Title IX Policy and Advisors
By Kim Pacelli, M.Ed., J.D., Associate, TNG

Our college is currently updating our Title IX Policy. In regard to the provision of advisors, the Policy and Procedure committee was curious about if any schools have positions or a pool of staff/faculty that are trained to be advocates and/or advisors? If so, how does this work?

My former campus had what I call a “structured supporter” program with a cadre of trained advisors for Title IX cases. Parties were welcome to choose these folks as their advisors – and many did – but were obviously not obliged to either. The supporters were trained and particularly familiar with our Title IX processes and procedures, had been through many cases before. I would add they were also individuals who naturally had the “soft skills” to excel at the role. I believe they were all staff, though there is no reason one couldn’t have been a faculty member.

One caveat is that the work was particularly time consumptive and did not always mesh well with the person’s “regular job.” Attending interviews, meetings, and proceedings, as well as lots of informal “counseling” and support time. So, for example, it was quite difficult for a Resident Life professional staff advisor to take on a case at the height of Residential Life hiring season each spring. Over time, we added a small nominal stipend for taking on a case, which was made available to the person as professional development money. It was a drop in the bucket as to their time, but an appreciated gesture nevertheless.