

BOARD GUIDELINES FOR THE DISTRICT'S PROCEDURES, SERVICES, AND COMMUNICATIONS RELATED TO BULLYING AND HARASSMENT IN THE SCHOOLS

The Board of Education believes that bullying and harassment are complex school and community issues that have harmful consequences, first and foremost, for those individuals who are the victims of the behavior; but bullying and harassment also have negative consequences for those who engage in the behavior, for the overall school environment, and for the broader community. Accordingly, the Board of Education directs the administration to ensure that the District's schools are taking active steps, directed toward both students and staff, surrounding bullying and harassment awareness, prevention, and intervention/response.

The administration shall ensure that bullying and harassment are addressed:

1. Within the District's personal development and health education curriculum;
2. As an element of technology/Internet safety instruction;
3. As an element of developing and monitoring the overall climate of District schools and programs;
4. By providing staff development resources related to harassment and bullying and communicating to District employees about their responsibilities related to awareness, prevention, and intervention;
5. By enforcing the Board of Education's expectations that employees and other adults who are present in the school environment will model appropriate behaviors, including not only the expectation that such adults will avoid engaging in bullying or harassment of students and others, but also the expectation that such adults will model the responsive behaviors that students are encouraged to use when they observe or intervene in response to negative conduct by others;
6. Through the provision and use of interventions and supports for students;
7. By establishing and communicating expectations for student conduct that address negative behaviors that, even if not rising to the level of bullying or harassment, are inappropriate for the school environment and that may be a precursor to bullying or harassment; and
8. By establishing and implementing procedures under which incidents and concerns involving bullying and harassment can be reported and addressed in an appropriate manner.

While there are often challenges associated with appropriately identifying, assessing, and responding to incidents of bullying and harassment, the District's procedures, services, and communications related to bullying and harassment shall take the following positions of the Board of Education into consideration:

1. The Board of Education expects the District's response to any incident or course of conduct that involves bullying or harassment to exhibit a degree of proportionality to the totality of the known

circumstances. No single, pre-defined response is appropriate for all circumstances. Similarly, if District employees conclude that an initial response to an incident or pattern of bullying or harassment has been ineffective, and they know that the behaviors have continued or that the behaviors have escalated, then a proportional response would include changing the District's approach to intervention.

2. Because these behaviors and their effects differ substantially from one situation to the next, the District can be more effective in its efforts when the students and parents and guardians affected by a serious situation (a) clearly identify the severity and totality of the circumstances of the situation to a teacher or administrator; and (b) participate in an ongoing partnership with District employees to monitor, communicate about, and make adjustments to the response(s) that have been implemented to date.
3. Bullying and harassment involve many overlapping behaviors, and conduct that may be properly labeled as bullying and/or harassment may also violate a state law, another District policy, school rules, or other established behavioral expectations for students or employees. Assigning a particular label to a negative behavior is generally less important than identifying the behavior as inappropriate and taking action to address the behavior. However, where any written complaint or written report of bullying or harassment specifies that the alleged conduct is based, in whole or in part, on a student's legally-protected classification, the District shall treat its final determination as appealable to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Information/Notice

1. Students and parents and guardians shall be informed annually of relevant portions of the District's bullying and harassment policy and the related complaint/reporting procedures through the Student Handbook.
Bullying behavior can be:
 1. Physical (e.g. assault, hitting and punching, kicking, theft, threatening behavior)
 2. Verbal (e.g. threatening or intimidating language, teasing or name-calling, racist remarks)
 3. Indirect (e.g. spreading cruel rumors, intimidation through gestures, social exclusion, and sending insulting messages or pictures by mobile phone or using the internet-also known as cyber bullying)
2. The District will also provide a copy of the bullying and harassment policy and the related complaint/reporting procedures to any person who requests it.
3. A reference to the District's bullying and harassment policy and the related procedures shall also be included in the District's Employee Handbook.

The District's Equal Educational Opportunities Compliance Officer shall keep data on the number and types of student-related incidents of bullying and harassment that are the subject of a written report/complaint. The Compliance Officer shall create an end-of-year annual summary report of such incidents (not including any personally-identifiable student information) to assist with the District's evaluation of its efforts to address bullying and harassment in the schools.

Adopted: 2/27/17

Revised: