

Book	Policy Manual
Section	200 Pupils
Title	FAIRFIELD AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT - Bullying/Cyberbullying
Code	249
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Purpose

The Board is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for district students. The Board recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the Board prohibits bullying by district students.

Definitions

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:[\[1\]](#)

1. Substantial interference with a student's education.
2. Creation of a threatening environment.
3. Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

Researchers have identified three (3) forms of bullying:

1. Physical - 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.

Cyberbullying means bullying that occurs on the Internet through email, instant messaging and social media sites. Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening or terrorizing a district student, teacher or employee by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images or website postings, including blogs.

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

The Board prohibits all forms of bullying by district students.[1]

The Board encourages students who have been bullied to promptly report such incidents to the building principal or designee and their parents/guardians. The Board encourages parents/guardians to report suspected bullying to the building principal.

The Board directs that complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the district's legal and investigative obligations. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith reports of bullying.

Delegation of Responsibility

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying.

If an employee suspects that bullying has occurred, they have a duty to report the incident to the building principal. Employees who witness acts of bullying shall respond appropriately to ensure observed acts of bullying cease and to teach students that bullying is not acceptable behavior.

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

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that this policy and administrative regulations are reviewed annually with students.[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]

District administration shall annually provide the following information with the Safe School Report:
[1]

1. Board's Bullying Policy.
2. Report of bullying incidents.
3. Information on the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention or education programs.

Guidelines

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

This policy shall be accessible in every classroom. The policy shall be posted in a prominent location within each school building and on the district website, if available.[1]

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.[1][4][5][6]

Complaint Procedure

Step 1 - Reporting

A student or third party who believes s/he has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy is encouraged to immediately report the incident to a teacher, nurse, counselor or administrator.

A school employee who suspects or is notified that a student has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy shall immediately report the incident to the building principal.

Step 2 - Investigation

Upon receiving a complaint of bullying, the building principal shall immediately begin the investigation.

The investigation may consist of individual interviews with the complainant, the accused and others with knowledge relative to the incident. The investigator may also evaluate any other information and materials relevant to the investigation.

Step 3 - Investigative Report

The building principal shall prepare a written report within fifteen (15) days, unless additional time to complete the investigation is required. The report shall include a summary of the investigation, a determination of whether the complaint has been substantiated as factual and whether it is a violation of this policy, and a recommended disposition of the complaint.

Step 4 - District Action

If the investigation results in a finding that the complaint is factual and constitutes a violation of this policy, the district shall take prompt, corrective action to ensure that such conduct ceases and will not recur.

Disciplinary actions shall be consistent with the school's Discipline Code, Board policies and district procedures, applicable collective bargaining agreements, and state and federal laws.

If it is concluded that a student has knowingly made a false complaint under this policy, such student shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Consequences for Violations

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include:[1][3][7]

1. Counseling within the school.
2. Parental conference.
3. Loss of school privileges.
4. Transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus.

5. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities.
6. Detention.
7. Suspension.
8. Expulsion.
9. Counseling/Therapy outside of school.
10. Referral to law enforcement officials.