

6.009.

Policy Concerning Equal Education Opportunity

C.E.S. is committed to preserving a positive and productive learning environment free of all forms of student discrimination. Consistent with various Federal and State anti-discrimination laws including those listed below no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise discriminated against under any program, because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, mental retardation, mental or physical disability, including, but not limited to blindness.

The Executive Director is authorized to designate Compliance Coordinators for these areas of discrimination as required by law. The Executive Director is also authorized to establish administrative procedures that permit program administrators and/or Compliance Coordinators to take necessary steps to ensure equity and to deal with issues/complaints related to equal education opportunity in terms of admission; use of programs; facilities; applied education programs; student rules, regulations and benefits; school-sponsored extra curricular activities; enrollment in courses; counseling and guidance; physical education; health services; and other aid, benefits or services made available to students. This prohibition does not apply to specific program criteria where for example age is a qualifier (e.g., designating a particular C.E.S. program for students' ages 3 to 10 years).

ADOPTED: NOVEMBER 6, 1997

REVISED: June 1, 2000

References: Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title IX Education Amendments of 1972
Section 504 Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Age Discrimination Act of 1975
Americans with Disabilities Act
CT General Statutes 10-15c

6.009A. Administrative Regulations Concerning Equal Education Opportunity

I. General Requirements:

- 1) The Executive Director will designate a Compliance Coordinator for Title VI (Race, Color, National Origin); Title IX (Sex Equity); Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973/The Americans with Disabilities Act (Disability).
- 2) Each Compliance Coordinator will maintain full knowledge and familiarity with the requirements of designated laws and agency procedures to deal with complaints or grievances concerning discrimination.
- 3) Each Compliance Coordinator will keep the Executive Director aware of any complaints or grievances as they are made, along with the results/outcomes of ensuing investigations, except where the Executive Director is accused of having perpetrated the alleged discriminatory act.
- 4) The Program Administrator will incorporate into all published guides or student handbooks the following statement: **“It is the policy of Cooperative Educational Services that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise discriminated against under any program, because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, mental retardation, mental or physical disability, including, but not limited to blindness.”**
- 5) All personnel will annually be notified of the importance of maintaining learning environments free of any form of discrimination as well as procedures for notifying students/parents of perceived acts of discrimination.
- 6) Parents/students as is applicable, will annually receive notification of how to initiate a complaint related to a perceived act of discrimination and applicable Discrimination Grievance Procedures and will be notified of the names of specific compliance coordinators to contact related to concerns or formal complaints.
- 7) Each program office will maintain copies of C.E.S. policies and procedures related to Equal Education Opportunity as well as forms to initiate complaints or discrimination grievance procedures.
- 8) As may be applicable and developmentally appropriate, students will receive instruction related to acts of discrimination and information on how to proceed with complaints about perceived discriminatory practices.

Discrimination Grievance Procedures:

Any student (or parent on behalf of their child) or parent/guardian who wishes to inquire about or register a complaint concerning alleged discrimination in C.E.S.' school-based programs and services shall have an opportunity to bring such concerns directly to the attention of the agency's Compliance Coordinator for specific areas of discrimination or the program administrator of their child's program.

The following grievance procedure shall be utilized by any student or parent in making a formal complaint or inquiry. Officials shall be governed by this procedure.

In the event the complaint is against the Compliance Coordinator, the complaint may proceed directly to the Executive Director (*See Note*).

LEVEL I

The complainant shall first discuss the alleged discriminatory act or practice with the program administrator (if the complaint is against the program administrator, the complainant may choose to initiate this level of grievance with the designated Compliance Coordinator for the area of discrimination). If satisfaction cannot be achieved through informal discussion, the following procedures should be initiated if the complainant desires to proceed further.

LEVEL II

The complainant shall file a grievance in writing as soon as possible after the alleged incident, preferably on forms provided by the program administrator or Compliance Coordinator. Normally complaints should be made within thirty (30) days of the act.

