

# Title IX Coordinators: Decisions and Implementations

Presented by: Sarah E. Fama and Monica Batanero

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# Monica D. Batanero

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#### Overview

Monica D. Batanero is Senior Counsel in Lozano Smith's Los Angeles office. Ms. Batanero advises educational institutions on student, special education and personnel issues.

#### Experience

Ms. Batanero provides legal counsel to community college districts and K-12 school districts on day-to-day issues involving Title IX compliance, sexual harassment, discrimination/harassment, Section 504, IDEA, governance, Public Records Act, and student discipline. She regularly conducts workplace and school investigations involving alleged misconduct in violation of board policy and/or law, including Title IX, sexual harassment, professional standards, and code of student conduct.

Ms. Batanero has represented school districts in all phases of special education matters, including Individualized Education Plan meetings, resolution meetings, mediations, and due process hearings conducted by the Office of Administrative Hearings.

She also frequently develops and provides trainings to clients on Title IX, Section 504, IDEA, workplace and school investigations, sexual harassment prevention, student discipline, and first amendment issues.

#### Education

Ms. Batanero earned her Juris Doctor from the University of San Francisco, School of Law. She earned both an M.S. and B.S. in Gerontology from the University of Southern California.

Title IX

Governance





# Sarah E. Fama

Senior Counsel

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#### Overview

Sarah E. Fama is Senior Counsel in Lozano Smith's Walnut Creek office. She represents public agencies through various aspects of employment and general liability issues.

#### Experience

Ms. Fama represents public employers at California Superior Court, California Labor Commission, California Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board, California Workers' Compensation Appeals Board, Department of Fair Employment and Housing, and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. She regularly defends employers against claims of harassment, discrimination, wrongful termination, and wage and hour violations. Clients seek her out to provide guidance, education and training to employers regarding employment law compliance, in areas of harassment, discrimination, separation, accommodation, and wage and hour compliance.

She is routinely involved in investigations, either by guiding employers through the investigation process or by acting as an investigator herself. She also advises employers and provides training on various topics including investigations, Title IX, sexual harassment, Uniform Complaint Procedure, retaliation, discrimination and other complaints that may arise in an education setting.

#### Education

Ms. Fama received her Juris Doctor degree from the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law, where she was named to the Dean's Honor List. Her J.D. concentration was focused on International Legal Studies. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from the University of Alberta.



#### WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

Lozano Smith is a full-service education and public agency law firm serving hundreds of California's K-12 and community college districts, and numerous cities, counties, and special districts. Established in 1988, the firm prides itself on fostering longstanding relationships with our clients, while advising and counseling on complex and ever-changing laws. Ultimately, this allows clients to stay focused on what matters most – the success of their district, students and communities they serve. Lozano Smith has offices in eight California locations: Sacramento, Walnut Creek, Fresno, Monterey, Bakersfield, San Luis Obispo, Los Angeles, and San Diego.

#### **AREAS OF EXPERTISE**

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- Charter School
- Community College
- Facilities & Business
- Governance
- Investigations
- Labor & Employment
- Litigation
- Municipal
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- Public Safety
- Special Education
- Student
- Technology & Innovation
- Title IX

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JULY 17, 2024

#### Presenter

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#### AT LOZANO SMITH

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#### Presenter

#### Monica D. Batanero

#### AT LOZANO SMITH

Monica D. Batanero is Senior Counsel in Lozano Smith's Los Angeles office. Ms. Batanero represents California public school districts, county offices of education, and community college districts in all aspects of education law. She is co-chair of the firm's Title IX Practice Area and specializes in Title IX compliance, as well as conducting complex investigations into claims of sexual misconduct and harassment (including Title IX), discrimination, bullying, retaliation, and other issues that may arise in an educational setting.



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# This presentation on Title IX will include topics that will involve descriptions of sexual harassment, assault and other inappropriate sexual behaviors. We understand that these topics can be distressing or triggering for some individuals. Viewer discretion is advised. Thank you for your understanding and participation in this important conversation. Topics Compliance by August 1, 2024 Overview of 2024 Title IX Regulations Pregnancy and parenting $\underline{\mathbf{LS}}$

CONTENT ADVISORY:

Compliance by August 1, 2024

#### The 2024 Regulations are $\underline{NOT}$ Retroactive

 Only applies to sex discrimination that occurred on or after August 1, 2024.



