Title IX Roles & Responsibilities



Investigators and Decision Makers



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Sign-in at https://conference.leeschools.net Passkey: weaky





Title IX of the Education Amendments Act, 1972

"No person in the United State shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

INVESTIGATORS



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Designated Investigators

- Investigators will receive formal complaints from the Title IX Coordinator, along with the checklist, after supportive measures have been offered. Investigators shall then:
 - send written notification to parties throughout the investigative process;
 - gather evidence;
 - interview witnesses;
 - submit the investigatory file to parties and advisors; and
 - create an investigatory report



Formal Complaints Under Title IX

- Promptly Contact the Complainant and Respondent to discuss the allegations.
 - Do this through Written Notice, Please Send this notice within 24 hours of receiving the complaint
 - Written notice for meetings needs to be given at least 2 days in advance to the parties & advisors, so get this out ASAP
 - Written notice must include the date, time, location, participants, and purpose for the meeting with sufficient time for the party to prepare to participate
 - Send the Following:
 - Notice of Investigation Letter (BOTH Parties)
 - Responders Notification Letter (Respondent)



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[place on school letterhead]

Name Role

Address | O: XXX.XXX.XXXX | E: email



Dear [insert name],

On [date], our office received a report of an incident that occurred on [date] in [location]. The alleged incident was reported by [insert name of reporter], and includes an allegation of [describe behavior] by [insert name of responder]. This alleged behavior may be in violation of The Code of Conduct for Students and/or the Non-Discrimination Policy of the School District of Lee County. This letter serves as notice that we will be conducting an impartial investigation of this allegation according to the process outlined in the Code of Conduct for Students, in accordance with Title IX requirements.

I need to meet with you to discuss this allegation. It is our intention to address and resolve this matter as quickly and thoroughly as possible for all individuals concerned. Please contact me at the number or email provided above as soon as possible to schedule a meeting.

The scheduled meeting time is your opportunity to respond to these allegations, provide names of witnesses, ask questions about the process, and assist in completing a timely and thorough investigation. You may bring an advisor to this meeting if desired, although the advisor may not speak for you or on your behalf.

Failure to participate or respond to this request for a meeting within one week will not prohibit the investigation from occurring, and may result in a decision being made on the alleged violations in your absence. In such instances, we will review the information provided and determine responsibility based on a preponderance of the available evidence. You have the right to discuss the matter with your advisors and others, but the school is required under federal law to conduct the investigation confidentially. We ask for your discretion in what you choose to share, and hope that you will respect the private and sensitive nature of these allegations.

For further information on our investigation and resolution process, go to https://leeschools.net. Please contact my office with your questions or request for additional information.

Sincerely,

[Name] Cc: file



Respondent Notification Letter



Written Notice Must Include the Following

- The identities of parties involved;
- The conduct allegedly constituting sexual harassment;
- The date and location of the alleged incident;
- A statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct;
- The school's grievance process;
- A statement that a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process;
- A statement informing the parties that they may have an advisor of their choice who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney;
- A statement advising parties that they may inspect and review evidence; and
- A statement informing the parties of any provision in the recipient's Code of Student Conduct that prohibits knowingly making false statements or knowingly submitting false information

[place on school letterhead]

Name

Role

Address | O: XXX.XXX.XXXX | E: email

Name Address

[Date]

Dear [insert name],

On [date], our office received a report of an incident that occurred on [date] in [location]. The alleged incident was reported by [insert name of reporter], and includes an allegation of [describe behavior] by [insert name of responder]. This alleged behavior may be in violation of The Code of Conduct for Students and/or the Non-Discrimination Policy of the School District of Lee County. This letter serves as notice that we will be conducting an impartial investigation of this allegation according to the process outlined in the Code of Conduct for Students, in accordance with Title IX requirements.

The investigation will include four phases: (1) Initial notification and information gathering, (2) Review period for both parties to examine the information, (3) Investigation analysis and final report, (4) Notification and actions based on the conclusion. During this investigation, the School District of Lee County authorizes school officials to ensure that contact between the reporter and the responder is avoided and ask that the parents comply with any directives for this purpose. There will be no presumption of offense until the investigation is concluded and provided to the Principal/administrator for determination.

