**Heritage Academy**

**Title IX Grievance Procedure**

Heritage Academy (“the School”) complies with federal and state laws prohibiting unlawful discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability and age in its programs and activities. Such programs and activities may include, but are not limited to, admissions, recruitment, academic programs, counseling and guidance, discipline classroom assignment, grading, vocational education, recreation, physical education, athletics and employment.

The School does not tolerate sex discrimination, harassment or retaliation and will therefore take effective action, including disciplinary action, when appropriate. Any person that believes they have been discriminated based on sex can file a complaint under this procedure by contacting the School’s Title IX Coordinators as follows:

Jennifer Whitmire

Human Resource Manager

32 S Center St.

Mesa, Arizona 85210

480-969-5641 ext. 4408

jwhitmire@heritageacademyaz.com

This grievance procedure applies to Grievances filed by staff members, parents/guardians, students or by someone on their behalf alleging unlawful discrimination, harassment or retaliation carried out by employees, students or third parties.

**GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

* Grievances should be submitted to the Title IX Coordinator within 30-working (i.e., school) days of the date the person filing the grievance becomes aware of the alleged action.
* All grievances should be in writing, containing the name and address of the person filing it. The grievance must state the problem or action alleged to be discriminatory and the remedy or relief sought. The complaining party (“Complainant”) may use the School’s grievance form available at the front office of the School to submit his/her complaint but is not required to.

If the Complainant is unable to put the grievance in writing, the Schoolshall provide reasonable accommodations to assist the Complainant with submission of his/her complaint. Although the School encourages individuals to submit grievances in writing, the School will nonetheless provide prompt and equitable response when it becomes aware of possible discrimination.

* The Title IX Coordinator shall initiate and oversee an investigation of the grievance. This investigation may be informal, but it must be adequate, reliable and impartial, affording all interested persons an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the grievance, including the opportunity to present witnesses. The Title IX Coordinator will maintain the files and records of the Schoolrelating to such grievances.
* The alleged perpetrator in any grievance will be provided with written notice of the allegations against him/her, reference to any School Policies that may be violated by the allegations and shall have the opportunity to prepare a response to the allegations as part of the investigation before an initial interview is conducted.
* When necessary, the Title IX Coordinator will implement interim measures during the investigation, such as placing students in separate classes pending the results of the investigation, allowing students to transfer classes, developing a safety plan, etc.
* The Title IX Coordinator will complete the investigation no later than 30-working days after the filing of the grievance, unless extenuating circumstances require an extension of the 30-working day timeline. In such a case, the Title IX Coordinator (or her/his designee) will communicate with the Complainant concerning the need for an extension.
* Upon completion of the investigation, the Title IX Coordinator shall prepare written findings and conclusions within 10-working days from the completion of the investigation. The Complainant and alleged perpetrator shall be informed of the outcome of the investigation within 10-working days timeframe outlined above and such communication shall not violate the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) or the privacy interests of either party.
* The opportunity for either party to appeal the decision of the Title IX Coordinator shall be noted in the written findings and conclusions provided to them. Appeals may be submitted, in writing, to the School’s Governing Board,within 15-working days of receiving the Title IX Coordinator’s decision and must outline the reason(s) for the appeal. The Board shall issue a written decision in response to the appeal no later than 30-working days after its filing or shall provide an alternative decision date if the 30-day time frame will not be met.
* If it is determined that harassment occurred, the School shall take the appropriate steps to prevent the recurrence of any harassment and to correct the discriminatory effects on the Complainant and others, if appropriate.
* If a Grievance includes a report of alleged criminal conduct (including, but not limited to, sexual assault/violence), the School shall ensure that mandatory reports are made to law enforcement authorities, the Department of Child Safety and the Arizona Department of Education, consistent with the School’s reporting policies and state laws. In such situations, the School will ensure that it provides any other appropriate response to the incident.
* The Schoolshall maintain student confidentiality as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) during all times.
* The availability and use of this grievance procedure does not prevent a person from filing a complaint of discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex with the U. S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights ([www.ed.gov/ocr](http://www.ed.gov/ocr)). The contact information for the regional office that includes Arizona is:

 Office for Civil Rights

 1244 Speer Blvd., Suite 300

 Denver, CO 80204-3582

 303-844-5695 or ocr.denver@ed.gov

The Schoolwill make appropriate arrangements to ensure that disabled persons are provided other accommodations, if needed, to participate in this grievance process. Such arrangements may include, but are not limited to, providing interpreters for the deaf, providing taped cassettes of material for the blind, providing a scribe for submission of the complaint, or assuring a barrier-free location for the proceedings. The Title IX Coordinator will be responsible for making such arrangements.