

Model Whistleblower Protection Policy for Temecula Valley Unified School District (TVUSD)

Modeled After Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD) Whistleblower Protection Policy

Purpose

To promote transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct by providing clear, enforceable protections for employees, students, parents, volunteers, and community members ("whistleblowers") who report actual or suspected misconduct, including financial wrongdoing, fraud, and retaliation.

Definitions

- **Whistleblower:** Any employee, student, parent, volunteer, or community member who, in good faith, reports suspected or actual misconduct.
- **Misconduct:** Illegal acts, fraud, financial mismanagement, ethical violations, retaliation against whistleblowers, or any act compromising district integrity.

Reporting Channels

- The district shall maintain **multiple confidential and anonymous reporting options**, including a 24/7 hotline and online portal, managed independently to ensure whistleblower anonymity and protection.
- All reports, including anonymous complaints, **shall be investigated** without exception.

Protection Against Retaliation

- The district **strictly prohibits any form of retaliation** (e.g., dismissal, demotion, harassment, discrimination) against whistleblowers.
- Whistleblowers who experience retaliation shall have access to immediate remedial action, including disciplinary consequences for retaliators.

Investigation Procedures

- Upon receipt of a report, an **Ethics and Compliance Officer** or designated independent investigator shall promptly and impartially investigate the allegation.
- Investigations shall be confidential to the extent possible and completed in a timely manner.
- Whistleblowers will be kept informed of investigation status and outcomes, respecting privacy laws.

Confidentiality

- The district shall **safeguard the identity** of whistleblowers and complainants to the fullest extent possible consistent with a thorough investigation.
- Disclosure of identities shall occur only with whistleblower consent or when legally required.

Training and Awareness

- The district shall provide **annual mandatory training** for all employees and stakeholders on whistleblower rights, reporting procedures, and protections.
- Public awareness campaigns shall be conducted to ensure community knowledge of protections and reporting channels.

Reporting and Accountability

- The Ethics and Compliance Officer shall provide **annual public reports** to the School Board summarizing whistleblower reports, investigations, and policy effectiveness without disclosing personally identifiable information.
- The district shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws, including California Labor Code §1102.5 and Government Code §§ 8547–8547.12.

Comparison to Current TVUSD Policy 1312.1

- Unlike the current TVUSD policy, which states that anonymous complaints “*will not be investigated unless the district so desires*,” this policy mandates investigation of **all** complaints regardless of anonymity.
- The current policy’s anti-retaliation language is vague and discretionary, while this model enforces **strict, immediate protections** and remedies for whistleblowers.

- Confidentiality protections in this model are **firmly guaranteed**, rather than left to superintendent discretion.

Implementation

- This policy shall be adopted by the TVUSD School Board and integrated into district regulations.
- An Ethics and Compliance Officer shall be appointed to oversee implementation, reporting, and compliance.

This policy is designed to foster a culture where whistleblowers are protected, encouraged, and valued, enabling TVUSD to improve financial integrity and restore community trust.