The complainant should state the nature of complaint (the alleged discriminatory act or practice) and the date of the complaint, the date of the alleged discrimination, the name or names of the individuals alleged to have committed the act/practice and a statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged act or practice. When requested, the Compliance Coordinator should assist the student/parent in completing the necessary written complaint (e.g., the written report should not be a deterrent to initiating a formal complaint).

Upon receipt of the grievance form the Compliance Coordinator will notify the Executive Director of the grievance and if possible within five (5) working days of receipt of the written complaint, commence an effective, thorough, objective and complete investigation of the complaint maintaining confidentiality insofar as possible. In the case of a written complaint by a student involving an alleged act by educational personnel or volunteers, the investigation should be carried out jointly with the program administrator.

Every effort should be made to conclude the investigation within five (5) working days and to schedule a meeting with the complainant within ten (10) working days following receipt of the written grievance. The Compliance Coordinator should make a written report summarizing the results of the investigation and proposed disposition of the matter

and shall provide copies to the complainant, to the individual(s) alleged to have committed the act and as appropriate to all others directly concerned.

LEVEL III

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the result of the investigation, he or she may file a written appeal to the Executive Director who shall review the written report; the information collected in the investigation; and any recommended actions. The Executive Director may also conduct a reasonable investigation, including interviewing the complainant and individual(s) alleged to have committed the act and any witnesses with relevant information. After completing the review, the Executive Director shall respond to the complaint in writing, whenever possible within ten (10) days of receipt of the written appeal.

The Executive Director's resolution of the grievance shall be final and binding on all parties, including the C.E.S. Representative Council subject to the requirement of applicable state and federal law and due process rights.

Note: A. If the complaint involves the Compliance Coordinator, the Level II procedures will be handled by the Executive Director. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the result(s) he/she may file a written appeal to the C.E.S. Representative Council President who in turn will handle Level III procedures.

B. If the complaint is against the Executive Director, the Compliance Coordinator shall notify the Representative Council President, and the C.E.S. designated attorney shall handle the complaint. Appeals shall be made to the Representative Council President.

COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

ANNUAL NOTICE

“It is the policy of Cooperative Educational Services that no person shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise discriminated against under any program, because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, mental retardation, mental or physical disability, including, but not limited to blindness.”

Cooperative Educational Services (C.E.S.) in compliance with federal and state anti-discrimination laws and requirements has designated the following individuals as Compliance Coordinators for specific areas of discrimination. Although C.E.S.’ formal discrimination grievance procedures encourage complaints, concerns or issues to be resolved at the lowest possible level, individuals have the right to process such complaints directly with the designated Compliance Coordinator. Listed below are the names of the designated Compliance Coordinators, their C.E.S. mailing address and work telephone number. Formal written complaints should be submitted to them for areas of discrimination as designated.

Title VI Coordinator (race, color, national origin)

Name: Janet Robinson Title: Deputy Executive Director

Mailing Address: C.E.S., 40 Lindeman Drive, Trumbull, CT 06611 Phone: 365-8850

Title IX Coordinator (sex equity/sexual harassment)

Name: Zita McMahon Title: Human Resources Manager

Mailing Address: C.E.S., 40 Lindeman Drive, Trumbull, CT 06611 Phone: 365-8828

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans with Disabilities Act (disability)

Name: Anthony Maida Title: Director of Special Education

Mailing Address: C.E.S., 25 Oakview Drive, Trumbull, CT 06611 Phone: 365-8837

Complaint Forms are available from the C.E.S. Personnel Office, C.E.S. administrators and school/program offices.

If you feel that you are the victim of discrimination, you may also file a complaint with the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, 21 Grand Street, Hartford, CT 06106, Telephone number: 566-7710; TDD Number 566-2301. Connecticut law requires that a formal written complaint be filed with the Commission within 180 days of the date when the alleged discrimination occurred. Furthermore, you may also file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, J.P. McCormack Post Office and Court House Building, Room 222, Boston, MA 02109-4557, (617) 223-9662.

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