



Association of
Title IX Administrators

Informal Resolution Foundations for K-12 Education

Training and Certification Course

WELCOME!

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- The ATIXA Event Lobby can be accessed by the QR code or visiting www.atixa.org/atixa-event-lobby in your Internet browser.
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Strategic Risk
Management Solutions



Any advice or opinion provided during this training, either privately or to the entire group, is **never** to be construed as legal advice or an assurance of compliance. Always consult with your legal counsel to ensure you are receiving advice that considers existing case law in your jurisdiction, any applicable state or local laws, and evolving federal guidance.

Introduction



The primary focus of this course is to introduce practitioners to Informal Resolution and its application to Title IX and allegations of sex discrimination and sex-based harassment.



Practitioners will learn about the variety of structural and policy decisions that need to be made when implementing an Informal Resolution Process.



Our goal is to provide practitioners with a deep dive into the foundational elements and considerations regarding whether and how to implement Informal Resolution options.

Content Advisory

The content and discussion in this training will necessarily engage with sex- and gender-based harassment, discrimination, violence, and associated sensitive topics that can evoke strong emotional responses.

ATIXA faculty members may offer examples that emulate the language and vocabulary that Title IX practitioners may encounter in their roles including slang, profanity, and other graphic or offensive language. It is not used gratuitously, and no offense is intended.

Note on Vocabulary

- Title IX Resolution Processes specifically address sex- and gender-based discrimination, harassment, and violence
- Common alternative dispute resolution processes focus on opportunities to reduce “conflict” or resolve a “dispute”
- Use of existing alternative dispute resolution terminology is not meant to diminish the reality of sex- or gender-based misconduct

Informal Resolution and Title IX

Title IX

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

20 U.S.C. § 1681 & 34 C.F.R. Part 106 (1972)



Title IX and Equity

- Title IX is a gender equity law
- Equity refers to the understanding that not all individuals have access to the same resources and opportunities
 - Equity focuses on providing support and resources to reduce disparities in access to the education program
 - Title IX seeks to remedy the inequities sex and gender discrimination create
- Schools/Districts may determine their own Informal Resolution (IR) processes
 - Processes must be equitable in execution and access

Essential Compliance Elements

The requirement to **Stop, Prevent,** and **Remedy** guides School/District response in assuring equity and compliance

1

STOP discriminatory conduct

2

PREVENT recurrence, on both individual and School/District levels

3

REMEDY the effects of discrimination, on individuals and the School/District community

The IX Commandments



2024 Title IX Final Rule

- Issued **April 19, 2024**
- Effective and enforceable **August 1, 2024**
- Applies exclusively to incidents occurring **on or after August 1, 2024**
- 2024 is a blend of the 2011 Dear Colleague Letter, 2020 Regulations, and new approaches
- 1561 pages total (1504 Preamble and 57 Regulations)
- More flexibility for institutions in how to structure and staff resolution processes

Review: Applicability

- Education program or activity in the United States
- Downstream effects of external misconduct
- Disciplinary authority over the context of the behavior
- Identity of the Complainant
- Applies to students and employees



Review: Sex Discrimination Definitions

- Discrimination on the basis of sex includes:
 - Sex Stereotypes
 - Sex Characteristics
 - Pregnancy or Related Conditions
 - Sexual Orientation
 - Gender Identity
- “More than *de minimis* harm”
- Sex-Based Harassment
- **Disparate Treatment:** occurs when an institutional policy, practice, or procedure (or an agent thereof) **intentionally** discriminates
- **Disparate Impact:** occurs when an institutional policy, practice, or procedure (or an agent thereof) **unintentionally** discriminates
 - A policy may be intended to be neutral as written but it may be applied in a discriminatory manner

Sex-Based Harassment

- Subset of Sex Discrimination
- Includes (the “Big Six” offenses):
 - Quid Pro Quo (QPQ)
 - Hostile Environment Harassment
 - Sexual Assault
 - Dating Violence
 - Domestic Violence
 - Stalking
- No consent definition provided
 - Develop or adopt one for the institution



General Application Information

- IR can take place at any point before a final determination is made
- May offer IR for incidents that:
 - Could meet the regulatory definitions of Title IX sex discrimination or sex-based harassment, if proven
 - Fall under another policy
 - Do not yet rise to the level of a potential policy violation
- **IR is optional** and may be offered in a variety of forms

IR Within the Title IX Regulations

- Can take place following a report or complaint
- Alleged conduct must meet regulatory sex discrimination or sex-based harassment definition, if proven, and have occurred in the United States
 - Though if it doesn't, there is no prohibition on IR of any kind
- Complainant must have been a student, employee, or other person participating or attempting to participate in the education program or activity at the time of the alleged misconduct
- Respondent is the person alleged to have violated policy
 - Typically, a student or employee, but could be an agent/person authorized to provide services

IR Within the Title IX Regulations

- Facilitator cannot be the Investigator or Decision-Maker
 - Must be free of bias and conflicts of interest and have appropriate training
- Records maintained for minimum of **seven years**
- Cannot be used when:
 - A student alleges **sex-based harassment** against an employee
 - A Complainant alleges sex discrimination against the School/District
 - IR would conflict with applicable federal, state, or local law
- Policy/procedure should include option for IR, if available

Notice

Parties must receive notice prior to agreeing to participate in IR

- Allegations
- IR process requirements
- Any party may withdraw from IR process and initiate/resume Administrative Resolution Process prior to agreeing to a resolution
- A resolution agreement precludes the parties from initiating/resuming the Administrative Resolution Process for the same allegations (unless the Agreement terms are not honored)
- Potential terms that may be requested or offered
- IR agreements are only binding on the parties
- What information the school/district will maintain and whether and how it could be disclosed for use in the Administrative Resolution Process

