



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

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GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 20, 2024

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Dr. Diane Golzynski, Deputy Superintendent
Division of Business, Health, and Library Services

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Golzynski".

SUBJECT: Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Information for Students

According to the 2023 Michigan Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 13.8% of Michigan high school students have experienced sexual violence in the previous year. Schools can play an important role in educating students and families to help prevent sexual violence and support victims and survivors. This memorandum addresses state-developed and approved materials to be given to students and made available to their families.

Pursuant to [MCL 380.1508 \(Public Act 57 of 2023\)](#), the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) developed age-appropriate informational materials for students in grades 6-12 titled [Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Information Guide](#). MDE worked with experts on sexual assault and sexual harassment, including but not limited to the Michigan Domestic and Sexual Violence Prevention and Treatment Board (MDSVPTB), housed within the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Division of Victim Services and the Michigan Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence (MCEDSV). The materials have been reviewed by students and partners in the education, public health, and sexual violence fields to make them clear and accessible.

MDE is launching the dissemination of the information guide for all intermediate school districts (ISDs) and local education agencies (LEAs), both traditional public school districts and public school academies (PSAs), that operate in grades 6-12. As required by law [[MCL 380.1508\(1\)](#)], the educational materials must include information regarding what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual assault, an explanation that sexual harassment and sexual assault are not the victim's fault, and resources for people who have experienced sexual harassment or sexual assault, including but not limited to information on Title IX, appropriate contact information for organizations that offer assistance to victims of sexual harassment or sexual assault, and actions that the individual may take.

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For the 2024-2025 school year, school districts shall disseminate the Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Information Guide developed by MDE in partnership with MDSVPTB and MCEDSV to students in grades 6-12 in a form and manner determined by the district. [See [MCL 380.1508\(2\)](#)]. The guide is five pages in length. The first four pages must not be edited, while page five requires customization by the district to at least include the following legally required elements:

- Contact information for the district's Title IX coordinator including name, email, phone, and address.
- The district's policies on sexual assault and sexual harassment.

Districts shall ensure that information is accessible to students and their parents/guardians and included in student handbooks and similar publications prepared by the district as well as readily available on the district's webpage. [See [MCL 380.1508\(2\)](#)]

Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, districts are encouraged to provide annual professional development on how to respond to sexual assault or sexual harassment for all educators and school personnel who have contact with students. According to state law, it is recommended that school personnel complete the professional development minimally every five years ([MCL 380.1526b](#)).

It is not uncommon for disclosures or reports to go up after increasing awareness of sexual assault or sexual harassment. This does not mean that the materials are causing violence; rather, it indicates that students may feel supported or have the language to ask for help. How a person responds when a victim or survivor discloses can have a long-term impact on that person's healing. To learn more about how to best handle disclosures, visit [Helping a Survivor](#).

These informational materials are an important starting point, but alone will not change the culture of sexual violence. Districts are encouraged to address these issues more substantially through trauma-informed policies, programs, and practices that include a focus on topics such as primary prevention of violence perpetration, bystander intervention, and support for victims and survivors. For more information, please contact Laurie Bechhofer at BechhoferL@michigan.gov or Jim Whittaker, Title IX coordinator, at WhittakerJ@michigan.gov.

Thank you for your efforts to ensure your district is a safe and supportive environment for all students to learn.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Departments