

## Title IX Enforcement Initiatives in School Districts

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U.S. Department of Education Secretary Betsy DeVos has taken up the fight against sexual harassments and assault in public schools.

The department recently launched [Title IX enforcement initiatives](#) in response to the growing number of sexual assaults, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and sexual violence incidents occurring in elementary and secondary schools across the country. DeVos cited the findings of an investigation into Chicago public schools as the impetus for the new initiative.

The department's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) enforces Title IX requirements in which schools must take appropriate steps to address discriminatory incidents of sexual misconduct, including student-on-student and staff-on-student incidents to prohibit discrimination that interferes with students' rights to receive a free, appropriate education.

Based on the new initiatives, the OCR will perform the following activities:

- **Compliance Reviews:** The OCR will work with schools to identify and correct compliance concerns, examining how sexual assault cases, including incidents with students and staff, are handled under Title IX.
- **Public Awareness and Support:** The OCR will raise awareness of sexual assault in schools, and will make information available to educators, school leaders, parents and families.
- **Data Quality Reviews (DQRs):** The OCR will conduct DQRs of the data submitted by schools as part of their Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC). Additionally, OCR will join forces with the National Center for Education Statistics to work with schools to ensure sexual assault incidents and offenses are being accurately reported and recorded through the CRDC.
- **Proposed CRDC Data Collection:** For the 2019-2020 data collection, the OCR has proposed the data collection include more detailed data on sexual assaults, including incidents perpetrated by school staff or school personnel.

The new initiatives also builds on the department's work to implement "Pass the Trash" provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which prohibits schools from assisting an individual from obtaining new employment at another school if that individual has engaged in sexual misconduct with a student or minor.

We previously provided an [update](#) on the proposed Title IX regulations, which are currently under review by the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. A calendar of public meetings for this part of the rulemaking process [can be found here](#). In addition, the [House Committee on Oversight and Reform](#) has requested documents from the U.S. Department of Education related to the proposed rules.

If you have any questions on this or any other topic, please reach out to any member of the [Barley Snyder Education](#)

Practice Group.