

The Board of Education recognizes that bullying is not a rite of passage that must be endured by young people. Instead, it is a behavior that schools must address because of its harmful social, physical, psychological, and academic impact upon the bullies, victims, and bystanders. In an effort to provide a safe, secure, and respectful learning environment for all students on school grounds, on school buses, and at school sponsored events, the board adopts the following bullying prevention guidelines.

DEFINITION:

- Bullying includes aggressive or hostile behavior that is intentional and involves an imbalance of power between the bully and the bullied. It is typically repeated over time.
- Bullying takes many forms including, but not limited to, physical or verbal assaults, non-verbal or emotional threats or intimidation, social exclusion and isolation, extortion, and the use of computer or telecommunications to send embarrassing, slanderous, threatening or intimidating messages.
- Bullying is a form of victimization and is not necessarily a result of or part of an ongoing conflict.
- Bullying can also be characterized by teasing, put-downs, name calling, cruel rumors, false accusations, and hazing.

PROHIBITED BEHAVIOR:

- Student to student behaviors characterized by bullying per the definition above provided it takes place on school grounds, on school buses, at a school sponsored event, or through the use of school equipment in the case of cyber bullying.
- Student to staff member, given the same conditions as above.
- Staff member to student.
- Staff member to another staff member.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE:

- It is the responsibility of students and staff members to report acts of bullying to the building principal.
- An investigation to determine the facts will be performed to verify the validity of the report.
- Filing a report will not affect a student's grades or, if the complainant is a staff member, their employment status. Every effort will be made to protect against potential retaliation for making such a report.
- The complaint shall remain confidential for both the accused and accuser until the misconduct is confirmed and disciplinary actions are imposed.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION:

- Staff members found to have participated in bullying behavior, or who are aware of bullying and failed to report the behavior, may be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the current employee handbook.
- Students found to have participated in bullying behavior are subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to, counseling, suspension, expulsion, and referral to law enforcement officials.