This letter also serves as a reminder that the School District of Lee County prohibits retaliation and will respond accordingly if anyone attempts to intimidate or harm the reporter, respondent, and/or witnesses of this allegation (Code of Conduct for Students). Retaliation exists when an individual harasses, intimidates, or takes other adverse actions against a person because of that person's participation in an investigation of discrimination or sexual misconduct or their support of someone involved in an investigation of discrimination or sexual misconduct. Retaliatory actions include, but are not limited to, threats or actual violence against the person or that person's property, adverse educational or employment consequences, ridicule, intimidation, bullying, or ostracism. This includes faculty, students, family, friends, or staff member(s) found to be engaging in retaliation, or individuals who encourage third parties to retaliate on their behalf. If you experience any retaliation, please contact my office. As well, deliberately providing false information will be subject to discipline per the Code of Conduct for Students or district policy regarding employee misconduct.

You have the right to be represented by an advisor of your choice, which may be (but is not required to be) a legal representative. The School District of Lee County is required under federal law to conduct this investigation in a confidential manner. We ask for your discretion in what you choose to share and hope that you will respect the private and sensitive nature of these allegations. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the phone number or email above - although our email is public record, student specific information is confidential and cannot be retrieved through public records requests.

Sincerely,

[Name] Cc: file



Formal Complaint Notification Letter



Respondent's Rights

- The Respondent should not be disciplined or punitive action taken against the Respondent prior to an investigation.
 - Employees may be placed on a paid leave.
 - Changing the Respondent's schedule could be considered punitive.

OR LEE COUNTY

Emergency Removal

- The Respondent can still be removed if there is threat assessment conducted and determined the Respondent is a threat.
 - If the Respondent is removed, please send the Appeal Form, as the Respondent is entitled to appeal a removal
 - Note that the Respondent is entitled to services under 504, ADA, and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act



Witness Interviews

- Notice must be given to any person being interviewed at least 2 days prior to the interview.
- Please inform the witness(es) that the parties have the right to review the evidence and their statements are included in this evidence.
- Each Party is permitted to provide witness lists.

Witness Notification

Send Notification to Witnesses

For scheduling the meeting do so in writing (email) and be sure to include:

- Date of meeting
- Time of meeting
- Location of meeting
- Participants of meeting
- Purpose of meeting

[place on school letterhead]

Т

Name

Title

2855 Colonial Boulevard, Fort Myers, FL 33966 | O: 239.XXX.XXXX | F: 239.XXX.XXXX



Name Address Email Address

Dear [insert name]:

Our office is investigating an incident that is reported to have occurred on [date] in/at [location]. The incident was reported by [name of reporter] involving [name of responder]. Reports gathered so far indicate that you may have information that would be helpful to our investigation.

Please contact me at your earliest convenience to discuss this matter. It is our intention to address and resolve this issue as quickly and thoroughly as possible for all individuals concerned. This is your opportunity to provide any information you may have in response to this matter, provide names of other witnesses, ask questions about the process, and assist us in completing a timely and thorough investigation. Your assistance is appreciated. For more information on the investigation process, please go to https://leeschools.net/titleix.

[School name] and the School District of Lee County take all allegations very seriously. It is our expectation that you will assist in the investigation process and will provide any information you have. This investigation is confidential under federal law, and we ask that you respect the privacy of those involved and of any information disclosed to you by the school during your interview.

You may contact me to make an appointment at [phone] or [email], and also to let us know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely, [Investigator] Cc: file



New Allegations

- In the event new allegations arise during the investigation, written notice of the new allegations must be sent to both parties and advisors.
- These new allegations should be in writing and a record of this should be maintained.





After the Investigation

- Once the investigation is completed, but **BEFORE** an investigative report is created the Investigator shall submit to both parties and their advisors the investigatory file
 - This should be done in an electronic format
 - The Parties have 10 days to review the file from the day it is sent to them, and to submit a written response to the investigatory documentation

Investigatory File Review Letter

Parties and their advisors have 10 days to review and provide a written response if they choose to do so.

Name Address

Dear [insert name],

You were previously notified that our office has opened an investigation of an incident that occurred on [date] in [location]. The alleged incident was reported by [insert name of reporter], and includes an allegation of [describe behavior] by [insert name of responder]. This letter serves as notice that we have completed an impartial investigation of this allegation according to the process outlined in the Code of Conduct for Students and in accordance with Title IX requirements.

At this time, you have ten days to review and respond to the enclosed investigation file. You have the right to review this with your legal representatives, but the School District of Lee County is required to keep this file confidential according to federal law. We ask for your discretion in what you choose to share and hope that you will respect the private and sensitive nature of these allegations. You may submit a written response to this information, addressed to me. Upon completion of the review period, I will complete and submit the investigation report to the principal/decision maker for final determination and action.

