



# Academy of Arts and Knowledge

*Creating an environment in which all students can reach their full potential.*

4800 Wheaton Dr. Fort Collins, CO 80525

Phone (970) 226-2800

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## **NONDISCRIMINATION/EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

Academy of Arts and Knowledge is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment where all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. The school is subject to all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, religion, ancestry, military or veteran status, 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 district program or activity on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, religion, ancestry, military or veteran status, or need for special education services. Discrimination against employees and applicants for employment based on age, genetic information and conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth is also prohibited in accordance with state and/or federal law. For purposes of this policy, these terms have the following meanings: "Race" includes hair texture, hair type, or a protective hairstyle that is commonly or historically associated with race. "Protective Hairstyle" includes such hairstyles as braids, locs, twists, tight coils or curls, cornrows, bantu knots, afros, and head wraps. "Sexual Orientation" means a person's orientation toward heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, or transgender status or another person's perception thereof.

This policy and supporting regulations will be used to address all concerns regarding unlawful discrimination and harassment. Alleged conduct regarding sex-based discrimination and sexual harassment will follow the complaint and investigation procedures specific to this conduct.

In keeping with these statements, the following are objectives of this school:

1. To promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the state and federal constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretation.
2. To encourage positive experiences in terms of human values for children and adults who have differing personal and family characteristics or who come from various socio-economic, racial, and ethnic groups.

3. To consider carefully, in all decisions made which affect the schools, the potential benefit or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society.
4. To utilize educational experiences to build each individual's pride in the community in which they live.
5. To initiate a process of reviewing all policies and practices of this school district in order to achieve the objectives of this policy to the greatest extent possible.
6. To investigate and resolve promptly any complaint of unlawful discrimination and harassment.
7. To investigate and appropriately discipline staff and students found to be responsible for incidents of harassment or unlawful discrimination in violation of school policy.

This policy applies to all employees, Board members, visitors, and other persons not affiliated with the district, regardless of their title, position, or gender. Academy of Arts and Knowledge will take all reasonable measures to prevent unlawful harassment or discrimination and promptly and effectively respond to harassment or discrimination allegations.

### **Harassment is prohibited:**

Harassment based on a person's disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, religion, ancestry, military or veteran status, or need for special education services is a form of discrimination prohibited by state and federal law. Preventing and remedying such harassment in schools 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 school facilities and programs. All such harassment, by school employees, students, and third parties, is strictly prohibited. All school employees and students share the responsibility to ensure that harassment does not occur at any school property or school-sanctioned activity or event, or off school property when such conduct has a nexus 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, or physical conduct based on or directed at a person's race, color, national origin, ancestry, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation (which includes transgender), marital or veteran status, disability, or need for special education services that: (1) results in physical, emotional, or mental harm, or damage to property; or (2) is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that it



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unreasonably interferes with an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or threatening environment; or (3) substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school. Board policy on sexual harassment will apply to complaints alleging sexual harassment.

## **Reporting unlawful discrimination and harassment:**

Any student who believes they have been a target of unlawful discrimination or harassment as defined in Board policy and supporting regulations, or who has witnessed such unlawful discrimination or harassment, must immediately report it to an administrator, counselor, teacher, or the district's compliance officer and file a complaint as set forth in the regulation which accompanies this policy.

Any employee, applicant for employment, or member of the public who believes they have been a target of unlawful discrimination or harassment, or who has witnessed such unlawful discrimination or harassment, must file a complaint with the AAK principal either an immediate supervisor or the school's compliance officer. If the individual alleged to have engaged in prohibited conduct is the AAK principal, person designated as the compliance officer, the complaint shall be made to a representative from Minga Education who will designate an alternate compliance officer to investigate the matter in accordance with this policy's accompanying regulation. An alleged target of discrimination or harassment is not required to directly confront any persons who are the source of the issue or closely associated with the person who is the source of such issue. Other various avenues of internal complaint may be used instead. A reasonable effort must be made to bring forward any allegations of unlawful discrimination or harassment so that the school may work to stop such wrongdoing and prevent future occurrences.

## **School Action:**

All staff members who witness unlawful discrimination or harassment must take prompt and effective action to stop it, as prescribed by the school. The school will take appropriate action to promptly and impartially investigate allegations of unlawful discrimination and harassment, to end unlawful behavior, to prevent the recurrence of such behavior and to prevent retaliation against the individual(s) who files the complaint and/or any person who participates in the investigation. When appropriate, the school will take interim measures during the investigation to protect against further unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation. To the extent possible, all reports of

unlawful discrimination or harassment will be kept confidential. Students or employees who knowingly file false complaints or give false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline, up to and including suspension/expulsion for students and termination of employment. No student, staff member, or member of the public may be subject to adverse treatment in retaliation for any good faith report of harassment under this policy. Upon determining that incidents of unlawful discrimination or harassment are occurring in particular district settings or activities, the school will implement measures designed to remedy the problem in those areas or activities. Any student or employee who engages in unlawful discrimination or harassment will be disciplined according to applicable administrative policies and the district will take reasonable action to restore lost educational or employment opportunities to the target(s). In cases involving potential criminal conduct, the district will determine whether appropriate law enforcement officials should be notified.

Academy of Art and Knowledge will make every effort to ensure that those named in a complaint, or are too closely associated with those involved in the complaint, will not be part of the investigative team or efforts. AAK may utilize a neutral third-party investigator to address allegations of work-related discrimination, harassment, or other work-related misconduct.

**Notice and training:**

To reduce unlawful discrimination and harassment and ensure a respectful school environment, the administration is responsible for providing notice of this policy to all district schools and departments. The policy and complaint process must be prominently posted on the district's website, referenced in student and employee handbooks, and made otherwise available to all students, staff and members of the public through electronic or hard-copy distribution. Students and district employees will receive periodic training related to recognizing and preventing unlawful discrimination and harassment.