

Summary

The IVCSB Board has recognized sexual violence and harassment as a significant problem in our community. The District has contracted with the UCSB Police Department for an Interpersonal Violence Investigator, who has been tasked with conducting investigations into incidents that occur in the community. In addition, the Board has authorized funding for the purpose of partnering with Standing Together To End Sexual Assault (STESA) in order to provide crisis counseling for survivors in District facilities.

During the past academic year, 60 instances of sexual violence and harassment were reported to the UC Santa Barbara Title IX office.¹ Representatives from law enforcement, the University, survivor resource organizations, and student advocacy groups routinely emphasize that while many survivors choose to report incidents to law enforcement, others report to the University, and seek disciplinary action under Title IX. In addition, approximately 80% of students who reported sexual or interpersonal violence to UCSB CARE opted not to report to law enforcement or Title IX.

Provisions in the Department of Education's proposed regulations² include, but are not limited to:

1. Changes the standard for what triggers a University's obligation to respond to allegations. The new standard could exclude many incidents that occur in Isla Vista under the requirement that the incident occur within the school's "own program or activity."
2. Mandates an investigation model that includes live hearings and cross examination, prohibiting the model currently used by the UC, which is widely considered to be more trauma-informed. This new model could have a chilling effect on reporting, and reports seen through to completion.

Many victims advocacy groups and higher education institutions (Including the UC Office of the President) have announced their deep concern with the proposed regulations.

Action

The Board, as the de-facto community council in Isla Vista, should provide formal comment to the Department in order to register our community's particular circumstances and suggestions.

Spencer Brandt, IVCSB Director and Secretary of the Board

¹ <http://sexualviolence.ucsb.edu/reports/svsa.overview.and.statistics.sept.2017.thru.sept.2018.pdf>

² <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/background-summary-proposed-ttle-ix-regulation.pdf>