

Harassment/Bullying Policy

Adopted 2017, updated June 2019

iQ Academy California – Los Angeles strives to provide a safe and welcoming environment for all students to learn. Harassment and/or bullying on the basis of actual or perceived characteristics including disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics is unlawful and will not be tolerated. No individual or group shall, through physical, written, verbal, or other means, harass, sexually harass, threaten, intimidate, retaliate, cyberbully, cause bodily injury to, or commit hate violence against any student or school personnel.

Cyberbullying includes the electronic creation or transmission of harassing communications, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images as defined in Education Code 48900. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's or another's reputation.

- Harassment or bullying on the basis of sex includes sexual harassment or bullying and gender-based harassment or bullying. Sexual harassment or bullying is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, such as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Gender-based harassment or bullying is nonsexual intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on the student's actual or perceived sex, including harassment based on gender identity, gender expression, and nonconformity with gender stereotypes. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as non-verbal behavior, such as graphic and written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful or humiliating. The conduct can be carried out by school employees, other students, and non-employee third parties. Both male and female students can be victims of harassment or bullying on the basis of sex, and the harasser or bully and the victim can be of the same sex. Bullying on the basis of sex constitutes sexual harassment.
- Harassment or bullying on the basis of race, color, or national origin refers to intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on actual or perceived race, color or national origin. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as non-verbal behavior, such as graphic and written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful or humiliating. The conduct can be carried out by school employees, other students, and non-employee third parties. Bullying on the basis of race, color, or national origin constitutes racial harassment.
- Harassment or bullying on the basis of disability refers to intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on actual or perceived disability. Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as non-verbal behavior, such as graphic and written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful or humiliating. The conduct can be carried out by school employees, other students, and non-employee third parties. Bullying on the basis of disability constitutes disability harassment.

Complaint and Reporting Procedure

Any student, employee, or agent who believes he or she has been harassed by an employee, agent, or student of the school should promptly report the facts of the incident(s) and the name of the individual(s) involved to an adult staff member with whom they feel comfortable, and that person shall report the incident to the Academic Administrator. If the alleged harasser is the Academic Administrator, the person may report the incident to the Head of Schools. A written report of the alleged incident will be developed by the Academic Administrator or Head of Schools. A copy of the report, along with a copy of this policy, shall be mailed to the parent of the student who initiated the complaint.

All staff, upon personal knowledge of an incident of harassment, are obligated to report it to the Academic Administrator, or if the harasser is the Academic Administrator, the report shall be made to the Head of Schools. Failure to do so is a violation of this policy. Failure of staff to report student allegations of harassment within three (3) school days is a violation of this policy.

Students who feel aggrieved because of unwelcome conduct that may constitute harassment are not required to inform the person engaging in such conduct that the conduct is unwanted, offensive and must stop, but are encouraged to do so. An aggrieved individual is not required to complain to his or her instructor if that instructor is the individual who is harassing the student. Any individuals making a report may bring an advocate to assist them.

Filing Complaints with State and Federal Agencies

Aggrieved parties may wish to file complaints with other appropriate state and federal agencies, including:

U.S. Office for Civil Rights
50 United Nations Plaza, Room 239, San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 556-7000

Confidentiality

An allegation of harassment and the results of the investigation shall be kept confidential to the extent reasonably possible under the investigative process. Witnesses and those interviewed shall be informed of the confidential nature of the issues and the investigation, and shall be informed that it will be a violation of this policy to disclose the allegation or the nature of the investigation to others and shall be subject to disciplinary action as defined in this policy.

Retaliation is prohibited

The initiation of an allegation of harassment will neither cause any negative reflection on the individual reporting the incident or witnesses nor will it affect such persons' future business dealings with the school, his or her employment, compensation or work assignments, or, in the case of students, his/her grades, class section or other matters pertaining to his/her status as a student of any school programs. It shall be a violation of this policy to engage in such retaliation. An allegation of retaliation shall be considered as a separate incident, shall be investigated, and shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Time Limits

Allegations of harassment shall be reported by the complainant as soon as reasonably possible after the conduct in question has taken place. Students, employees, or agents of the school wishing to report allegations to additional agencies, such as the U.S. Office for Civil Rights, should know that this agency follows a 180 day time limit for reporting alleged incidents of sexual harassment.

Disciplinary Action

When an allegation of harassment is supported by the investigation and disciplinary action is necessary, the Academic Administrator will determine what course of action is appropriate, depending upon whether the harasser is a student, staff member, or agent of the school.

Employees who violate this policy may be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. Such disciplinary action shall be in accordance with applicable policies and/or laws. Students who violate this policy may be subject to discipline up to and including expulsion. Such disciplinary action shall be in accordance with board policy and state law. Agents of the school who violate this policy may be subject to penalties and sanctions as may be available to the school, including termination of business relationships and contracts or the privilege of volunteering on campus.

Appeal Procedures

Either the complaining party or the accused may appeal the findings of an investigation to the Governing Board of the school. Appeals shall be made in writing within ten (10) business days from the date of a finding.

Prevention Strategies

iQ Academy California – Los Angeles shall focus on the prevention of bullying and harassment by establishing clear rules for student conduct and implementing strategies to promote a positive, collaborative school climate. Students shall be informed, through student handbooks and other appropriate means, of district and school rules related to bullying, mechanisms available for reporting incidents or threats, and the consequences for engaging in bullying.

Training and Professional Development

As part of the school's commitment to bullying prevention, the Head of School or designee will develop training for teachers and other school staff to raise their awareness about the legal obligation of the school and its employees to prevent discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

Such training shall be designed to provide staff with the skills to:

- Discuss the diversity of the student body and school community, including their varying immigration experiences
- Discuss bullying prevention strategies with students, and teach students to recognize the behavior and characteristics of bullying perpetrators and victims
- Identify the signs of bullying or harassing behavior
- Take immediate corrective action when bullying is observed
- Report incidents to the appropriate authorities, including law enforcement in instances of criminal behavior