

Students

Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment 1

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important District goals.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, military status, unfavorable discharge status from the military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is **prohibited** in each of the following situations:²

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a nonschool-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the School District or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This paragraph (item #4) applies only when a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred; it does not require staff members to monitor any nonschool-related activity, function, or program.

The footnotes are not intended to be part of the adopted policy; they should be removed before the policy is adopted.

¹ All districts must have a policy on bullying. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7, amended by P.A. 100-137. Every two years, each district must review and re-evaluate this policy, make necessary and appropriate revisions, and file the updated policy with ISBE. This sample policy's first paragraph allows a school board to consider its goals for preventing bullying and remedying its consequences; it may be amended.

In addition to a bullying prevention policy, all districts must have a policy on student behavior. 105 ILCS 5/10-20.14; 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.280. Boards must, in consultation with their parent-teacher advisory committees and other community-based organizations, address aggressive behavior, including bullying, in their student behavior policy. See 7:190, *Student Behavior*; 7:190-E1, *Aggressive Behavior Reporting Letter and Form*.

This policy contains an item on which collective bargaining may be required. Any policy that impacts upon wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment is subject to collective bargaining upon request by the employee representative, even if the policy involves an inherent managerial right. See f/n 7, below.

² This paragraph and its subparts 1-4 are from the bullying prevention statute. 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(a); see also 775 ILCS 5/1-103 and 23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240. The protected statuses are mandated by the bullying prevention statute; the list of protected statuses is identical to the list in 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*.

numbered requirement, 1-12, corresponds with the same number in the list of required policy components in 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b) 1-12. ⁴

1. The District uses the definition of *bullying* as provided in this policy. ⁵
2. Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of this District. However, nothing in the District's bullying prevention and response plan is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution or under Section 3 of Article I of the Illinois Constitution.
3. Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, Building Principal, Assistant Building Principal, Dean of Students, a Complaint Manager, or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. ⁶ Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the District named officials or any staff member. The District named officials and all staff members are available for help with a bully or to make a report about bullying. ⁷ Anonymous reports are also accepted.

Nondiscrimination Coordinator: ⁸

Name

Address

Email

Telephone

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⁴ As each numbered requirement, 1-12, corresponds with the same number in 5/27-23.7(b)1-12, there are no reference citations in footnotes. All non-statutory requirements, plus alternatives and optional provisions, are described in footnotes.

⁵ A board may augment the School Code requirement by using this alternative:

Using the definition of *bullying* as provided in this policy, the Superintendent or designee shall emphasize to the school community that: (a) the District prohibits bullying, and (b) all students should conduct themselves with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students. This may include a process for commending or acknowledging students for demonstrating appropriate behavior.

⁶ The statute requires that the policy contain the email address and telephone number for the staff person(s) responsible for receiving bullying reports. Using the district Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers is consistent with 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. While the names and contact information are required by law to be listed, they are not part of the adopted policy and do not require board action. This allows for additions and amendments to the names and contact information when necessary. It is important for updated names and contact information to be inserted into this policy and regularly monitored. A telephone number for making anonymous reports may also be added.

⁷ 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(d), amended by P.A. 100-137, requires that "[s]chool personnel available for help with a bully or to make a report about bullying" be made known to parents/guardians, students, and school personnel.

⁸ Sample policy 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*, states that a district's Nondiscrimination Coordinator also serves as its Title IX Coordinator. If the district uses a separate Title IX Coordinator who does not also serve as the Nondiscrimination Coordinator, list the Title IX and Nondiscrimination Coordinators' names separately in this policy. Best practice is that throughout the district's board policy manual, the same individual be named as Nondiscrimination Coordinator. In contrast, Complaint Managers identified in individual policies may vary depending upon local district needs.

7. A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is **prohibited**. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as *bullying* for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.
8. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the District's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as *bullying* for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.
9. The District's bullying prevention and response plan must be based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians.
10. The Superintendent or designee shall post this policy on the District's website, if any, and include it in the student handbook, and, where applicable, post it where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted. The policy must be distributed annually to parents/guardians, students, and school personnel (including new employees when hired), and must also be provided periodically throughout the school year to students and faculty.¹²
11. The Superintendent or designee shall assist the Board with its evaluation and assessment of this policy's outcomes and effectiveness. This process shall include, without limitation:
 - a. The frequency of victimization;
 - b. Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school;
 - c. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs;
 - d. The types of bullying utilized; and
 - e. Bystander intervention or participation.

The evaluation process may use relevant data and information that the District already collects for other purposes. The Superintendent or designee must post the information developed as a result of the policy evaluation on the District's website, or if a website is not available, the information must be provided to school administrators, Board members, school personnel, parents/guardians, and students.

12. The Superintendent or designee shall fully implement the Board policies, including without limitation, the following:¹³

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¹² 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b)(10), amended by P.A. 100-137.

¹³ The statute requires that the bullying policy *be consistent with* other board policies. The list of policies may be deleted and the following alternative used: "12. The District's bullying prevention plan must be consistent with other Board policies." If a policy list is included, be sure the referenced policies were adopted locally and amend the list accordingly.

The bullying statute does not identify staff member duties regarding the prevention of or response to student bullying. The following optional provision addresses staff member responsibilities and may be added as a new paragraph 13:

13. The Superintendent or designee shall fully inform staff members of the District's goal to prevent students from engaging in bullying and the measures being used to accomplish it. This includes each of the following:
 - a. Communicating the District's expectation and State law requirement that teachers and other certificated or licensed employees maintain discipline.

LEGAL REF.: 405 ILCS 49/, Children's Mental Health Act.
105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, 5/24-24, and 5/27-23.7.
23 Ill.Admin.Code §1.240 and §1.280.

CROSS REF.: 2:240 (Board Policy Development), 2:260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 2:265 (Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure), 4:170 (Safety), 5:230 (Maintaining Student Discipline), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:220 (Bus Conduct), 7:230 (Misconduct by Students with Disabilities), 7:240 (Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities), 7:285 (Food Allergy Management Program), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publications; Elementary Schools), 7:315 (Restrictions on Publications; High Schools)