 All incidents that take place on or before July 31, 2024, must be processed through the 2020 Title IX Regulations.

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#### Policies/Procedures

#### Adding and Updating

- Add new ARs
- 2020 Title IX Regulations still in effect



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#### Notice of Nondiscrimination

#### Must be posted on:

- Website
- Handbook
- Other means of notifying students/parents/employees



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#### Trainings

- All employees
- Investigators, Decisionmakers, Informal Resolution Officers and persons implementing supportive measures (All Supervisors)
- Title IX Coordinators and designees



### Overview of the 2024 Regulations

#### Scope of Sex Discrimination

- Title IX prohibits sex discrimination.
- Based on sex stereotypes, sex characteristics, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, and gender identity.



#### Definition of Sex-Based Harassment

- Quid Pro Quo (person authorized by the District)
- <u>Hostile environment harassment</u> unwelcome sex conduct
  - is subjectively and objectively offensive;
  - so severe *or* pervasive; and
  - that it limits or denies a person's ability to participate in or benefit from the recipient's education program or activity
- Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Stalking

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#### Sex-Based Harassment - HEH

Factors to consider:

- Affect on the complainant's ability to access the district's education program or activity;
- The type, frequency, and duration of the conduct;
- The parties' ages, roles, previous interactions, and other individual factors;
- The location of the conduct and the context in which the conduct occurred; and
- Other sex-based harassment.

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#### Sexual Assault

- Rape
- Sodomy (meaning forcible oral or anal sexual intercourse with a complainant)
- Sexual Assault with an Object
- Fondling
- Incest
- Statutory Rape



#### Hypothetical

Principal Jones tells Claire, a student teacher at his site, "If you spend your lunch hour with me every day for the rest of the year, I will make sure you get a job here next year." When Claire doesn't join him for lunch, Principal Jones threatens that he will make sure she never has a job in this District.

Is this Title IX?

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#### Hypothetical

You are a Title IX Coordinator at a K-12 District. Michelle, a  $7^{th}$  grader, comes to you and complains that another  $7^{th}$  grader, Brady, keeps following her in the hallway and calling her names, such as "dyke," and "lesbian." Michelle is extremely upset and is requesting that she be transferred to a new school.

Is this Title IX?

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#### Title IX Jurisdiction

Must address all sex discrimination occurring under the district's education program or activity in the United States. Includes, but not limited to:

- Conduct that occurs in any building owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by a postsecondary institution; and,
- Conduct that is subject to the recipient's disciplinary authority.



§ 106.11

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#### Title IX Jurisdiction vs. Impact

Must also address a sex-based hostile environment under its education program or activity, even when some conduct alleged to be contributing to the hostile environment occurred outside the recipient's education program or activity or outside the United States.

- Off campus conduct (no effect on campus and District has no jurisdiction in policy) = No
  Title IX jurisdiction.
- Off campus conduct but with impact that is not a Title IX violation (i.e., complainant is
  upset by seeing respondent) = No Title IX jurisdiction, but District must remedy/provide
  supportive measures.
- Off campus conduct with impact that is a Title IX violation (i.e., hostile environment harassment from rumors, bullying, retaliation, etc.) = Title IX jurisdiction over HEH.
- Off campus conduct when District has jurisdiction over off campus conduct in policy = Title IX jurisdiction.



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#### Hypothetical

Lauren and Michael are juniors in high school. Over the weekend, they attend a party, where Lauren performs oral sex on Michael, who is intoxicated and unable to consent. When they return to school on Monday, rumors spread about Michael being "raped" by his girlfriend. Michael does not come to school for the rest of the week.

You are the Title IX Coordinator.

Is this Title IX?
 What do you do?



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#### Sex-Based Distinctions or Separation

- Recipients can impose sex-based distinctions or separation in their educational programs if they do not impose more than a de minimis harm.
- More than de minimis harm is any harm that is genuine and objectively non-trivial, from a reasonable person's perspective.
- Prohibiting a student from participating in an education program or activity consistent with their gender identity violates this standard and is thus prohibited.



