helps to ensure that all members of our school community are protected against discriminatory acts or practices based on NJLAD-protected or federally protected characteristics.

Slide 9: As an Affirmative Action Officer, I may be called upon to investigate unwelcomed actions or behaviors to determine if a person has been discriminated against or harassed due to a protected characteristic. Such actions or behaviors may fall within these specific categories which we will now learn more about.

Slide 10: Harassment is the willful intent to torment, pester, and/or irritate persistently based upon a protected characteristic real or perceived. Harassing behavior can include humiliating or abusive comments, actions, or gestures. Hate speech can fall under the umbrella of harassment. It is important to point out that harassment is based on the point of view of the victim.

Slide 11: Sexual harassment is a type of workplace harassment in which an individual is the recipient of unwelcome sexual attention. Sexual harassment has nothing to do with a mutual attraction or a consensual relationship. Sexual harassment can include a request for sexual relations or other verbal/physical conduct of a sexual nature.

It can include any of the following: physical touching, suggestive comments or jokes, requests for sex, or displays of clearly sexual material and/or photos. Again, It is important to point out that sexual harassment is based on the point of view of the victim.

Slide 12: Examples of harassment, sexual or otherwise, can include spreading malicious gossip or rumors based upon or because of a protected characteristic, failing to maintain personal boundaries, and making repeated indecent and/or racially offensive remarks or jokes. Posting and/or distributing indecent or offensive material.

Slide 13: These unwanted unwelcomed behaviors may fall under the following categories.

- Quid-pro-quo- you do this for me and you will get something in return (i.e. advancement, better evaluation/ grade)

- Hostile Environment- can be created by inappropriate language of a sexual, racial, or demeaning nature, cartoons, sexual jokes, graffiti, or other images.
- Favoritism- offering advancement, opportunities, or better evaluation/grade to a person based on being the favorite.

Again, it is important to note that harassment is based on the point of view of the victim.

Slide 14: A note regarding the classification of the hostile work environment. Under NJLAD, for the legal definition of a hostile work environment to be met, behaviors or communication must be discriminatory and severe or pervasive enough for the complainant to reasonably believe that the environment has been made hostile. The alleged behaviors, actions, and/or communications seriously disrupt the employee's work or career progress.

If the harassment is not directed at someone's protected characteristic then it is not actionable under NJLAD. Unfortunately, rude or socially unacceptable behavior does not necessarily constitute harassment or a hostile workplace. Rather, rude, crude, or socially unacceptable behavior that is not occurring based upon one's protected class is seen as workplace conflict.

In the event of workplace conflict, an association building representative, administrator or department manager, or the Human Resources Director is your best point of contact for resolution.

Slide 15: Intolerance and Bullying is unwillingness or willful refusal to tolerate or respect contrary opinions or held beliefs associated with race, ethnicity, religion, and/or other protected classes.

Slide 16: Harassment and Bullying are further discussed as part of the annual critical policy training provided by the Director of Student Services.

Slide 17: A bias-related act is defined as any act directed at a person, group of persons, or property (public or private) that is motivated in whole or in part by race, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnicity.

A hate crime is any criminal offense where the person or person committing the offense acted with the purpose of intimidating an individual or group because of race, color, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnicity. Such acts are reported to local authorities in accordance with mandatory reporting procedures.

Slide 18: Throughout this presentation, you have heard me refer to NJLAD or protected characteristics/classifications. This slide illustrates protected characteristics/classes outlined both at the federal and state level.

Slide 19: Collectively we all have a role to play in ensuring that all members of the school community are protected and being treated equitably. Here are some important reminders as you reflect on your own professional and personal behavior.

As stated throughout this presentation, it is important that you remember that harassment is based on the victim's point of view. Consider how your words or actions make those around you feel. Additionally, it is equally important to be mindful of what you're posting on social media accounts; even those that are private or cannot be linked to your professional social media accounts. Remember what you post because part of your brand.

Slide 20: So what can you do if you believe you have been the victim of inequitable treatment or have witnessed inequitable treatment in our school community? You may find the Galloway Township School District Grievance Procedure in the district handbook and within this presentation on the district website.

In summary, the first step in the process is to report your concern to your immediate supervisor and the Affirmative Action Officer. If your concern is with your immediate supervisor, then you may report solely to the Affirmative Action Officer.

Once reported, if you have not done so already, you will be asked to complete a complaint form. All Affirmative Action Grievances must be shared in writing with the Affirmative Action Officer. The complaint form is available on the district website under staff resources district forms. Once written notification is received, the Affirmative Action Officer or appropriate designee will investigate the concern and respond to the grievant. If the grievant is unsatisfied with the findings, an appeal process can be initiated. For more detailed information regarding the grievance or appeal procedures, please see the staff handbook.

Slide 21: Again, I cannot stress enough that we all have a collective responsibility to ensure that all members of our school community feel valued, respected, and seen.

Slide 22: This quote from Anita Perna Bohn from Illinois State University sums up this collective responsibility nicely as well as our why. Our goal is to prepare our young people to be tomorrow's leaders.

Slide 23: Thank you for your time and attention to this presentation and for ensuring that our schools continue to be safe and equitable for all of us and our students. The following and final slide in our presentation shares associated District Policies which you may review as needed or desired.

