



# SUPERINTENDENT UPDATES

August 15, 2024

Good afternoon,

I am excited that school will start on August 26. We have been busy preparing this summer and I know that on August 26th we will have a great start to the school year.

I write today because there is misinformation in the community about an action that the Board of Education took on Monday, August 12. The information being shared is not true.

This spring the federal government changed their Title IX policy. Title IX is a federal law that prohibits sex-based discrimination. Our district is required to have a policy that follows this law and prohibits sex-based discrimination. We have had this policy for many years.

This spring changes were made in the Title IX rules and regulations that required us to update our policy. On Monday, August 12, the board approved required revisions to the Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities policy. The policy states: This policy pertains to sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, which occurs on or after August 1, 2024.

Some are trying to get you to believe that these changes approved things that they did not.

This policy DOES NOT allow boys in girls bathrooms.

The board DID NOT vote to allow boys in girls bathrooms.

The policy DOES NOT allow boys in girls' athletic teams.

The board DID NOT vote to allow boys on girls' athletic teams.

Nowhere in the policy does in mention bathrooms or athletic teams.

The policy is about ensuring our district does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination or sex harassment. The revisions were focused on bringing clarity to the roles and responsibilities of district staff in when to investigate claims of sexual discrimination and sexual harassment, how to investigate these claims, and timelines that must be followed.

Some are arguing on social media that we are actively working to create dangerous situations – especially for girls in the district. That is not true.

It has also been argued that the district could have chosen to opt out. They point as evidence to the fact that there are 100 schools in Michigan that were placed on a list that allowed them to delay implementing while a court case plays out. Those districts/schools did not opt out. They were placed on this list by a judge.

I take our responsibility to ensure our schools are safe seriously. I would not allow us to create an environment that places our students at risk.

This policy reinforces that we will not allow students and staff to be sexually harassed or to endure sexual discrimination.

If you ever do have questions or concerns about an issue, you can always contact me. My email address is [smatthews@rockfordschools.org](mailto:smatthews@rockfordschools.org).

Steve

Dr. Steve Matthews  
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