

HARASSMENT, HAZING & BULLYING

The Board strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate that promotes respect, dignity and equality. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the school district to maintain an educational environment in which bullying and cyber bullying in any form are not tolerated.

All forms of bullying and cyber bullying by school district students are hereby prohibited. Anyone who engages in bullying or cyber bullying on school grounds that has the effect of interfering with one's ability to attend school and/or to be educated in a safe, non-hostile environment may be subject to disciplinary consequences. Further, bullying and/or cyber bullying that occurs off campus that has the effect of interfering with one's ability to attend school and/or to be educated in a safe, non-hostile environment is prohibited and may result in a school and/or criminal consequence.

Complaints of bullying or cyber bullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when a complaint is verified. Nether reprisals nor retaliation shall occur as a result of the submission of a complaint.

For the purpose of this policy and its implementation, "bullying" shall mean unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a student by another student that has the effect of:

1. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student;
2. Damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property;
3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;
4. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property;
- or
5. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities.

For the purposes of this policy and its implementation, "cyber bullying" includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student or staff member by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings (including blogs) which has the effect of:

1. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student;
2. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;
3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage or loss of personal property; or
4. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities.

In order for the Board to effectively enforce this policy and to take prompt corrective measures, it is essential that all victims and persons with knowledge of bullying and/or cyber bullying report such behavior immediately to the Principal, Assistant Principal, School Counselor or teacher. The district will promptly investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written. To the extent possible, all complaints will be treated in a confidential manner, although limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

Investigation and Resolution Procedure

Whenever a complaint of bullying and/or cyber bullying is received whether verbal or written, it will be subject to a preliminary review and investigation. Except in the case of severe or criminal conduct, the Principal or Assistant Principal should make all reasonable efforts to resolve complaints informally at the school level. The goal of informal procedures is to end bullying and/or cyber bullying, and obtain a prompt and equitable resolution to a complaint. Where appropriate, informal methods may be used to resolve the complaint, including but not limited to:

1. discussion with the accused, informing him or her of the district's policies and indicating that the behavior must stop;
2. suggesting counseling and/or sensitivity training;
3. conducting training for the department or school in which the behavior occurred, calling attention to the consequences of engaging in such behavior;
4. mediation;
5. requesting a letter of apology to the victim;
6. writing letters of caution or reprimand; and/or
7. separating the parties,
8. suspension from school and/or school activities

Appropriate disciplinary action shall be recommended and imposed in accordance with district policy, the applicable collective bargaining agreement or state law.

All forms of bullying are unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive of the educational process of the school district, offenders shall be subject to appropriate staff intervention, which may result in administrative discipline.

Adoption date: August 16, 2010