§ 106.31(a)(2)



#### Sex-Based Distinctions or Separation - Exemptions

- Religious institutions
- Military and merchant marine educational institutions
- Social fraternities and sororities
- Housing
- Athletics \*\*



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#### 2024 Title IX Definitions

#### Complainant:

Includes person(s) other than student(s)/employee(s) who is alleged
to have been subjected to conduct that could constitute sex
discrimination under Title IX at a time when that individual was
participating or attempting to participate in the district's education
program or activity.

#### Respondent

 A person who is alleged to have violated the recipient's prohibition on sex discrimination. (§ 106.2)



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#### 2024 Title IX Definitions

#### Knowledge

 Knowledge of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination requires a prompt and effective response. (§ 106.44)

#### **Evaluation:**

 The district's decision to dismiss or investigate a complaint.

(§ 106.45(b)(4))



#### 2024 Title IX Definitions

#### Complaint

 May be oral or written, as long as the complaint can be objectively understood as a request for the district to investigate. (§ 106.45(a)(2))

#### **Pregnancy or Related Conditions**

 Pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or lactation; medical conditions related to pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or lactation; or recovery from pregnancy, childbirth, termination of pregnancy, lactation, or related medical conditions. (§106.2)



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#### 2024 Title IX Definitions

#### Retaliation:

Retaliation means intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination
against any person by the District, a student, or an employee or other
person authorized to provide aid, benefit, or service, for the purpose of
interfering with any right or privilege secured by Title IX, or because the
person has participated in any manner in a Title IX process. (§ 106.2)

#### Peer Retaliation:

• Peer retaliation means retaliation by a student against another student.



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#### Responding to Sex Discrimination

- The district must respond promptly and effectively and must prevent the recurrence of any sex discrimination and remedy its effects.
- All non-confidential employees must notify the Title IX Coordinator of conduct that could reasonably be considered sex discrimination.
- Title IX reporting is separate from mandated reporting requirements.

§ 106.44 (c)(2)



# Responding to Sex Discrimination (K-12)

 All non-confidential employees must notify the Title IX Coordinator of conduct that could reasonably be considered sex discrimination.



§ 106.44 (c)(2)

Responding to Sex Discrimination (Higher Ed.)			
Employee Role	Disclosure From	NotifyT IX C	Provide T IX C's Contact Info
Confidential Employees	<ul><li>Student</li><li>Employee</li></ul>	No	Yes
Employees With Authority To Institute Corrective Measures	<ul><li>Student</li><li>Employee</li></ul>	Yes	Yes
Employees With Responsibility For Administrative Leadership, Teaching, And Advising	<ul><li>Student</li><li>Employee</li></ul>	Yes	Yes
All Other Employees Who Are Not Confidential Employees	<ul><li>Student</li><li>Employee</li></ul>	Yes/Or	Yes/Or
Q			§ 106.44 (c)(2)

#### **Public Awareness Events**

- No obligation to act in response unless imminent and serious threat to health or safety.
- Must use the information to inform efforts to prevent sexbased harassment.



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#### Confidential Employees



An employee whose communications are privileged or confidential under Federal or State law or an employee that has been designated as a confidential employee for the purpose of providing services to persons related to sex discrimination.

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§ 106.2

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#### Confidential Employees

#### Under Law

- School counselor
- Licensed psychologist
- Licensed clinical social worker
- School psychologist with credential
   Licensed marriage and family therapist
- Licensed professional clinical counselor
- Licensed educational psychologist (Evid. Code, § 1010.5)

#### Designation

- Will you designate additional people?
- How Many?

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#### Confidential Employees

- Only confidential when providing those services.
- Must specify who they are in policies
- Must provide specific training to them about their reporting requirements.



6 106 44/d

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#### Confidential Employees

- Must explain to any person who informs them of conduct that reasonably may constitute sex discrimination:
  - Their status as confidential
  - Title IX Coordinator's contact information
  - How to make a complaint
  - That supportive measures, informal resolution and an investigation may be available

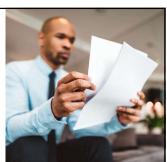
§ 106.44(d)

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#### Barriers to reporting

Title IX Coordinator must:

- Monitor for barriers to reporting
- Take reasonable steps to address such barriers



§ 106.44(b)

#### **Initial Evaluation**

Upon notice, Title IX Coordinator must:

- Treat parties equitably
- Offer supportive measures
- Inform of grievance procedure
- Initiate process

Must consider and evaluate the parties wishes.

