

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Series 100

- 100 Legal Status of the School District
- 101 Educational Philosophy of the School District
- 102 Equal Educational Opportunity
 - 102.E1 Annual Notice of Nondiscrimination
 - 102.E2 Continuous Notice of Nondiscrimination
 - 102.E3 Notice of Section 504 Student and Parental Rights
 - 102.E4 Complaint Form
 - 102.E5 Witness Disclosure Form
 - 102.E6 Disposition of Complaint Form
 - 102.R1 Grievance Procedure
- 103 Long-Range Needs Assessment
 - 103.R1 Long-Range Needs Assessment
- 104 Anti-Bullying/Anti-Harassment
 - 104.E1 Anti-Bullying/Anti-Harassment Complaint Form
 - 104.E2 Witness Disclosure Form
 - 104.E3 Anti-Bullying/Anti-Harassment Disposition of Complaint Form
 - 104.R1 Anti-Bullying/Anti-Harassment Investigation Procedures
- 105 Assistance Animals
- 106 Title IX - Discrimination and Harassment Based on Sex Prohibited

LEGAL STATUS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Iowa law authorizes the creation of a Common Schools System. As part of this Common Schools System, this school district is a school corporation created and organized under Iowa law. This school district is known as the Decorah Community School District.

This school corporation is located in Winneshiek and Allamakee Counties, and its affairs are conducted by elected school officials, the Decorah Community School District Board of Directors. This school corporation has exclusive jurisdiction over school matters in the territory of the school district.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 274.1, .2, .6, .7; 279.8; 594A.

Cross Reference: 200
of Directors

Legal Status of the Board

Revised June 11, 2012
Reviewed October 14, 2019
Reviewed September 12, 2022
Reviewed July 21, 2025

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

As a school corporation of Iowa, the School District, acting through its board of directors, is dedicated to promoting an equal opportunity for a quality public education to its students. The board's ability may be limited by the school district's ability and willingness to furnish financial support in cooperation with student's parents and school district community. The board is also dedicated to providing the opportunity to develop a healthy social, intellectual, emotional, and physical self-concept in a learning environment that provides guidance to, and encourages critical thinking in, the students for a lifetime.

The board endeavors, through the dedication of the school district's resources, to encourage students, who come to the school district from a variety of backgrounds, to look forward to the time when they will have jobs, homes, families, places in the school district community, and attain recognition as individuals. In order to achieve this goal, the board will seek qualified employees dedicated to development of their professional skills for the betterment of the education program and for the expertise for educational productivity.

Instruction and curriculum are the key elements of a public education. Critical thinking and problem solving skills that will assist the students' preparation for life is instructed as part of a sequentially coordinated curriculum. The school district strives to prepare students for employment, to discover and nurture creative talent and to prepare them to meet and cope with social change in an atmosphere conducive to learning.

The support and involvement of the home and the school district community are essential to achieve educational excellence in the school district. The school district strives to maintain an active relationship with the home and the school district community to create within the students an awareness of dignity and worth of the individual, civic responsibility and respect for authority.

The vision of the Decorah Community School District is to create a student-centered environment where:

- individual needs are addressed.
- cooperation and teamwork are valued.
- competent professionals lead.
- community partnerships flourish.
- a commitment to excellence prevails.
- life-long learning continues.

Education is the responsibility of all residents of the Decorah community. We believe in creating an environment that is student-centered, where individual needs are addressed, and students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.

We value cooperative teamwork among students, teachers, support staff, parents, administrators, and community. This begins with an attitude of openness and mutual respect, honest listening and expression, the flexibility to respond to change, and the ability to compromise. The strengths of each school and community member should be recognized and used to their fullest potential.

We believe that community resources should be maximized to meet student needs and professional development of school staff should be encouraged. All citizens of the Decorah Community School District should have a commitment to excellence and a shared responsibility to support lifelong learning.

This vision will be fulfilled through the achievement of the following Student Learning Goals:

Decorah Community School District graduates will be

- Knowledgeable Individuals,
- Effective Communicators,
- Competent Thinkers and Information Processors,
- Skillful Problem Solvers,
- Collaborative Workers,
- Resourceful Learners, and
- Responsible Citizens.

