

**Chapter 28A.642 RCW  
DISCRIMINATION PROHIBITION**

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**RCW 28A.642.005 Findings.** The legislature finds that in 1975 legislation was adopted, codified as chapter 28A.640 RCW, recognizing the deleterious effect of discrimination on the basis of sex, specifically prohibiting such discrimination in Washington public schools, and requiring the office of the superintendent of public instruction to monitor and enforce compliance. The legislature further finds that, while numerous state and federal laws prohibit discrimination on other bases in addition to sex, the common school provisions in Title 28A RCW do not include specific acknowledgment of the right to be free from discrimination because of race, creed, color, national origin, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability, nor do any common school provisions specifically direct the office of the superintendent of public instruction to monitor and enforce compliance with these laws. The legislature finds that one of the recommendations made to the legislature by the \*achievement gap oversight and accountability committee created in chapter 468, Laws of 2009, was that the office of the superintendent of public instruction should be specifically authorized to take affirmative steps to ensure that school districts comply with all civil rights laws, similar to what has already been authorized in chapter 28A.640 RCW with respect to discrimination on the basis of sex. [2010 c 240 s 1.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The "achievement gap oversight and accountability committee" was renamed the "educational opportunity gap oversight and accountability committee" by 2011 1st sp.s. c 21 s 33.

**RCW 28A.642.010 Discrimination prohibited—Definitions.** Discrimination in Washington public schools on the basis of race, creed, religion, color, national origin, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability is prohibited. The definitions given these terms in chapter

49.60 RCW apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise. [2010 c 240 s 2.]

**RCW 28A.642.020 Rules and guidelines.** (1) The superintendent of public instruction shall develop rules and guidelines to eliminate discrimination prohibited in RCW 28A.642.010 and 28A.320.233 as it applies to public school employment, counseling and guidance services to students, recreational and athletic activities for students, access to course offerings, and in textbooks, instructional materials, and supplemental instructional materials, and student access to those materials.

(2) For the purposes of this section, "supplemental instructional materials" has the same meaning as in RCW 28A.320.235. [2024 c 316 s 5; 2010 c 240 s 3.]

**RCW 28A.642.030 Compliance—Monitoring—Compliance enforcement.** The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall monitor local school districts' compliance with this chapter, and shall establish a compliance timetable, rules, and guidelines for enforcement of this chapter. [2010 c 240 s 4.]

**RCW 28A.642.040 Individual right of action.** Any person aggrieved by a violation of this chapter, or aggrieved by the violation of any rule or guideline adopted under this chapter, has a right of action in superior court for civil damages and such equitable relief as the court determines. [2010 c 240 s 5.]

**RCW 28A.642.050 Authority of superintendent of public instruction—Administrative orders.** The superintendent of public instruction has the power to enforce and obtain compliance with the provisions of this chapter and the rules and guidelines adopted under this chapter, by appropriate order made pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW. The order may include, but is not limited to, termination of all or part of state apportionment or categorical moneys to the offending school district, termination of specified programs in which violations may be flagrant within the offending school district, institution of corrective action, and the placement of the offending school district on probation with appropriate sanctions until compliance is achieved. [2010 c 240 s 6.]

**RCW 28A.642.060 Chapter supplementary.** This chapter is supplementary to, and does not supersede, existing law and procedures and future amendments to those laws and procedures relating to unlawful discrimination. [2010 c 240 s 7.]

**RCW 28A.642.070 Schools established under state-tribal education compacts.** Nothing in this chapter prohibits schools established under chapter 28A.715 RCW from:

(1) Implementing a policy of Indian preference in employment; or

(2) Prioritizing the admission of tribal members where capacity of the school's programs or facilities is not as large as demand. [2013 c 242 s 6.]

**RCW 28A.642.080 Transgender student policy and procedure.**

(1) (a) By January 31, 2020, each school district must adopt or amend if necessary policies and procedures that, at a minimum, incorporate all the elements of the model transgender student policy and procedure described in subsection (3) of this section.

(b) School districts must share the policies and procedures that meet the requirements of (a) of this subsection with parents or guardians, students, volunteers, and school employees in accordance with rules adopted by the office of the superintendent of public instruction. This requirement as it relates to students, parents, and guardians may be satisfied by using the model student handbook language in RCW 28A.300.286.

