

Book	Policy Manual
Section	200 Pupils
Title	Bullying/Cyberbullying
Code	249
Status	Active
Adopted	August 8, 2019

### **Purpose**

The Board strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students in the schools. The district recognizes that bullying and intimidation have a negative effect on this environment. Students who feel unsafe, intimidated, or abused cannot fully attend to the educational process. Bullying can lead to more serious harassment and violence; therefore, it shall be the policy of the district to maintain an educational environment in which bullying in any form is not tolerated.

### **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]

1. Substantially interfering with a student's education.
2. Creating a threatening environment.
3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

**Bullying** may include, but is not limited to the following activities:

1. Name calling.
2. Teasing.
3. Threatening looks.
4. Gestures.
5. Note writing.
6. Electronic communication.
7. Extortion.
8. Physical intimidation.
9. Threats.
10. Assault.

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

**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.[1]

### **Authority**

The Board prohibits all forms of bullying by district students.[1]

The Board encourages students who believe they or others have been bullied to promptly report such incidents to the building principal or designee.

Students are encouraged to use the district's report form, available from the building principal, or to put the complaint in writing; however, oral complaints shall be accepted and documented. The person

accepting the complaint shall handle the report objectively, neutrally and professionally, setting aside personal biases that might favor or disfavor the student filing the complaint or those accused of a violation of this policy.

The district expects staff members and support personnel who observe an act of bullying to take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene. If a student informs a staff member that s/he has witnessed or is the target of bullying behavior, the staff member must take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene. If an employee believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying persists, s/he shall report the bully to the school principal or designee for further investigation.

The Board directs that verbal and written complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and appropriate corrective or preventative action be taken when allegations are substantiated. The Board directs that any complaint of bullying brought pursuant to this policy shall also be reviewed for conduct which may not be proven to be bullying under this policy but merits review and possible action under other Board policies.

#### Discrimination/Discriminatory Harassment

Every report of alleged bullying that can be interpreted at the outset to fall within the provisions of policies addressing potential violations of laws against discrimination and discriminatory harassment shall be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations and coordinated with the full participation of the Compliance Officer. If, in the course of a bullying investigation, potential issues of discrimination or discriminatory harassment are identified, the Compliance Officer shall be promptly notified, and the investigation shall be conducted jointly and concurrently to address the issues of alleged discrimination as well as the incidents of alleged bullying.[2][3]

#### Confidentiality

Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the allegations, the filing of a complaint and the investigation shall be handled in accordance with this policy and the district's legal and investigative obligations.

#### Retaliation

Reprisal or retaliation relating to reports of bullying or participation in an investigation of allegations of bullying is prohibited and shall be subject to disciplinary action.

#### 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.[1]

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.[1]

District administration shall annually provide the following information with the Safe School Report:[1]

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.

## Guidelines

The district shall make this policy available on its publicly accessible website, in every classroom of the district, and within each school building where other notices are posted.[1]

The Code of Student Conduct, which shall contain this policy, shall be disseminated annually to students.[1][4][5]

## Education

The district shall develop, implement and evaluate bullying prevention and intervention programs and activities. Programs and activities shall provide district staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in and reporting incidents of bullying.[1][6][7][8]

The district shall provide students with skills to deal with bullying situations. Students shall be made aware of available resources to assist in resolution of the problem.

## Consequences for Violations

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include, but are not limited to:[1][5][9]

1. Counseling within the school.
2. Parental conference.
3. Loss of school privileges.
4. Transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus.
5. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities.
6. Detention.
7. Suspension.
8. Expulsion.
9. Review of harassment policy and/or subsequent legal action.
10. Counseling/Therapy outside of school.
11. Referral to law enforcement officials.

## Legal

1. 24 P.S. 1303.1-A
2. Pol. 103
3. Pol. 103.1
4. 22 PA Code 12.3
5. Pol. 218
6. 20 U.S.C. 7118
7. 24 P.S. 1302-A
8. Pol. 236
9. Pol. 233
- Pol. 113.1