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The board endeavors, through the dedication of the school district's resources, to encourage students, who come to the school district from a variety of backgrounds, to look forward to the time when they will have jobs, homes, families, places in the school district community, and attain recognition as individuals. In order to achieve this goal, the board will seek qualified employees dedicated to development of their professional skills for the betterment of the education program and for the expertise for educational productivity.

Instruction and curriculum are the key elements of a public education. Critical thinking and problem solving skills that will assist the students' preparation for life is instructed as part of a sequentially coordinated curriculum. The school district strives to prepare students for employment, to discover and nurture creative talent and to prepare them to meet and cope with social change in an atmosphere conducive to learning.

The support and involvement of the home and the school district community are essential to achieve educational excellence in the school district. The school district strives to maintain an active relationship with the home and the school district community to create within the students an awareness of dignity and worth of the individual, civic responsibility and respect for authority.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 256.11

Cross Reference:	102	Equal Educational
Opportunity	103	Long-Range Needs
Assessment	209	Board of Directors'
Management Procedures	600	Goals and Objectives of
the Education Program	602	Curriculum Development

Revised April 9, 2001
Reviewed October 14, 2019
Reviewed September 12, 2022
Reviewed July 21, 2025

DISTRICT GOALS

The goals of the Decorah Community School District are to:

1. Assure that every student has access to curriculum, instruction and assessment systems that reflect the district's mission and beliefs and that prepare students for life in the twenty-first century.
2. Design and implement a technology program that will benefit the learner, school employees, families and the community.
3. Secure and manage financial resources to adequately meet student and district needs.
4. Develop and implement a long-range facility plan, which will accommodate enrollment and enhance present and future educational programs.
5. Develop an integrated long-range planning process which culminates in improvement plans at all levels of the organization.
6. Select the best employees and maintain a highly qualified staff through continuous professional development.
7. Develop and implement a communication plan directed toward all stakeholders which will enhance community support and confidence in our schools.
8. Build collaborative and innovative partnerships through school, parent and community interactions.

Revised April 9, 2001

Reviewed October 14, 2019

Reviewed September 12, 2022

Reviewed July 21, 2025

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

It is the goal of the board to develop a healthy social, intellectual, emotional, and physical self-concept in the students enrolled in the school district. Each student attending school will have the opportunity to use its education program and services as a means for self-improvement and individual growth. In so doing, the students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that assures each student the same educational opportunity.

The Decorah Community School District does not discriminate in its educational programs, activities and employment practices on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, sexual orientation, age (for employment), actual or potential parental, family, or marital status (for programs). The belief in equal educational opportunity serves as a guide for the board and employees in making decisions relating to school district facilities, employment, selection of educational materials, equipment, curriculum, and regulations affecting students. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy or for information about the district's grievance procedures, please contact Justin Albers, Middle School Principal, justin.albers@decorah.school, 405 Winnebago Street, Decorah IA 52101, phone (563) 382-8427.

Board policies, rules and regulations affect students while they are on school district property or on property within the jurisdiction of the school district; while on school owned and/or operated school or chartered vehicles; while attending or engaged in school activities; and while away from school grounds if misconduct will directly affect the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school district.

The board requires all persons, agencies, vendors, contractors and other persons and organizations doing business with or performing services for the school district to subscribe to all applicable federal and state laws, executive orders, rules and regulations pertaining to contract compliance and equal opportunity.

Inquiries by students regarding compliance with equal educational opportunity laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, are directed to the Affirmative Action Coordinator by writing to the Affirmative Action Coordinator, Decorah Community School District, Decorah, Iowa 52101; or by telephoning (563) 382-4208.

Inquiries by students regarding compliance with equal educational opportunity laws and policies, including but not limited to complaints of discrimination, may also be directed in writing to the Director of the Office of Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Cesar E. Chaves Memorial Building, 1244 Speer Boulevard, Suite 310, Denver, CO 80204-3582, (303)844-5695 FAX: (303) 844-4303, TDD: (800) 877-8339, Email: OCR.Denver@ed.gov, the Iowa Civil Rights Commissioner, 6200 Park Avenue, Suite 100, Des Moines, IA 50321-1270, <https://icrc.iowa.gov>, (515) 281-4121 or the Iowa Dept. of Education, Grimes State Office Bldg., Des Moines, IA 50319. (515) 281-5294. This inquiry or complaint to the federal or state office may be done instead of, or in addition to, an inquiry or complaint at the local level.

