



**SECTION: Foundations and Basic Commitments  
Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity  
Approved: 7/2021**

## **Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity**

The Colorado Early Colleges Governing Board (Board) is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment where all members of Colorado Early Colleges (CEC) are treated with dignity and respect. CEC is subject to all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, marital status, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services.

Accordingly, no otherwise qualified student, employee applicant for employment or member of the public shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to unlawful discrimination under any CEC program or activity on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, marital status, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services. Discrimination against employees and applicants for employment based on age is also prohibited in accordance with state and federal law.

### **Annual Notice**

CEC shall issue a written notice prior to the beginning of each school year that advises students, parents, employees, and the general public that the educational programs, activities, and employment opportunities offered by CEC are offered without regard to disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, marital status, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services. The announcement shall also include the name/title, address and telephone number of the person designated to coordinate Title IX, and Section 504 and ADA compliance activities.

The notice shall be disseminated to persons with limited English language skills in the person's own language. It shall also be made available to persons who are visually or hearing impaired.

The notice shall appear on a continuing basis, including on CEC's website, recruitment materials, application forms, vacancy announcements, student/family handbooks, and employee handbooks.

### **Harassment is Prohibited**

Harassment based on a person's disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, marital status, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services is a form of discrimination prohibited by state and federal law. Preventing and remedying such harassment in school is essential to ensure a nondiscriminatory, safe environment in which students can learn, employees can work, and members of the public can access and receive the benefit of CEC facilities and programs. All such harassment by CEC employees, students, and/or third parties is strictly prohibited.

All CEC employees and students share the responsibility to ensure that harassment does not occur at any school, on any school property, at any school-sanctioned activity or event, or off school property when such conduct has a connection to the school, or any school curricular or non-curricular activity or event.

For purposes of this policy, harassment is any unwelcome, hostile, and offensive verbal, written and physical conduct based on or directed at a person's disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, marital status, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services:

- 1) results in physical, emotional, or mental harm, or damage to property;
- 2) is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, hostile, or threatening environment; or
- 3) substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school. CEC policy [Discrimination and Harassment](#) will apply to complaints alleging sexual harassment.

## **Reporting Harassment**

Any student who believes they have been a victim of unlawful discrimination or harassment as defined in this policy shall immediately report it to the Head of School, school counselor, teacher, or Title IX Coordinator, and file a formal complaint as set forth in the [CEC Network Grievance Policy](#).

Any employee, applicant for employment, or member of the public who believes they have been a victim of unlawful discrimination or harassment shall file a complaint with the Title IX Coordinator.

All students who witness such harassment shall immediately report it to the Head of School or other school employee. All employees who have such harassment reported to them shall promptly forward the report to their immediate supervisor and to the Title IX Coordinator.

All CEC employees who witness such harassment shall take prompt and effective action to stop it, as prescribed by CEC. Under certain circumstances, harassment may constitute child abuse that must be reported to proper authorities.

## **Interim Institute School Action**

When appropriate, CEC shall take interim measures during the investigation of a harassment report to protect the alleged subject of the harassment from further harassment or retaliation.

In cases involving potential criminal conduct, the CEA, or designee shall determine whether appropriate law enforcement officials should be notified.

## **Action Following Investigation**

The school shall take appropriate action to end the unlawful harassment, to prevent its recurrence, to prevent retaliation against the individual making the report and anyone participating in the investigation, and to restore lost educational opportunities to the harassed student or employment opportunities to staff. In addition, any student or employee who engages in harassment of another student or employee shall be disciplined according to applicable policies. Steps shall also be taken to ensure that victims of, and witnesses to, harassment are protected from retaliation. Further, students or employees who knowingly file false harassment complaints or give false statements in an investigation shall be subject to discipline, up to and including suspension/expulsion for students and termination of employment.

No student, employee, or member of the public shall be subject to adverse treatment in retaliation for any good faith report of harassment under this policy. To the extent possible, all reports of harassment will be kept confidential. Upon determining that incidents of harassment are occurring in particular school settings or activities, CEC shall implement measures designed to remedy the problem in those areas or activities.

## Notice and Training

To reduce harassment and ensure a respectful school environment, CEC is responsible for providing notice of this policy to all schools and departments. The policy and compliance process shall be incorporated into student/family and employee handbooks.

Students and CEC employees shall receive periodic training related to recognizing and preventing unlawful harassment. CEC employees shall receive additional training related to handling reports of harassment. The training will include, but not be limited to:

- Awareness of groups protected under state and federal law and/or targeted groups, whether real or perceived;
- How to recognize and react to harassment; and
- Proven harassment prevention strategies

### **Legal References:**

20 U.S.C. 1681 (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972)

20 U.S.C. 1701-1758 (Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972)

29 U.S.C. 621 *et seq.* (Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967)

29 U.S.C. 701 *et seq.* (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973)

42 U.S.C. 1201 *et seq.* (Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act)

42 U.S.C. 2000d (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1972)

42 U.S.C. 2000e (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1972)

34 C.F.R. Part 100

C.R.S. 2-4-401 (13.5) (definition of sexual orientation)

C.R.S. 18-9-121 (bias-motivated crimes)

C.R.S. 22-32-109 (1) (11) Board duty to adopt written policies prohibiting discrimination

C.R.S. 24-34-301 (7) definition of sexual orientation

C.R.S. 24-34-301 through 24-34-308

C.R.S. 24-34-601 (Unlawful discrimination in places of public accommodation)

C.R.S. 24-34-602 (penalty and civil liability for unlawful discrimination)