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New Guidance from U.S. Department of Education Reminds Schools of Obligation to Designate Title IX Coordinator

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The U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights today released a guidance package emphasizing the responsibility of school districts, colleges and universities to designate a Title IX coordinator. The package also contains an overview of the law’s requirements in several key areas, including athletics, single-sex education, sex-based harassment, and discipline.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in all education programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance.

"A critical responsibility for schools under Title IX is to designate a well-qualified, well-trained Title IX coordinator and to give that coordinator the authority and support necessary to do the job," said Catherine E. Lhamon, assistant secretary for civil rights. "We hope that these documents will help schools understand their obligations under Title IX."

The guidance package released today includes three documents:

- A Dear Colleague Letter to school districts, colleges, and universities reminding them of their obligation to designate a Title IX coordinator.
- A letter to Title IX coordinators that provides them more information about their important role.
- A Title IX resource guide that includes an overview of Title IX’s requirements in several key areas, including recruitment, admissions and counseling; financial assistance; athletics; sex-based harassment; treatment of pregnant and parenting students; and discipline—all topics that frequently confront schools and their Title IX coordinators.
Since the issuance of Title IX regulations in 1975, school districts, colleges, and universities receiving federal financial assistance from the Department of Education have been required to designate at least one employee to coordinate the recipient’s compliance with Title IX.

OCR’s mission is to ensure equal access to education and promote educational excellence throughout the nation through the vigorous enforcement of civil rights. The office is responsible for enforcing federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination by educational institutions on the basis of disability, race, color, national origin, sex, and age, as well as the Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act of 2001. For more about the office, click here (http://www.ed.gov/ocr).

More information about Title IX and other OCR guidance documents on Title IX issues can be found here (http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/publications.html).

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