Legal Reference: 20 U.S.C. §§ 1221 et seq.
20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 et seq.
20 U.S.C. §§ 1701 et seq.
29 U.S.C. § 206 et seq.
29 U.S.C. § 794
42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d and 2000e.
42 U.S.C. §§ 12101 et seq.
34 C.F.R. Pt. 100.
34 C.F.R. Pt. 104.
Iowa Code §§ 216.6; 216.9; 256.11; 280.3.
281 I.A.C. 12.

Cross Reference: 101 Educational Philosophy of the School District
401.1 Equal Employment Opportunity
506.1 Student Records

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Reviewed August 10, 2026

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The Decorah Community School District does not discriminate in its educational programs, activities and employment practices on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, sexual orientation, age (for employment), actual or potential parental, family, or marital status (for programs). There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy or for more information about the district's grievance procedures please contact District Equity Coordinator, Justin Albers, Middle School Principal / Equity Coordinator, 405 Winnebago Street, Decorah, IA 52101, (563) 382-8427, justin.albers@decorah.school.

Students, parents of students, employees, and applicants for employment in the school district have the right to file a formal complaint alleging discrimination. The district has policies and procedures in place to identify and investigate complaints alleging discrimination. If appropriate, the district will take steps to prevent the recurrence of discrimination and to correct its discriminatory effects on the Complainant and others.

A Complainant may attempt to resolve the problem informally by discussing the matter with a building principal or a direct supervisor. However, the Complainant has the right to end the informal process at any time and pursue the formal grievance procedures outlined below. Use of the informal or formal grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies. Please note that informal processes and procedures are not to be used in certain circumstances (e.g., sexual harassment and sexual assault).

Filing a Complaint

A Complainant who wishes to avail himself/herself of this grievance procedure may do so by filing a complaint with the District Equity Coordinator (hereinafter "coordinator"). An alternate will be designated in the event it is claimed that the coordinator or superintendent committed the alleged discrimination or some other conflict of interest exists. Complaints shall be filed within 180 days of the event giving rise to the complaint or from the date the Complainant could reasonably become aware of such occurrence. The Complainant will state the nature of the complaint and the remedy requested. The coordinator shall assist the Complainant as needed.

Investigation

Within 15 working days, the coordinator will begin the investigation of the complaint or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation. If the Complainant is under 18 years of age, the coordinator shall notify his or her parent(s)/guardian(s) that they may attend investigatory meetings in which the Complainant is involved. The complaint and identity of the Complainant, Respondent, or witnesses will only be disclosed as reasonably necessary in connection with the investigation or as required by law or policy. The investigation may include, but is not limited to the following:

- A request for the Complainant to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint;
- A request for the individual named in the complaint to provide a written statement;
- A request for witnesses identified during the course of the investigation to provide a written statement;

- Interviews of the Complainant, Respondent, or witnesses;
- An opportunity to present witnesses or other relevant information; and
- Review and collection of documentation or information deemed relevant to the investigation.

Within 60 working days, the equity coordinator shall complete the investigation and issue a report with respect to the findings.

The coordinator shall notify the Complainant and Respondent of the decision within 5 working days of completing the written report. Notification shall be by U.S. mail, first class.

Decision and Appeal

The complaint is closed after the coordinator has issued the report, unless within 10 working days after receiving the decision, either party appeals the decision to the superintendent by making a written request detailing why he/she believes the decision should be reconsidered. The coordinator shall promptly forward all materials relative to the complaint and appeal to the superintendent. Within 30 working days, the superintendent shall affirm, reverse, amend the decision, or direct the coordinator to gather additional information. The superintendent shall notify the Complainant, Respondent, and the coordinator of the decision within 5 working days of the decision. Notification shall be by U.S. mail, first class.

The decision of the superintendent shall be final.

The decision of the superintendent in no way prejudices a party from seeking redress through state or federal agencies as provided by in law.

This policy and procedures are to be used for complaints of discrimination, in lieu of any other general complaint policies or procedures that may be available.

If any of the stated timeframes cannot be met by the district, the district will notify the parties and pursue completion as promptly as possible.

Retaliation against any person, because the person has filed a complaint or assisted or participated in an investigation, is prohibited. Persons found to have engaged in retaliation shall be subject to discipline by appropriate measures.

