

Students

Preventing Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors is an important District goal.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived:

- Race
- Color
- Nationality
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Identity
- Gender-Related Identity or Expression
- Ancestry
- Age
- Religion
- Physical or Mental Disability
- Order of Protection Status
- Status of Being Homeless
- Actual or Potential Marital or Parental Status, including Pregnancy
- Association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited in each of the following situations:
 1. During any school sponsored education program or activity
 2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school sponsored or school sanctioned events or activities.
 3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.

For purposes of this policy, the term *bullying* means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property.
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.
3. Substantially interfering with the student's academic performance.
4. Substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying, intimidation, and/or harassment may take various forms, including without limitation:

- Threats
- Stalking
- Physical Violence
- Sexual Harassment
- Sexual Violence
- Theft
- Public Humiliation
- Destruction of Property or
- Retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying

Definition of Cyber-Bullying. Cyber-bullying is defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photoelectronic system, or photooptical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. "Cyber-bullying" includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section. "Cyber-bullying" also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in [105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b)].

Prohibition on Cyber-Bullying. Bullying is prohibited through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a nonschool-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This item applies only in cases in which a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred and does not require a district or school to staff or monitor any nonschool-related activity, function, or program.

Process to Determine if an Incident is Within the Scope of the Policy. Public Act 98-0801 also instituted a requirement that a district's bullying policy or implementing procedure shall include a process to investigate whether a reported act of bullying is within the permissible scope of the district's or school's jurisdiction and shall require that the district or school provide the victim with information regarding services that are available within the district and community, such as counseling, support services, and other programs.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and maintain a program that:

1. Fully implements and enforces each of the following Board policies:
 - a. 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. This policy contains the process for an individual to seek resolution of a complaint. A student may use this policy to complain about bullying. The District Complaint Manager shall address the complaint promptly and equitably. After an investigation, the Complaint

Manager shall file a written report of his or her findings with the Superintendent for his or her action. The student may appeal any decision to the Board.

- b. 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks*. This policy states that the use of the District's electronic networks is limited to:
 - 1) support of education and/or research, or
 - 2) a legitimate business use. It subjects any individual to the loss of privileges, disciplinary action, and/or appropriate legal actions for violating the District's *Authorization of Electronic Network Access*.
- c. 7:20, *Harassment of Students Prohibited*. This policy prohibits any person from harassing, intimidating, or bullying a student based on an actual or perceived characteristic that is identified in the policy. Those characteristics are also identified in the second paragraph of 7:180, *Preventing Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*.
- d. 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*. This policy prohibits teen dating violence on school property, at school sponsored activities, and in vehicles used for school-provided transportation. It encourages anyone with information about an incident of teen dating violence to report it to any school staff member.
- e. 7:190, *Student Discipline*. This policy prohibits students from engaging in hazing, bullying, or any kind of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to another or any urging of other students to engage in such conduct; prohibited conduct includes any use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threats, intimidation, fear, harassment, or other comparable conduct.
- f. 7:310, *Restrictions on Publications*. This policy prohibits students from:
 - 1) accessing and/or distributing at school any written, printed, or electronic material, including material from the Internet, that will cause substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities, and
 - 2) creating and/or distributing written, printed, or electronic material, including photographs and Internet material and blogs, that causes substantial disruption to school operations or interferes with the rights of other students or staff members.

Full implementation of the above policies includes:

- 1) conducting a prompt and thorough investigation of alleged incidents of bullying,
- 2) providing each student who violates one or more of these policies with appropriate consequences and remedial action, and
- 3) protecting students against retaliation for reporting bullying.

2. Examines the appropriate steps to understand and rectify conditions that foster bullying, intimidation, and harassment; this contemplates taking action to eliminate or prevent these disruptive behaviors beyond traditional punitive disciplinary actions.
3. Includes bullying prevention and character instruction in all grades in accordance with State law and Board policy 6:60, *Curriculum Content*. This includes incorporating student social and emotional development into the District's educational program as required by State law and in alignment with Board policy 6:65, *Student Social and Emotional Development*.
4. Fully informs staff members of the District's goal to prevent students from engaging in bullying and the measures being used to accomplish it. This includes each of the following:
 - a. Communicating the District's expectation and State law requirement that teachers and other certified or licensed employees maintain discipline.
 - b. Establishing the expectation that staff members:
 - 1) intervene immediately to stop a bullying incident that they witness or immediately contact building security and/or law enforcement if the incident involves a weapon or other illegal activity,
 - 2) report bullying, whether they witness it or not, to an administrator, and
 - 3) inform the administration of locations on school grounds where additional supervision or monitoring may be needed to prevent bullying.
 - c. Where appropriate in the staff development program, providing strategies to staff members to effectively prevent bullying and intervene when it occurs.
 - d. Establishing a process for staff members to fulfill their obligation to report alleged acts of bullying.
5. Encourages all members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors, to report:
 - a. alleged acts of bullying, intimidation, harassment, and other acts of actual or threatened violence, and
 - b. locations on school grounds where additional supervision or monitoring may be needed to prevent bullying.
6. Actively involves students' parents/guardians in the remediation of the behavior(s) of concern. This includes ensuring that all parents/guardians are notified, as required by State law, whenever their child engages in aggressive behavior.
7. Communicates the District's expectation that all students conduct themselves with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students. This includes a process for commending or acknowledging students for demonstrating appropriate behavior.

8. Annually communicates with policy to students and their parents/guardians. This includes annually disseminating information to all students and parents/guardians explaining the serious disruption caused by bullying, intimidation, or harassment and that these behaviors will be taken seriously and are not acceptable in any form.
9. Engages in ongoing monitoring that includes collecting and analyzing appropriate data on the nature and extent of bullying in the District's schools and, after identifying appropriate indicators, assesses the effectiveness of the various strategies, programs, and procedures and reports the results of this assessment to the Board along with recommendations to enhance effectiveness.
10. Complies with State and federal law and is in alignment with Board policies. This includes prompting the Board to update the policy beginning every 2 years after its initial adoption and filing this policy with the Illinois State Board of Education after the Board adopts or updates it.

This policy is not intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution or under Section 3 or 4 of Article 1 of the Illinois Constitution.

LEGAL REF: 405 ILCS 49/, Children's Mental Health Act
105 ILCS 5/10-20.14, 5/24-24, and 5/27-23.7.
23 Ill. Admin.Code §§1.240 and §1.280