



## **Bullying and Sexual Harassment at Broward County Public Schools**

Robert W. Runcie, Superintendent of Schools  
Broward County Public Schools  
600 SE Third Avenue  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

July 18, 2012

Dear Superintendent Runcie:

On behalf of the more than 150,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), **I urge you to review and correct Broward County Public Schools' reporting of zero incidents of bullying based on sex and sexual harassment for the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) from the 2009-2010 school year.**

AAUW's analysis of the CRDC found that Broward County Public Schools reported no allegations of sexual harassment, no disciplinary actions as a result of bullying or harassment on the basis of sex, and no student reports of being bullied or harassed on the basis of sex. *See attached.* However, national press reports of students being bullied because of their sex and independent research conducted by AAUW shows that it is highly unlikely that any school district would be free of sexual harassment and bullying. As a result of greater public scrutiny, some districts (Chicago, New York City) are already updating their data, and your school district should do the same for bullying based on sex and sexual harassment.

AAUW's report, *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*,<sup>1</sup> found that sexual harassment is part of everyday life in middle and high schools, with 48 percent of the students surveyed experiencing some form of sexual harassment in the 2010–11 school year. Of that number, an overwhelming majority (87 percent) said that being harassed had a negative effect on them. About a third of all girls and a quarter of boys said they had witnessed sexual harassment at school.

Bullying and harassment can be a Title IX (discrimination based on sex), Title VI (discrimination based on race, color, or national origin), or Section 504 (discrimination based on disability) violation. If a school fails to recognize and address discriminatory sexual harassment, it can be held responsible for violating students' civil rights.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Title IX also prohibits gender-based harassment, which may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature. Schools must disseminate notice of nondiscrimination policy, designate at least one employee to educate and enforce Title IX, and adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee sex discrimination complaints.<sup>3</sup>

AAUW is committed to the “vigorous protection of and full access to civil and constitutional rights”<sup>4</sup> and believes transparency through accurate CRDC reporting is necessary to make schools a safer place for all students to learn. **AAUW calls on you to take steps to ensure that instances of bullying and harassment are reflected accurately for the 2009-2010 school year and in future reports.** If you have any questions, please contact me at 202/785-7793.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Maatz  
Director, Public Policy and Government Relations

Eileen Recchia  
President, AAUW of Florida

Diane Schrier  
State Public Policy Chair, AAUW of Florida

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<sup>1</sup> AAUW. (November 2011). *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*. Retrieved December 12, 2011, from [www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/CrossingTheLine.pdf](http://www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/CrossingTheLine.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ali, Russlynn. “Dear Colleague Letter from Assistant Secretary of the Office of Civil Rights.” Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Oct. 26, 2010. Accessed on web Nov. 1, 2011 at [www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/letters/2010-4/ocrcolleague102610harassbully4q2010.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/letters/2010-4/ocrcolleague102610harassbully4q2010.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Ali, Russlynn. “Dear Colleague Letter from Assistant Secretary of the Office of Civil Rights.” Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, April 4, 2011. Accessed on web Nov. 1, 2011 at [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> American Association of University Women. (June 2011). *2011-13 AAUW Public Policy Program*. Retrieved December 6, 2011, from [www.aauw.org/advocacy/issue\\_advocacy/principles\\_priorities.cfm](http://www.aauw.org/advocacy/issue_advocacy/principles_priorities.cfm)



## **Bullying and Sexual Harassment at Fairfax County Public Schools**

Jack D. Dale, Superintendent  
Fairfax County Public Schools  
8815 Gatehouse Road  
Falls Church, Virginia 22042

July 18, 2012

Dear Superintendent Dale,

On behalf of the more than 150,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), **I urge you to review and correct the Fairfax County Public Schools' reporting of zero incidents of bullying based on sex and sexual harassment for the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) from the 2009-2010 school year.**

AAUW's analysis of the CRDC found that Fairfax County Public Schools is one of fourteen among the twenty largest school districts that reported no allegations of sexual harassment, no disciplinary actions as a result of bullying or harassment on the basis of sex, and no student reports of being bullied or harassed on the basis of sex. *See attached.* However, national press reports of students being bullied because of their sex and independent research conducted by AAUW shows that it is highly unlikely that any school district would be free of sexual harassment and bullying. As a result of greater public scrutiny, some districts (Chicago, New York City) are already updating their data, and your school district should do the same for bullying based on sex and sexual harassment.