Informal Resolution Overview

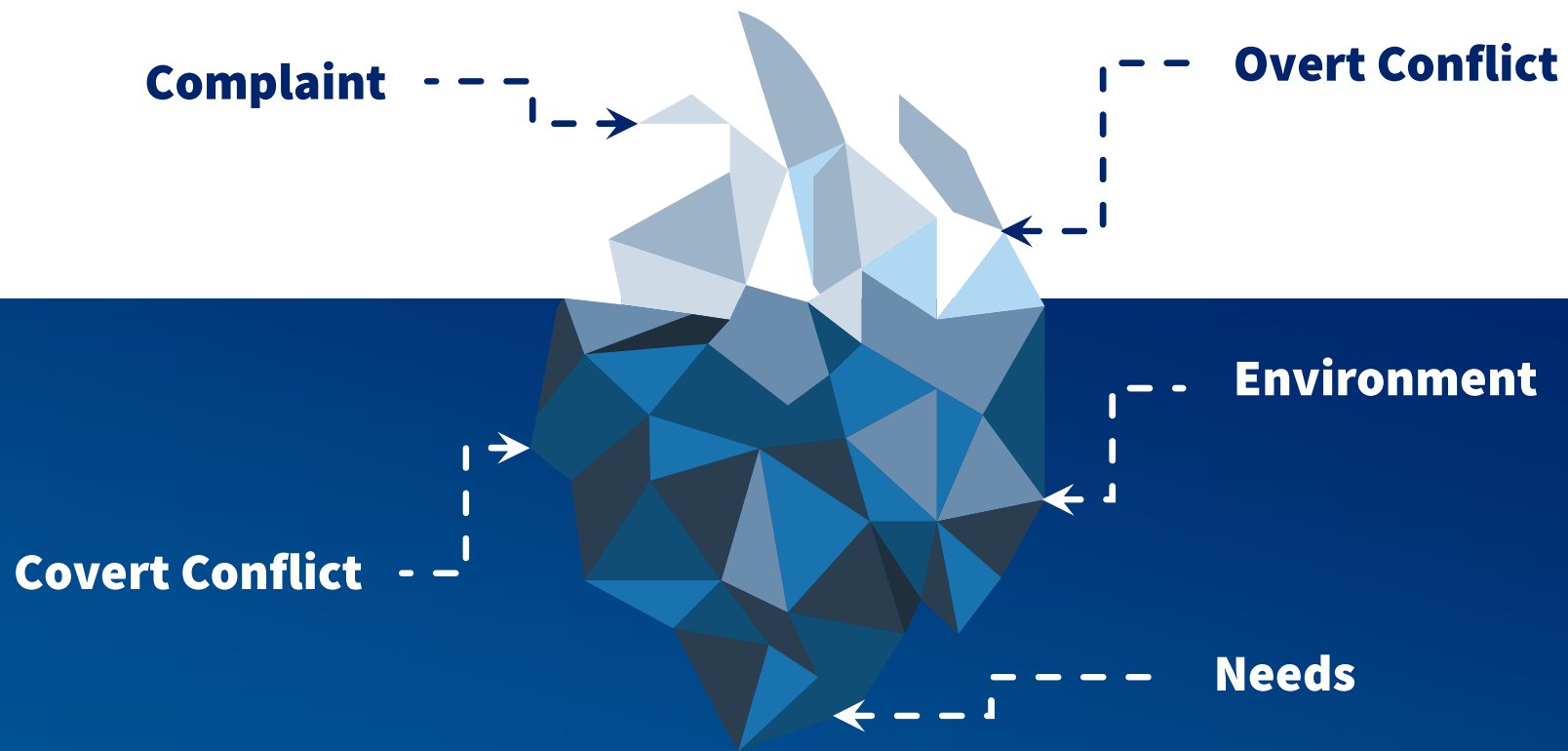
Informal Resolution Goals

- Restore educational access
- Empower choice and agency over the resolution
- Identify and address parties' and school/district community needs
- Address past harm
- Prevent future harm
- Create space for communication and understanding among parties, if desired

Informal Resolution Foundations

- Safety (physical, psychological, and emotional)
- Focus on needs
- Mutually serving
- Intentionality
- Informal \neq casual
- Presence
- Meet parties where they are
- Pre- and post-process support and resources

Complaints and Conflicts



Sources of Conflict

- Conflicts are a sign of unmet needs
- There are three root causes of conflict

1

**Power and
Control**

2

**Care and
Connection**

3

**Respect and
Recognition**

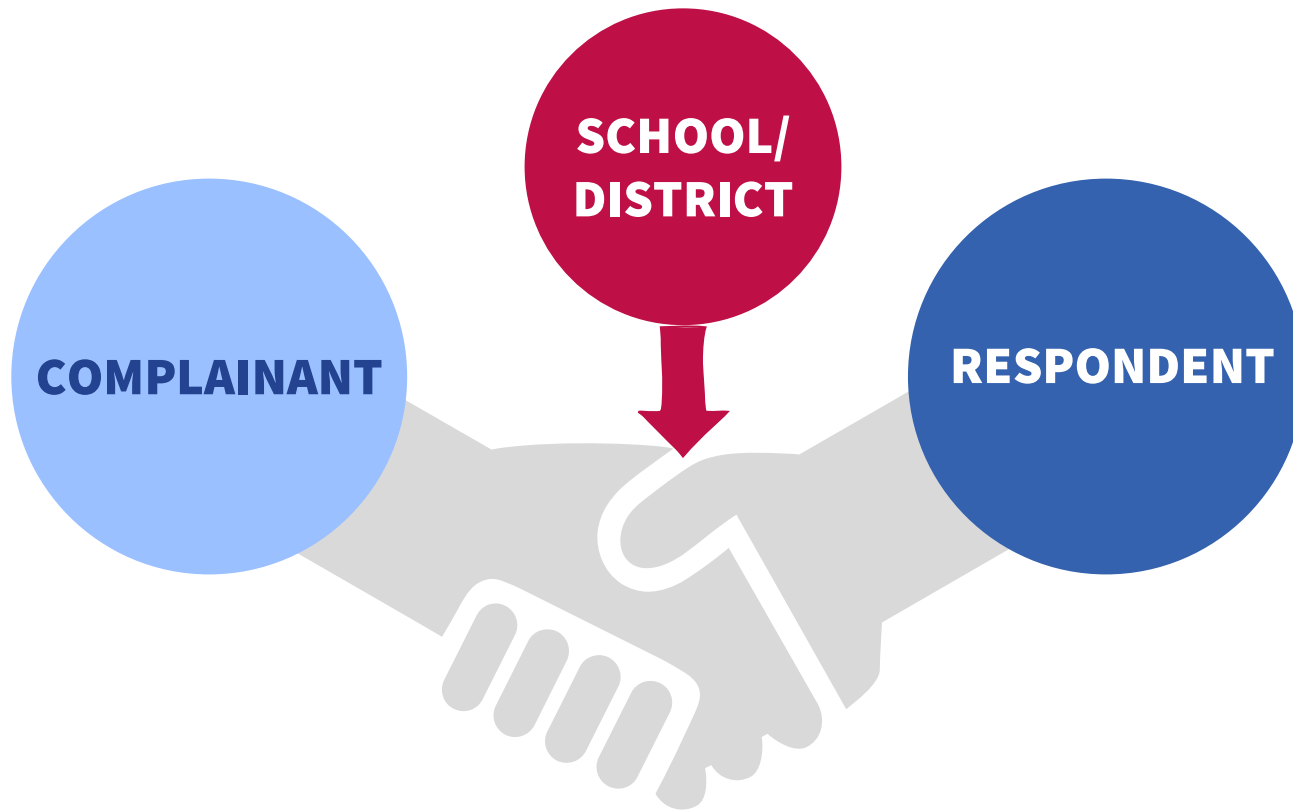
Informal Resolution Benefits

- Can be effective way of addressing complaints for parties and impacted School/District community
- Resolution focuses on the parties
- Empowers choice
- Provides a needs-based process
- Honors privacy similar to the Administrative Resolution Process
- Focuses on ensuring educational access and restoration

Contextual Considerations

- No one-size-fits-all approach to IR
- Not all structures will fit the unique circumstances of sex- and gender-based misconduct complaints
- Policies and processes should be designed with a variety of complaints and parties in mind

Three-Party Model



Timing

- IR may be implemented prior to or in lieu of an Administrative Resolution Process
- Schools/Districts determine whether an investigation should proceed or be paused while IR is attempted
 - Jurisdiction over Respondent
 - Party and witness availability
 - Evidence availability
- Timing may inform IR structure or options that may be available

Common Off-Ramps for IR

Any party may request to pursue an IR at any point prior to a final determination



The diagram illustrates three off-ramp points for an investigation process, represented by three shield-shaped boxes on a road. The first box is red and labeled 'Intake Meeting'. The second box is blue and labeled 'First Respondent Meeting'. The third box is light blue and labeled 'Evidence/Report Review'. The road is depicted as a grey horizontal band with white dashed lines, and the boxes are positioned as if they are off-ramps from this road.