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Reviewed July 21, 2025

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ANNUAL NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The Decorah Community School District offers career and technical programs in the following areas of study:

- Agricultural, Food and Natural Resources
- Applied Science, Technology, Engineering, and Manufacturing including transportation, distribution, logistics, architecture, and construction
- Business, Finance, Marketing, and Management
- Human Services

The Decorah Community School District does not discriminate in its educational programs, activities and employment practices on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, sexual orientation, age (for employment), actual or potential parental, family or marital status (for programs). There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy or for information about the district's grievance procedures, please contact District Equity Coordinator, Justin Albers, Middle School Principal / Equity Coordinator, (563) 382-8427, justin.albers@decorah.school or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Cesar E. Chavez Memorial Building, 1244 Speer Boulevard, Suite 310, Denver, CO 80204-3582, Telephone: (303) 844-5695, FAX: (303) 844-4303, TDD: (800) 877-8339, Email: OCR.Denver@ed.gov.

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Reviewed July 21, 2025

Reviewed February 9, 2026

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CONTINUOUS NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The Decorah Community School District does not discriminate in its educational programs, activities or employment practices on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, sexual orientation, age (for employment), and actual or potential parental, family or marital status. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy or for information about the district's grievance procedures please contact District Equity Coordinator, Justin Albers, MS Principal / Equity Coordinator, (563) 382-8427, justin.albers@decorah.school or the Director of the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Cesar E. Chavez Memorial Building, 1244 Speer Boulevard, Suite 310, Denver, CO 80204-3582, Telephone: (303) 844-5695, FAX: (303) 844-4303, TDD: (800) 877-8339, Email: OCR.Denver@ed.gov.

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Reviewed July 21, 2025
Reviewed February 9, 2026
Reviewed August 10, 2026

NOTICE OF SECTION 504 STUDENT AND PARENTAL RIGHTS

The Decorah Community School District does not discriminate in its educational programs and activities on the basis of a student's disability. It has been determined that your child has a qualifying disability for which accommodations may need to be made to meet his or her individual needs as adequately as the needs of other students. As a parent, you have the right to the following:

- Participation of your child in school district programs and activities, including extracurricular programs and activities, to the maximum extent appropriate, free of discrimination based upon the student's disability and at the same level as students without disabilities;
- Receipt of free educational services to the extent they are provided students without disabilities;
- Receipt of information about your child and your child's educational programs and activities in your native language;
- Notice of identification of your child as having a qualifying disability for which accommodations may need to be made and notice prior to evaluation and placement of your child and right to periodically request a re-evaluation of your child;
- Inspect and review your child's educational records including a right to copy those records for a reasonable fee; you also have a right to ask the school district to amend your child's educational records if you feel the information in the records is misleading or inaccurate; should the school district refuse to amend the records, you have a right to a hearing and to place an explanatory letter in your child's file explaining why you feel the records are misleading or inaccurate; and
- Hearing before an impartial hearing officer if you disagree with your child's evaluation or placement; you have a right to counsel at the hearing and have the decision of the impartial hearing officer reviewed.

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Reviewed July 21, 2025
Reviewed August 10, 2026

DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT FORM

Date of complaint: _____

Name of Complainant: _____

Are you filling out this form for
yourself or someone else (please
identify the individual if you are
submitting on behalf of
someone else): _____

Who or what entity do you
believe discriminated against,
harassed, or bullied you (or
someone else)? _____

Date and place of alleged
incident(s): _____

Names of any witnesses (if
any): _____

Nature of discrimination alleged (check all that apply):

☐	Race	☐	Religion
☐	Color	☐	Sexual Orientation
☐	National Origin	☐	Age
☐	Sex	☐	Actual or potential parental, family or marital status
☐	Disability	☐	Pregnancy or related conditions
☐	Creed	☐	

In the space below, please describe what happened and why you believe that you or someone else has
been discriminated against. Please be as specific as possible and attach additional pages if
necessary. _____

I agree that all of the information on this form is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

WITNESS DISCLOSURE FORM

Name of Witness: _____

Date of interview: _____

Date of initial complaint: _____

Name of Complainant (include whether the Complainant is a student or employee): _____

Date and place of alleged incident(s): _____

Nature of discrimination alleged (check all that apply):