AAUW's report, *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*,<sup>1</sup> found that sexual harassment is part of everyday life in middle and high schools, with 48 percent of the students surveyed experiencing some form of sexual harassment in the 2010–11 school year. Of that number, an overwhelming majority (87 percent) said that being harassed had a negative effect on them. About a third of all girls and a quarter of boys said they had witnessed sexual harassment at school.

Bullying and harassment can be a Title IX (discrimination based on sex), Title VI (discrimination based on race, color, or national origin), or Section 504 (discrimination based on disability) violation. If a school fails to recognize and address discriminatory sexual harassment, it can be held responsible for violating students' civil rights.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Title IX also prohibits gender-based harassment, which may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature. Schools must disseminate notice of nondiscrimination policy, designate at least one employee to educate and enforce Title IX, and adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee sex discrimination complaints.<sup>3</sup>

AAUW is committed to the “vigorous protection of and full access to civil and constitutional rights”<sup>4</sup> and believes transparency through accurate CRDC reporting is important to make schools a safer place for all students to learn. **AAUW calls on you to take steps to ensure that instances of bullying and harassment are reflected accurately for the 2009-2010 school year and in future reports.** If you have any questions, please contact me at 202/785-7793.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Maatz  
Director, Public Policy and Government Relations

Caroline Pickens  
2012-2014 President, AAUW-Virginia  
McLean Area Branch

Dianne Blais  
2011-2012 State Co-Vice President of Public Policy, AAUW-Virginia  
Fairfax City Branch

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<sup>1</sup> AAUW. (November 2011). *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*. Retrieved December 12, 2011, from [www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/CrossingTheLine.pdf](http://www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/CrossingTheLine.pdf)

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<sup>3</sup> Ali, Russlynn. "Dear Colleague Letter from Assistant Secretary of the Office of Civil Rights." Office for Civil Rights. U.S. Department of Education, April 4, 2011. Accessed on web Nov. 1, 2011 at [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.pdf).

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## **Bullying and Sexual Harassment at Gwinnett County Public Schools**

J. Alvin Wilbanks, CEO/Superintendent  
Gwinnett County Public Schools  
437 Old Peachtree Road NW  
Suwanee, GA 30024

July 18, 2012

Dear Superintendent Wilbanks,

On behalf of the more than 150,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), **I urge you to review and correct Gwinnett County Public Schools' reporting of zero incidents of bullying based on sex and sexual harassment for the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) from the 2009-2010 school year.**

AAUW's analysis of the CRDC found that Gwinnett County Public Schools reported no allegations of sexual harassment, no disciplinary actions as a result of bullying or harassment on the basis of sex, and no student reports of being bullied or harassed on the basis of sex. *See attached.* However, national press reports of students being bullied because of their sex and independent research conducted by AAUW shows that it is highly unlikely that any school district would be free of sexual harassment and bullying. As a result of greater public scrutiny, some districts (Chicago, New York City) are already updating their data, and your school district should do the same for bullying based on sex and sexual harassment.

AAUW's report, *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*,<sup>1</sup> found that sexual harassment is part of everyday life in middle and high schools, with 48 percent of the students surveyed experiencing some form of sexual harassment in the 2010–11 school year. Of that number, an overwhelming majority (87 percent) said that being harassed had a negative effect on them. About a third of all girls and a quarter of boys said they had witnessed sexual harassment at school.

Bullying and harassment can be a Title IX (discrimination based on sex), Title VI (discrimination based on race, color, or national origin), or Section 504 (discrimination based on disability) violation. If a school fails to recognize and address discriminatory sexual harassment, it can be held responsible for violating students' civil rights.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Title IX also prohibits gender-based harassment, which may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature. Schools must disseminate notice of nondiscrimination policy, designate at least one employee to educate and enforce Title IX, and adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee sex discrimination complaints.<sup>3</sup>

AAUW is committed to the “vigorous protection of and full access to civil and constitutional rights”<sup>4</sup> and believes transparency through accurate CRDC reporting is necessary to make schools a safer place for all students to learn. **AAUW calls on you to take steps to ensure that instances of bullying and harassment are reflected accurately for the 2009-2010 school year and in future reports.** If you have any questions, please contact me at 202/785-7793.

