



## **FSMA TITLE IX POLICY**

Consistent with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”), First State Montessori Academy (the “School”) does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs and activities, course offerings, financial aid, athletics, or employment.

In addition to this Title IX policy, the School has established separate policies, that, among other things: (1) outline the School’s mandated reporting guidelines; (2) outline the School’s processes for managing interpersonal relationships safely and appropriately; and (3) seek to prevent sex-based discrimination, harassment, and violence.

Students, parents/guardians, and employees are also encouraged to communicate with the Head of School, the Director of Education, The Director of Special Education, the Human Resources Department, the School Nurse, and/or the School Counselor with any questions or concerns regarding these policies. The School believes that open communication about these sensitive topics is integral to preventing serious misconduct from occurring and is essential to fostering a culture of personal responsibility, mutual accountability, and positive leadership.

### **Compliance Coordinator**

The Compliance Coordinator is responsible for administering and ensuring the School’s compliance with Title IX. In order to ensure compliance with Title IX in all facets of the School’s operation, the Compliance Coordinator will coordinate with the School’s Administration to implement and administer this policy and the School’s related grievance procedures for resolving Title IX complaints. The Compliance Coordinator is also responsible for investigating complaints of sex-based discrimination, harassment, violence, or other allegations regarding violations of Title IX; working with law enforcement regarding such complaints when necessary; and ensuring that complaints are resolved promptly and appropriately to the extent possible. The Compliance Coordinator may delegate these duties to other school employees or external investigators, as necessary and in his or her sole discretion, to ensure the prompt and appropriate resolution of any complaint.

The Compliance Coordinator (or his or her designee) may also meet with the School’s students, parents/guardians, and/or employees regarding their rights and obligations under Title IX and to address any questions regarding the School’s compliance with such obligations.

Inquiries concerning this policy, Title IX, and any related issues of sex-based discrimination should be directed to the School's Compliance Coordinator:

Name: Tracy Long

Title: Director of Special Education

Office Address: 1000 N French St Wilmington, DE 19801

Telephone Number: (302)576-1500

Email Address: [tracy.long@fsma.k12.de.us](mailto:tracy.long@fsma.k12.de.us)

### **Sex-Based Harassment**

The School prohibits sex-based harassment by students, employees, or third parties when the conduct is sufficiently serious to deny or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the School's educational programs and activities; submission to or rejection of such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of admission or employment or the basis for an admission or employment decision; or such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive learning or work environment.

Title IX prohibits several types of sex-based harassment. For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply. Sex-based harassment means unwanted conduct that is related to an individual's sex or the sex of another person. Sexual violence is a form of sex-based harassment and refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where an individual is incapable of giving consent (e.g., due to the individual's age or use of drugs or alcohol, or because an intellectual or other disability prevents the individual from having the capacity to give consent). A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion. Gender-based harassment is another form of sex-based harassment and refers to unwelcome conduct based on an individual's actual or perceived sex, including harassment based on gender identity or nonconformity with sex stereotypes, and not necessarily involving conduct of a sexual nature. All of these types of sex-based harassment are forms of sex-based discrimination prohibited by Title IX.

Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling, as well as nonverbal behavior, such as graphic and written statements, or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating. The more severe the conduct, the less need there is to show a repetitive series of incidents to prove a hostile environment, particularly if the conduct is physical. Indeed, a single or isolated incident of sexual violence may create a hostile environment.

Sex-based harassment may occur between students, between students and employees, between employees, between students and third parties, and between employees and third parties, regardless of the genders of the victim and harasser.

### **Complaints and Investigation Process**

The responsibility to investigate complaints (and/or designate other individuals to conduct investigations) under this policy has been assigned to the Compliance Coordinator. Students or employees who experience or witness conduct in violation of this policy should immediately report it to the Compliance Coordinator or any member of the School's Administration. Any member of the School's Administration receiving a complaint is required to immediately report it to the Compliance Coordinator.

Complaints may be reported orally or by using the School's Title IX Complaint Form. The Title IX Complaint Form may be obtained from the Compliance Coordinator.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the Compliance Coordinator (or his or her designee) will promptly conduct an investigation in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practical under the circumstances. The Compliance Coordinator (or his or her designee) will conduct the investigation in compliance with the School's Title IX Grievance Procedures.

Any student or employee who is found to have harassed another student or employee will be subject to disciplinary action (up to and including expulsion and/or termination of employment). The School will also take appropriate corrective action to address harassment by third parties.

### **Prohibition Against Retaliation**

Retaliation or reprisal by any student or employee against complainants, witnesses, or any other individual who reports allegations of sex-based harassment, discrimination, and/or violence or provides information to assist in an investigation is strictly prohibited. Individuals who believe they have been retaliated against in connection with such action should immediately report such conduct to the Compliance Coordinator.

Any student or employee who is found to have retaliated against a student or employee in connection with a good-faith report of sex-based harassment or discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action (up to and including expulsion and/or termination of employment).