

## **HERRON HIGH SCHOOL POLICY REGARDING SEXUAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT**

Herron High School is committed to maintaining a school environment free of unlawful discrimination and harassment. Each individual has the right to learn or work in a safe atmosphere that promotes equal opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, Herron High School expects that all relationships among persons on campus will be respectful and free of bias, prejudice, and harassment. All members of the Herron High School community share responsibility for avoiding, discouraging, and reporting any form of unlawful harassment.

### **Definitions of Harassment**

#### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment of any kind is in total disregard to the culture of Herron High School and will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is unlawful under federal, state and local laws. Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not so subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include, but are not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advancements, leering, sexual flirtations or propositions
- Sexual slurs, epithets, verbal abuse, derogatory comments or sexually degrading descriptions
- Graphic verbal comments or writings about an individual's body, or overly personal conversation.
- Sexual jokes, stories, drawings, pictures or gestures, including digital media
- Spreading sexual rumors
- Teasing or sexual remarks about students or staff
- Touching an individual's body or clothes in a sexual way, or in way that may be construed as sexual
- Cornering or blocking of normal movements
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects Any act of retaliation against an individual who reports a violation of the school's sexual harassment policy or who participates in the investigation of a sexual harassment complaint
- Request for sexual favors regardless of the seriousness of the request, i.e. to say "I was just joking" does not excuse the statement

Not all behavior with sexual connotations constitutes unlawful sexual harassment. Conduct must be sufficiently severe, pervasive, and persistent such that it adversely affects an individual's education, or such that it creates a hostile or abusive educational environment.

#### **Non-sexual Harassment**

Harassment on the basis of any other protected characteristic is also strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment is verbal or physical conduct that derogates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of:

- his/her race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, age, disability, military service or veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth or related conditions
- any other characteristic protected by law, and that:
- is sufficiently severe, pervasive, and persistent such that it adversely affects an individual's education, or such that it creates a hostile or abusive educational environment.

Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to: epithets, slurs, or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; derogatory jokes; and written or graphic material that derogates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group or that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the school premises.

#### **Definitions of Sexual Violence**

Sexual violence is a criminal matter and includes, but is not limited to; rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual coercion; or "any sexual act directed against another person, forcibly and/or against that person's will; or not forcibly or against the person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent." Victims of sexual violence are strongly encouraged to report the matter to law enforcement agents immediately. Victims should also file a complaint and request a Title IX investigation (Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination and harassment based on sex) of school officials, whether the incident occurred on or off campus, if the act of violence was perpetrated by a student or employee of Herron High School. In all cases, victims of sexual violence will be directed to seek services from community crisis counseling providers.

#### **Individuals and Conduct Covered**

These policies apply to all students and employees of Herron High School community, including persons hired to provide contracted services and persons volunteering at school activities. Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in all academic, educational, extracurricular, athletic, and other programs of the school, whether those programs occur on campus, on a bus, or at another location away from campus. Individuals who violate these policies will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion (if a student) or suspension or termination of employment (if an employee), and in egregious situations, law enforcement officials will be notified.

In accordance with its obligations under federal law, Herron High School reserves the right to investigate reports of harassment occurring between students and other members of the school community, regardless of whether the alleged harassment occurred on or off school grounds; during or outside school hours; or using school-owned or personally-owned electronic devices (e.g., postings to digital media and electronic forums such as Twitter and Facebook or text messages).

Courts have struggled to strike a balance between safeguarding students' First Amendment rights and protecting the authority of school administrators to maintain an appropriate learning environment. However, in keeping with Herron High School's mission to create world class citizens, and in accordance with provisions in the school's Acceptable Use Policy, students are prohibited from using school computers or the school network to harass others, whether the harassment occurs on or off campus. The full range of disciplinary actions outlined in the Student Handbook may be applied, including demerits, restrictions on computer use, suspension and expulsion.

### **Retaliation Is Prohibited**

Herron High School encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination or harassment. It is the policy of Herron High School to investigate such reports. Herron High School prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or participates in an investigation of such reports.

Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or discrimination or for participation in an investigation of a claim of harassment or discrimination is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will subject an individual to disciplinary action. Acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and will be investigated and corrective action taken promptly. Corrective action may include suspension, expulsion and in egregious situations, the involvement of law enforcement officials.

### **Complaint Procedures - Reporting an Incident of Harassment, Discrimination, Sexual Violence or Retaliation**

Herron High School encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment, sexual violence or retaliation, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Herron High School encourages the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns so that rapid and corrective action can be taken. Early reporting and intervention have proven to be the most effective method of resolving actual or perceived incidents of harassment. All employees of Herron High School are required to immediately report in writing to the school's Title IX/Harassment Coordinator suspected discrimination, harassment, sexual violence or retaliation of a student regardless of whether it is based on the employee's own observations, on information from the student, the student's parent, or a third party. An employee who observes such acts is expected to intervene, unless circumstances would make such intervention dangerous. All complaints of discrimination, harassment, sexual violence or retaliation will be investigated.

