

# BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING

## 1. Purpose

The Board recognizes that bullying has a negative effect on the educational environment of its schools. Students who are bullied, intimidated or fearful of other students may not be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the district. Bullying can also escalate into more serious violence. Therefore, the district strives to offer all students an educational environment free from bullying.

## 2. Definitions

**Bullying** means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Substantial interference with a student's education.
2. Creation of a threatening environment.
3. Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

**Bullying**, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

The term **bullying** shall not be interpreted to infringe upon a student's right to engage in legally protected speech or conduct.

A **School setting** means in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

## 3. Authority

The Board prohibits all forms of bullying by district students.

## 4. Delegation of Responsibility

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that this policy and administrative regulations are reviewed annually with students.

The Superintendent or designee, in cooperation with other appropriate administrators, shall review this policy every three (3) years and recommend necessary revisions to the Board.

District administration shall annually provide the following information with the Safe School Report:

1. Board's Bullying Policy.
2. Report of bullying incidents.
3. Information on the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention or education programs.

## 5. Guidelines

The Code of Student Conduct, which shall contain this policy, shall be disseminated annually to students.

This policy shall be accessible in every classroom. The policy shall be posted in a prominent location within each school building and on the district web site, if available.

### Education

The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations and programs to increase the awareness of the problems of bullying, and train teachers to effectively intervene if bullying is witnessed in their presence or brought to their attention.

Teachers who observe acts of bullying shall take reasonable steps to intervene to stop such conduct, unless intervention would threaten a teacher's personal safety. The nature of the intervention will vary depending upon the age of the student (both the victim and aggressor), the severity of the bullying and the student's involvement in prior acts of bullying. The purpose of the intervention is to take prompt remedial steps to ensure observed acts of bullying cease and to teach students that bullying is not acceptable behavior.

### Student, Parent/Guardian And Employee Reporting

The district strongly encourages all students and parents/guardians who become aware of any act of bullying to immediately report that conduct. Students may report acts of bullying to their teachers, building principal or other school employees supervising school-sponsored activities. Parents/Guardians may contact the building principal to report acts of bullying.

If teachers cannot reasonably remediate acts of bullying through their own intervention, they should report the bullying to the building principal. Other school employees who observe acts of bullying shall report that conduct to the building principal.

### Investigation Procedures

Each building principal or designee is authorized to investigate reports of bullying brought to their attention by students, parents/guardians or school employees. Any investigation of a report may include meetings with students, parents/guardians or employees; a review of student records and other reasonable efforts to better understand the facts surrounding a reported incident.

### Consequences/Discipline

Consequences for students who are found to have bullied others may include counseling, a parent conference, detention, suspension, expulsion, a loss of school privileges and/or exclusion from school-sponsored activities.

Depending upon the severity of a particular situation, the building principal may also take appropriate steps to ensure student safety. Such steps may include the implementation of a safety plan; separating and supervising the students involved; providing employee support for students as needed; reporting incidents to law enforcement, if appropriate; and developing a supervision plan with parents/guardians.

This policy shall not be interpreted as preventing a student or parent/guardian from filing a complaint under the school district's unlawful harassment policy.