Sincerely,



Lisa M. Maatz  
Director, Public Policy and Government Relations



Debbie Karvey  
Co-President, AAUW of Georgia



Laurie Shaw  
Co-President, AAUW of Georgia

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<sup>3</sup> Ali, Russlynn. "Dear Colleague Letter from Assistant Secretary of the Office of Civil Rights." Office for Civil Rights. U.S. Department of Education, April 4, 2011. Accessed on web Nov. 1, 2011 at [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.pdf).

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## **Bullying and Sexual Harassment at the Los Angeles Unified School District**

Dr. John E. Deasy, Superintendent of Schools  
Los Angeles Unified School District  
P.O. Box 3307  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

July 18, 2012

Dear Superintendent Deasy,

On behalf of the more than 150,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), **I urge you to review and correct the Los Angeles Unified School District's reporting of zero incidents of bullying based on sex and sexual harassment for the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) from the 2009-2010 school year.**

AAUW's analysis of the CRDC found that the Los Angeles Unified School District reported no allegations of sexual harassment, no disciplinary actions as a result of bullying or harassment on the basis of sex, and no student reports of being bullied or harassed on the basis of sex. *See attached.* However, national press reports of students being bullied because of their sex and independent research conducted by AAUW shows that it is highly unlikely that any school district would be free of sexual harassment and bullying. As a result of greater public scrutiny, some districts (Chicago, New York City) are already updating their data, and your school district should do the same for bullying based on sex and sexual harassment.

AAUW's report, *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*,<sup>1</sup> found that sexual harassment is part of everyday life in middle and high schools, with 48 percent of the students surveyed experiencing some form of sexual harassment in the 2010–11 school year. Of that number, an overwhelming majority (87 percent) said that being harassed had a negative effect on them. About a third of all girls and a quarter of boys said they had witnessed sexual harassment at school.

Bullying and harassment can be a Title IX (discrimination based on sex), Title VI (discrimination based on race, color, or national origin), or Section 504 (discrimination based on disability) violation. If a school fails to recognize and address discriminatory sexual harassment, it can be held responsible for violating students' civil rights.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Title IX also prohibits gender-based harassment, which may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature. Schools must disseminate notice of nondiscrimination policy, designate at least one employee to educate and enforce Title IX, and adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee sex discrimination complaints.<sup>3</sup>

AAUW is committed to the “vigorous protection of and full access to civil and constitutional rights”<sup>4</sup> and believes transparency through accurate CRDC reporting is necessary to make schools a safer place for all students to learn. **AAUW calls on you to take steps to ensure that instances of bullying and harassment are reflected accurately for the 2009-2010 school year and in future reports.** If you have any questions, please contact me at 202/785-7793.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Maatz  
Director, Public Policy and Government Relations

Judith Pfeil  
Co-President, AAUW of California

Gloria Taylor  
Co-President, AAUW of California

Sue E. Miller  
State Public Policy Chair, AAUW of California

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<sup>1</sup> AAUW. (November 2011). *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*. Retrieved December 12, 2011, from [www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/CrossingTheLine.pdf](http://www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/CrossingTheLine.pdf)

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## **Bullying and Sexual Harassment at Miami-Dade County Public Schools**

Alberto Carvalho, Superintendent  
Miami-Dade County Public Schools  
1450 NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Suite 912  
Miami, FL 33132

July 18, 2012

Dear Superintendent Carvalho:

On behalf of the more than 150,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), **I urge you to review and correct Miami-Dade County Public Schools' reporting of zero incidents of bullying based on sex and sexual harassment for the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) from the 2009-2010 school year.**

AAUW's analysis of the CRDC found that Miami-Dade County Public Schools reported no allegations of sexual harassment, no disciplinary actions as a result of bullying or harassment on the basis of sex, and no student reports of being bullied or harassed on the basis of sex. *See attached.* However, national press reports of students being bullied because of their sex and independent research conducted by AAUW shows that it is highly unlikely that any school district would be free of sexual harassment and bullying. As a result of greater public scrutiny, some districts (Chicago, New York City) are already updating their data, and your school district should do the same for bullying based on sex and sexual harassment.