If no complaint, determine path

§106.44(f)

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# Complaint Initiated by Title IX Coordinator – Factors to Consider

- Complainant request
- Complainant's reasonable safety concerns
- Risk of additional acts
- Severity
- Age and relationship
- Scope (i.e., pattern, ongoing acts, or impact on multiple individuals)
- Availability of evidence
- Whether the alleged sex discrimination can be stopped

§ 106.44(f)(1)(V)

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#### Complaint Initiated by Title IX Coordinator

#### May Initiate If Alleges Conduct:

- Presents an imminent and serious health or safety threat
- Prevents the district from ensuring equal access on the basis of sex to its education program or activity

#### If Initiating, Must:

- Notify complainant prior to initiation
- Address safety concerns
- Complainant
- Others

§ 106.44

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#### Supportive Measures



Must offer supportive measures to both Complainants and Respondents.



Parties have the right to challenge supportive measures.

§ 106.44(g)

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#### Supportive Measures

#### Must/May Be:

- Must be designed to protect the safety of the parties or environment
- May be modified or terminated at the end of the resolution process
- May include emergency removal and administrative leave

#### Must NOT Be:

- Must not unreasonably burden either party
- May not be imposed for punitive or disciplinary reasons

§106.44(g) and (k)

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#### Supportive Measures



- Parties may challenge a decision regarding their supportive measures
- Challenge heard by an impartial employee with the ability to modify or reverse the original decision

#### Hypothetical

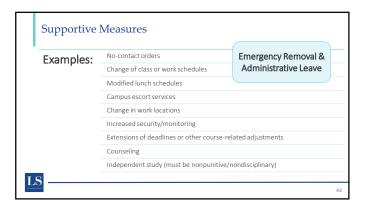
Charlie, a  $4^{\rm th}$  grade non-binary student, filed a Title IX complaint against two classmates for repeatedly misgendering them, and teasing them for not being "a boy or a girl."

1. What supportive measures would you offer Charlie?

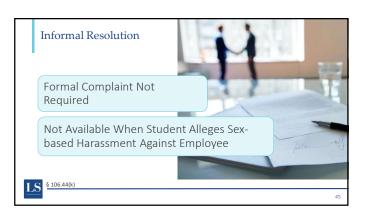
2. What supportive measures would you offer the two classmates?

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# K-12 MUST consult with a student's IEP/Section 504 team. Higher Education MAY consult with the student or office designated to support students with disabilities.



#### Informal Resolution

- Must provide notice to parties, which include:

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- Allegations;Requirements of informal resolution process;
- Right to withdraw and initiate investigation; Resolution would preclude an
- investigation;
- Potential terms of resolution; and
- What information the district will maintain and how the district could disclose such information.
- Must obtain parties' voluntary
- Informal Resolution Officer cannot be Investigator or Decision-maker.

§ 106.44(k)

#### Dismissal of Complaint

- May dismiss complaint when:
  - District is unable to identify the respondent after taking reasonable steps to do so
  - The respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the district
  - The complainant voluntarily withdraws any or all allegations
  - The alleged conduct would not constitute sex discrimination, if proven

§ 106,45(d)

#### Hypothetical

Ms. Parke, a 10<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher, filed a Title IX Complaint against the high school athletic director, Mr. Brown, alleging that Mr. Brown sexually assaulted her on campus after a football game.

When Mr. Brown received the notice of investigation, he immediately resigned.

> 1. Is this Title IX? 2. 2. Should you dismiss this complaint?

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#### Dismissal Appeal

- Must offer appeal of dismissal
- Basis for appeal
  - Procedural irregularity
  - New evidence
  - Conflict of interest or bias



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#### Title IX Grievance Procedures

Adequate, Reliable and Impartial

§ 106.45

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#### Title IX Grievance Procedures

#### 106.45

- K-12
- Higher Education complaints, except sexbased harassment complaints involving a student.

#### 106.46

 Higher Education complaints of sex-based harassment involving a student.

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#### Notice of Complaint 106.45 106.46 • Grievance procedures; • All of the 106.45 • A statement that respondent is • Informal resolution process; presumed not responsible; Identities of parties; Right to an advisor; and $\hfill\blacksquare$ The conduct alleged to constitute • Statement on code of conduct on sex discrimination; false statements/information. Dates/locations of incident; • Anti-retaliation statement; and

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evidence.