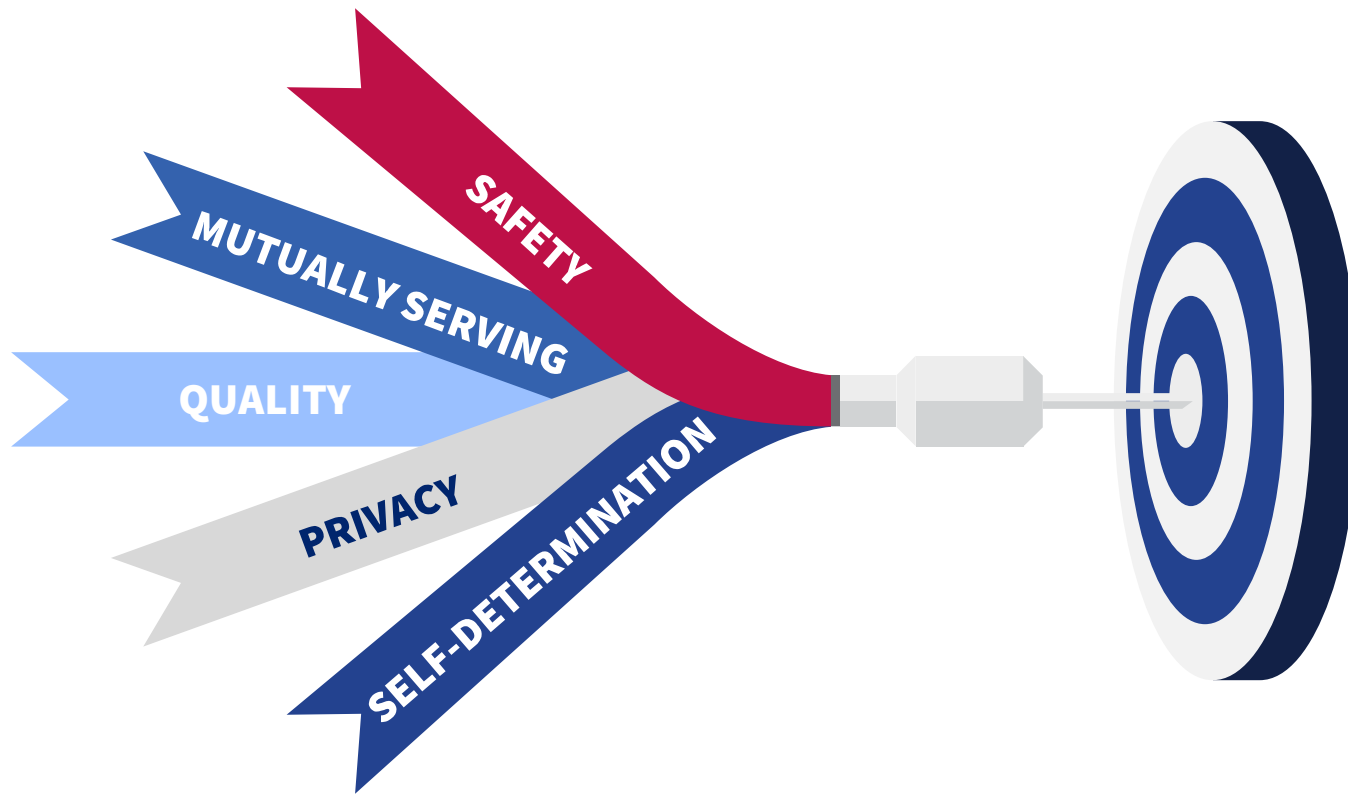
Intake Meeting

First Respondent Meeting

**Evidence/
Report
Review**

Determining Availability and Appropriateness

Key Values



Considerations for Informal Resolution

- Not all complaints are appropriate for IR and not all parties are ready to participate
- Not all forms of IR are appropriate for all circumstances
- Factors to consider:
 - Age and developmental appropriateness for minors
 - History of emotional, physical, or sexual violence between parties
 - Power imbalances between parties
 - Potential to jeopardize safety or well-being
 - Party or parties not sincere or acting in good faith

Informal Resolution Structures and Implementation

Cross-Cultural Considerations

Culture

“[A] set...of rules for being in the world...[and] shared cognitive approaches to reality that distinguish a given group from others.”

Adler, Nancy & Jelinek, Mariann. (2006). Is “Organizational Culture” culture bound?. Human Resource Management. 25. 73 - 90.



Cross-Cultural Considerations

“
Culture eats
strategy for
breakfast.”

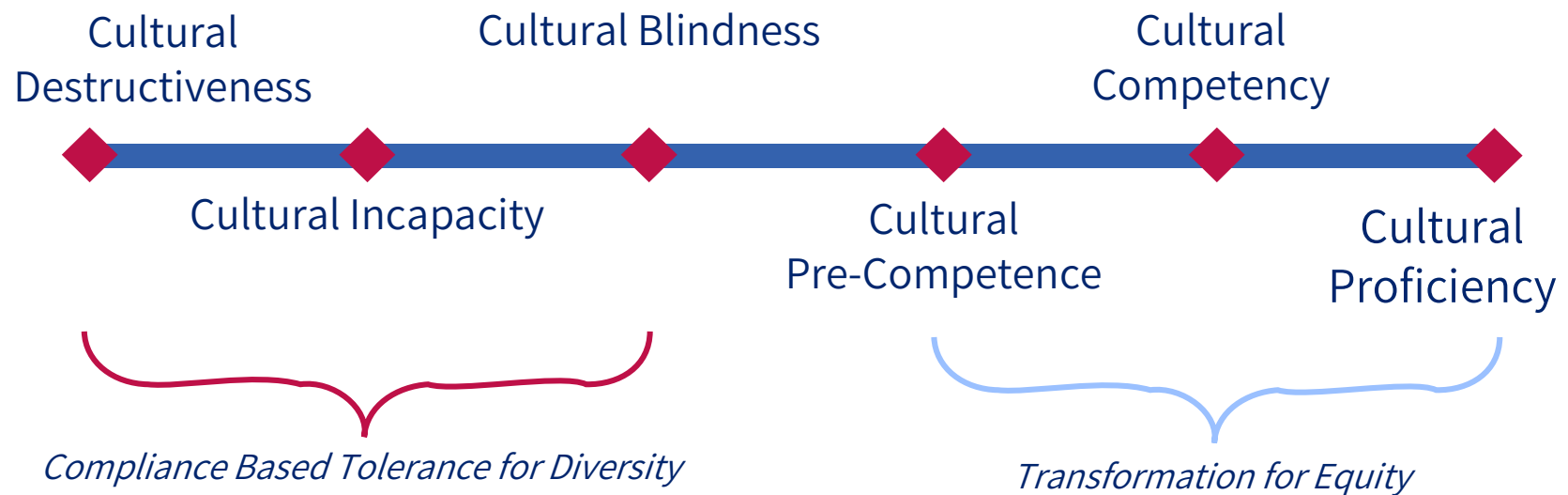
Peter Drucker
Management Theorist

- Practitioners need a thorough understanding of institutional culture and needs
- Culture is learned and adaptable
- People tend to defend and protect their culture
- People are often oblivious to the unique customs of their own culture

Cultural Competence

- Awareness of one's own cultural beliefs and values and how they may be similar to or different from other cultures
- Achieving cultural competence includes:
 - Awareness of one's own worldview
 - Developing positive attitudes toward cultural differences
 - Willingness to accept and respect cultural differences
 - Gaining knowledge of different cultural practices and worldviews
 - Incorporating knowledge into interactions across cultures

Cultural Competence Continuum



Trauma and Culture

A trauma-informed approach refers to the manner in which a school/district thinks about and responds to those who have experienced or may be at risk of experiencing trauma

