

## VAN METER SCHOOL DISTRICT

### Series 100

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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 Van Meter Community School District.

This school corporation is located in Dallas and Madison Counties, and its affairs are conducted by elected school officials, the Van Meter 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; 278.1(9); 279.8; 594A (2007).

Cross Reference: 200 Legal Status of the Board of Directors

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed April 2013

Revised \_\_\_\_\_

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

As a school corporation of Iowa, the Van Meter Community 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.

Legal Reference: Iowa Code §§ 256.11, .11A (2007).

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

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed April 2013

Revised \_\_\_\_\_

## EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

The board will not discriminate in its educational activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender (sex), sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, socioeconomic status, disability, religion, or creed.

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.

The board is committed to the policy that no otherwise qualified person will be excluded from educational activities on the basis of of race, color, national origin, gender (sex), sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, socioeconomic status, disability, religion, or creed. Further, the board affirms the right of all students and staff to be treated with respect and to be protected from intimidation, discrimination, physical harm and harassment.

Legal Reference:       20 U.S.C. §§ 1221 *et seq.* (2004).  
                              20 U.S.C. §§ 1681 *et seq.* (2004).  
                              20 U.S.C. §§ 1701 *et seq.* (2004).  
                              29 U.S.C. § 794 (2004).  
                              42 U.S.C. §§ 12101 *et seq.* (2004).  
                              34 C.F.R. Pt. 100 (2004).  
                              34 C.F.R. Pt. 104 (2004).  
                              Iowa Code §§ 216.9; 256.11, .11A; 280.3 (2007).  
                              281 I.A.C. 12.

Cross Reference:       101     Educational Philosophy of the School District  
                              401.1   Equal Employment Opportunity  
                              500     Objectives for Equal Educational Opportunities for Students  
                              506.1   Student Records

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed April 2013

Revised \_\_\_\_\_

NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

Students, parents, employees and others doing business with or performing services for the Van Meter Community School District are hereby notified that this school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender (sex), sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, socioeconomic status, disability, religion, or creed in admission or access to, or treatment in, its programs and activities.

The school district does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age (except students), religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability in admission or access to, or treatment in, its hiring and employment practices. Any person having inquiries concerning the school district's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), § 504 or *Iowa Code* § 280.3 is directed to contact:

Title	<u>Business Manager</u>
Location	<u>Business Office, Van Meter Community School</u>
Telephone Number	<u>515-996-9960</u>

who has been designated by the school district to coordinate the school district's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the ADA, § 504 and *Iowa Code* § 280.3 (2007).

GRIEVANCE FORM FOR COMPLAINTS OF DISCRIMINATION  
OR NON-COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL OR STATE REGULATIONS  
REQUIRING NON-DISCRIMINATION

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am filing this grievance because

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(Attach additional sheets if necessary)

Describe incident or occurrence as accurately as possible:

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(Attach additional sheets if necessary)

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

If student, name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_

Attendance center \_\_\_\_\_

GRIEVANCE DOCUMENTATION

Name of Individual Alleging Discrimination or Non-Compliance

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grievance Date \_\_\_\_\_

State the nature of the complaint and the remedy requested.

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Indicate Principal's or Supervisor's response or action to above complaint.

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Signature of Principal or Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

SECTION 504 STUDENT AND PARENTAL RIGHTS

The Van Meter 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;
- 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.

Inquiries concerning the school district's compliance with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), § 504 or *Iowa Code* § 280.3 should be directed to:

(Title) Business Manager

(Where located) Business Office/Van Meter School (Telephone No.) 515-996-9960

who has been designated by the school district to coordinate the school district's efforts to comply with the regulations implementing Title VI, Title IX, the ADA, § 504 and *Iowa Code* § 280.3. (2007)



## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Students, parents of students, employees, and applicants for employment in the school district will have the right to file a formal complaint alleging discrimination under federal or state regulations requiring non-discrimination in programs and employment.

Level One - Principal, Immediate Supervisor or  
Personnel Contact Person  
(Informal and Optional - may be bypassed by the grievant)

Employees with a complaint of discrimination based upon their gender, race, national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability are encouraged to first discuss it with their immediate supervisor, with the objective of resolving the matter informally. An applicant for employment with a complaint of discrimination based upon their gender, race, national origin, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability are encouraged to first discuss it with the personnel contact person. This paragraph is for employees and “marital status” isn’t a protected class for employees.

A student, or a parent of a student, with a complaint of discrimination based upon their gender, race, national origin, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability are encouraged to discuss it with the instructor, counselor, supervisor, building administrator, program administrator or personnel contact person directly involved.

