



Letter to Educators re Discrimination Against Asian American and Pacific Islander Students Notice of Language Assistance

Notice of Language Assistance: If you have difficulty understanding English, you may, free of charge, request language assistance services for this Department information by calling 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (TTY: 1-800-877-8339), or email us at: Ed.Language.Assistance@ed.gov.

Aviso a personas con dominio limitado del idioma inglés: Si usted tiene alguna dificultad en entender el idioma inglés, puede, sin costo alguno, solicitar asistencia lingüística con respecto a esta información llamando al 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (TTY: 1-800-877-8339), o envíe un mensaje de correo electrónico a: Ed.Language.Assistance@ed.gov.

給英語能力有限人士的通知: 如果您不懂英語, 或者使用英語有困難, 您可以要求獲得向大眾提供的語言協助服務, 幫助您理解教育部資訊。這些語言協助服務均可免費提供。如果您需要有關口譯或筆譯服務的詳細資訊, 請致電 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (聽語障人士專線: 1-800-877-8339), 或電郵: Ed.Language.Assistance@ed.gov。

Thông báo dành cho những người có khả năng Anh ngữ hạn chế: Nếu quý vị gặp khó khăn trong việc hiểu Anh ngữ thì quý vị có thể yêu cầu các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ cho các tin tức của Bộ dành cho công chúng. Các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ này đều miễn phí. Nếu quý vị muốn biết thêm chi tiết về các dịch vụ phiên dịch hay thông dịch, xin vui lòng gọi số 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (TTY: 1-800-877-8339), hoặc email: Ed.Language.Assistance@ed.gov.

영어 미숙자를 위한 공고: 영어를 이해하는 데 어려움이 있으신 경우, 교육부 정보 센터에 일반인 대상 언어 지원 서비스를 요청하실 수 있습니다. 이러한 언어 지원 서비스는 무료로 제공됩니다. 통역이나 번역 서비스에 대해 자세한 정보가 필요하신 경우, 전화번호 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) 또는 청각 장애인용 전화번호 1-800-877-8339 또는 이메일 주소 Ed.Language.Assistance@ed.gov 으로 연락하시기 바랍니다.

Paunawa sa mga Taong Limitado ang Kaalaman sa English: Kung nahihirapan kayong makaintindi ng English, maaari kayong humingi ng tulong ukol dito sa inpormasyon ng Kagawaran mula sa nagbibigay ng serbisyo na pagtulong kaugnay ng wika. Ang serbisyo na pagtulong kaugnay ng wika ay libre. Kung kailangan ninyo ng dagdag na impormasyon tungkol sa mga serbisyo kaugnay ng pagpapaliwanag o pagsasalín, mangyari lamang tumawag sa 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (TTY: 1-800-877-8339), o mag-email sa: Ed.Language.Assistance@ed.gov.

Уведомление для лиц с ограниченным знанием английского языка: Если вы испытываете трудности в понимании английского языка, вы можете попросить, чтобы вам предоставили перевод информации, которую Министерство Образования доводит до всеобщего сведения. Этот перевод предоставляется бесплатно. Если вы хотите получить более подробную информацию об услугах устного и письменного перевода, звоните по телефону 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (служба для слабослышащих: 1-800-877-8339), или отправьте сообщение по адресу: Ed.Language.Assistance@ed.gov.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

May 26, 2021

Dear Educator:

I write to express concern about increased harassment and violence directed at Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) individuals and to remind you of schools' obligations to investigate and address all forms of harassment based on race, color, and national origin, as well as sex and disability, during the academic year and in summer school-sponsored activities. This letter also contains resources to assist you with fulfilling these important responsibilities.

The U.S. Department of Education's (Department) Office for Civil Rights (OCR), together with the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division, recently issued [Confronting COVID-19-Related Harassment in Schools](#), a resource for students and families, in English and multiple Asian/Pacific Islander languages. This builds on President Biden's [Memorandum Condemning and Combating Racism, Xenophobia, and Intolerance Against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the United States](#).