### **Informal Complaint Procedure**

The informal complaint procedure is intended to stop inappropriate behavior and investigate and facilitate resolution through informal means. It is not a precursor to the filing of a formal complaint and may be terminated at any time to move to the formal process.

As an initial step, an individual who believes he or she has been subject to discrimination or harassment is encouraged to promptly advise the alleged offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome and request that it be discontinued, as long as he or she feels comfortable doing so. In some cases, an offender may not realize his/her behavior is offensive and being perceived as harassment. This action alone may sometimes resolve the problem. The Title IX/Harassment Coordinator is available to support an individual taking this initial step.

Herron High School recognizes, however, that an individual may prefer to pursue the matter through informal or formal complaint procedures. If for any reason an individual does not wish to address the offender directly, or if addressing the offender does not successfully end the offensive conduct, the individual should notify, orally or in writing, the Dean of Students, Class Advisors, Head of School, the Title IX/Harassment Coordinator, or any other member of Herron High School Leadership (identified at the end of this policy). Students may also report incidents to the school nurse or to a teacher. All reports will be filed with the school's Title IX/Harassment Coordinator, who will either facilitate an informal resolution or appoint another individual to facilitate an informal resolution. An informal resolution may involve meeting with the alleged offender to discuss the unwelcome

nature of the behavior, or, if both parties agree, facilitating a meeting between the complainant and the alleged offender to work out a mutual resolution.

The informal complaint procedure is not intended for victims of sexual violence. **Victims of sexual violence should NOT approach the offender under any circumstances in an attempt to resolve the matter, and should file a police report as soon as possible after the attack has occurred.** An individual who is a victim of sexual violence and has filed a police report may file a complaint under Herron High School's formal complaint procedures.

### **Formal Complaint Procedure**

If a complaint is not resolved through the informal complaint procedure, or if an individual elects to file a formal complaint initially, the following formal procedures will be followed.

An individual who believes he or she has been subject to discrimination, harassment, sexual violence or retaliation may file a formal complaint, orally or in writing, with the Title IX/Harassment Coordinator or any other employee. If a report is made to any other employee of Herron High School, orally or in writing, about any complaint of discrimination, harassment, sexual violence or retaliation, the employee must immediately report that information to the Title IX/Harassment Coordinator. *A complaint form is available at the end of this policy.*

All allegations of harassment, discrimination, sexual violence or retaliation will be investigated promptly. Members of the school's Leadership team and the Title IX/Harassment Coordinator are responsible for investigating complaints. This team includes: Janet H. McNeal, President, Head of School; Deborah Cooney, Vice President, Operations; Jonathan Harris, Vice President, Academics; Katie Dorsey, Head of School - Riverside; Malcolm Gilchrist, Head of School - Herron; Emanuel Harper, Assistant Head of School - Riverside; Rachelle Klinger, Assistant Head of School - Herron; Atticus Westerfeld, Assistant Head of School - Herron; and Karen Laliuff, Title IX Coordinator. Investigations will be launched immediately upon the filing of a complaint, and will be completed promptly. Typically, the investigation will begin with an interview of the alleged victim to obtain information regarding the identity(ies) of the alleged offender, the offensive conduct, the potential witnesses, and the desired resolution. The alleged victim will be offered an opportunity to submit any evidence that he or she believes relevant to the investigation within 5 school days.

Within 5 school days of receiving the initial complaint, the alleged offender will be informed of the allegations and will be offered an opportunity to submit a written response to the allegations. The alleged offender's response and any supporting materials must be submitted within 3 school days. The investigator will then review the relevant documents and conduct additional interviews as necessary to determine whether there has been a violation of this policy. For instance, the investigator may conduct interviews with the alleged offender, the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the parties, and/or other individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge. During the investigation, the investigator will keep both parties apprised of the status of the investigation, to the extent permitted under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. The investigator will not require the alleged victim to appear in the same room as the accused.

Upon receiving a complaint, the investigator will consider whether any interim measures should be taken during the investigatory phase of the complaint process to protect the alleged victim from further harassment, sexual violence, or retaliation. For instance, the investigator, in conjunction with the Head of School and other members of the Leadership team, may determine that it is necessary to place the alleged perpetrator in interim suspension or alternative setting, change schedules, or assign a hall monitor.