Level Two - Compliance Officer

If the grievance is not resolved at Level One and the grievant wishes to pursue the grievance, the grievant may formalize it by filing a complaint in writing on a Grievance Filing Form, which may be obtained from the Compliance Officer. The complaint will state the nature of the grievance and the remedy requested. The filing of the formal, written complaint at Level Two must be within 15 working days from the date of the event giving rise to the grievance, or from the date the grievant could reasonably become aware of such occurrence. The grievant may request that a meeting concerning the complaint be held with the Compliance Officer. A minor student may be accompanied at that meeting by a parent or guardian. The Compliance Officer will investigate the complaint and attempt to resolve it. A written report from the Compliance Officer regarding action taken will be sent to the involved parties within a reasonable time after receipt of the complaint.

Level Three - Superintendent/Administrator

If the complaint is not resolved at Level Two, the grievant may appeal it to Level Three by presenting a written appeal to the superintendent within five working days after the grievant receives the report from the Compliance Officer, the grievant may request a meeting with the Superintendent. The superintendent may request a meeting with the grievant to discuss the appeal. A decision will be rendered by the superintendent within a reasonable time after the receipt of the written appeal. If, in cases of disability grievances at the elementary and secondary level, the issue is not resolved through the grievance process, the parents have a right to an impartial hearing to resolve the issue.

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

This procedure in no way denies the right of the grievant to file formal complaints with the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights or Office of Special Education Programs, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, or the Iowa Department of Education for mediation or rectification of civil rights grievances, or to seek private counsel for complaints alleging discrimination.

### Level Four - Appeal to Board

If the grievant is not satisfied with the superintendent's decision, the grievant can file an appeal with the board within five working days of the decision. It is within the discretion of the board to determine whether it will hear the appeal.

The Compliance Officer is:

Name	<u>Shonna Trudo, Business Manager</u>
Office Address	<u>520 First Avenue PO Box 257, Van Meter, IA 50261</u>
Phone Number	<u>515-996-9960</u>
Office Hours	<u>8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.</u>

## 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.

At least every five years the Board shall conduct an in-depth needs assessment, soliciting information from business, labor, industry, higher education, and community members regarding their expectations for appropriate student preparation. The School Improvement Advisory Committee will meet at least once per semester to provide feedback.

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, .18 (2007).  
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  
801.2 Buildings and Sites Surveys

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed \_\_\_\_\_

Revised April 2013

## ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY

Harassment and bullying of students and employees are against federal, state and local policy, and are not tolerated by the board. The board is committed to providing all students with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. To that end, the board has in place policies, procedures, and practices that are designed to reduce and eliminate bullying and harassment as well as processes and procedures to deal with incidents of bullying and harassment. Bullying and harassment of students by other students, by school employees, and by volunteers who have direct contact with students will not be tolerated in the school or school district.

The board prohibits harassment, bullying, hazing, or any other victimization; of students, based on any of the following actual or perceived traits or characteristics, including but not limited to, age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status. Harassment against employees based upon the employee's race, color, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, age or disability is also prohibited.

This policy is in effect while students or employees are on property within the jurisdiction of the board; while on school-owned or school-operated vehicles; while attending or engaged in school-sponsored activities; and while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management and welfare of the school or school district.

If, after an investigation; a student is found to be in violation of this policy, the student shall be disciplined by appropriate measures which may include suspension or 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. "Volunteer" means an individual who has regular, significant contact with students.

When looking at the totality of the circumstances, harassment and bullying mean any electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward a student which is based on any actual or perceived trait or characteristic of the student and which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:

- Places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property;
- Has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed \_\_\_\_\_

Revised April 2013

## ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY

“Electronic” means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optical cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. “Electronic” includes but is not limited to communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, electronic text messaging or similar technologies.

Harassment and bullying may include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors and circumstances:

- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, property, etc.;
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student; and/or,
- Unreasonable interference with a student's performance.

Sexual harassment of a student by an employee means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to the conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of the student's education or benefits;
- Submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for academic decisions affecting that student; or,
- The conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive education environment.

In situations between students and school officials, faculty, staff, or volunteers who have direct contact with students, bullying and harassment may also include the following behaviors:

- Requiring that a student submit to bullying or harassment by another student, either explicitly or implicitly, as a term or condition of the targeted student's education or participation in school programs or activities; and/or,
- Requiring submission to or rejection of such conduct as a basis for decisions affecting the student.

