

Book	Policy Manual
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## **Purpose**

The district is committed to providing all students and employees with the right to a safe and civil educational environment, free from harassment and bullying. The district recognizes that bullying interferes with the learning process and may present an obstacle to the academic, vocational and social and/or emotional development of students.

## **Definitions**

**Bullying** shall mean a pattern of repeated harmful behavior by a person with more physical or social power toward a less powerful person. This may include a wide variety of behaviors, with deliberate intent to hurt, embarrass, or humiliate the other person. Researchers have identified four (4) forms of bullying:[\[1\]](#)

1. **Physical** – the most commonly known form. Includes hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing and taking personal belongings.
2. **Verbal** – includes taunting, malicious teasing, name-calling and making threats.
3. **Psychological or Relational** – involves spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships and engaging in social exclusion or intimidation.
4. **Cyberbullying** – forms of verbal and psychological bullying may also occur on the Internet through e-mail, instant messaging or personal profile web sites, such as My-Space. Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher or employee of the district by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images or web site postings, including blogs.

All forms of cyberbullying are unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive of the educational process of the district, offenders shall be the subject of appropriate discipline.

**Bullying** shall include unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a student by another student that has the intent of or effect of:

1. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student.
2. Damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property.
3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm.
4. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property.
5. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities.

The term **bullying** and **cyberbullying** shall not be interpreted to infringe upon a student's right to engage in legally protected speech or conduct.

**School setting** means in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.[\[1\]](#)

### **Authority**

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to bully another student on district grounds, at any school activity or on the way to or from school.[\[1\]](#)

Bullying may include acts that occur outside of the school if those acts are intentional, electronic, verbal or physical, are directed at another student or students, are severe, persistent or pervasive, and have the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education, creating a threatening environment or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

The Board encourages students to report bullying or cyberbullying complaints to district employees.

All employees who receive a bullying or cyberbullying complaint shall investigate to determine if bullying or cyberbullying has occurred. If the behavior shall be found to meet the definition of bullying or cyberbullying, written documentation shall be submitted to the building principal.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

Each staff member shall be responsible to maintain an educational environment free of bullying and cyberbullying.

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of his/her fellow students and to ensure an atmosphere free from all forms of bullying and cyber-bullying.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop regulations to implement this policy.

This policy and regulations shall be reviewed with students within ninety (90) days of its adoption and each school year thereafter.[\[1\]](#)

The Superintendent or designee, in cooperation with other appropriate administrators, shall review this policy every three (3) years and recommend necessary revisions to the Board.[\[1\]](#)

A copy of this policy, report of bullying incidents, and any information relating to the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention and education programs shall be submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education Office of Safe Schools as part of the district's annual report.[\[1\]](#)

### **Guidelines**

The Code of Student Conduct, which shall contain this policy, shall be disseminated annually to students.[1][2][3]

This policy shall be available on the district's web site, shall be posted in every classroom and in a prominent location in every school building where notices are posted.

### Education

The district may develop and implement bullying prevention and intervention programs. Such programs shall provide district staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in and reporting incidents of bullying.[4][1][5]

### Investigation Procedures

Investigation of bullying shall be in accordance with the following:

1. A student shall report a complaint of bullying or cyberbullying, orally or in writing, to a teacher, building administrator or counselor.
2. The building administrator shall investigate the alleged conduct that occurred.
3. The building administrator may request assistance from other district employees in the investigation process.
4. After the investigation, the building principal or designee shall be notified in writing of the complaint and results of the investigation and shall take corrective action to ensure that the conduct ceases.
5. The building principal or designee shall inform parents/guardians of the victim and accused.

### Consequences/Intervention

Students who violates this policy shall be subject to disciplinary options that may include counseling, a parent/guardian conference, detention, suspension or other consequences as provided in the Code of Student Conduct.[1][3][6]

### Confidentiality

The district recognizes that both the complaining student and the alleged bully or extorter have a strong interest in maintaining the confidentiality of the allegations and relation information. The privacy of the complaining student, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed and the witnesses shall be respected as much as possible, consistent with legal obligations to investigate, take appropriate action and comply with law. As limited by law, the principal or designee may inform the complaining student and parents/guardians of the outcome of the investigation.

### Reprisals

Any student who retaliates against another student for reporting bullying or extortion or for assisting or testifying in the investigation or hearing may be subject to disciplinary action.