In many cases, investigations may be resolved within 5 school days, but in some situations, the investigation may require up to 60 days to complete. Within 7 school days of the completion of the investigation, the investigator will prepare a report that summarizes the evidence gathered, states whether there was a policy violation, and makes recommendations. In determining whether there has been a violation of policy, an investigator will consider a variety of factors, including but not limited to: the nature of the conduct, the age and maturity of the parties, the frequency of the conduct, the relationship between the parties, and whether the conduct adversely affected the victim's education or environment. The determination will be based on the totality of the circumstances and will be based on the 'preponderance of the evidence' (i.e., it is more likely than not that a policy violation occurred). The determination will not take into account any "past relationships" of the alleged victim. The investigator's recommendations may include discipline of the alleged offender up to and including suspension or expulsion (if a student) or suspension or termination of employment (if an employee).

Both parties will then be provided written notice of the outcome of the investigation. If either party is dissatisfied with the outcome, he or she may appeal to the Head of School by filing a written notice of appeal within 5 school days of the date of the written notice of the outcome of the investigation. Within 10 school days of receiving the notice of appeal, the Head of School will review the report prepared by the investigator, the investigator's file, and any other documents or materials provided by the parties and affirm, reverse, or revise the determination and recommendations of the investigator. To the extent the Head of

School determines the parties should be heard, the alleged victim will not be required to appear in the same hearing room as the accused.

Where there has been a policy violation, Herron High School will make every reasonable effort to stop any conduct in violation of these policies and prevent recurrence. Where appropriate, Herron High School will also take steps to remedy the effects of any violation. Some examples of such remedial measures include: the provision of counseling and/or academic support to the victim or recalculating certain course grades. Any appropriate remedial measures will be determined on a case-by-case individualized basis.

### **Confidentiality and Recordkeeping**

Herron High School will make all reasonable efforts to protect the privacy of all parties involved in an investigation and to keep the complaint and investigation confidential. Confidentiality, however, cannot be guaranteed. For example, some details or identities may need to be revealed in order to fully investigate the complaint.

In accordance with its regular recordkeeping practices, Herron High School will maintain records of all complaints of discrimination, harassment, sexual violence or retaliation.

### **False Claims of Sexual Harassment, Retaliation, and/or Discrimination**

In order to cover all possibilities of misconduct, Herron High School reserves the right to discipline students who have falsely accused another of harassment, sexual violence, retaliation, and/or discrimination. This does not mean that a complaint will be considered "false" solely because it cannot be corroborated. Disciplinary action for making false claims may include suspension or expulsion.

### **Conclusion**

Herron High School has developed these policies to ensure that all its students can learn in an environment free from harassment, discrimination and retaliation. Herron High School will make every reasonable effort to ensure that all necessary persons are familiar with these policies and aware that any complaint in violation of such policies will be investigated and resolved appropriately. In addition to any individuals previously mentioned in this policy, complaints of discrimination, harassment, sexual violence or retaliation may be submitted to any of the following administrators:

Janet H. McNeal  
President  
[jmcneal@herronhighschool.org](mailto:jmcneal@herronhighschool.org)  
RM 141 317-231-0010 x1113

Malcolm Gilchrist  
Head of School - Herron  
[mgilchrist@herronhighschool.org](mailto:mgilchrist@herronhighschool.org)  
RM 130 317-231-0010 x1139

Deborah Cooney  
Vice President, Operations  
[dcooney@herronhighschool.org](mailto:dcooney@herronhighschool.org)  
317-231-0010 x1104

Emanuel Harper  
Assistant Head of School - Riverside  
[eharper@herronhighschool.org](mailto:eharper@herronhighschool.org)  
317-231-0010 x 16104

Jonathan Harris  
Vice President, Academics  
[jharris@herronhighschool.org](mailto:jharris@herronhighschool.org)  
317-231-0010 x1127

Rachelle Klinger  
Dean of Student Accountability - Herron  
[atorres@herronhighschool.org](mailto:atorres@herronhighschool.org)  
317-231-0010 x1141

Juli Woodrum  
Vice President, Chief Financial Officer  
[jwoodrum@herronhighschool.org](mailto:jwoodrum@herronhighschool.org)  
317-231-0010 x1109

Atticus Westerfeld  
Assistant Head of School - Herron  
[awesterfeld@herronhighschool.org](mailto:awesterfeld@herronhighschool.org)  
RM 116 317-231-0010 x1124

Katie Dorsey  
Head of School - Riverside  
[kdorsey@herronhighschool.org](mailto:kdorsey@herronhighschool.org)  
317-231-0010 x 16101

Karen Laliuff  
Title IX/Harassment Coordinator  
[klaliuff@herronhighschool.org](mailto:klaliuff@herronhighschool.org)  
317-231-0010 x1113