☐	Race	☐	Religion
☐	Color	☐	Sexual Orientation
☐	National Origin	☐	Age
☐	Sex	☐	Actual or potential parental, family or marital status
☐	Disability	☐	Pregnancy or related conditions
☐	Creed	☐	

Description of incident witnessed: _____

Additional information: _____

I agree that all of the information on this form is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

DISPOSITION OF COMPLAINT FORM

Date: _____

Date of initial complaint: _____

Name of Complainant (include whether the Complainant is a student or employee): _____

Date and place of alleged incident(s): _____

Name of Respondent (include whether the Respondent is a student or employee): _____

Nature of discrimination alleged (check all that apply):

☐	Race	☐	Religion
☐	Color	☐	Sexual Orientation
☐	National Origin	☐	Age
☐	Sex	☐	Actual or potential parental, family or marital status
☐	Disability	☐	Pregnancy or related conditions
☐	Creed	☐	

Summary of Investigation: _____

I agree that all of the information on this form is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

LONG-RANGE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Long-range needs assessment enables the school district to analyze assessment data, get feedback from the community about its expectation of students and determine how well students are meeting student learning goals. The board will conduct ongoing and in-depth needs assessment, soliciting information from business, labor, industry, higher education and community members, regarding their expectations for adequate student preparation.

In conjunction with the in-depth needs assessment of the school district, the board will authorize the appointment of a committee, representing administrators, employees, parents, students and community members, to make recommendations and assist the board in determining the priorities of the school district in addition to the basic skills areas of the education program.

The District will provide opportunities for local feedback on an ongoing basis by utilizing a variety of methods. These may include surveys, focus groups, building and program advisory committees and forums. Information gathered from these sources will be used to provide recommendations and assist the Board in making decisions related to student preparation and District policies and procedures. It is the responsibility of the superintendent to ensure the school district community is informed of students' progress on state and locally determined indicators. The superintendent will report annually to the board about the means used to keep the community informed.

It is the responsibility of the superintendent to ensure the school district community is informed of students' progress on state and locally determined indicators. The superintendent will report annually to the board about the means used to keep the community informed.

As a result of the board and committee's work, the board will determine major educational needs and rank them in priority order; develop long-range goals and plans to meet the educational needs; establish and implement short- range and intermediate-range plans to meet the goals and to attain the desired levels of student performance; evaluate progress toward meeting the goals and maintain a record of progress under the plan that includes reports of student performance and results of school improvement projects; and annually report the school district's progress made under the plan to the committee, community and Iowa Department of Education.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 21; 256.7; 280.12.
281 I.A.C. 12.8(1)(b).

Cross Reference:	101	Educational Philosophy
of the School District	200	Legal Status of the Board
of Directors	208	Committees of the Board
of Directors	603.1	Basic Instruction
Program	801.1	Buildings and Sites Long
Range Planning		

Surveys

801.2

Buildings and Sites

Review: October 14, 2019 and Reviewed July 21, 2025

Revised: September 12, 2022 and October 14, 2024

LONG-RANGE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Policy Statement:

The School District is dedicated to a thorough and ongoing long-range needs assessment process to effectively analyze assessment data, gather community feedback on student expectations, and evaluate student progress toward learning goals. This policy outlines the framework for collecting, analyzing, and reporting relevant information to guide strategic decision-making and planning.

1. Long-Range Needs Assessment Objectives

Long-range needs assessment enables the school district to:

- Analyze assessment data to understand current performance levels.
- Obtain feedback from the community about its expectations for students.
- Determine how well students are meeting established learning goals.

2. Provisions for Ongoing and In-Depth Needs Assessments

The Decorah Board of Directors will conduct ongoing and in-depth needs assessments by:

- Soliciting information from businesses, labor, industry, higher education, and community members regarding their expectations for student preparation as responsible citizens and successful wage earners.
- Gathering feedback from district patrons, staff, and students on a regular basis.

3. Role of the School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC)

The School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC), in collaboration with the Superintendent, will:

- Collect input from the district's patrons, staff, and students concerning long-range goals, student learning goals, and other relevant areas.
- Utilize this input in the decision-making process to guide recommendations to the school board.

4. Responsibilities of the Superintendent

The Superintendent (or designee) will:

- Ensure that the community is informed of student progress on state and locally determined indicators.
- Report annually to the school board regarding the methods used to keep the community informed about student progress.

