

STUDENT VIOLENCE / HARASSMENT / INTIMIDATION / BULLYING

The Governing Board believes it is the right of every student to be educated in a positive, safe, caring, and respectful learning environment. The Governing Board further believes a school environment inclusive of these traits maximizes student achievement, fosters student personal growth, and helps students build a sense of community that promotes positive participation as members of society.

The District, in partnership with parents, guardians, and students, shall establish and maintain a school environment based on these beliefs. The District shall identify and implement age-appropriate programs designed to instill in students the values of positive interpersonal relationships, mutual respect, and appropriate conflict resolution.

To assist in achieving a school environment based on the beliefs of the Governing Board, bullying, harassment or intimidation as defined by this policy will not be tolerated.

Definitions

Bullying: Bullying is any written, verbal, or physical act or any electronic communication that is intended to or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one (1) or more pupils by doing any of the following:

- Using force or coercion to negatively affect others and involving an imbalance of social, physical, and/or emotional and willful acts of harm;
- Interfering with the educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more pupils;
- Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional stress;
- Having an actual detrimental effect on a pupil's physical or mental health;
- Causing a disruption and/or interference with the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying may occur when a student or group of students engages in any form of action, behavior, or threat, either on a single occasion or as part of a pattern and practice of actions, behavior, or threats, that includes such acts as intimidation and/or harassment that

- has the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm or damage to property,

- creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive environment in the form of physical or emotional harm,
- occurs when there is a real or perceived imbalance of power or strength, or
- may constitute a violation of law.

Bullying of a student or group of students can be manifested through written, verbal, physical, or emotional means and may occur in a variety of forms including, but not limited to

- verbal, written/printed or graphic exposure to derogatory comments, extortion, exploitation, name calling, or rumor spreading either directly through another person or group or through cyberbullying,
- exposure to social exclusion or ostracism,
- physical contact including but not limited to pushing, hitting, kicking, shoving, or spitting, and
- damage to or theft of personal property.

Cyberbullying: Cyberbullying is a form of bullying and includes, but is not limited to, any act of bullying committed by use of electronic technology or electronic communication devices, including telephonic devices, social networking and other Internet communications, on school computers, networks, forums and mailing lists, or other District-owned property, and by means of an individual's personal electronic media and equipment.

Harassment: Harassment is intentional behavior by a student or group of students that is disturbing or threatening to another student or group of students. Intentional behaviors that characterize harassment include, but are not limited to, stalking, hazing, social exclusion, name calling, unwanted physical contact and unwelcome verbal or written comments, photographs and graphics. Harassment may be related, but not limited to, real or perceived race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural background, national origin, disability, economic status, physical size, personal appearance, age, or grade level. Harassing behaviors can be direct or indirect and can be communicated by use of social or electronic media.

Intimidation: Intimidation is intentional behavior by a student or group of students that places another student or group of students in fear of harm of person or property. Intimidation can be manifested emotionally or physically, either directly or indirectly, and by use of social media.

Prohibitions and Discipline

Students are prohibited from bullying on school grounds, School District property, school buses, at school bus stops, at school sponsored events and activities. Students are also prohibited from engaging in bullying or cyberbullying through the use of electronic technology or electronic communication equipment on school computers, networks, forums, or mailing lists.

Disciplinary action may result for bullying or cyberbullying that is committed outside of the school grounds, School District property, school buses, school bus stops, or school sponsored events and/or before and after the regular school day when such bullying results in a physical, mental, or emotional negative effect on the victim when the victim is on school grounds, School District property, school buses, at school bus stops, or at school sponsored events and activities, or when such act(s) interfere with the authority of the school system to maintain order.

Reporting Incidents of Bullying

A student who is experiencing bullying, or believes another student is experiencing bullying, is to report the situation to the principal or another school employee. A school employee who becomes aware of or suspects a student is being bullied shall immediately notify the school administrator. To the extent permitted by law, School District personnel shall maintain confidentiality of the reported information.

Subject to the Superintendent's approval, each school shall implement and maintain a procedure whereby students may make an anonymous report of bullying.

The initial notification of an alleged incident may be provided verbally. A detailed written description of the incident and any other relevant information must be provided on form(s) made available by the school and submitted to the principal or school administrator within one (1) school day of the verbal report. Depending upon the age of any witness, school personnel may transcribe student statements or reports of the alleged incident. Should the principal or school administrator be the employee who observes, is informed of, or suspects a student is experiencing bullying, the principal shall document the incident or concern in writing. Failure by an employee to report a suspected case of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension without pay or dismissal, pursuant to Governing Board Policies GCQF and GDQD.

Reprisal by any student or staff member directed toward a student or employee related to the reporting of a case of bullying or a suspected case of bullying shall not be tolerated, and the individual(s) will be subject to the disciplines set out in applicable District policies and administrative regulations. Reprisal by a staff member may result in disciplinary action up to and including suspension without pay or dismissal, pursuant to Governing Board Policies GCQF and GDQD. Reprisal by any student may result in discipline of the student pursuant to Governing Board Policies JK and JKD.

At the time a student reports alleged bullying, a school administrator or designated staff person shall provide to the student who has allegedly been bullied a written copy of student rights, protections and support services available to the student and shall notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) of the report.

The principal or school administrator shall investigate *all* reports of bullying. If the principal determines that bullying has occurred, discipline will be administered pursuant to Governing Board Policies JK and JKD. Regardless of the outcome of the investigation, the principal or school administrator will meet with the involved students to review the findings of the investigation pursuant to protocol and best practices. Subject to the restrictions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) set out in Policy JR, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the involved students shall also be informed of the findings of the investigation.

Documentation related to reported bullying and subsequent investigation shall be maintained by the District for not less than six (6) years. In the event the District reports incidents to persons other than school officials or law enforcement, all individually identifiable information shall be redacted to the extent required by law. Restrictions established by FERPA on disclosure of personally identifiable student information must be observed at all times.

The Superintendent shall establish procedures for the dissemination of information to students, parents and guardians. The information will include, but not be limited to, Governing Board policies, incident reporting, support services (proactive and reactive) and student's rights. The dissemination of this information shall

- occur during the first (1st) week of each school year,
- be provided to each incoming student during the school year at the time of the student's registration,
- be posted in each classroom and in common areas of the school, and
- be summarized in the student handbook and on the District website, and

the Superintendent shall establish procedures for the dissemination of information to District employees including, but not limited to

- Governing Board policy,
- preventive measures,
- incident reporting procedures,
- available support services for students (both proactive and reactive), and
- student rights.

Information will be provided to staff members at the beginning of each instructional year and on the first day of employment for new employees.

The Superintendent shall establish procedures designed to protect the health and safety of students who are physically harmed as the result of bullying. These will include, when appropriate, procedures for accessing the services of school personnel and contacting emergency medical services, law enforcement agencies, or both.

Knowingly submitting a false report under this policy shall subject the student to discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion. Where disciplinary action is necessary pursuant to any part of this policy, relevant District policies shall be followed.

Adopted: July 15, 2013

LEGAL REF.: A.R.S. 13-1202
 13-1203
 13-1204
 13-2321
 13-2916
 13-2921
 13-3506.01
 15-341
 A.A.C. R7-2-1308

CROSS REF.: JI - Student Rights and Responsibilities
 JIC - Student Conduct
 JII - Student Concerns, Complaints and Grievances
 JK - Student Discipline
 JKD - Student Suspension
 JKDA - Removal of Students from School-Sponsored
 Activities
 JKE - Expulsion of Students
 JR - Student Records