During this time of review, all specified safety measures and conditions of this investigation will remain in place. As a reminder, the School District of Lee County prohibits retaliation and will respond accordingly if anyone attempts to intimidate or harm the reporter, respondent, and/or witnesses of this allegation (Code of Conduct for Students). Please refer to the initial notification of investigation for the definition and description of retaliation. If you experience any retaliation, please contact my office.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the phone number or email above - although our email is public record, student specific information is confidential and cannot be retrieved through public records requests.

Sincerely,



Investigative Report

- Once the 10 days to review the investigative file have passed, the Investigator shall create an investigative report.
- The investigative report must fairly summarize the relevant evidence of the investigation.
- It should include a chronological summary of the procedural steps taken from the receipt of the complaint, summary of information gathered from the parties and witnesses, and an analysis of the information including commonalities and discrepancies.
- It should not make conclusions related to a determination.



Submission of Investigative Report

- The Investigator shall submit the Investigative Report along with the investigative file to the Decision Maker.
- This includes the checklist.

Title IX

Checklist



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Title IX Complaint Resolution Checklist

School-based Title IX Coordinator Information

School-based Title IX Coordinator Information			
School	-based Title IX Coordinator Name:	Incident Date:	
School	<u>:</u>	Date Notified of Inciden	<u>t:</u>
Phone	<u>#:</u>	Email:	
Conflic	t of Interest Check		
	The school-based Title IX Coordinator values the decision-maker or appeals-decis		
	The school-based Title IX Coordinator had no conflicts of interest or bias for or against any complainant or respondent.		
Respor	nse to Knowledge of Sexual Harassment	:	
	If the alleged sexual harassment constituted a crime, the conduct was immediately reported to the School Resource Officer.		Date reported:
	If the alleged sexual harassment constituted child abuse, the conduct was immediately reported to the Florida Department of Children and Families .		
	If the respondent was an LCSD employee, the Office of Professional Standards was immediately notified.		
	Within two (2) business days, the Complainant was contacted to discuss the availability of supportive measures.		Date contacted:
	Within two (2) business days, the Complainant's wishes were considered with respect to supportive measures.		Date contacted:



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acted:
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issed:



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THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LEE COUNTY



or C	CONSOLIDATION ONLY: Allegations arising from the same facts or circumstances were consolidated into a single formal complaint.	Date Consolidated: Parties Involved:
n/a		raities ilivoiveu.
Dismiss	sal of Formal Complaint	
□ or □ n/a	Written notice of dismissal was sent to all parties, and their parents and/or legal guardians, within five (5) business days.	Date sent:
Emerge	ency Removal	
□ or □ n/a	Notice of Emergency Removal and the opportunity to challenge the decision was provided to the respondent within two (2) business days following the removal.	Date sent:
Grieva	nce Process	
	Written notice of allegations in the formal complaint was sent to all known parties, and their parents and/or legal guardians, within five (5) business days upon filing of formal complaint.	Date sent:
□ or □ n/a	ADDITIONAL ALLEGATIONS ONLY: Written notice of additional allegations was sent to all known parties, and their parents and/or legal guardians within five (5) business days.	Date sent:
	Interview of complainant was conducted no less than five (5) business days from the date of the written notice of allegations.	Date:





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	Interview of respondent was conducted no less than five (5) business days from the date of the written notice of allegations.	Date:
	Witnesses were given notice within five (5) business days' before their interview.	Date of notice:
Investi	gation	
	The investigation was completed within five (5) school days of the last initial interview.	Date completed:
	The burden of proof and the burden of gathering evidence rested on the school.	
	Written notice for any investigative interviews or meetings was sent to all parties, and their parents and/or legal guardians at least two (2) days prior to interview or meetings.	Date sent:
	Both parties were given an equal opportunity to inspect and review any evidence directly related to allegations.	
	Before completion of the investigative report, evidence was sent to each party, their parents and/or legal guardians, and all advisors, in an electronic format or a hard copy.	Date sent:
	Parties submitted a written response to all evidence within ten (10) school days.	Date received:
	Parties did not submit a written response to evidence within ten (10) days.	
Investi	gative Report	
	The written investigative report fairly summarized all relevant evidence presented. The investigative report did not include any recommendations regarding responsibility or discipline.	