AAUW's report, *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*,<sup>1</sup> found that sexual harassment is part of everyday life in middle and high schools, with 48 percent of the students surveyed experiencing some form of sexual harassment in the 2010–11 school year. Of that number, an overwhelming majority (87 percent) said that being harassed had a negative effect on them. About a third of all girls and a quarter of boys said they had witnessed sexual harassment at school.

Bullying and harassment can be a Title IX (discrimination based on sex), Title VI (discrimination based on race, color, or national origin), or Section 504 (discrimination based on disability) violation. If a school fails to recognize and address discriminatory sexual harassment, it can be held responsible for violating students' civil rights.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Title IX also prohibits gender-based harassment, which may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature. Schools must disseminate notice of nondiscrimination policy, designate at least one employee to educate and enforce Title IX, and adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee sex discrimination complaints.<sup>3</sup>

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Sincerely,

Lisa M. Maatz  
Director, Public Policy and Government Relations

Eileen Recchia  
President, AAUW of Florida

Diane Schrier  
State Public Policy Chair, AAUW of Florida

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## **Bullying and Sexual Harassment at New York City Public Schools**

Dennis M. Walcott, Chancellor  
Tweed Courthouse  
52 Chambers Street  
New York, NY 10007

July 18, 2012

Dear Chancellor Walcott,

On behalf of the more than 150,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), **I urge you to review and correct New York City Public Schools' reporting of zero incidents of bullying based on sex and sexual harassment for the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) from the 2009-2010 school year.**

AAUW's analysis of the CRDC found that New York City Public Schools reported no allegations of sexual harassment, no disciplinary actions as a result of bullying or harassment on the basis of sex, and no student reports of being bullied or harassed on the basis of sex. *See attached.* However, national press reports of students being bullied because of their sex and independent research conducted by AAUW shows that it is highly unlikely that any school district would be free of sexual harassment and bullying. As a result of greater public scrutiny, some districts (Chicago, New York City) are already updating their data, and your school district should do the same for bullying based on sex and sexual harassment.

AAUW's report, *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*,<sup>1</sup> found that sexual harassment is part of everyday life in middle and high schools, with 48 percent of the students surveyed experiencing some form of sexual harassment in the 2010–11 school year. Of that number, an overwhelming majority (87 percent) said that being harassed had a negative effect on them. About a third of all girls and a quarter of boys said they had witnessed sexual harassment at school.

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AAUW is committed to the “vigorous protection of and full access to civil and constitutional rights”<sup>4</sup> and believes transparency through accurate CRDC reporting is necessary to make schools a safer place for all students to learn. **AAUW calls on you to take steps to ensure that instances of bullying and harassment are reflected accurately for the 2009-2010 school year and in future reports.** If you have any questions, please contact me at 202/785-7793.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Maatz  
Director, Public Policy and Government Relations

Eileen S. Hartmann  
2010-2012 President, AAUW of New York

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<sup>1</sup> AAUW. (November 2011). *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*. Retrieved December 12, 2011, from [www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/CrossingTheLine.pdf](http://www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/CrossingTheLine.pdf)

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## **Bullying and Sexual Harassment at the School District of Palm Beach County**

E. Wayne Gent, Superintendent  
Fulton-Holland Educational Services Center  
3300 Forest Hill Boulevard  
West Palm Beach, FL 33406

July 18, 2012

Dear Superintendent Gent:

On behalf of the more than 150,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), **I urge you to review and correct the School District of Palm Beach County's reporting of zero incidents of bullying based on sex and sexual harassment for the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) from the 2009-2010 school year.**

AAUW's analysis of the CRDC found that the School District of Palm Beach County reported no allegations of sexual harassment, no disciplinary actions as a result of bullying or harassment on the basis of sex, and no student reports of being bullied or harassed on the basis of sex. *See attached.* However, national press reports of students being bullied because of their sex and independent research conducted by AAUW shows that it is highly unlikely that any school district would be free of sexual harassment and bullying. As a result of greater public scrutiny, some districts (Chicago, New York City) are already updating their data, and your school district should do the same for bullying based on sex and sexual harassment.