- Anyone can experience trauma, and reactions vary from person to person
- Culture influences how an individual interprets and assigns meaning to trauma
- Practitioners must understand trauma-informed practices in relation to cultural differences
- Trauma-informed schools/districts have a culture that incorporates a thorough understanding of trauma-informed principles and practices
- Offering IR is one way to move toward trauma-informed practices for all parties

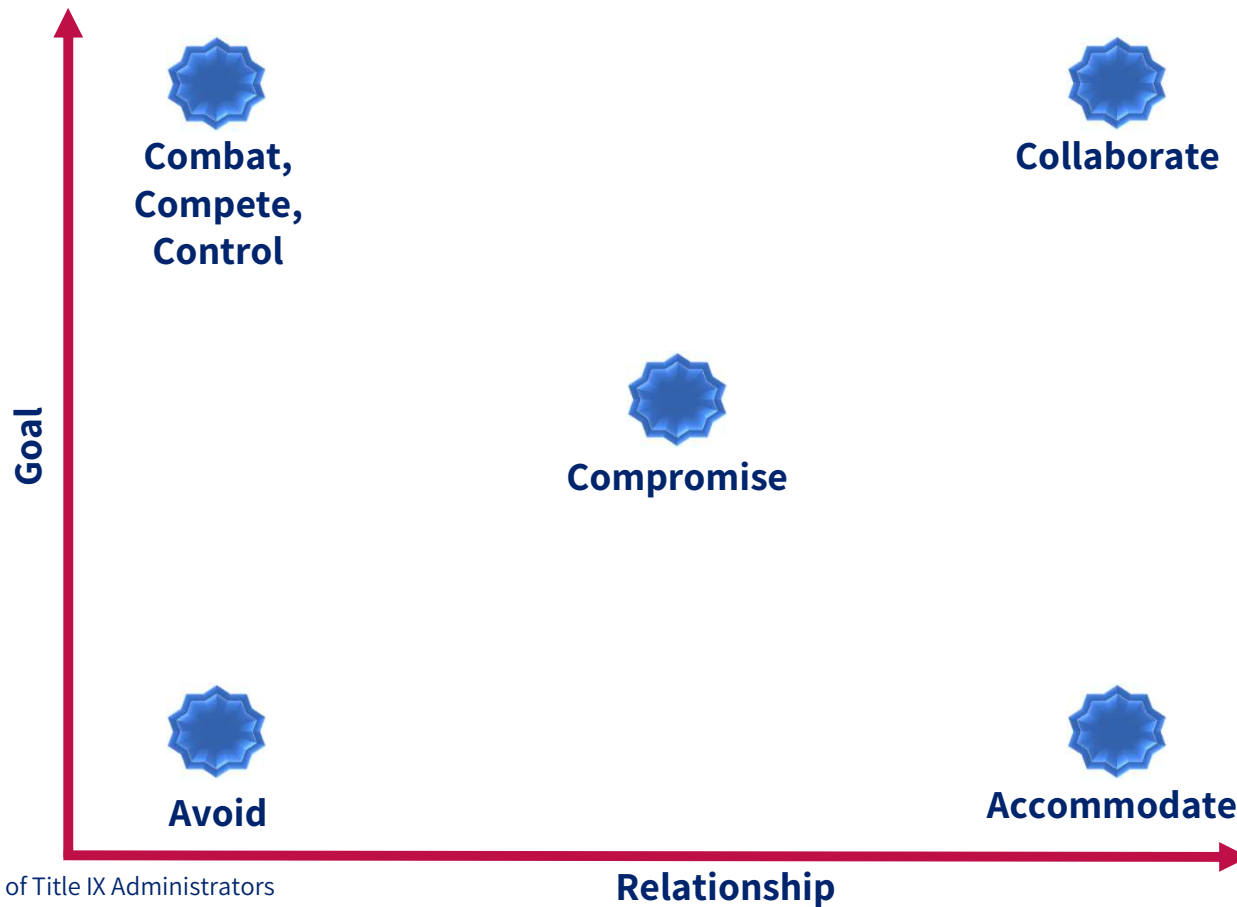
Dynamics of Sex- and Gender-Based Violence

- Culture affects how individuals view and experience gender-based violence (GBV)
- GBV occurs across many different types of relationships
- Relationships, and the power dynamics of those relationships, have an enormous impact on what strategies will provide the most effective responses
- Cultural aspects that may influence how GBV is experienced and viewed include:
 - Spoken and unspoken rules about behavior
 - Bodily autonomy
 - Fear, shame, and evaluation
 - Laws
 - Religious beliefs

Culture and Conflict Resolution

- Cultures are embedded in every conflict because every conflict arises within human relationships
- Affects the ways we name, frame, blame, and attempt to tame conflict
- Influences how individuals engage in conflict resolution

Approaches to Conflict Resolution



Intersectionality

- Framework for understanding how aspects of a person's identities contribute to various disadvantages and privileges
- Recognizes that identity markers do not exist independently, and each informs the others
- How one travels the world
- Some identities may be more salient than others depending upon context



Intersectionality

Framework for understanding how aspects of a person's identities contribute to various disadvantages and privileges

RACE

Often a dominant identity when navigating systems

GENDER AND GENDER IDENTITY

More salient for gender diverse individuals encountering lack of knowledge or understanding

ABILITY

Ability status often diminished based on intersecting identities

ETHNICITY

Can create a feeling of being siloed into one group or another

SEXUALITY

May be more dominant for males than females

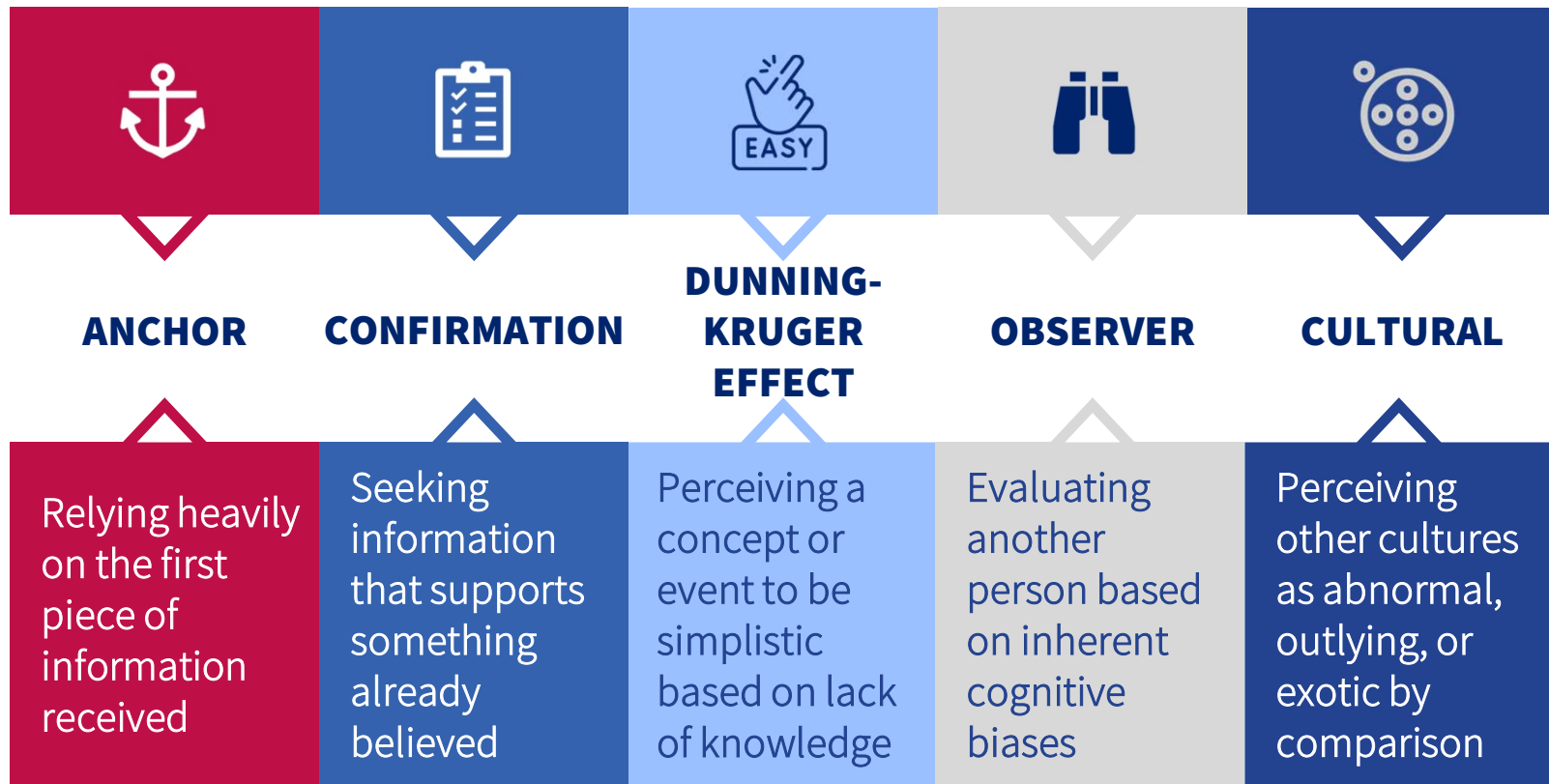
What is Bias?