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	in electronic form or hard copy to all parties, their parents and/or legal guardians, and all advisors, ten (10) days prior to the written determination.	Date sent:
	Parties provided a written response to the investigative report within ten (10) days of receipt of investigative report.	Date:
	Parties did not provide a written response to the investigative report within ten (10) days of receipt of investigative report.	Date:
K-12 Q	uestions	
	Parties submitted no more than seven (7) written, relevant questions to be asked of any party or witness.	Date:
	Parties submitted answers to the questions within three (3) school days.	Date:
	Parties provided no more than three (3) follow-up questions in total to be asked of all parties and witnesses within three (3) school days.	Date:
	Parties and witnesses responded to follow-up questions within three (3) school days.	Date:
	All questions were sent to the decision-maker to determine relevance of questions.	
	The written investigative report was sent to the decision- maker to make a determination regarding responsibility.	Date sent:
Writter	n Determination	
	If no appeal was filed, remedies stated in the written determination were implemented.	Date implemented:
	All materials including all written notices, the investigative report and attachments, K-12 questions, all checklists, and the	Date sent: Coordinator:



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	written determination and attachments, were sent to the appropriate District Title IX Coordinator. For K-12 Students – Chuck Bradley For Adult Students & Employees – Ryan Hudak		
Appeal	Appeals Process		
	Decision-maker notified school-based Title IX Coordinator that a "Request for Appeal" form was received and a "Notice of Appeal" must be sent to the parties and their parent and/or legal guardian.	Date notified:	
	"Notice of Appeal" letter was sent to parties, and the parents and/or legal guardians.	Date sent:	
	Parties were given five (5) school days to submit a written statement in support of, or challenging, the outcome of the written determination.		
	After the five (5) school-day period passed to submit a response, the "Request for Appeal" form, any response to the "Notice of Appeal" letter, and all materials used to make the original determination, were sent to the appeals decisionmaker.	Date sent:	
□ or □ n/a	Remedies stated in appeals written determination were implemented.	Date implemented:	

When completed, email (i) this form, (ii) the Title IX Packet Submission Cover sheet, and (iii) all attachments to the District Title IX Coordinator. Attachments include all checklists, the investigative report, the written determination, written appeals determination, and any attachments.

	Date submitted:	
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^{*}ALL RECORDS ARE REQUIRED TO BE MAINTAINED FOR 7 YEARS AND MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE DISTRICT TITLE IX COORDINATOR AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE CHECKLIST.

DECISION MAKERS



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Role of the Decision Maker

- The Decision Maker will review the investigation and make a determination of whether the Title IX allegation(s) is/are substantiated or not.
- They will also:
 - Send out the investigative report to parties and their advisors for review;
 - Intake relevant questions and follow up questions from the parties;
 - Offer the parties an appeal process from their determination



Submitting the Investigatory Report

 One the Investigator has submitted the investigatory file along with the investigative report, the Decision Maker shall submit the investigative report to both parties and their advisors.



Review of the Investigatory Report

- The Parties again have 10 days to review the investigative report and they are permitted to submit up to 7 questions from any witness or party mentioned in the report. These are to be submitted to the individual for them to respond in writing.
- The parties are then permitted to ask up to 3 follow up questions from any witness or party.
- This information is provided in the following letter.

[place on school letterhead]

Name

Role

Address | O: XXX.XXX.XXXX | E: email

Name Address

Dear [insert name],

You were previously notified that our office has opened an investigation of an incident that occurred on [date] in [location]. The alleged incident was reported by [insert name of reporter], and includes an allegation of [describe behavior] by [insert name of responder]. This letter serves as notice that we have completed an impartial investigation of this allegation according to the process outlined in the Code of Conduct for Students | and in accordance with Title IX requirements.

At this time, you have ten days to review and respond to the enclosed investigation report. You have the right to review this with your legal representatives, but the School District of Lee County is required to keep this report confidential according to federal law. We ask for your discretion in what you choose to share and hope that you will respect the private and sensitive nature of these allegations. During the ten-day review, you may submit a maximum of seven (7) written, relevant questions to any party or witness. You are asked to provide answers to any questions posed to you. You may submit a maximum of three (3) follow-up relevant questions to each responding party, as they may of you. All correspondence must be sent to me for distribution to the appropriate party – direct contact with any party or witness is prohibited. Questions and/or responses received after the ten-day review period will be disregarded. The investigator has the authority to disregard irrelevant questions and/or responses/comments. Upon completion of the review period, the investigator will complete and submit the investigation report to the principal/decision maker for final determination and action.

During this time of review, all specified safety measures and conditions of this investigation will remain in place. As a reminder, the School District of Lee County prohibits retaliation and will respond accordingly if anyone attempts to intimidate or harm the reporter, respondent, and/or witnesses of this allegation (Code of Conduct for Students). Please refer to the initial notification of investigation for the definition and description of retaliation. If you experience any retaliation, please contact my office.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the phone number or email above - although our email is public record, student specific information is confidential and cannot be retrieved through public records requests.

