10 TIPS

FOR PREK-12 DISTRICT TITLE IX COORDINATORS

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1 Each District is required to identify an individual to serve as its Title IX Coordinator. Make sure the identity and contact information (office location, telephone number and email address) for the Title IX Coordinator is widely published and disseminated to students, employees, and parents throughout the district.

2 Be sure your policy and procedures are clear, concise, and published throughout the District (on website, in student and employee handbooks, distributed to every school, distributed to parents, etc.). A policy no one knows about is not an effective policy. This is the law but is often overlooked by PreK-12 districts. If your policy needs improvement, see if your state DOE has model policy language; many do.

3 Be very clear on what the law enforcement and child protective agency reporting requirements are for your state as these requirements may overlap with Title IX reporting requirements. Know who and when to call.

4 Ensure that the appropriate people within the district are trained on an annual basis. This includes anyone who plays a role in the Title IX complaint resolution process (i.e. Title IX Coordinator, deputy Title IX Coordinator(s), investigator(s) and, decision-maker(s)) in addition to principals, teachers, social workers/counselors and athletic directors. At a minimum, the training should cover the district's legal obligations under Title IX, policy, reporting protocol, and investigation protocol. This is not a "one and done" responsibility.

5 Be mindful of your role to ensure the district is in compliance with all Title IX-related requirements. This includes, but is not limited to, staying abreast of all federal and state mandates, new case law, regular review of district policies, procedures and practices to determine if any changes needed to be made, and tracking all Title IX-related complaints so that you can address any patterns that may exist.

6 Know your community partners. You do have them. Examples: local domestic violence organization (usually has teen dating violence materials), rape crisis centers, child advocacy centers, or child protective agencies. Get to know them and develop collaborative relationships with them as they can serve as key partners in the prevention, education, and advocacy efforts for your district.

7 Once you articulate your process for reporting and investigating, follow it every single time. Any single mishandled Title IX complaint can be a very expensive lesson.

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8 Have an appointed point of contact for Title IX-related matters at each school who can serve as a liaison between the school and the district's Title IX Coordinator. This will serve to ensure the district's Title IX Coordinator is always informed of what is occurring and can streamline the exchange of information that is required between a school and the district's Title IX Coordinator. Having to speak to multiple people at a school to find out what is being done to address a Title IX complaint is not efficient. You need one point of contact, normally an assistant principal, dean, etc., within the school.

9 Many PreK-12 Districts and schools are not processing all behaviors and incidents that actually fall under Title IX as Title IX-related matters. Educate yourself well on what issues are covered under Title IX. Staff "flirting" with students, teen dating relationship stalking or violence, locker room hazing, etc., can all be Title IX-related matters that can become expensive lessons if not properly handled.

10 The last tip may be the most important for a Title IX Coordinator. Build a support team that includes individuals within your district and external to your district. Do not be hesitant to reach out to colleagues who do this work. Be honest, be open to learning and be willing to share your questions and mistakes. The information you can obtain through connecting with others in this field will be invaluable.

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