- A preference or tendency to like or dislike
- A cognitive process
- Can be a systematic error in our thinking process
- Mental shortcuts
- A thought process developed over time through repeated personal experience
- Implicit or explicit
- Can be intentional, but generally unintentional

What is Bias?

- Formed from stereotypes, societal norms, cultural experiences, and expectations of the people around you
- Can affect our perceptions of Complainants **and** Respondents
- Common pre-conceptions about Complainants **and** Respondents
- Can affect our perceptions of others within the process or associated with the process

Types of Bias



Common Bases for Implicit Bias

- Ability
- Age
- Citizenship status
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Gender Identity/Expression
- Health status
- Marital status
- Mental health status
- National origin
- Parental status
- Physical attributes
- Race
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Socioeconomic status

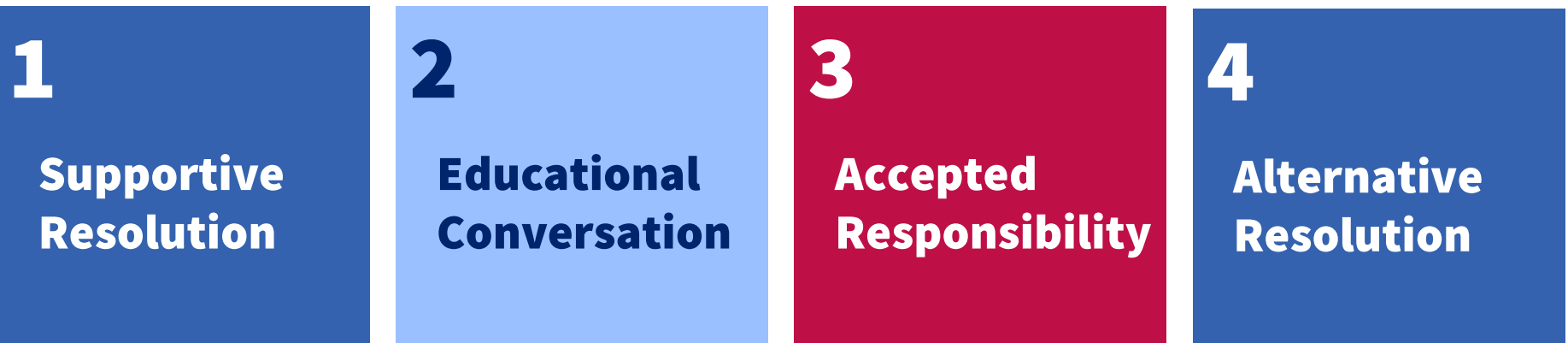
Strategies for Addressing Bias

- Provide robust training
 - Cultural Competency
 - Title IX regulatory requirements
 - IR skills and best practices
- Encourage IR Facilitator to share potential concerns or areas of bias with TIXC
 - Assign an alternative IR Facilitator if a potential concern or bias is present

ATIXA's Informal Resolution Framework

ATIXA's Informal Resolution Framework

ATIXA's Framework contemplates four categories of IR:



Supportive Resolution

- Title IX Coordinator (TIXC) resolves the report by providing the Complainant with remedies and supportive measures
- Complaint not required
- Respondents are typically not involved unless a supportive measure directly involves or impacts them
- Parties may challenge the provision, denial, modification, or termination of supportive measures



Supportive Resolution

- Complainant declines to pursue Administrative Resolution Process
- TIXC works with Complainant to determine reasonable and appropriate supportive measures
 - May not **unreasonably** burden either party
 - No cost to the Complainant
- Cannot disclose supportive measures to anyone other than the Complainant, unless necessary to implement the supportive measure or restore or preserve access to the education program or activity

Supportive Resolution

Examples include:

- Academic adjustment
- Monitoring at certain times/locations within the school day
- Transportation assistance; escorts
- No Contact Orders; involves notifying the other party
- Counseling
- Modified work schedule



Supportive Resolution

- **Facilitation Foundations**

- What does TIXC and/or IR Facilitator need to know?
- Work collaboratively to identify reasonable and appropriate supports
- Empower choice
- Be cautious about incomplete accounts

- **Appropriate Documentation**

- Decision to decline complaint and/or other resolution options
- Option to pursue complaint in the future
- What was offered, declined, and implemented
 - How to request additional support or modifications
 - Document plan for future academic years

Supportive Resolution Agreement Example

“Agreement” between TIXC and Complainant that outlines specific supportive measures to be implemented

Example:

- TIXC (or the school counselor) will contact Mr. Simmons (AP English), Dr. Gaines (Calculus), and Ms. Lyles (U.S. Government) to request they work directly with student regarding academic adjustments appropriate to their classes. Student/parent will be cc'ed on emails and student is encouraged to work directly with their teachers to make specific arrangements.
- TIXC will work with the school counselor to arrange a conversation with the yearbook advisor to ensure that both students remain involved but will minimize in-person meetings that both students need to attend.