5. Board Responsibilities and Actions

As a result of the board and committee's efforts, the school board will:

- Determine major educational needs and prioritize them.
- Develop long-range goals and plans to address identified needs.
- Establish and implement short-range and intermediate-range plans to achieve the goals and desired levels of student performance.
- Evaluate progress towards meeting the goals and maintain a record of progress, including reports on student performance and results of school improvement projects.
- Annually report the district's progress under the plan to the SIAC, the community, and the Iowa Department of Education.

Implementation and Review

The Superintendent or designee will oversee the implementation of this policy, ensuring effective execution of all provisions. The policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it continues to meet the district's needs and remains aligned with best practices.

Approved September 12, 2022 and October 14, 2024

Reviewed July 21, 2025

ANTI-BULLYING/ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

The Decorah Community School District is committed to providing all students, employees, and volunteers with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying and/or harassing behavior can seriously disrupt the ability of school employees to maintain a safe and civil environment, and the ability of students to learn and succeed.

Bullying and/or harassment of or by students, employees, and volunteers is against federal, state, and local policy and is not tolerated by the board.

Accordingly, school employees, volunteers, and students shall not engage in bullying or harassing behavior while on school property, while on school-owned or school-operated vehicles, while attending or participating in school-sponsored or sanctioned activities, and while away from school grounds if the conduct materially interferes with the orderly operation of the educational environment or is likely to do so.

Complaints may be filed with the superintendent or superintendent's designee pursuant to the regulation accompanying this policy. The superintendent is responsible for implementation of this policy and all accompanying procedures. Complaints will be investigated within a reasonable time frame. Within 24 hours of receiving a report that a student may have been the victim of conduct that constitutes bullying and/or harassment, the district will notify the parent or guardian of the student.

If as a result of viewing surveillance system data or based on a report from a school district employee, the district determines that a student has suffered bullying or harassment by another student enrolled in the district, a parent or guardian of the student may enroll the student in another attendance center within the district that offers classes at the student's grade level, subject to the requirements and limitations established in Iowa law related to this topic.

A school employee, volunteer, or student, or a student's parent or guardian who promptly, reasonably, and in good faith reports an incident of bullying or harassment, in compliance with the procedures in the regulation, to the appropriate school official designated by the school district, shall be immune from civil or criminal liability relating to such report and to participation in any administrative or judicial proceeding resulting from or relating to the report.

Individuals who knowingly file false bullying or harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline by appropriate measures.

Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation against any person because the person has filed a bullying or harassment complaint or assisted or participated in an investigation is prohibited.

Any student found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Any school employee found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. Any school volunteer found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, removal from service and exclusion from school grounds.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the defined words shall have the following meaning:

- “Electronic” means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optic cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. “Electronic” includes but is not limited to communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, and electronic text messaging.
- “Harassment” and “bullying” mean any repeated and targeted electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward an individual that creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:
 1. Places the individual in reasonable fear of harm to the individual’s person or property.
 2. Has a substantial detrimental effect on the individual’s physical or mental health.
 3. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the individual’s academic or career performance. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the individual’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.
-
- “Volunteer” means an individual who has regular, significant contact with students.

Publication of Policy

The board will annually publish this policy. The policy may be publicized by the following means:

- Inclusion in the student handbook,
- Inclusion in the employee handbook
- Inclusion in the registration materials
- Inclusion on the school or school district’s web site.

Legal References: 20 U.S.C. §§ 1221-1234i.
 29 U.S.C. § 794.
 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d-2000d-7.
 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101 2et. seq.
 Iowa Code §§ 216.9; 280.3.
 281 I.A.C. 12.3(6).
 Morse v. Frederick, 551 U.S. 393 (2007)

Cross References: 102 Equal Educational Opportunity
 502 Student Rights and Responsibilities
 503 Student Discipline
 506 Education Records

Approved September 12, 2022

Reviewed September 11, 2023

Reviewed July 21, 2025

COMPLAINT FORM
(Discrimination, Anti-Bullying, and Anti-Harassment)

Date of complaint: _____

Name of Complainant: _____

Are you filling out this form for
yourself or someone else (please
identify the individual if you are
submitting on behalf of
someone else): _____

Who or what entity do you
believe discriminated against,
harassed, or bullied you (or
someone else)? _____

Date and place of alleged
incident(s): _____

Names of any witnesses (if
any): _____

In the space below, please describe what happened and why you believe that you or someone else has been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied. Please be as specific as possible and attach additional pages if necessary.