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#### Hypothetical

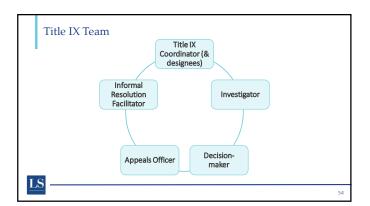
• A statement regarding access to

Priya is a sophomore at State college. While at a party in her sorority house after a Saturday football game, Priya is sexually assaulted by another student, Rob.

Is this Title IX?

If Priya and Rob were employees, which grievance procedure do you use?

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Name of Model	Process	Options
Single Investigator	T IX Coordinator = Investigator = Decision-maker	Can have someone else sign off on decision
Single Investigator +	T IX Coordinator = Investigator → Decision-maker	Inv. makes recommended findings
Title IX Coordinator/Decision -maker	T IX Coordinator → Investigator → T IX Coordinator/Decision-maker	Have Inv. make recommended findings
2020 Regs	T IX Coordinator → Investigator → Decision-maker	Have DM collaborate with Investigator regarding question DM may have

#### Hypothetical

Julie, a middle school student, reports to you that Bryan, an instructional aide, inappropriately touched her shoulders and chest when she went to him for homework assistance.

What investigation model would be best?

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Pregnancy and Parenting

	Discrimination Based on Preg	nancy or Related Conditions	
	Discrimination Specific A	Employee Notice	
	Prohibited	Responsibilities	
			-
T	S		
	<u> </u>		58
			<del></del> -
	Notice of student pregnancy		
		Title IX Coordinator	
	All Employees  Provide the Title IX	<ul> <li>Inform of the district's</li> </ul>	
	All Employees  Provide the Title IX Coordinator's contact information	<ul> <li>Inform of the district's obligations to ensure equal access</li> </ul>	
	All Employees  Provide the Title IX Coordinator's contact information Inform of the district's obligations to ensure equal	<ul> <li>Inform of the district's obligations to ensure equal</li> </ul>	
	All Employees  Provide the Title IX Coordinator's contact information Inform of the district's	<ul> <li>Inform of the district's obligations to ensure equal access</li> </ul>	
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	All Employees      Provide the Title IX     Coordinator's contact     information      Inform of the district's     obligations to ensure equal     access	<ul> <li>Inform of the district's obligations to ensure equal access</li> </ul>	59
	All Employees  Provide the Title IX Coordinator's contact information Inform of the district's obligations to ensure equal access Maintain privacy	<ul> <li>Inform of the district's obligations to ensure equal access</li> </ul>	59
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	All Employees  Provide the Title IX Coordinator's contact information Inform of the district's obligations to ensure equal access Maintain privacy	Inform of the district's obligations to ensure equal access     Maintain privacy	59

- Reasonable modifications according to policies, practices or procedures
  - Cannot fundamentally alter the education program or activity
  - Student can accept or decline
- Limitation of supporting documentation



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34 C.F.R. § 106.40

#### Pregnancy and Related Conditions – Students

- Voluntary access to a separate and comparable portion of the education program or activity
- Voluntary leaves of absence
- Lactation space
- Certification to participate



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#### Pregnancy and Related Conditions - Employees

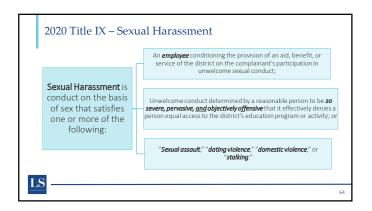


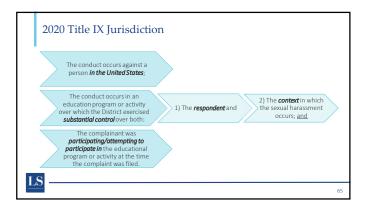
- Comparable treatment to other temporary medical conditions
- Voluntary leaves of absence
- Lactation time and space

§ 106

b.57

2020 Regs Still Apply





#### Hypothetical

RECALL: Julie, a middle school student, reports to you that Bryan, an instructional aide, inappropriately touched her shoulders and chest when she went to him for homework assistance.

Julie notes that this happened last year, around December 2023.

Which Regulations Apply? 2020 Regulations or 2024 Regulations?



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# @LozanoSmith





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