

**EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES/
NONDISCRIMINATION - STUDENT**

I. Policy Statement

Equal educational opportunities are available for all students, without regard to sex, sexual orientation, race, creed, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, disability, ancestry, marital or parental status or any other unlawful basis.

II. Complaint Procedure

A. File Report

Any student who believes he or she has been the victim of prohibited discrimination should report the alleged discrimination as soon as possible to one of the Compliance Officers designated in this policy or to any other school personnel. The alleged discrimination should be reported as soon as possible, and the report generally should be made within fifteen (15) school days of the occurrence. Further, any student who has knowledge of conduct which may constitute prohibited discrimination should report such conduct to one of the Compliance Officers designated in this policy or to any school personnel. Any employee who has knowledge of conduct which may constitute prohibited discrimination shall immediately report such conduct to one of the Compliance Officers designated in this policy.

The reporting party should use the form, Report of Discrimination, 8001-F, to make complaints of discrimination. However, oral reports and other written reports shall also be accepted. The complaint should be filed with either the Director or one of the Compliance Officers designated in this policy. The Director shall immediately forward any report of alleged prohibited discrimination to the Compliance Officer. Any complaint that involves the Compliance Officer shall be reported to the Director. The complaint, and identity of the complainant and of the person or persons allegedly responsible for the discrimination, will not be disclosed except as required by law or policy, as necessary to fully investigate the complaint or as authorized by the complainant. A complainant who wishes to remain anonymous will be advised that such confidentiality may limit the school's ability to fully respond to the complaint.

B. Investigation

Upon receipt of a report of alleged prohibited discrimination, the Compliance Officer shall immediately authorize or undertake an investigation. The investigation may be conducted by school personnel or a third party designated by the school. The investigation shall be completed as soon as practicable, which should generally be not later than 14 school days after receipt of the report by the Compliance Officer. Upon receiving the complaint, the Compliance Officer shall acknowledge receipt of the complaint, by giving written notice that the complaint has been received, to both the person complaining of discrimination and the person or persons allegedly responsible for the discrimination. Also upon receiving the complaint, the Compliance Officer shall determine whether interim measures should be taken pending the outcome of the investigation. If the Compliance Officer determines that

more than 14 school days will be required to investigate the complaint, the complainant and the person or persons allegedly responsible for the discrimination will be notified of the reason for the extended investigation and of the date by which the investigation will be concluded.

The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the person or persons allegedly responsible for the discrimination, and any others who may have knowledge of the alleged discrimination or the circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation will consider witnesses and evidence from both the complainant and the person or persons responsible for the alleged discrimination. The investigation may also include the inspection of any documents or information deemed relevant by the investigator. Maggie L. Walker Governor's School shall take necessary steps to protect the complainant and others pending the completion of the investigation.

Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a case by case determination based on all of the facts and circumstances revealed by a complete and thorough investigation.

The Compliance Officer shall issue a written report to the Director upon completion of the investigation. If the complaint involves the Director, then the report shall be sent to the Chairman of the Superintendent's Steering Committee. The report shall include a determination of whether the allegations are substantiated, whether this policy was violated and recommendations for corrective action, if any.

All employees shall cooperate with any investigation of alleged discrimination conducted under this policy or by an appropriate state or federal agency.

C. Action by Director

Within 5 school days of receiving the Compliance Officer's report, the Director or designee shall issue a decision regarding (1) whether this policy was violated and (2) what action, if any, should be taken. This decision must be provided in writing to the complainant. If the Director or designee determines that prohibited discrimination occurred, Maggie L. Walker Governor's School shall take prompt, appropriate action to address and remedy the violation as well as prevent any recurrence. Such action may include discipline up to and including expulsion or discharge.

D. Appeal

If the Director or designee determines that no prohibited discrimination occurred, the student who was allegedly subjected to discrimination may appeal this finding to the Regional School Board within 5 school days of receiving the decision. Notice of appeal must be filed with the Director who shall forward the record to the Regional School Board. The Regional School Board shall make a decision within 30 school days of receiving the record. The Regional School Board may ask for oral or written argument from the aggrieved party and the Director and any other individual the Regional School Board deems relevant. Written

notice of the Regional School Board decision will be given to both the complainant and the person or persons responsible for the alleged discrimination.

If the Director or designee determines that prohibited discrimination occurred and discipline is imposed, the disciplined person may appeal the disciplinary sanction in the same manner as any other such sanction would be appealed.

E. Compliance Officer and Alternate Compliance Officer

The Regional School Board designates a Compliance Officer responsible for identifying, preventing and remedying discrimination as well as receiving complaints under this Policy. The name and contact information for the Compliance Officer is posted on the school's website at all times. The Compliance Officer may be contacted at MWcompliance@gsgis.k12.va.us. Complaints of discrimination may also be made to the Alternate Compliance Officer at AltMWcompliance@gsgis.k12.va.us.

The Compliance Officer

- receives reports or complaints of discrimination;
- conducts or oversees the investigation of any alleged discrimination;
- assesses the training needs of the school in connection with this policy;
- arranges necessary training to achieve compliance with this policy; and
- ensures that any discrimination investigation is conducted by an impartial investigator who is trained in the requirements of equal education opportunity and has the authority to protect the alleged victim and others during the investigation.

III. Retaliation

Retaliation against students or school personnel who report discrimination or participate in the related proceedings is prohibited. Maggie L. Walker Governor's School shall take appropriate action against any student or employee who retaliates against another student or employee who reports alleged discrimination or participates in related proceedings. The Compliance Officer will inform persons who make complaints, who are the subject of complaints, and who participate in investigations of how to report any subsequent problems.

IV. Right to Alternative Complaint Procedure

Nothing in this policy shall deny the right of any individual to pursue other avenues of recourse to address concerns relating to prohibited discrimination including initiating civil action, filing a complaint with outside agencies or seeking redress under state or federal law.

V. Prevention and Notice of Policy

Training to prevent discrimination should be included in employee and student orientations as well as employee in-service training.

This policy shall be (1) displayed in prominent areas of the building in a location accessible to students, parents and school personnel, (2) included in the student and employee handbooks; and (3) sent to parents of all students within 30 calendar days of the start of school. All students and their parents/guardians shall be notified annually of the names and contact information of the Compliance Officers.

VI. False Charges

Students or school personnel who knowingly make false charges of discrimination shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Adopted: May 16, 2013
Amended: September 15, 2016
Amended: September 17, 2017
Amended: October 15, 2020
Amended: October 21, 2021

Legal Refs: 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681-1688.
29 U.S.C. §§ 794.
42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d through 2000d-7.
34 CFR 106.9.

Code of Virginia, 1950 as amended, §§ 2.2-3900, 2.2-3901,
2.2-3902, 22.1-23.3, 22.1-212.6:1.

Cross Refs: Pol 0011 Nondiscrimination
Pol 0012 Educational Philosophy
Pol 5012 Equal Employment Opportunity/Nondiscrimination
Pol 5012.F Report of Discrimination
Pol 5011/8000 Prohibition Against Harassment and Retaliation
Pol 8001.1 Section 504 Nondiscrimination Policy and Grievance
Procedures