I agree that all of the information on this form is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

WITNESS DISCLOSURE FORM

Name of Witness: _____

Date of interview: _____

Date of initial complaint: _____

Name of Complainant (include
whether the Complainant is a
student or employee): _____

Date and place of alleged
incident(s): _____

Description of incident witnessed: _____

Additional information: _____

I agree that all of the information on this form is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

DISPOSITION OF COMPLAINT FORM

Date: _____

Date of initial complaint: _____

Name of Complainant (include
whether the Complainant is a
student or employee): _____

Date and place of alleged
incident(s): _____

Name of Respondent (include
whether the Respondent is a
student or employee): _____

Summary of Investigation: _____

I agree that all of the information on this form is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

ANTI-BULLYING/ANTI-HARASSMENT INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

Filing a Complaint

An individual who believes that the individual has been harassed or bullied may file a complaint with the superintendent or superintendent's designee. The complaint form is available on the website. If the complainant is a school employee, after filing the complaint with the superintendent or superintendent's designee, the employee may separately notify the parent or guardian of the student alleged to have been harassed or bullied.

An alternate investigator will be designated in the event it is claimed that the superintendent or superintendent's designee committed the alleged bullying or harassment or some other conflict of interest exists. Complaints shall be filed within [state number of days - 180 of the event giving rise to the complaint or from the date the Complainant could reasonably become aware of such occurrence. The Complainant will state the nature of the complaint and the remedy requested. The Complainant shall receive assistance as needed.

Investigation

The school district will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of bullying or harassment upon receipt of a written complaint. The superintendent (hereinafter "Investigator") will be responsible for handling all complaints alleging bullying or harassment.

The investigation may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Interviews with the Complainant and the individual named in the complaint ("Respondent")
- A request for the Complainant to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint;
- A request for the Respondent to provide a written statement;
- Interviews with witnesses identified during the course of the investigation;
- A request for witnesses identified during the course of the investigation to provide a written statement; and
- Review and collection of documentation or information deemed relevant to the investigation.

The Investigator shall consider the totality of circumstances presented in determining whether conduct objectively constitutes bullying or harassment as defined in Board policy. Upon completion of the investigation, the Investigator shall issue a report with respect to the findings, and provide a copy of the report to the appropriate building principal or Superintendent if the investigation involved the building principal

The complaint and identity of the Complainant, Respondent, or witnesses will only be disclosed as reasonably necessary in connection with the investigation or as required by law or policy. Similarly, evidence uncovered in the investigation shall be kept confidential to the extent reasonably possible.

Additional suggestions for administrative procedures regarding this policy include:

- Organizing training programs for students, school employees, and volunteers regarding how to recognize bullying and harassing behavior and what to do if this behavior is witnessed; and
- Developing a process for evaluating the effectiveness of this policy in reducing bullying and

harassing behavior.

Decision

The investigator, building principal or superintendent, depending on the individuals involved, shall inform the Complainant and the accused about the outcome of the investigation. If, after an investigation, a student is found to be in violation of the policy, the student shall be disciplined by appropriate measures, which may include suspension and expulsion. If after an investigation a school employee is found to be in violation of this policy, the employee shall be disciplined by appropriate measures, which may include termination. If after an investigation a school volunteer is found to be in violation of this policy, the volunteer shall be subject to appropriate measures, which may include exclusion from school grounds.

Individuals who knowingly file false bullying and/or harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline by appropriate measures, as shall any person who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy. Any student found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Any school employee found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. Any school volunteer found to have retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, exclusion from school grounds.

Approved September 12, 2022

Reviewed September 11, 2023

Reviewed July 21, 2025

ASSISTANCE ANIMALS

It is the policy of the Decorah Community School District to foster an equal education environment for all students, employees and community members within the district. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to the district on the proper use of assistance animals while on district property. The district shall allow the use of qualified service animals to accompany individuals with disabilities in all areas of district buildings where the public is normally allowed to go. This can include classrooms, cafeteria and school buses. Individuals with disabilities are people who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. Service animals are dogs and in some instances miniature horses trained to do work or perform tasks for individuals with disabilities.

