

Feminist Daily News Wire

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OCR Urges Use of Title IX to Protect Students from Sexual Harassment

School boards and educators across the nation have been notified by Stephanie Monroe, the new Assistant Secretary for the Office for Civil Rights in the US Department of Education, that protecting students from sexual harassment using Title IX sexual harassment guidance must become a top priority. In her "Dear Colleague" letter, Monroe said that "a significant number of students are still subjected to sexual harassment, which can interfere with a student's education as well as his or her emotional well being." She also said that the Office for Civil Rights plans to conduct a series of Title IX compliance reviews. A recent AAUW study found that nearly two-thirds of college students in the U.S. have experienced sexual harassment.

"This is a positive start for Monroe," said Dr. Sue Klein, FMF Education Equity Director. "I hope that she will extend this notification and enforcement follow-up to postsecondary institutions and encourage the active involvement of Title IX coordinators in educating everyone about their rights and responsibilities under all aspects of Title IX".

FMF is working with other organizations to develop a Title IX Action Network to more adequately use Title IX coordinators and other concerned citizens to educate everyone about Title IX and solutions to end sex discrimination and stereotyping in education. Without the essential Title IX gender equity coordinators in place, educators, parents, and students are frequently left unable to effectively solve or prevent problems.

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Media Resources: Letter from Stephanie Monroe, 1/25/06; Feminist Daily News 1/24/06, 1/26/06.