

Civility

The Wahluke School District believes that a safe, civil environment is essential to high student and staff achievement, to the free exchange of ideas central to a quality educational process, and to the development of youth as thoughtful participants in our democracy. Conversely, uncivil conduct, like other forms of disruptive behavior, interferes with a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its students. The Wahluke School District Board of Directors expects administrators, faculty, staff, students, volunteers, parents, and other community members to participate in maintaining a clear expectation of civil conduct and problem-solving throughout the school district. The Board is committed to providing training and resources to support this expectation and refuses to condone uncivil conduct on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities, whether by staff, students, parents, volunteers, or other District visitors. The basic purpose of this policy is three-fold:

- 1) To promote a work and learning environment that is safe, productive and nurturing for all staff and students, and to encourage the free flow of ideas without fear or intimidation;
- 2) To provide our students with appropriate models for respectful problem-solving; and
- 3) To reduce the potential triggers for violent conduct, such as fear, anger, frustration and alienation—especially by making problem-solving procedures and alternatives to violence readily accessible to both youth and adults who need them.

Definitions. For purposes of this policy, “uncivil conduct” includes the following: directing vulgar, obscene or profane gestures or words at another individual; taunting, jeering, inciting others to taunt or jeer at an individual; raising one's voice at another individual, repeatedly interrupting another individual who is speaking at an appropriate time and place; imposing personal demands at times or in settings where they conflict with assigned duties and cannot reasonably be met; using personal epithets, gesturing in a manner that puts another in fear for his/her personal safety, invading the personal space of an individual after being directed to move away, physically blocking an individual's exit from a room or location, remaining in a classroom or school area after a teacher or administrator in authority has directed one to leave, violating the privacy of another individual's belongings (except for lawful searches by school officials conducted in connection with the administration of school rules and applicable laws), or other similar disruptive conduct.

“Uncivil conduct” does not include the expression of controversial or differing viewpoints that may be offensive to some persons, so long as (1) the ideas are presented in a respectful manner and at a time and place that are appropriate, and (2) such expression does not materially disrupt, and may not be reasonably anticipated to disrupt, the educational process.

Expectations. In support of this policy, the Superintendent shall be responsible for the development of District training, written and oral communications, resource lists and other tools for the use of staff, students and community members in achieving the purposes of this policy.

Specific procedures appropriate to the needs of staff, students, and parents/community members will be available to all persons who have legitimate business within the District. In all cases, individuals who perceive they have been treated in an uncivil manner will be urged to resolve their concerns through simple, direct or assisted communication with the person(s) at the source of the concern. When this is not possible or appropriate, any person who needs help in identifying and/or using appropriate problem-solving procedures may seek assistance from the school principal, principal designee, or work site administrator. Individuals are encouraged to work out issues of concern promptly. No retaliation will be tolerated against individuals for working in good faith under this policy and its related procedures to resolve concerns. Building leaders are encouraged to guide, support, and evaluate local efforts to establish and reinforce a culture of civility and respect for all.

This policy seeks to promote a school culture of respect and civility. Severe or persistent acts of uncivil conduct may, however, violate other school rules, such as the District's policies against harassment and sexual harassment, or specific conduct codes. Violation of such policies may result in further action, such as discipline, adverse employment action, or criminal charges, as applicable. Nothing in this policy is intended to interfere with the ability of school officials to maintain order and discipline in the schools or to enforce school rules and applicable laws. The Superintendent and appropriate staff shall review this policy annually.

Severability Clause. If any part of this policy or its related procedures is found to be unlawful or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect to the full extent permitted by law.

Cross References/Related Policies and Procedures

4220 Parent Complaint

3207 Harassment & Bullying (students)

8700 Harassment

3205 Civility – Students (identical language)

4011 Civility –Community Relations (identical language)

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