Any person who promptly, reasonably, and in good faith reports an incident of bullying or harassment under this policy to a school official, shall be immune from civil or criminal liability relating to such report and to the person's participation in any administrative, judicial, or other proceeding relating to the report. Individuals who knowingly file a false complaint may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Retaliation against any person, because the person has filed a bullying or harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment investigation or proceeding, is also prohibited. Individuals who knowingly file false harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation shall 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.

## ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY

The school or school district will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of bullying or harassment. The Level I Investigator or designee will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging bullying or harassment.

It also is the responsibility of the superintendent, in conjunction with the investigator and principals, to develop procedures regarding this 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,
- and a copy shall be made to any person at the central administrative office at (520 First Avenue, Van Meter, IA).

## Legal References:

20 U.S.C. §§ 1221-1234i (2004).  
 29 U.S.C. § 794 (1994).  
 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d-2000d-7 (2004).  
 42 U.S.C. §§ 12001 *et. seq.* (2004).  
 Senate File 61, 1<sup>st</sup> Regular Session, 82<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly, (2007).  
 Iowa Code §§ 216.9; 280.3 (2007).  
 281 I.A.C. 12.3(6).  
Morse v. Frederick, 127 S.Ct. 2618 (2007)

## Cross References:

502 Student Rights and Responsibilities  
 503 Student Discipline  
 506 Student Records

ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM

Name of complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

Position of complainant: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of student or employee target: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of alleged harasser or bully: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and place of incident or incidents: \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Discrimination or Harassment Alleged (Check all that apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical Attribute	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sex
<input type="checkbox"/>	Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Political Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sexual Orientation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Familial Status	<input type="checkbox"/>	Race/Color	<input type="checkbox"/>	Socio-economic Background
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marital Status	<input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Creed	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other – Please Specify:
<input type="checkbox"/>	National Origin/Ethnic Background/Ancestry	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

Description of misconduct: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of witnesses (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence of harassment or bullying, i.e., letters, photos, etc. (attach evidence if possible):

Any other information: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT WITNESS DISCLOSURE FORM

Name of witness: \_\_\_\_\_

Position of witness: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of testimony, interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of incident witnessed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Any other information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_



## ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

Individuals who feel that they have been harassed should:

- Communicate to the harasser that the individual expects the behavior to stop, if the individual is comfortable doing so. If the individual wants assistance communicating with the harasser, the individual should ask a teacher, counselor or principal to help.
- If the harassment does not stop, or the individual does not feel comfortable confronting the harasser, the individual should:
  - tell a teacher, counselor or principal; and
  - write down exactly what happened, keep a copy and give another copy to the teacher, counselor or principal including:
    - what, when and where it happened;
    - who was involved;
    - exactly what was said or what the harasser did;
    - witnesses to the harassment;
    - what the student said or did, either at the time or later;
    - how the student felt; and
    - how the harasser responded.

### COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

An individual who believes that the individual has been harassed or bullied will notify the Level I Investigator, the designated investigator. The alternate investigator is the building principal. The investigator may request that the individual complete the Harassment/Bullying Complaint form and turn over evidence of the harassment, including, but not limited to, letters, tapes, or pictures. The complainant shall be given a copy of the completed complaint form. Information received during the investigation is kept confidential to the extent possible.

The investigator, with the approval of the principal, or the principal has the authority to initiate an investigation in the absence of a written complaint.

### INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE

The investigator will reasonably and promptly commence the investigation upon receipt of the complaint. The investigator will interview the complainant and the alleged harasser. The alleged harasser may file a written statement in response to the complaint. The investigator may also interview witnesses as deemed appropriate.

Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator will make written findings and conclusions as to each allegation of harassment and report the findings and conclusions to the principal. The investigator will provide a copy of the findings of the investigation to the principal.

## ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

### RESOLUTION OF THE COMPLAINT

Following receipt of the investigator's report, the principal may investigate further, if deemed necessary, and make a determination of any appropriate additional steps which may include discipline.

Prior to the determination of the appropriate remedial action, the principal may, at the principal's discretion, interview the complainant and the alleged harasser. The principal will file a written report closing the case and documenting any disciplinary action taken or any other action taken in response to the complaint. The complainant, the alleged harasser and the investigator will receive notice as to the conclusion of the investigation. The principal will maintain a log of information necessary to comply with Iowa Department of Education reporting procedures.

### POINTS TO REMEMBER IN THE INVESTIGATION

- Evidence uncovered in the investigation is confidential.
- Complaints must be taken seriously and investigated.
- No retaliation will be taken against individuals involved in the investigation process.
- Retaliators will be disciplined up to and including suspension and expulsion.

### CONFLICTS

If the investigator is a witness to the incident, the alternate investigator shall investigate.