(c) (i) Each school district must designate one person in the school district as the primary contact regarding the policies and procedures relating to transgender students that meet the requirements of (a) of this subsection. In addition to any other duties required by law and the school district, the primary contact must:

(A) Ensure the implementation of the policies and procedures relating to transgender students that meet the requirements of (a) of this subsection;

(B) Receive copies of all formal and informal complaints relating to transgender students;

(C) Communicate with the school district employees responsible for monitoring school district compliance with this chapter, and the primary contact regarding the school district's policy and procedure prohibiting harassment, intimidation, and bullying under RCW 28A.600.477; and

(D) Serve as the primary contact between the school district, the office of the education ombuds, and the office of the superintendent of public instruction on policies and procedures relating to transgender students that meet the requirements of (a) of this subsection.

(ii) The primary contact from each school district must attend at least one training class as provided in RCW 28A.600.477, once this training is available.

(iii) The primary contact may also serve as the primary contact regarding the school district's policy and procedure prohibiting harassment, intimidation, and bullying under RCW 28A.600.477 and the primary contact regarding school district compliance with nondiscrimination laws under RCW 28A.300.286.

(2) As required by the office of the superintendent of public instruction, each school district must provide to the office of the superintendent of public instruction its policies and procedures relating to transgender students that meet the requirements of subsection (1) (a) of this section.

(3) (a) By September 1, 2019, and periodically thereafter, the Washington state school directors' association must collaborate with the office of the superintendent of public instruction to develop and update a model transgender student policy and procedure.

(b) The elements of the model transgender student policy and procedure must, at a minimum: Incorporate the office of the superintendent of public instruction's rules and guidelines developed

under RCW 28A.642.020 to eliminate discrimination in Washington public schools on the basis of gender identity and expression; address the unique challenges and needs faced by transgender students in public schools; and describe the application of the model policy and procedure prohibiting harassment, intimidation, and bullying, required under RCW 28A.600.477, to transgender students.

(c) The office of the superintendent of public instruction and the Washington state school directors' association must maintain the model policy and procedure on each agency's website at no cost to school districts.

(4) (a) By December 31, 2020, the office of the superintendent of public instruction must develop online training material available to all school staff based on the model transgender student policy and procedure described in subsection (3) of this section and the office of the superintendent of public instruction's rules and guidance as provided under this chapter.

(b) The online training material must describe the role of school district primary contacts for monitoring school district compliance with this chapter prohibiting discrimination in public schools, RCW 28A.600.477 related to the policies and procedures prohibiting harassment, intimidation, and bullying, and this section related to policies and procedures relating to transgender students.

(c) The online training material must include best practices for policy and procedure implementation and cultural change that are guided by school district experiences.

(d) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must annually notify school districts of the availability of the online training material. [2023 c 242 s 5; 2019 c 194 s 2.]

**RCW 28A.642.090 Primary contact.** (1) Each school district shall designate one person in the school district as the primary contact regarding school district compliance with this chapter. In addition to any other duties required by law and the school district, the primary contact must:

(a) Ensure that complaints of discrimination communicated to the school district are promptly investigated and resolved; and

(b) Communicate with the primary contact regarding the school district's policy and procedure prohibiting harassment, intimidation, and bullying under RCW 28A.600.477, and the primary contact regarding the school district's policies and procedures related to transgender students under RCW 28A.642.080.

(2) The primary contact may also serve as the primary contact regarding the school district's policy and procedure prohibiting harassment, intimidation, and bullying under RCW 28A.600.477 and the primary contact regarding the school district's policy and procedure related to transgender students under RCW 28A.642.080. [2023 c 242 s 2.]

**RCW 28A.642.100 Decisions of school materials subject to chapter.** In accordance with RCW 28A.320.233, decisions by school district boards of directors, charter school boards under chapter 28A.710 RCW, and state-tribal education compact schools subject to chapter 28A.715 RCW that pertain to textbooks, instructional materials, supplemental instructional materials, and other curriculum

for student instruction may be subject to the provisions of this chapter. [2024 c 316 s 7.]