

Bullying and Anti-bullying policy

Bullying, intimidation, and (sexual) harassment are not acceptable in any form and will not be tolerated at school or during any school-sponsored education program or activity, 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, or through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network or other similar school electronic equipment. The school will protect students against retaliation for reporting incidents of bullying, intimidation, or (sexual) harassment, and will take disciplinary action against any student who participates in such conduct.

No person shall harass, intimidate or bully another based upon actual or perceived race, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, creed, physical or mental disability, military status, gender identity, order of protection status, status as homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristic or any other distinguishing characteristic. The school and district will not tolerate harassing, intimidating conduct, or bullying whether verbal, physical, or visual, that affects the tangible benefits of education, that unreasonably interferes with a student's educational performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

Bullying means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of: (1) placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property; (2) causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health; (3) substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or (4) substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

Examples of prohibited conduct include, without limitation: name calling; using derogatory slurs; causing psychological harm; violence; intimidation; force; noise; coercion; threats; stalking; harassment; sexual harassment; sexual violence; public humiliation; theft or destruction of property; retaliation; hazing; bullying; bullying through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment; or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above; or other comparable conduct. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Students who believe they are victims of bullying, intimidation or harassment or have witnessed such activities are encouraged to discuss the matter with the Principal or Assistant Principal. Students may choose to report to a person of the student's same sex. Complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible given the need to investigate. Students who make good faith complaints will not be disciplined.

Any student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in bullying, intimidation or harassment will be subject to disciplinary consequences as provided in this handbook, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with the school and district's discipline policy. Parents of students who have engaged in the

above behavior will be notified. Any student making a knowingly false accusation regarding harassment may also be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Bullying, Intimidation, and (Sexual) Harassment

Bullying, intimidation, and (sexual) harassment are not acceptable in any form and will not be tolerated at school or during any school-sponsored education program or activity, 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, or through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network or other similar school electronic equipment. The school will protect students against retaliation for reporting incidents of bullying, intimidation, or (sexual) harassment, and will take disciplinary action against any student who participates in such conduct.

No person, shall harass, intimidate or bully another based upon actual or perceived race, color, nationality, sex, sexual-orientation, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, creed, physical or mental disability, military status, gender identity, order of protection status, status as homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristic or any other distinguishing characteristic. The school and district will not tolerate harassing, intimidating conduct, or bullying whether verbal, physical, or visual, that affects the tangible benefits of education, that unreasonably interferes with a student's educational performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

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Students

Preventing Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment

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 is an important District goal. The Superintendent or designee shall develop and maintain a program that:

1. Fully implements and enforces each of the following Board policies:
 - a. 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*. This policy prohibits any person from harassing, intimidating or bullying a student on an actual or perceived basis relating to a student's sex, color, race, religion, creed, ancestry, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or other protected group status.
 - b. 7:190, *Student Discipline*. This policy prohibits students from engaging in hazing or any kind of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to another or any urging of other students to engage in such in such conduct; prohibited conduct includes any use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threats, intimidation, fear, harassment, bullying, hazing, or other comparable conduct.
 - c. 7:310, *Restrictions on Publications and Written or Electronic Material*. This policy prohibits students from: (i) accessing and/or distributing at school any written or electronic material, including material from the Internet, that will cause substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities, and (ii) creating and/or distributing, written, printed, or electronic material, including photographs and Internet material and blogs, that causes substantial disruption to school operations or interferes with the rights of other students or staff members.

Full implementation of the above policies includes: (a) conducting a prompt and thorough investigation of alleged incidents of bullying, intimidation, or harassing behavior, or similar conduct, (b) providing each student who violates one or more of these policies with appropriate consequences and remedial action, and (c) protecting students against retaliation for reporting such conduct.

2. Examines the appropriate steps to understand and rectify conditions that foster bullying, intimidation, and harassment; this contemplates taking action to eliminate or prevent these disruptive behaviors beyond traditional punitive disciplinary actions.
3. Includes bullying prevention and character instruction in all grades in accordance with State law and Board policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*. This includes incorporating student social and emotional development into the District's educational program as required by State law and in alignment with Board policy 6:65, *Student Social and Emotional Development*.

4. Fully informs staff members of the District's goal to prevent students from engaging in bullying and the measures being used to accomplish it. This includes: (a) communicating the District's expectation – and the State law requirement – that teachers and other certificated employees maintain discipline, and (b) establishing a process for staff members to fulfill their obligation to report alleged acts of bullying, intimidation, harassment, and other acts of actual or threatened violence.
5. Encourages all members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors, to report alleged acts of bullying, intimidation, harassment, and other acts of actual or threatened violence.
6. Actively involves students' parents/guardians in the remediation of the behavior(s) of concern. This includes ensuring that all parents/guardians are notified, as required by State law, whenever their child engages in aggressive behavior.
7. Communicates the District's expectation that all students conduct themselves with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students. This includes a process for commending or acknowledging students for demonstrating appropriate behavior.
8. Annually communicates this policy to students and their parents/guardians. This includes annually disseminating information to all students and parents/guardians explaining the serious disruption caused by bullying, intimidation, or harassment and that these behaviors will be taken seriously and are not acceptable in any form.
9. Engages in ongoing monitoring that includes collecting and analyzing appropriate data on the nature and extent of bullying in the District's schools and, after identifying appropriate indicators, assesses the effectiveness of the various strategies, programs, and procedures and reports the results of this assessment to the Board along with the recommendations to enhance effectiveness.
10. Complies with State and federal law and is in alignment with Board policies. This includes prompting the Board to update the policy beginning every 2 years after its initial adoption and filing this policy with the Illinois State Board of Education after the Board adopts or updates it.

LEGAL REF.: 405 ILS 49/1 et seq.
 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), 5:230 (Maintaining Student Discipline), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 7:20 (Harassment of Students Prohibited), 7:190 (Student Discipline), 7:220 (Bus Conduct), 7:230 (Misconduct by Students with Disabilities), 7:240 (Conduct Code for Participants in Extracurricular Activities), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publications and Written or Electronic Material)