Sincerely,

[Name] Cc: file





Relevancy of Questions

- The parties are permitted to provide questions, however, they must be relevant to the investigation and information provided in the investigatory file/report.
- Questions need to be relevant to the allegations in the dispute
- If a question is deemed irrelevant, the Decision Maker can determine it is not relevant and strike it from the list of questions to be answered by each party.
 - An simple explanation to why it is not relevant should be made.



Relevancy of Questions

- Using the preponderance of evidence standard, when determining if a question is relevant one should ask:
 - Does this help me in deciding if there was more likely than not a violations?
 - Does it make it more or less likely, why or why not?



Non Relevant Questions

- Rape Shield laws apply to the Complainant
 - Questions about the Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless they are offered to prove:
 - (1) that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant; or
 - (2) if the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainants prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offer to prove consent.



Non Relevant Questions Continued

- Information protected by a legal privilege
- Party's treatment records, unless there is a written waiver by the parties
- Rape shield, other than 2 exceptions as discussed in the previous slide



Written Determination

- Once the parties and advisors have submitted their questions and follow up questions, the Decision Maker shall then review the entire investigatory file and report and issue a determination of whether the allegations are substantiated or not, along with reasoning for their decision.
- Any action taken against the respondent or complainant shall be mentioned in the determination as well.



Submission of Determination

- The Decision Maker shall submit to the parties and advisors simultaneously the written determination along with information on how to appeal the decision.
- Please include the following Letter.

[place on school letterhead]

Name

Role

Address | O: XXX.XXX.XXXX | E: email

Name Address

Dear [insert name],

You were previously notified that our office has opened an investigation of an incident that occurred on [date] in [location]. The alleged incident was reported by [insert name of reporter], and includes an allegation of [describe behavior] by [insert name of responder]. This letter serves as notice that we have completed an impartial investigation of this allegation according to the process outlined in the Code of Conduct for Students and in accordance with Title IX requirements.

At this time, we have concluded our investigation and determined that the complaint is [substantiated or unsubstantiated per each allegation- list separately] under Title IX. Both parties may provide a written statement in support of, or challenging the outcome. Both parties have the right to appeal this decision. If you plan to provide a statement and/or request an appeal, please provide your statement and/or request to me in writing within five (5) business days. Appeals will only be considered on the basis of: (1) A procedural irregularity that may have affected the outcome of the matter; (2) Newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome of the matter; and/or (3) Conflict of interest/bias with the Title IX personnel that may have affected the outcome of the matter.

Please note that a determination under Title IX does not exclude the possibility of other action authorized by district policy - Code of Conduct for Students or district policies regarding employee conduct.

During this time of review, all specified safety measures and conditions of this investigation will remain in place. As a reminder, the School District of Lee County prohibits retaliation and will respond accordingly if anyone attempts to intimidate or harm the reporter, respondent, and/or witnesses of this allegation (Code of Conduct for Students). Please refer to the initial notification of investigation for the definition and description of retaliation. If you experience any retaliation, please contact my office.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at the phone number or email above - although our email is public record, student specific information is confidential and cannot be retrieved through public records requests.

Sincerely,

[Name] Cc: file





Appeals

- The parties have 5 business days to submit an appeal as stated in the determination letter.
- If no appeal is submitted within that time frame, then the file shall be considered closed.
- The file will then be delivered to the Title IX Coordinator, along with the checklist, for record keeping.



Appeals Continued

- If either party submits and appeal for any of the appropriate reasons, the Decision Maker then shall submit the appeal letter along with the investigatory file to appropriate the District Level Title IX Coordinator.
- The District Level Title IX Coordinator shall than have the Office of Legal Counsel Review the file and make a determination.



Appeals Continued

- The Office of Legal Counsel shall have 10 business days to review the file and make a determination.
- Once a determination is made, the Office of Legal Counsel will submit their decision to the appropriate District Level Title IX Coordinator.
- The District Title IX Coordinator will then send the appeal decision to the School Level Title IX Coordinator to be kept on file.



Record Keeping

- The entire file shall be kept in a safe and secure location within each site for 7 years, as required by the regulations.
- These should be kept in a central location rather than an individual's office.
- After 7 years the records can be purged appropriately.



Thank you all for your time!!!

- We understand this is a lot of new information, and if you have any questions we are always here to assist.
- For Employee Related Claims
 - Ryan Hudak, Esq. ryanwh@leeschools.net
- For Student Related Claims
 - Chuck Bradley chuckeb@leeschools.net