JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

KEITH T. HAYASHI
SUPERINTENDENT

STATE OF HAWAIʻI
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA ʻOIHANA HOʻONAʻAUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAIʻI 96804

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

September 3, 2024

Dear Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s) and Students:

The safety, social-emotional health, and well-being of our students continue to be a top priority for the Hawaii State Department of Education (Department). The Department is committed to fostering culturally responsive, supportive, and inclusive learning environments in all schools and classrooms. In line with this commitment, the Department emphasizes the following:

Hawaii Administrative Rules, Chapter 19

The *Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR), Chapter 19 Student Misconduct, Discipline, School Searches, and Seizures, Reporting Offenses, Police Interviews and Arrests, Restitution for Vandalism, Complaint Procedure and Investigation of Discrimination, Harassment (Including Sexual Harassment), Bullying and/or Retaliation* includes definitions, behavioral offenses, and procedures for filing complaints of discrimination, bullying, harassment (including sexual harassment), and retaliation. This rule also guides schools to maintain a safe and inclusive learning environment, ensure appropriate responses to student misconduct, and protect the rights and well-being of students in compliance with state regulations.

It is important that you discuss this rule with your child(ren) to ensure his or her understanding of this rule. A copy of this rule can be found at *HIDOE-Chapter 19*. Additionally, in this link, there is a template titled, “Department of Education Hawaii Administrative Rules Title 8, Chapter 19 Complaint Form,” which is used for filing complaints of student-to-student discrimination, bullying, harassment (including sexual harassment), and retaliation to be used by parent(s)/legal guardian(s) or other adults on behalf of students. Individuals who do not have access to or prefer not to use this complaint form may make a complaint in either writing or orally to the school, complex area, or Civil Rights Compliance Branch.

Speak Now Mobile Application
The *Speak Now* anti-bullying application (app), visit *HIDOE-Speak Now*, recommended for students in grades 4-12, is a reporting tool that provides students another way to report incidents of bullying on Department campuses, transportation, and during Department-sponsored activities that the students have either experienced or witnessed. Reports may be submitted anonymously. The free application is available to download from the Apple App and Google Play stores.

School Safety
The Department is dedicated to ensuring all schools have safe and secure environments. Enhanced safety measures such as regular drills, adequate security personnel, and law enforcement partnerships will continue to be utilized to maintain school safety. For more information about safety at school, visit *Hawaii Public Schools, Safety at School* portal.

Social and Emotional Learning
The Department recognizes the importance of addressing the social and emotional learning (SEL) of our students and provides resources, support, and professional development for educators and families to promote these skills which may include practices such as restorative discipline and trauma-informed care. For more information about SEL, visit *Hawaii Public Schools, SEL Resources for Parents, Families, and Educators* portal.

Student Behavior, Mental Health, and Overall Well-Being (Here to HELP)
The Department is committed to fostering a positive school climate that promotes the well-being of all students by working toward creating inclusive learning environments that respect and value the diversity of all students. This includes providing appropriate resources and services for students who are in need of support. For more information about Student Behavior, Mental Health, and Overall Well-Being (Here to HELP), visit *Hawaii Public Schools, Here to HELP* portal.

Should you have questions and/or would like to request a printed copy of the HAR Chapter 19 rule, please contact your child's respective school administrator for assistance.

Mahalo for your partnership and cooperation in keeping all students safe and well.

Sincerely,



Keith T. Hayashi
Superintendent

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