Educational Conversation

- Conversation between Facilitator and Respondent about reported behavior
- Does not result in disciplinary action
- Documented for future reference
- Provides an opportunity to stop behavior and provide Respondent with any necessary support
- Could be accompanied by a written cease and desist instruction when warranted



Educational Conversation

- Complaint not required
 - Parent/Guardian notification optional, but recommended
- Complainant declines to pursue Administrative Resolution Process
- TIXC meets with Respondent to discuss reported concerns
 - Respondent not required to participate in meeting
 - Respondent not required to provide any response/explanation for concerning behavior
- Cannot disclose details of conversation to Complainant without Respondent's agreement to do so; can verify whether conversation took place

Educational Conversation

- **Facilitation Foundations**

- What does TIXC and/or IR Facilitator need to know?
- Work collaboratively to identify discussion topics and necessary supports
- Be cautious about incomplete accounts

- **Appropriate Documentation**

- Decision to decline complaint and/or other resolution options
- Option to pursue complaint in the future
- Whether a cease-and-desist directive was given
- How to request additional support or modifications

Accepted Responsibility

- Respondent accepts responsibility for violating policy and accepts the recommended sanction(s) prior to a final determination
- Accepted Responsibility may allow, but does not require, the parties to communicate directly about the allegations with the assistance of a third-party Facilitator



Accepted Responsibility

- TIXC, Complainant, and Respondent agree to sanctions/corrective actions
- If the school/district uses a **progressive sanctioning model**, the TIXC will need access to the Respondent's prior disciplinary history
- If a Respondent has an **Individualized Education Plan (IEP)**, school/district may need to follow the disciplinary process for students with disabilities (consult with special education director and/or legal counsel)
- **No appeal process** if all parties agree on IR terms
- Document parties' decision to not pursue Administrative Resolution Process

Accepted Responsibility

- **Facilitation Foundations**

- What does TIXC and/or IR Facilitator need to know?
- Discuss Complainant and Respondent needs and goals
- Ensure all parties/parents/guardians are voluntarily participating
- All parties must agree to findings/sanctions
- Outcome enforcement procedures

- **Appropriate Documentation**

- Decision to decline Administrative Resolution Process and/or other resolution options
- Signed agreement

Signed Resolution Agreement Example

Respondent accepts responsibility for violating the Sexual Harassment policy by repeatedly making unwelcome sexual comments to Complainant in person and sending sexual content to Complainant via text message between March and September 2023

- Respondent agrees to attend sexual harassment training provided by Human Resources by December 15, 2023
- Respondent agrees to have no contact with Complainant unless it is expressly work related
- Respondent will be placed on employment probation for a period of one calendar year
- Failure to adhere to this agreement will result in disciplinary action for Respondent's failure to comply

Alternative Resolution (AR)

- Parties agree to resolve the complaint through an AR mechanism such as facilitated dialogue, shuttle negotiation, or restorative practices
- AR may allow, but does not require, the parties to communicate directly about the allegations with the assistance of a third-party Facilitator



Alternative Resolution

- Encompasses any mechanism used to resolve a report or complaint that is not a Supportive Resolution, Acceptance of Responsibility, or the Administrative Resolution Process
- May or may not result in formalized agreement between the parties and school/district
 - Agreements are only binding on the parties
- Should always include intake, preparation, facilitation, and closure phases
- Five common alternative resolution mechanisms:
 - Conflict Coaching
 - Facilitated Dialogue
 - Shuttle Negotiation
 - Mediation
 - Restorative Practices

Conflict Coaching

- Party, usually the Complainant, works one-on-one with a trained Facilitator
- Discuss the behavior they want to address
- Explore strategies for addressing the behavior directly with other party
- Often includes role-playing practice



Conflict Coaching

STRENGTHS

- Prevents low-level concerns from escalating
 - Empowers parties and builds conflict resolution skills
-

CHALLENGES

- Relies on one party's version of the events
 - Dependent upon initiating party's willingness to engage
-

CONTEXT CUES

- Pre-existing relationship
 - Low-level conduct
 - Respondent may struggle with reading social cues
-

BEHAVIORS

- Unwelcome communication
- Lingering or lurking
- Repeated requests for dates

Facilitated Dialogue

- Parties engage in direct conversation about incident/conflict
- Use the assistance of a mutually serving Facilitator
- Focus on providing space and framework for communication versus finding agreement



Facilitated Dialogue

STRENGTHS

- Allows for dialogue without pressure to reach an agreement
 - Easily adaptable to in-person or virtual settings
-

CHALLENGES

- May leave parties feeling the situation is unresolved
 - Can easily turn into debate rather than dialogue
-

CONTEXT CUES

- Parties open to direct interaction
 - Conduct may not rise to the level of a policy violation
 - Goal of perspective sharing and increasing understanding
-

BEHAVIORS

- Offensive or hate speech
- Not respecting boundaries
- Behaviors occurring around but not directed at the Complainant

Shuttle Negotiation

- Common approach in K-12
- Third-party Facilitator acts as a go-between for the parties to negotiate a resolution
- Often takes several conversations with each party before a resolution is reached



Shuttle Negotiation

STRENGTHS

- Allows for resolution without direct interaction
 - Flexible to accommodate different communication preferences
-

CHALLENGES

- Relies heavily upon Facilitator's accuracy and skill
 - Often does not address underlying feelings and needs
-

CONTEXT CUES

- Parties do not want or are restricted from direct communication
 - Goal of sharing perspectives and reaching agreements
 - Parties have ongoing relationship/overlap in education, social, or employment activities
-

BEHAVIORS

- Sexual harassment
- Dating or domestic violence
- Sexual exploitation

Mediation

- Structured process where mutually serving Facilitator fosters an environment of open communication between parties with an intention of reaching an agreement
- Facilitators tend to follow facilitative and/or transformative mediation models for Title IX complaints
- Mediators tend to keep their own views of the matter hidden



Mediation

STRENGTHS

- Seeks to address short- and long-term issues
- Structured to facilitate developing a tangible agreement

CHALLENGES

- Assumption that both parties contributed to causing the issue being mediated
- Not appropriate for matters with unresolved power imbalances
- Often results in compromise; no party is fully satisfied

CONTEXT CUES

- Parties willing to be in the same space
- Limited or no power imbalances
- Flexibility about what outcome may result

BEHAVIORS

- Sexual harassment
- Sexual exploitation

Restorative Practices

- May take the form of a circle, conferencing, or an exchange of statements
- Focuses on identifying:
 - Who was harmed
 - How they were harmed
 - Respondent taking accountability for causing harm
 - Parties determining how Respondent can best repair the harm
 - Reintegrating the Respondent
 - Responsibilities and commitments to community



Restorative Practices

STRENGTHS

- Provide Complainant opportunity to be heard and have questions answered
 - Allow parties to work collaboratively to determine how harm and relationships can be repaired
-

CHALLENGES

- Cultural shift for Respondents to take accountability
 - Requires highly skilled and experienced Facilitator
 - Often time-intensive for preparation and facilitation
-

CONTEXT CUES

- Respondent is taking accountability for causing harm
 - Desire to repair a pre-existing relationship
 - Openness to listening to others' experiences and perspectives
-

BEHAVIORS

- Sexual exploitation
- Hazing

Activity: Case Study

Tate and Cal

Initial Contact

Tate, a senior, and their parent file a Title IX complaint alleging that another student, Cal, repeatedly and intentionally touched Tate's buttocks and breasts during basketball practice and in the locker room. Tate alleges the behavior has been going on for several months and Cal hasn't stopped when Tate has asked Cal to stop. Tate and their parent aren't sure how they want the matter resolved yet, but they want Cal to be "spoken to," for the behavior to stop, and for the coaches and volunteers to be aware of Cal's behavior. In earlier conversations, Tate's parent said they wished Cal would leave the team entirely.

If this complaint were to be resolved informally, would it fall within the Title IX Regulations? Why or why not?

Tate and Cal

Initial Screening

- Is this situation appropriate for a possible IR?
- Is this a scenario where we need to follow IR procedures as specified under the Title IX Regulations?
- What IR method might be appropriate?
- What potential outcomes can you envision based upon the information provided?
- What other issues do you “spot” as you think about approaching the parties regarding IR?

Alternative Resolution Process

Who Should Facilitate?

