

# HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: ANTI-BULLYING

ADOPTED: November 20, 2006

REVISED: November 17, 2008

<p>1. Purpose</p> <p>2. Definitions</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">249. ANTI-BULLYING</p> <p>The Highlands School District is committed to providing all students and employees with the right to a safe and civil educational environment, free from harassment or bullying. Highlands School District recognizes that bullying interferes with the learning process, and may present an obstacle to the academic, vocational, and social/emotional development of students.</p> <p><b>Bullying</b> 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:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Physical</b> – the most commonly known form; includes hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing and taking personal belongings.</li> <li>2. <b>Verbal</b> – includes taunting, malicious teasing, name-calling, and making threats.</li> <li>3. <b>Psychological or Relational</b> – involves spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, and engaging in social exclusion or intimidation.</li> <li>4. <b>Cyberbullying</b> – 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.</li> </ol>
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<p>3. Authority</p> <p>4. Delegation of Responsibility</p>	<p><b>Bullying</b> shall mean unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a student by another student that has the intent of or effect of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student.</li> <li>2. Damaging, extorting or taking a student’s personal property.</li> <li>3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm.</li> <li>4. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property.</li> <li>5. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities.</li> </ol> <p>The term <b>bullying</b> and <b>cyberbullying</b> shall not be interpreted to infringe upon a student’s right to engage in legally protected speech or conduct.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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 (i) substantially interfering with a student’s education; (ii) creating a threatening environment; or (iii) substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.</p> <p>Each staff member shall be responsible to maintain an educational environment free of bullying and cyberbullying.</p> <p>Each staff member shall be responsible to respect the rights of his/her fellow students and to ensure an atmosphere free from all forms of bullying and cyberbullying.</p> <p>Students shall be encouraged to report bullying or cyberbullying complaints to district employees.</p> <p>All employees who receive a bullying or cyberbullying complaint shall investigate to determine if bullying or cyberbullying has occurred. If the behavior is found to meet the definition of bullying or cyberbullying, written documentation must be submitted to the building principal.</p> <p>The building principal or his/her designee will inform parents/guardians of the victim and person accused.</p>
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take appropriate action, and to comply with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and any discovery or disclosure obligations. As limited by FERPA protections, the principal or his/her designee may inform the complaining student/parents/guardians of the outcome of the investigation.

Reprisal

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.

References:

School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 1302-A, 1303.1-A

State Board of Education Regulations – 22 PA Code Sec. 12.3

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act – 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1232g

Board Policy – 000, 218, 233, 236, 248