

Aggressive Behavior/Bullying: Aggressive behavior includes but is not limited to, the use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threats, intimidation, fear, bullying, or other comparable conduct. Bullying is defined as persistent, negative, psychological or physical acts directed by a stronger student or group against a weaker one.

Bullying- “Bullying includes “cyber-bullying” and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- (1) Placing the student or students in reasonable fear or harm to the student’s or students’ person or property
- (2) Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student’s or students’ physical or mental health
- (3) Substantially interfering with the student’s or student’s academic performance; or
- (4) Substantially interfering with the student’s or students’ ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Examples of bullying include but are not limited to:

- Physical - hitting, other types of physical contact such as poking, kicking, grabbing, spitting, etc.
- Verbal - name calling, racist remarks, put-downs, taunts, extortion, etc.
- Indirect or direct behaviors such as spreading rumors, wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice, exclusion from peer group, taking and hiding/destroying other’s papers, and/or possessions, etc.
- Written - threatening e-mail or other electronic correspondence, notes, and/or graffiti, etc.

Bullying is contrary to Illinois State Law and the policy of Okaw Valley CUSD #302.

Due to the mental and physical harm that these forms of aggressive behavior/bullying can create, it is necessary for the building administrator to have the tools necessary to help protect students that are subjected to this type of behavior. With this in mind, the consequences of any documented incidence of these behaviors will be as follows **(unless circumstances deem more severe/immediate consequences):**

1st incidence: Verbal warning and conference with principal

2nd incidence: Detention assigned to student and parent contact will be made to rectify situation.

3rd incidence: **Minimum 1 day In-School-Suspension** assigned and a parental conference may be called by the administration.

Subsequent incidences: Due to continued bullying being a threat to the safety of students, a **minimum of 1 day out-of-school suspension** will be administered.

Repeated incident(s) of this type of behavior will result in additional disciplinary action that will consist of additional out-of-school suspension or a recommendation for expulsion.

Anyone can report harassing conduct to a school. This may be done verbally, through email (forlinesr@okawvalley.org), phone (217-756-8521) or the anonymous Bully Report Form found on the school website <http://www.okawvalley.org/schools/middle/bullying.cfm>). When OVMS receives a complaint they will take these steps to investigate and resolve the situation.

- Immediate and appropriate action to investigate or otherwise determine what happened. (within 10 days after the report date)
- Inquiry will be prompt, thorough, and impartial.
- Interview targeted students, offending students, and witnesses, and maintain written documentation of investigation. Parents/Guardians of all students involved will be promptly informed.
- Communicate with targeted students regarding steps taken to end harassment
- Check in with targeted students to ensure that harassment has ceased

- When an investigation reveals that harassment has occurred, OVMS will take steps reasonably calculated to:
 - End the harassment,
 - Eliminate any hostile environment,
 - Prevent harassment from recurring, and
 - Prevent retaliation against the targeted student(s) or complainant(s).
 - Appropriate Services will be provided: Social work services, counseling, school psychological services, restorative measures and other interventions (as necessary)

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying will result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to, a suspension. Reprisal actions will also trigger remedial restorative actions. This also includes false accusations as a means of bullying/retaliation.

OVMS provides the following to address bullying:

- (1) Bully Prevention Assemblies
- (2) Bully Prevention resources
- (3) Social Work Services
- (4) Counseling services
- (5) Restorative measures
- (6) Character Education
- (7) FLEX intervention services
- (8) SRSS Student Behavior Screener
- (9) School Climate Surveys
- (10) Disciplinary Data Sharing
- (11) School Psychological Services
- (12) Behavior/Bullying Committee