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Sincerely,

Lisa M. Maatz  
Director, Public Policy and Government Relations

Eileen Recchia  
President, AAUW of Florida

Diane Schrier  
State Public Policy Chair, AAUW of Florida

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<sup>1</sup> AAUW. (November 2011). *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*. Retrieved December 12, 2011, from [www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/CrossingTheLine.pdf](http://www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/CrossingTheLine.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ali, Russlynn. “Dear Colleague Letter from Assistant Secretary of the Office of Civil Rights.” Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Oct. 26, 2010. Accessed on web Nov. 1, 2011 at [www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/letters/2010-4/ocrcolleague102610harassbully4q2010.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/letters/2010-4/ocrcolleague102610harassbully4q2010.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Ali, Russlynn. “Dear Colleague Letter from Assistant Secretary of the Office of Civil Rights.” Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, April 4, 2011. Accessed on web Nov. 1, 2011 at [www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> American Association of University Women. (June 2011). *2011-13 AAUW Public Policy Program*. Retrieved December 6, 2011, from [www.aauw.org/advocacy/issue\\_advocacy/principles\\_priorities.cfm](http://www.aauw.org/advocacy/issue_advocacy/principles_priorities.cfm)



## **Bullying and Sexual Harassment at The School District of Philadelphia**

Tom Knudsen  
Acting Superintendent and Chief Recovery Officer  
The School District of Philadelphia  
440 N. Broad Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19130

July 18, 2012

Dear Superintendent Knudsen,

On behalf of the more than 150,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), **I urge you to review and correct the School District of Philadelphia's reporting of zero incidents of bullying based on sex and sexual harassment for the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) from the 2009-2010 school year.**

AAUW's analysis of the CRDC found that School District of Philadelphia reported no allegations of sexual harassment, no disciplinary actions as a result of bullying or harassment on the basis of sex, and no student reports of being bullied or harassed on the basis of sex. *See attached.* However, national press reports of students being bullied because of their sex and independent research conducted by AAUW shows that it is highly unlikely that any school district would be free of sexual harassment and bullying. As a result of greater public scrutiny, some districts (Chicago, New York City) are already updating their data, and your school district should do the same for bullying based on sex and sexual harassment.

AAUW's report, *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*,<sup>1</sup> found that sexual harassment is part of everyday life in middle and high schools, with 48 percent of the students surveyed experiencing some form of sexual harassment in the 2010–11 school year. Of that number, an overwhelming majority (87 percent) said that being harassed had a negative effect on them. About a third of all girls and a quarter of boys said they had witnessed sexual harassment at school.

Bullying and harassment can be a Title IX (discrimination based on sex), Title VI (discrimination based on race, color, or national origin), or Section 504 (discrimination based on disability) violation. If a school fails to recognize and address discriminatory sexual harassment, it can be held responsible for violating students' civil rights.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Title IX also prohibits gender-based harassment, which may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature. Schools must disseminate notice of nondiscrimination policy, designate at least one employee to educate and

enforce Title IX, and adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee sex discrimination complaints.<sup>3</sup>

AAUW in Pennsylvania re-iterates this call to make schools a safer place for all students to learn, and to establish and enforce policies regarding safety, drugs, bullying, harassment, equal access and discrimination. AAUW-PA calls on you to take steps to ensure that instances of bullying and harassment are reported accurately so that progress toward safe school environments may be measured.

