

Old Capitol Building  
PO Box 47200  
Olympia, WA 98504-7200



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**  
Chris Reykdal, Superintendent

k12.wa.us

April 4, 2024

(X) Action Required

Due date:

( ) Informational

## BULLETIN NO. 018-24 OFFICE OF LEGAL AFFAIRS

TO: Educational Service District Superintendents  
School District Superintendents  
School District Business Managers

FROM: Chris Reykdal, Superintendent of Public Instruction

RE: New Requirements for Annual Notices Regarding Discrimination, Harassment,  
Intimidation, and Bullying

CONTACT: Sarah Albertson, Managing Attorney, Equity and Civil Rights  
360-725-6162, [sarah.albertson@k12.wa.us](mailto:sarah.albertson@k12.wa.us)

## SUMMARY

Beginning with the 2024–25 school year, each Washington school district must publish OSPI’s model student handbook language in handbooks and on websites to notify the school community of district policies and procedures related to harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB); discrimination; sexual harassment; and gender-inclusive schools.

This bulletin provides information for school districts on this new requirement, including background regarding the handbook language and requirements for publication. The model handbook language is attached to this bulletin and is also available on OSPI’s Equity and Civil Rights webpage for [Notification Requirements](#). OSPI will post translated versions of the model student handbook language as they become available in the coming weeks.

## BACKGROUND

[House Bill 1207 \(2023\)](#), now codified at [RCW 28A.300.286](#), requires OSPI to develop, and periodically update, model handbook language related to HIB, discrimination, sexual harassment, and gender-inclusive schools. The statute further requires that each school district include OSPI’s model student handbook language in any student, parent, employee, and volunteer handbook that it or one of its schools publishes, beginning with the 2024–25 school

year. School districts must also publish this information on each district and school website, whenever such websites are maintained.

The new student handbook language requirements in House Bill 1207 build on existing annual notice requirements for notifying the school community about discrimination and sexual harassment,<sup>1</sup> HIB,<sup>2</sup> gender-inclusive schools,<sup>3</sup> and Washington State Governor’s Office of the Education Ombuds (OEO).<sup>4</sup> The new model student handbook language may be used to satisfy these existing annual notice requirements.

## REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with the requirements of House Bill 1207, OSPI’s model student handbook language includes an overview of the following information, policies, and related complaint procedures:

- Harassment, intimidation, and bullying;
- Discrimination, including sexual harassment and discriminatory harassment;
- The overlap between the nondiscrimination and HIB policies and complaint procedures;
- Gender-inclusive schools; and
- Contact information for OSPI and OEO.

The model student handbook language also includes placeholders for district-specific information, including coordinator contact information and links to the school district’s policies and procedures.

### **When and where must the handbook language be published?**

By the beginning of the 2024–25 school year, and every following school year, each school district must include OSPI’s model handbook language in the following publications:

- Any student, parent, employee, and volunteer handbook that the school district or any of its schools publishes;
- The school district’s website, if the district maintains a website; and
- Each school’s website, if a school maintains a website.

School districts should publish this information in handbooks and on websites in locations that

---

<sup>1</sup> [RCW 28A.640.020](#); [WAC 392-190-058](#); and [WAC 392-190-060](#).

<sup>2</sup> [RCW 28A.600.477](#).

<sup>3</sup> [RCW 28A.642.080](#).

<sup>4</sup> [RCW 28A.600.510](#).

families and staff may easily navigate to or find.

For employee and volunteer handbooks, the model student handbook language must be included to provide staff and volunteers notice of student rights and the processes for HIB, discrimination, and sexual harassment complaints. A school district may need to provide additional notices to staff about their rights and applicable complaint processes in accordance with state and federal nondiscrimination laws that apply to places of employment.

### **What if a school or school district does not publish a handbook or website?**

If a school district does not publish a handbook or maintain a website, it must provide the model student handbook language to each student, parent, employee, and volunteer at least annually.

School districts should use a notification method that is reasonably calculated to reach all students, parents, employees, and volunteers—such as a newsletter or handout provided to all students, employees, and volunteers—and should maintain documentation of this annual notice.

### **Can the handbook language be modified?**

Each school district should update the model handbook language to include district-specific information, including coordinator contact information and links to policies and procedures. The model handbook language includes placeholders for this district-specific information.

A school district may **not** remove any content from the model handbook language. It is permissible, however, for a school district to modify the formatting of the handbook language to meet its own style or formatting needs. However, any formatting change should not impact the readability of the handbook language, such as using very small font.

It is also permissible for a school district to add additional information or resources regarding its anti-HIB, nondiscrimination, or gender-inclusive schools efforts. However, any additional information must be consistent with state law and OSPI rules and guidelines.

## **INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE**

For questions regarding this bulletin, please contact Sarah Albertson, Managing Attorney, Equity and Civil Rights, at 360-725-6162 or email [sarah.albertson@k12.wa.us](mailto:sarah.albertson@k12.wa.us). For questions regarding discriminatory harassment, sexual harassment, or gender-inclusive schools, contact the Equity and Civil Rights Office at 360-725-6162 or email [equity@k12.wa.us](mailto:equity@k12.wa.us). For questions regarding HIB, please contact the School Safety Center at 360-725-6068 or email [schoolsafety@k12.wa.us](mailto:schoolsafety@k12.wa.us). The OSPI TTY number is 360-664-3631.

BULLETIN NO. 018-24 OLA

April 4, 2024

Page 4

This bulletin is also available on the [Bulletins](#) page of the OSPI website.

Tennille Jeffries-Simmons

Chief of Staff

Matt Schultz

Chief Legal and Civil Rights Officer

Office of Legal Affairs

Sarah Albertson

Managing Attorney

Equity and Civil Rights Office

CR:js

Attachment: OSPI Model Handbook Language

*OSPI provides equal access to all programs and services without discrimination based on sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. Questions and complaints of alleged discrimination should be directed to the Equity and Civil Rights Director at 360-725-6162/TTY: 360-664-3631; or P.O. Box 47200, Olympia, WA 98504-7200; or [equity@k12.wa.us](mailto:equity@k12.wa.us).*