

**MEDFORD AREA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT
RURAL VIRTUAL ACADEMY**

DATE ADOPTED: March 15, 2007
DATE REVISED: October 26, 2009
DATE REVISED: August 18, 2016
DATE REVISED: May 23, 2022
DATE REVISED: December 16, 2024

FILE SECTOR: RURAL VIRTUAL ACADEMY
POLICY TITLE: EQUAL EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITY

Rural Virtual Academy (RVA) is committed to equal educational opportunity for all students.

It is RVA policy, pursuant to state and federal laws, that no person, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, sex, (including gender identity), or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability, may be denied admission to any school in this district or be denied participation in, be denied the benefits of or be discriminated against in any co-curricular, student services, recreational or other programs.

Students who have been identified as having a disability, under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or the Americans with Disabilities Act, shall be provided with reasonable accommodations in educational services or programs. Students may be considered disabled under this policy even if they are not covered under the Medford Area Public School District's (MAPSD) special education policies and procedures.

RVA shall provide for the reasonable accommodation of a student's religious beliefs with regard to examinations and other academic requirements. Requests for accommodations shall be made in writing and approved by the RVA Administrator. Accommodations may include, but not limited to, exclusion from participation in an activity, alternative assignments, released time from school to participate in religious activities and opportunities to make up work missed due to religious observances. Any accommodations granted under this policy shall be provided to students without prejudicial effect.

Compliance Officers

MAPSD designates the following individuals to serve as the District's RVA compliance officers.

Sara Holewinski
 RVA Administrator of Teaching & Learning
 715-748-2400 ext. 8825
 624 College St
 Medford, WI 54451
sara.holewinski@ruralvirtual.org

Kathleen Alexander
 RVA Director of Pupil Services & 9-12 Principal
 715-748-2400 ext. 8827
 124 W State St
 Medford, WI 54451
kathy.alexander@ruralvirtual.org

It shall be the responsibility of the compliance officer(s) or their designee to examine existing policies and develop new policies where needed to ensure that the RVA does not discriminate pursuant to federal and state law. The RVA Administrator or their designee shall ensure that an employee is designated annually to receive complaints filed under state laws and/or regulations Title IX of the Education Amendments, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. That employee shall assure adoption of a complaint procedure to resolve complaints alleging violation of these laws and assure that an evaluation of the RVA's compliance with state law is completed in accordance with state regulations.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

Notice of the Board's nondiscrimination policy and the identity of the District's RVA Compliance Officer(s) will be published on the District's website, posted throughout the District, and included in the District's recruitment statements or general information publications.

CROSS REFERENCE: Medford Area Public School District Special Education Handbook
LEGAL REFERENCE: Sec. 118.13, Wis. Stats, Department of Public Instruction (PI 9)
Wis. Admin. Code, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI (Civil Rights Act of 1964), Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Civil Rights Act of 1991

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STUDENT DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Any person who either lives within the district boundaries of MAPSD or open enrolls to attend the RVA through MAPSD believes that the school district or any part of the school organization has inadequately applied the principles and/or regulations of Title VI, Section 504, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or in some way discriminates on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, parental or marital status, sexual orientation, physical, learning, mental or emotional disability, may bring forward a complaint to the compliance officer at the district office, 624 College Ave, Room 104, in Medford, WI or contact them by telephone: 888-801-2666. If the complainant is uncomfortable with the compliance officer acting in this role, or if the compliance officer is allegedly involved as a party to, or the focus of the complaint, the complainant may present the complaint to the MAPSD district administrator or their designee.

Persons belonging to RVA consortium districts outside of MAPSD will be referred to their resident district for compliance to local district policy and procedure for filing a complaint.

An individual may file a complaint in writing or orally with a compliance officer, or the district administrator. Formal complaints shall be referred to the compliance officer for investigation unless the complaint relates to the compliance officer. If the complaint relates to a compliance officer, the district administrator may designate another compliance officer, or another individual to investigate the matter.

Investigations shall be completed by a compliance officer or another designee, without undue delay, typically within thirty (30) business days. However, more time may be necessary for some investigations. The investigator shall keep the complainant and compliance officer reasonably informed of the status of the investigation and the anticipated completion date.

After completing the investigation, the investigator(s) shall prepare and deliver a written report to the compliance officer and the district administrator. If the complaint relates to the district administrator, the report shall be delivered to the board president or Board of Education designee. The written report shall summarize the evidence gathered and provide recommendations on whether a preponderance of the evidence supports a finding that discrimination/retaliation occurred.

Within five (5) business days of receiving the report, the district administrator shall issue a written decision substantiating the complaint, dismissing the complaint, or requesting further investigation. If the complaint is substantiated, the district administrator shall direct corrective action to address the discrimination/retaliation. If further investigation is requested, the district administrator shall indicate what additional information must be gathered. Once the additional information is gathered, the district administrator shall issue a decision as described above.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE - SPECIAL EDUCATION

Discrimination complaints relating to the identification, evaluation, educational placement or the provision of free appropriate public education of a student with disabilities shall be processed in accordance with established appeal procedures outlined in MAPSD's special education handbook.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE - FEDERAL PROGRAMS

Discrimination complaints related to programs specifically governed by federal law or regulation shall be referred directly to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

MAINTENANCE OF COMPLAINT RECORDS

The district administrator shall keep records of all formal and informal complaints for the purpose of documenting compliance and past practices. The records shall include information on all levels of the complaint and any appeals. The records shall include:

- Name of the complainant and their title or status.
- Date the complaint was filed.
- Specific allegation made and any corrective action requested by the complainant.
- Name(s) of the respondents.
- Levels of processing followed, and the resolution, date and decision-making authority at each level.
- Summary of facts and evidence presented by each party involved.
- Statement of the final resolution and the nature and date(s) of any corrective or remedial action taken.

DISSEMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

The adopted discrimination grievance procedures shall be disseminated to students, parent(s)/guardian(s), employees and others to inform them about the proper process of making a complaint. The information shall be published in student/parent/staff handbooks and news articles before the start of school, and other appropriate places and times.