As reports of harassment and violence continue, I take this opportunity to underscore the specific responsibility of schools that receive Federal financial assistance to provide students an environment free from discrimination, including harassment, based on race, color, and national origin, as well as sex and disability. All of these forms of discrimination are prohibited by laws that OCR enforces, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and others.

In particular, schools and other recipients of Federal financial assistance from the Department must take prompt and effective steps to address bullying and harassment of students based on actual or perceived race, color, or national origin that creates a *hostile environment* in school: that is, harassment that is severe, pervasive, or persistent in ways that interfere with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school. The school's actions must be reasonably calculated to end the bullying or harassment, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects, as appropriate. The failure to do so would violate Title VI. You can learn more in an earlier OCR investigative guidance: [Racial Incidents and Harassment Against Students at Educational Institutions](#).

Please keep in mind that bullying and harassment often target multiple aspects of a student's identity. For example, AAPI students may be targeted with slurs directed particularly at Asian girls or boys in ways that implicate their sex, race, *and* national origin. In investigating and responding to incidents, it is important to keep these intersections in mind both to ensure students' well-being and to fulfill legal compliance obligations.

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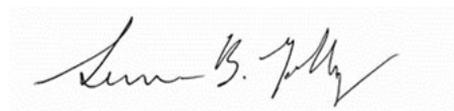
The Department of Education's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

Schools also have an important role to play in encouraging a culture that empowers students to speak out when they witness bullying or harassment and to seek help if needed. As part of these efforts to foster safe and inclusive learning environments for all students, schools should ensure that students and their families, as appropriate, know how to report concerns and incidents of bullying and harassment on any basis. Importantly, schools should provide this information in a language that is accessible to parents and guardians with limited English proficiency.

We include, below, links to resources that you might find helpful. If you have questions or would like additional information or technical assistance, please visit our website at www.ed.gov/ocr or contact OCR at (800) 421-3481 (TDD: 800-877-8339) or at ocr@ed.gov.

Thank you for all that you do to support our nation's students in learning and thriving through the pandemic and beyond.

Sincerely,



Suzanne B. Goldberg
Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

Resources:

- U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division and U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, *Confronting COVID-19-Related Harassment in Schools Fact Sheet*, available at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/ocr-factsheet-aapi-202105.pdf> and in multiple Asian/Pacific Islander languages at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/newsroom.html> (May 2021).
- AAPI Bullying Prevention Task Force, *AAPI Bullying Prevention Task Force Report*, available at www.stopbullying.gov/sites/default/files/2017-10/AAPI-Bullying-Prevention-Task-Force-Report-2014-2016.pdf (August 2016).
- U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, and White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, *Combating Discrimination Against Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander and Muslim, Arab, Sikh, and South Asian Students Fact Sheet*, available in English at www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/aanhpi-massa-factsheet-201606.pdf and in multiple Asian/Pacific Islander languages at www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto-index.html (June 2016).
- U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, *Racial Incidents and Harassment Against Students Investigative Guidance*, available at www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/race394.html (March 1994).
- U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights' *Civil Rights Data Collection* measures student access to courses, programs, and resources—as well as school climate factors, including

bullying or harassment—that impact education equity and opportunity for K-12 students attending public schools, available at <https://ocrdata.ed.gov/>.

- U.S. Department of Education Office of Elementary and Secondary Education funds four regional Equity Assistance Centers to provide technical assistance and training, upon request, in the areas of race, sex, national origin, and religion to public schools, public school districts, and other responsible governmental agencies to promote equitable education opportunities. Please find additional information, including contact information for the Center serving your state, at <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/program-and-grantee-support-services/training-and-advisory-services-equity-assistance-centers/>.

Other than statutory and regulatory requirements included in the document, the contents of this guidance do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.