AAUW is committed to the “vigorous protection of and full access to civil and constitutional rights”<sup>4</sup> and believes transparency through accurate CRDC reporting is necessary to make schools a safer place for all students to learn. **AAUW calls on you to take steps to ensure that instances of bullying and harassment are reflected accurately for the 2009-2010 school year and in future reports.** If you have any questions, please contact me at 202/785-7793.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Maatz  
Director, Public Policy and Government Relations

Margaret McGrath  
President, AAUW-Pennsylvania

Susan P. McNamara  
Eastern District Coordinator, AAUW-Pennsylvania

Jacqueline M. Territo, Ph.D.  
Education Action Committee, AAUW-Pennsylvania  
Fox Chapel Branch

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<sup>1</sup> AAUW. (November 2011). *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*. Retrieved December 12, 2011, from [www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/CrossingTheLine.pdf](http://www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/CrossingTheLine.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ali, Russlynn. “Dear Colleague Letter from Assistant Secretary of the Office of Civil Rights.” Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Oct. 26, 2010. Accessed on web Nov. 1, 2011 at [www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/letters/2010-4/ocrcolleague102610harassbully4q2010.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/letters/2010-4/ocrcolleague102610harassbully4q2010.pdf).

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<sup>4</sup> American Association of University Women. (June 2011). *2011-13 AAUW Public Policy Program*. Retrieved December 6, 2011, from [www.aauw.org/advocacy/issue\\_advocacy/principles\\_priorities.cfm](http://www.aauw.org/advocacy/issue_advocacy/principles_priorities.cfm)



## **Bullying and Sexual Harassment at Prince George's County Public Schools**

William R. Hite, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent  
Office of the Superintendent  
Sasser Administration Building  
14201 School Lane  
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772

July 18, 2012

Dear Superintendent Hite,

On behalf of the more than 150,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), **I urge you to review and correct Prince George's County Public Schools' reporting of zero incidents of bullying based on sex and sexual harassment for the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) from the 2009-2010 school year.**

AAUW's analysis of the CRDC found that Prince George's County Public Schools reported no allegations of sexual harassment, no disciplinary actions as a result of bullying or harassment on the basis of sex, and no student reports of being bullied or harassed on the basis of sex. *See attached.* However, national press reports of students being bullied because of their sex and independent research conducted by AAUW shows that it is highly unlikely that any school district would be free of sexual harassment and bullying. As a result of greater public scrutiny, some districts (Chicago, New York City) are already updating their data, and your school district should do the same for bullying based on sex and sexual harassment.

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Bullying and harassment can be a Title IX (discrimination based on sex), Title VI (discrimination based on race, color, or national origin), or Section 504 (discrimination based on disability) violation. If a school fails to recognize and address discriminatory sexual harassment, it can be held responsible for violating students' civil rights.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Title IX also prohibits gender-based harassment, which may include acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggression, intimidation, or hostility based on sex or sex-stereotyping, even if those acts do not involve conduct of a sexual nature. Schools must disseminate notice of nondiscrimination policy, designate at least one employee to educate and

enforce Title IX, and adopt and publish grievance procedures providing for prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee sex discrimination complaints.<sup>3</sup>

AAUW is committed to the “vigorous protection of and full access to civil and constitutional rights”<sup>4</sup> and believes transparency through accurate CRDC reporting is necessary to make schools a safer place for all students to learn. **AAUW calls on you to take steps to ensure that instances of bullying and harassment are reflected accurately for the 2009-2010 school year and in future reports.** If you have any questions, please contact me at 202/785-7793.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Maatz  
Director, Public Policy and Government Relations

Pat Stocker, Ph.D.  
President, AAUW of Maryland

Eileen Menton  
President, AAUW Laurel (MD) Branch

Audrey Davis  
President, AAUW College Park (MD) Branch

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<sup>1</sup> AAUW. (November 2011). *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*. Retrieved December 12, 2011, from [www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/CrossingTheLine.pdf](http://www.aauw.org/learn/research/upload/CrossingTheLine.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Ali, Russlynn. “Dear Colleague Letter from Assistant Secretary of the Office of Civil Rights.” Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Oct. 26, 2010. Accessed on web Nov. 1, 2011 at [www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/letters/2010-4/ocrcolleague102610harassbully4q2010.pdf](http://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/letters/2010-4/ocrcolleague102610harassbully4q2010.pdf).

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<sup>4</sup> American Association of University Women. (June 2011). *2011-13 AAUW Public Policy Program*. Retrieved December 6, 2011, from [www.aauw.org/advocacy/issue\\_advocacy/principles\\_priorities.cfm](http://www.aauw.org/advocacy/issue_advocacy/principles_priorities.cfm)