- Schools/Districts have discretion to determine who can serve as an IR Facilitator
 - Cannot be Investigator or Decision-Maker for the same matter
- Models:
 - TIXC can serve as Facilitator
 - Identified Deputy TIXC who typically facilitates
 - Facilitator pool
 - Student services, human resources, teachers
- School/District may contract or hire external Facilitators
- TIXC will need to determine appropriateness of Facilitator preference requests from parties
- Must be trained IR Facilitator

Parent/Guardian* Role(s)

- Parent/Guardian may accompany their student in the Resolution Process, including IR
 - Parent/Guardian can decide whether to opt for IR
 - Attend (and participate) in IR meetings and preparation meetings
 - Decide whether a resolution is acceptable
 - Support and assist their student in conveying experience and position
- IR Facilitator may need to navigate when student and parent/guardian want different outcomes or disagree on participating in IR

*Parent/Guardian refers to a parent, guardian, or authorized legal representative

Advisors

- School/District policy determines if Advisors are permitted during IR
- Assess whether school/district policy allows Advisors in other similar processes
 - Full participation/representation vs. limited role
 - Representative for school/district
- Clearly explain Advisor role and expectations in published policy/procedures and first Advisor interaction
- Advisors can be crucial to getting to an agreement between the parties, especially if attorneys are already involved

Intake

- First step in process
- Best facilitated by the person or pair running the process
- All parties need to participate in individual intake sessions

Intake Session Goals

- Build rapport
- Evaluate emotional, mental, and physical safety for participation
- Ascertain motivation and goals
- Explain AR process and manage expectations
- Identify support resources for parties
- Determine what would prevent continuation of process for each party

Facilitator Reminders

- For most parties, this is a new process
- Provide reference materials for parties after the intake meeting
- Facilitator's goal is to make the process or action easier for parties
- Do not take parties' actions personally
- Avoid making assumptions and challenge assumptions the parties make

Positions, Interests, and Needs

P

Positions: specific demands; a chosen stance; a solution upon which a party has decided

Example: “I want the Respondent suspended”

I

Interests: underlying motivations, hopes, concerns, desires, or worries that led a party to their position; what helps a party choose their solution

Example: “I don’t want to have classes with the Respondent”

N

Needs: what a party must have

Example: safety

Activity: Case Study

David and Andrea

Initial Contact

David has been referred to Title IX by Human Resources. He shared that his ex-fiancé Andrea (also an employee) has repeatedly contacted him after their relationship ended, including leaving notes on his vehicle on school property that stated, “This is not over;” approaching him after school; appearing at his home; and multiple phone calls and text messages demanding that he speak to her, sometimes during the school day. Andrea has also asked his friends where David is and has shown up at athletic events based on the district’s social media posts about the where and when of post-season play.

David explains that he has repeatedly asked Andrea to leave him alone and not contact him, but she will not comply with his requests. He believes Andrea is having a hard time letting go of their relationship, and he is now seeking your help to resolve the situation.

What could resolution look like based on David’s story?

David and Andrea

Initial Screening

- Is this situation appropriate for a possible IR?
- Is this a scenario where we need to follow IR procedures as specified under the Title IX Regulations?
- What IR method might be appropriate?
- What potential outcomes can you envision based upon the information provided?
- What other issues do you “spot” as you think about approaching the parties regarding IR?

David and Andrea

Intake with David

David explained that he started dating Andrea in college, and they were a couple when they both started working for the district. Last year, David proposed, and Andrea accepted. They moved in together. However, at the end of the last school year their relationship became strained, and they started arguing on a regular basis. David shared that he decided to end the relationship over the summer and moved into an apartment with friends. David stated that he does not want to have any further contact with Andrea and there is no reason that she should be continuing to contact him (i.e., no shared children, pets, property, etc.). He requests a No Contact Order and is considering whether to file a Title IX complaint.

David and Andrea

Next Steps

- Based on the information David has provided, what would your next steps be?
- What is your process for issuing a No Contact Order?

David and Andrea

Conversation with Andrea

Andrea provides similar information regarding the history of her relationship with David. She explains that when they were together, she consented to allowing David to take nude photographs of her at multiple times. Andrea has heard a rumor that David still has the photos and has commented that he plans to post them online. Andrea has been trying to speak to David about deleting the photos, including contacting him during and outside of the school day, but he refuses to answer or return her calls or speak to her in person. Although Andrea was not happy about the relationship ending and would be open to rekindling things with David, all she really wants at this point is for David to delete the photos.

Positions, Interests, and Needs

David



I want Andrea to leave me alone



We aren't in a relationship; there is no reason for us to communicate



Cooperation, ease

Andrea



David needs to delete the photos



He has no reason to keep the photos and I don't want them being shared



Consideration, respect, security

David and Andrea

Next Steps

- How could a Facilitator approach resolving the situation between David and Andrea?
- What pieces of information provide direction for possible resolution options?

Intake Meeting Structure



**GATHER PARTY'S
PERSPECTIVE**



**EXPLORE POSITIONS,
INTERESTS, NEEDS,
AND FEELINGS**



**ASCERTAIN PARTY'S
MOTIVATION**



**ASK WHAT CANNOT BE
SHARED WITH OTHER
PARTY**



**DISCUSS PARTY'S
GOALS**



**OBTAIN WRITTEN
CONSENT**

Evaluation Frameworks

- Pay attention to cues indicating whether a party is in a conducive mental and emotional state for AR participation
- Assessing readiness and amenability for AR is both an art and a science
- Three example frameworks:
 - The 10 D's of Opposition
 - Four Levels of Accountability
 - ATIXA's Policy Framework

10 D's of Opposition



DEFLECT



DELAY



DENY



DISCOUNT



DECEIVE



DIVIDE



DULCIFY



DISCREDIT



DESTROY



DEAL

Four Levels of Accountability

Want to repair
harm and
relationships

Desire to
understand
impact of harm

Ability to
acknowledge
you caused
harm

Ability to
acknowledge
someone was
harmed

ATIXA's Policy Framework

Checklist outlining considerations for determining appropriateness and parties' preparedness for AR

Considerations:

- Parties' amenability to AR
- Likelihood of resolution
- Parties' motivation
- Civility
- Results of violence risk assessment
- Emergency removal implications
- Complaint initiation
- Facilitator skill
- Emotional investment
- Rationality
- Parties' goals
- Resources

Preparation Meetings

- Number and structure of preparation meetings depends on AR mechanism and parties
- Facilitator should go into each meeting prepared with what they want to achieve during the meeting
 - AR can take unexpected turns and Facilitators should not plan for a particular outcome
- Parties may not get to a place where they are ready to interact

Nonviolent Communication (NVC)

- Method of communication alleged to increase empathy and improve quality of life
- Four stages include:
 - Observations
 - Feelings
 - Needs
 - Requests/Offers

If "violent" means acting in ways that result in hurt or harm, then much of how we communicate could indeed be called "violent" communication.

Nonviolent COMMUNICATION

A Language of Life



Words matter. Find common ground with anyone, anywhere, at any time, both personally and professionally.

MARSHALL B. ROSENBERG, PhD

Foreword by Deepak Chopra

Endorsed by Tony Robbins, Arun Gandhi, Marianne Williamson, John Gray, Jack Canfield, Dr. Thomas Gordon, Riane Eisler, and others

Preparation Questions

Complainant

- What would you like the Respondent to learn as a result of this incident?
- What would help you feel confident that this behavior will not happen again?
- Do you want to be able to have contact with the Respondent following this incident?
- What did you need in the moment that the incident was happening?

Respondent

- What do you think you need to learn as a result of this incident?
- Are there any underlying issues that contributed to your choices and behaviors that need to be addressed?
- What would help you feel confident that this behavior will not happen again?