Service animals must be current on all required vaccinations. Service animals also must be under control while on district grounds. The animal may be under control by either the individual with a disability, or a handler of the service. Under control means harnessed, leashed or tethered, unless these devices interfere with the animal's work, in which case under voice or other directive control.

Miniature Horses as Service Animals

Miniature horses shall be allowed as service animals within the district whenever it is reasonable to allow them. Factors to consider when determining reasonableness include: whether the miniature horse is house broken; whether the miniature horse is under the owner's control; whether the facility can accommodate the miniature horse's type, size and weight; and whether the miniature horse's presence will not compromise legitimate safety requirements necessary for safe operation of the facility.

Establishing the Need for a Service Animal

When no prior notice is given to the district of the use of a service animal, the Superintendent and/or school administrators are permitted to ask the following questions:

"Do you need/require this animal because of a disability?"

If the animal's trained tasks are not readily apparent, the administrator may ask:

"What work or task has the animal been trained to perform?"

Service Animals in training

Assuming the handler and animal are otherwise allowed, individuals who train service animals will also be allowed access with their service animal in training to public areas of district buildings and property. The service animal in training is expected to abide by the same requirements as a service or assistive animal.

Exclusion of Service Animals

In certain limited circumstances, it may be reasonable to exclude the use of a service animal from district property. The Superintendent is permitted to exclude service animals from district buildings and property in the following circumstances: The presence of the animal poses a direct threat to the health and safety of others; the owner or handler is unable to control the animal; the animal is not house broken; the presence of the animal significantly disrupts or interferes with the educational process; or the presence of the animal would require a fundamental alteration to the program. If a service animal is properly excluded from district property, the district shall provide the student served by the animal the opportunity to participate in the program, service or activity without having the service animal on district property.

Therapy Animals

These animals are not commonly required to be accommodated

Therapy animals are involved in an animal-assisted therapy program involving animals as a form of treatment. District employees may use therapy animals in the course of their regular duties only after receiving permission from the superintendent.

Employee use of Therapy Animals as part of Education Environment

Before permission to use therapy animals is granted, staff members must provide:

1. Proof that the animal is certified to be a therapy animal;
2. An explanation of how the animal will be used, including research supporting the use of therapy animals;
3. A plan for how the staff member will provide for the care and control of the animal;
4. A plan for how the staff member will accommodate students with allergies to the animal; and
5. A current vaccination certificate for the animal.

Legal Reference: 29 U.S.C. §794
42 U.S.C. §12132
28 C.F.R. 35
Iowa Code §216C

Cross References: 606.3 Animals in the Classroom

Approved September 12, 2022
Reviewed July 21, 2025

TITLE IX- DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT BASED ON SEX PROHIBITED

In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, the Decorah Community School District prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual harassment as defined by the regulations implementing Title IX (34 C.F.R. § 106.30), against any individual participating in any education program or activity of the District. This prohibition on discrimination applies to students, employees, and applicants for employment.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to adopt procedures for any individual to report sexual harassment to the District's Title IX Coordinator, for the provision of supportive measures to anyone who has been subjected to sexual harassment whether or not they proceed with a formal complaint under those procedures, and for the investigation and resolution of such complaints, as required by Title IX. This Title IX grievance process shall be used to respond to all complaints of sexual harassment that fall within the scope of Title IX. For complaints of sexual harassment that do not fall within the scope of Title IX, the District may still offer supportive measures to the subject of such conduct and shall apply any other policy or procedure applicable to the alleged conduct.

Any individual with questions about the District's Title IX policy and procedures, or who would like to make a report or file a formal complaint of sex discrimination or sexual harassment may contact the District's designated Title Coordinator, Tori Watson <tori.watson@decorah.school>, 101 Claiborne Drive, Decorah IA 52101, (563) 382-3125

Retaliation against a person who made a report or complaint of sexual harassment, assisted, or participated in any manner in an investigation or resolution of a sexual harassment report or complaint is strictly prohibited. Retaliation includes threats, coercion, discrimination, intimidation, reprisals, and/or adverse actions related to employment or education. Any individual who believed they have been retaliated against in violation of this Policy should immediately contact the District's Title IX Coordinator.

Legal References: 20 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq.

34 C.F.R. § 106 et seq.

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Reviewed July 21, 2025