

RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

PURPOSE

All individuals employed by the Morehouse Parish School Board have the right to work in an environment free from all forms of discrimination or harassment of any type on the basis of race. Likewise, students enrolled in the Morehouse Parish School System have the right to attend school in an environment free from all forms of racial discrimination. Racial discrimination and racial harassment, whether committed by a School Board member, employee or student are specifically prohibited as unlawful and against the policy of Morehouse Parish School Board.

Racial discrimination harassment may include but is not limited to the following:

Unwelcomed verbal or written harassment or abuse based on race; Repeated remarks to a person which contain racial implications; Display or distribution of racially derogatory objects, pictures, magazines, cartoons, posters, drawings, or images; Racially oriented gestures.

COVERAGE

Racial discrimination committed by Morehouse Parish School Board employees, including elected members of the School Board against other Morehouse Parish School Board employees or students constitutes misconduct. Racial discrimination or harassment committed by students against other students or Morehouse Parish School Board employees constitutes misconduct. The intentional fabrication of a racial discrimination or harassment complaint constitutes misconduct.

School administrators, including supervisors, principals, coordinators and facilitators, are responsible for taking appropriate and effective action when they know, or reasonably should have known, that an individual under their supervision is being racially harassed or discriminated against.

RESPONSIBILITY

Every School Board member, Superintendent, administrator, principal, teacher, and employee has the responsibility to report any witnessed or experienced racial discrimination to his/her immediate supervisor or those designated by the Superintendent to receive complaints. If the alleged harasser is the individual's immediate supervisor, the report should be made directly to the District Civil Rights Officer. If the alleged harasser is the Superintendent, the report should be made to any School Board member. The School Board member shall report the harassment to the School Board President. If the alleged harasser is a School Board member, the report should be made to the Superintendent. If the claimant and alleged harasser are students,

the report should be made to the school principal. Only those acting on behalf of the School Board to investigate claims of racial discrimination or harassment shall directly contact the alleged harasser concerning the claim or complaint. If anyone other than those assigned to investigate racial discrimination or harassment complaints receives a claim or complaint, that individual will not report the receipt to the complaint to the alleged harasser, but to his or her superior and/or a person so designated by the Superintendent.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The party offended should report the matter following the outlined complaint process.

If an employee is involved either as a claimant or alleged harasser, it is preferred that the report be made to one of the individuals designated by the Superintendent. School sites, coordinators/facilitators and department heads receiving complaints of racial discrimination or harassment involving an employee shall immediately report the complaint to one of the individuals identified to receive the complaints for further action. If the incident involves student to student harassment, the report shall be made to the school principal. The claimant should make a written note and keep it for safekeeping as to whom and when the complaint was made.

Complaints can also be made by calling the District Civil Rights Officer at 318-2815784. The person receiving the complaint shall take all information pertaining to the complaint and contact the claimant within five (5) working days. If the person receiving the complaint attempts to change the claimant's mind about following through with the complaint, these facts should be reported to the Superintendent at 318-281-5784.

If the report of racial discrimination or harassment is not acted upon within forty-five (45) days by the person to whom the incident was initially reported, the claimant shall again contact that individual to determine what has transpired since the report. If the claimant is not satisfied with the response, he/she shall report the complaint and the actions of the initial receiver to the Superintendent.

If the alleged harasser accosts or confronts the claimant concerning the fact that a complaint was made, the claimant should report this fact to the person to whom the initial complaint was made. Such action on the part of the alleged harasser shall be considered a violation of this policy. Any employee bringing a complaint or assisting in the investigation of such a complaint will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment nor discriminated against or discharged because of the complaint.

The following persons have been designated by the Superintendent to receive complaints involving racial discrimination or harassment:

1. Student to Student Complaints: School Principal or if the alleged harasser is the School Principal, then it should be reported to the District Civil Rights Officer.

2. All other complaints may be received by the District Civil Rights Officer, the Personnel Supervisor, Curriculum Supervisors, Title I Supervisor, Special Education Supervisor, Supervisor of Child Welfare and Attendance and Superintendent.

The report may be verbal or written. It is recommended that the person taking the complaint write it up on a form developed and made available by the Personnel Supervisor and submit it to the Superintendent to assign an investigator or investigators to conduct the investigation.

INVESTIGATIONS

Persons assigned by the Superintendent to investigate complaints of racial discrimination or harassment shall do so expeditiously, thoroughly, and professionally. School site administrators shall take action in cases of student to student discrimination or harassment based on the findings and consistent with the student discipline code. A copy of the report of findings shall be forwarded to the Superintendent. Persons assigned to handle investigations involving employees shall forward results of the investigations to the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall review the findings of the investigation and render a decision consistent with legal requirements within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the results of the investigation.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality as to the claimant and the nature of the complaint shall be maintained, consistent with the needs of the investigation into the complaint. Information concerning the complaint, the claimant, and the results or progress of the investigation will be on a need-to-know basis, only by those assigned duties to receive complaints, those who investigate them, and those interviewed.

The procedures provided for in the School Board's grievance procedure and other procedures provided for by law shall be complied with according to the status of the claimant and alleged harasser in each individual situation.

SANCTIONS

Some acts of racial discrimination or harassment are considered criminal and are subject to prosecution. If the Superintendent believes a violation of the criminal law of the State of Louisiana has taken place, the Superintendent shall notify the appropriate law enforcement agency. The Morehouse Parish School Board will fully cooperate with law enforcement agencies and the District Attorney in investigating and prosecuting such criminal offenses.

A substantiated charge against an employee in the Morehouse Parish School System shall subject that employee to disciplinary action which may include verbal warning, letter

of reprimand, suspension and/or termination of employment.

A substantiated charge against a student in the Morehouse Parish School System shall subject that student to disciplinary action deemed necessary and appropriate including parental notification, warnings, counseling, suspension or expulsion, consistent with the student discipline code.

Individuals lodging a complaint of racial discrimination or racial harassment will be free from retaliation. Any individuals who do retaliate shall be subject to disciplinary action and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

NOTIFICATION AND TRAINING

Notice of this policy will be circulated to all schools and departments of the Morehouse Parish School System and adopted and printed in teacher and student handbooks. Training sessions on this policy and the prevention of racial discrimination and harassment shall be held in all schools on an annual basis. Training sessions for new non-teaching employees shall be conducted annually. All current employees will be provided a copy of this policy as well as newly hired personnel on an annual basis.

Revised: March, 2025
Approved: June 3, 2025

Ref: 42 USC 2000d (1964 Civil Rights Act); La. Rev. Stat. Ann. §17:111; Board minutes, 6-3-25.