Facilitation

1

Opening

- Introductions
- Process explanation
- Guidelines/ground rules

2

Connection and Communication

- Exchange of information between parties
- Reflections and responses

3

Developing Agreements

- Requests and offers
- Negotiation
- Expectations for non-compliance

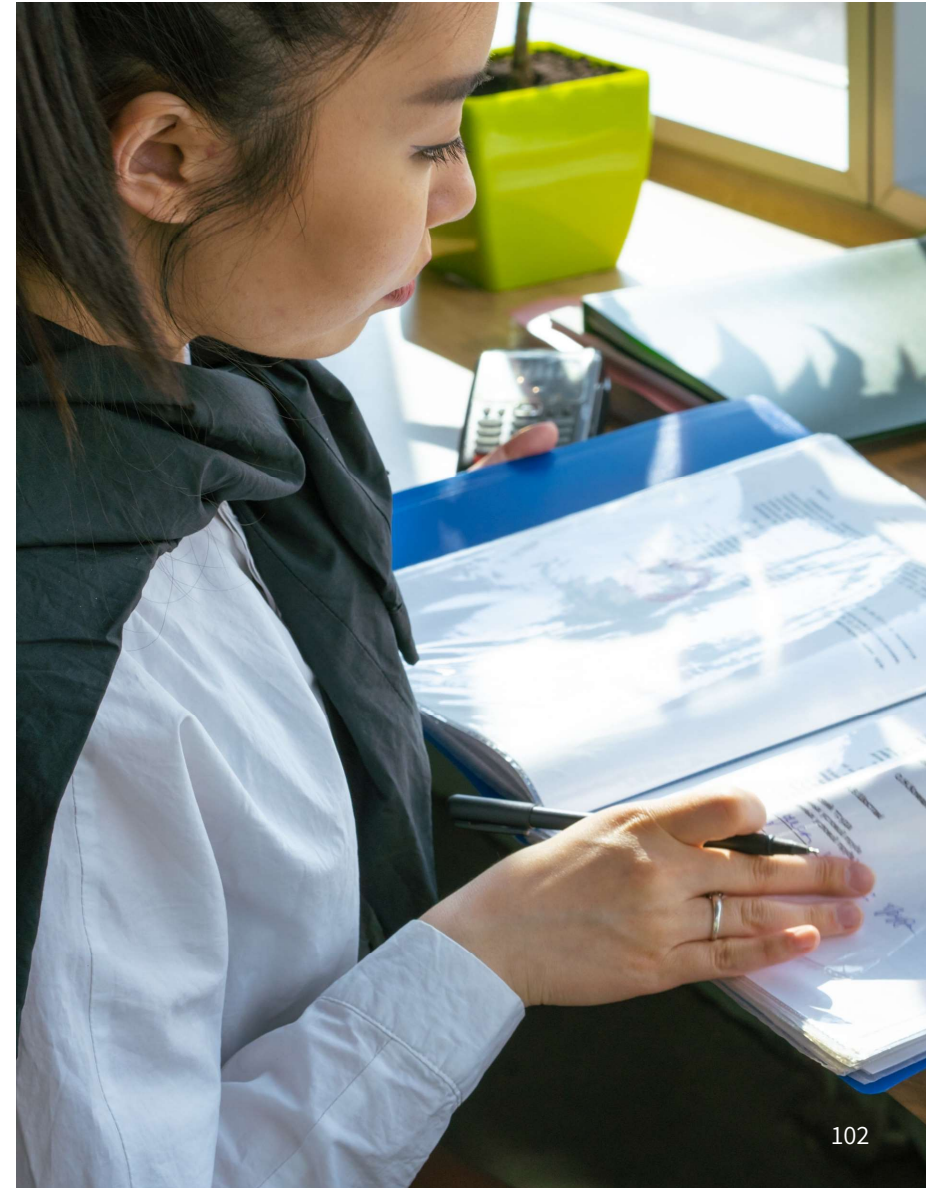
4

Closing

- Conversation recap
- Review and finalize any agreements

Process Closure

- Responsibilities for TIXC and the Facilitator(s)
- ATIXA recommends the TIXC approve any agreements before they are finalized
- Process closure includes:
 - Written agreements, if any
 - Follow-up with the parties
 - Facilitation debrief
 - Documentation
- If behavior continues after reaching a resolution, Complainant can initiate/resume the Administrative Resolution Process to address the additional instance(s)



Resolution Agreements

- Facilitator documents resolution from process notes
- Once approved by TIXC: clear communication regarding what is required of parties, if anything
- Copies of resolution are provided to parties for review
- School/District will determine whether parties will sign an acknowledgment of acceptance
- Final copy is provided to the parties and maintained by TIXC
- Document sufficient details to allow for an evaluation of a possible pattern in the event of a future complaint

Unsuccessful Resolution

- Facilitator or TIXC should meet with the parties individually to discuss why AR was unsuccessful
 - Gauge ability and willingness to revisit outcome and continue AR process
- Refer the complaint back to the Administrative Resolution Process to resume or start as appropriate
 - Complainant has option to withdraw the complaint
- For unapproved proposed resolutions, TIXC must provide a rationale
- Facilitator should provide process notes to the TIXC to be included in the complaint file

Process Considerations

Setting the Tone

TIXCs need to consider the tone they hope to set for IR in their process

- Participant experience from intake through resolution
- Policy language
- Print and web-based materials
- Presentations and training
- On- and off-ramps

Policy Considerations

- Determine if school/district policy allows for AR
 - Permissiveness
 - Deal breakers
- Determine whether school/district support exists for AR and to review/amend policies
- Know school/district processes to review/amend policies
 - Process
 - Approval
 - Legal counsel review

Process Structure Considerations

- ATIXA recommends the TIXC have authority to deny a proposed resolution
 - Responsible for ensuring equity within a complaint and across complaints
 - Requirement to stop, prevent, and remedy
- Schools/Districts need clearly defined deal-breakers
- Accurate understanding of the support and comfort level in applying AR in Title IX matters

Facilitation Structure Considerations

- Schools/Districts need to determine which of the IR and AR options they will offer
- Identify existing conflict/alternative Resolution Processes within the school/district
- Identify and train Facilitators
- Determine the types of complaints the school/district will resolve with internal vs. external Facilitators



Privacy Considerations

- Who is invited to participate?
- Non-Disclosure Agreements
 - All parties sign?
 - Advisors
 - How to address a violation of the agreement?
 - Violation by non-affiliated parties?
- Required Reporting
 - Abuse of minor/elder/person with a disability
 - Threats of harm to self
 - Threats of harm to others

Notetaking

- Facilitators often take notes to help all participants track issues and agreements during the IR process
- School/Districts must determine if Facilitator notes are maintained, and if so, by whom and how



Information Admissibility in the Administrative Resolution Process

School/District choice to allow information from an AR to be used in the Administrative Resolution Process

- A flexible approach allows schools/districts options and sets expectations with parties involved in each matter
- Respondents may hesitate to participate without some assurance that information they share won't be used against them in another venue
- Confidentiality agreements/NDAs and/or information sharing expectations can be part of the agreement to participate

ATIXA's Recommended Policy Language

“Under circumstances approved by the TIXC, the parties may agree, as a condition of engaging in Informal Resolution, that statements made, or evidence shared, during the Informal Resolution Process will not be considered in the Administrative Resolution Process unless all parties consent.”

Record Retention

- Title IX complaints and associated information must be maintained for a **minimum of seven (7) years**
 - IR is part of this recordkeeping requirement
- Schools/Districts need to determine:
 - Who maintains records
 - How records are retained
 - Whether to create and maintain recordings of AR meetings
 - Whether parties may request to review or amend records
 - Protocol for releasing records as requested and permitted by law

Questions?





Association of
Title IX Administrators

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