

Bullying Prohibited

Bullying is a form of harassment. All staff and pupils are prohibited from bullying a pupil at school.

“At school” means in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether or not it is held on school premises. “At school” includes conduct using a telecommunications access device or the telecommunications service provider is owned by or under the control of the school district.

All staff and pupils are prohibited from retaliation or false accusation against a target of bullying, a witness, or another person with reliable information about the act of bullying. All pupils are protected from bullying under this policy and bullying is equally prohibited without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus.

For the purposes of this policy, “bullying” means: “Any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- (a.) Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils.
- (b.) Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school district’s or public school’s educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
- (c.) Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil’s physical or mental health.
- (d.) Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.”

Students who engage in any act of bullying while at school, at any school function, in connection to or with any District sponsored activity or event, or while enroute to or from school, or through the use of district-provided technology are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion. As may be required by law, law enforcement officials shall be notified of bullying incidents.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative regulations and programs that will increase awareness of the problem of bullying. In designing administrative regulations and anti-bullying programs or strategies, the Superintendent should consult with the greater school community, including students.

Reports or complaints of bullying may be reported to any district staff member either verbally or in writing. All district staff members are required to immediately notify the appropriate building principal when they witness or become aware of a violation of this policy. When a bullying incident (violation of this policy) is reported, the building principal or designee will investigate the incident immediately. Based upon that investigation, if the report or complaint is verified, the principal or designee will set up a meeting with the parent or legal guardian of the victim of bullying and a meeting with the parent or legal guardian of the perpetrator of the bullying within 24 hours. The principal or designee will also document the incident in the student information system for quarterly reports to the Board of Education on any verified incidents with resulting consequences.

All staff members will be trained on an annual basis with regard to preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying. Pupils and parents will also have the opportunity to participate in educational programs on preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying and cyberbullying.

This policy will be publicized through the district's newsletter, its website, posters on bulletin boards near each building entrance, and in all student handbooks.

Approved: January 9, 2012

LEGAL REF: Public Act 241 of 2011. "Policies on Bullying," Michigan State Board of Education, 7-19-01; Tinker v Des Moines Independent School District, 393 US 503(1969). See also: Saxe v State College Area School District, 240 F3d 200(CA 3, 2001)