

BULLYING OF STUDENTS

Bullying of students by other students, personnel, or the public will not be tolerated. Students are expected to be civil, polite, and fully engaged in the learning process. Students who act inappropriately are not fully engaged in the learning process. This policy is in effect while the students are on school grounds, in school vehicles, at designated bus stops, at school-sponsored activities, at school-sanctioned events, and while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management, and welfare of the school district. Threatening behavior, harassment, intimidation, and bullying of students by electronic communication is prohibited whether or not such communication originated at school or with school equipment, if the communication is specifically directed at students or school personnel and concerns harassment, intimidation, or bullying at school. The school district is not required to provide educational services in the regular school setting to any student who has been removed from a public school or private school in Oklahoma or another state by administrative or judicial process for an act of using electronic communication with the intent to terrify, intimidate or harass, or threaten to inflict injury or physical harm to faculty or students.

Bullying includes harassment which is defined as deliberate intimidation or taunting by threats of or actual physical violence; the creation by whatever means of a climate of hostility, or intimidation; or the use of language, conduct, or symbols in such manner as to be commonly understood to convey hatred, contempt, or prejudice or to have the effect of insulting, degrading, humiliating or stigmatizing an individual. Harassment exists when an individual student or an unorganized group of individuals who use(s) rough practical jokes or cause(s) a student to perform meaningless, difficult or humiliating tasks. Harassment includes but is not limited to harassment on the basis of race, sex, creed, color, national origin, religion, marital status, or disability.

~~No student in this district will be subject to hazing, harassment, or any other form of persecution by any student or employee at school or on school-sponsored activities.~~

~~District employees shall take necessary and appropriate disciplinary action toward any student or employee who violates this policy. Disciplinary action may include suspension for students and employment termination for employees if in compliance with state law.~~

As used in the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act, "bullying" means any pattern of harassment, intimidation, threatening behavior, physical acts, verbal or electronic communication directed toward a student or group of students that results in or is reasonably perceived as being done with the intent to cause negative educational or physical results for the targeted individual or group and is communicated in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student. ~~Such behavior~~ **Isolated action does not meet the state's definition of bullying. However, the administration will investigate isolated incidents or actions and apply appropriate discipline under the student discipline code. This policy addresses bullying which** is specifically prohibited.

Bullying set forth above may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Verbal, physical, or written harassment or abuse;
2. Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
3. Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, etc.;
4. Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student;
5. Unwelcome physical contact;
6. Exploitation of a less powerful person.

Reporting Bullying

Any individual who believes that he/she has been a witness to or target of student bullying under the terms of this policy shall report it by completing a written and signed statement and submitting it to the building principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously. However, no formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

BULLYING OF STUDENTS (Cont.)

The superintendent shall develop procedures providing for:

1. Prompt investigation of allegations of harassment.
2. The expeditious correction of the conditions causing such harassment.
3. Establishment of adequate measures to provide confidentiality in the complaint process.
4. Initiation of appropriate corrective actions.
5. Identification and enactment of methods to prevent reoccurrence of the harassment.
6. A process where the provisions of this policy are disseminated in writing annually to all staff and students.

Consequences of Bullying

Any employee found to have engaged in bullying shall be subject to sanctions including, but not limited to, verbal warning, written reprimand, mandatory harassment training, transfer, suspension, or termination of employment subject to applicable procedural and due process requirements.

Any student found to have engaged in bullying while involved in a school activity shall be subject to disciplinary action which may include, but not be limited to, verbal or written warning or reprimand, counseling, mandatory bullying training, community service, suspension, or other consequences consistent with the student discipline code.

In administering discipline, consideration will be given to alternative methods of punishment to insure that the most effective discipline is administered in each case. In all disciplinary action, teachers and administrators will be mindful of the fact that they are dealing with individual personalities. The faculty may consider consultation with parents to determine the most effective disciplinary measure.

In considering alternatives of corrective actions, the faculty/administration of the school district will consider those listed below. However, the school is not limited to these alternative methods, nor does this list reflect an order or sequence of events to follow in disciplinary actions. The board of education will rely upon the judgment and discretion of the administrator to determine the appropriate remedial or corrective action in each instance.

1. Conference with student
2. Conference with parents
3. In-school suspension
4. Detention
5. Referral to counselor
6. Behavioral contract
7. Changing student's seat assignment or class assignment
8. Requiring a student to make financial restitution for damaged property
9. Requiring a student to clean or straighten items or facilities damaged by the student's behavior
10. Restriction of privileges
11. Involvement of local authorities
12. Referring student to appropriate social agency or to a delinquency prevention and diversion program administered by the Office of Juvenile Affairs.
13. Suspension
14. Performing Campus-site services for the school district

BULLYING OF STUDENTS (Cont.)

15. Other appropriate disciplinary action as required and as indicated by the circumstances which may include, but is not limited to, removal from eligibility to participate or attend extracurricular activities as well as removal from the privilege of attending or participating in the graduation ceremony, school dances, prom, prom activities, and/or class trips.

The above consequences will be imposed for any person who commits an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying as well as any person found to have falsely accused another as a means of retaliation, reprisal, or as a means of bullying. Strategies will be created to provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and other protection for student, both targets and perpetrators, and family members affected by bullying, as necessary.

Application

This policy applies to all students, employees (including administrators, teachers, support staff, and volunteers), and third parties of Stillwater Public Schools. A third party is defined as any individual who enters the school premises who is not a student or an employee. This includes visitors, parents, contractors, consultants, and vendors.

This policy applies to students and employees in connection with all academic, educational, extracurricular, athletic, and other programs of the school, whether they take place in the facilities of the school, on a school bus, at a class or training program sponsored by the school, or elsewhere.

Prohibition of Retaliation and False Reporting

The district will discipline any student or employee who retaliates against anyone reporting alleged bullying or who retaliates against any person assisting in an investigation or proceeding relating to a bullying complaint. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment. The district will discipline any student or employee who falsely accuses another student or employee as a means of retaliation, reprisal, or as a means of bullying.

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BULLYING OF STUDENTS (Cont.)

The district shall utilize procedures providing for:

1. Documentation of the incident using form FNCD-E;
2. Prompt investigation of allegations of bullying;
3. The expeditious correction of the conditions causing such bullying;
4. Establishment of adequate measures to provide confidentiality in the compliant process;
5. Initiation of appropriate corrective actions;
6. Identification and enactment of methods to prevent reoccurrence of the bullying; and
7. A process where the provisions of this policy are disseminated in writing annually to all staff and students.

All school employees at each school site shall be required to complete professional development training in school bullying prevention, identification, response and reporting that meets the requirements of Oklahoma law and shall include recommendations from each school site's Safe Schools Committee.

Students will receive annual training regarding identifying, preventing, addressing, and reporting incidents of bullying via educational programs. These programs may include, but are not limited to, classroom discussions, assemblies, multimedia and presentations. The purpose of the educational programs are to assist students in the identification of bullying behaviors, reporting procedures and the consequences for violation of school policy.

The district will implement a research-based educational program as designed and developed by the Oklahoma State Department of Education for students and parents to prevent, identify, respond to and report bullying.

Publication of Policy

Annual written notice of this policy will be provided to parents/guardians, staff, volunteers, and students with age-appropriate language for students. Notice of the policy will be posted at various locations within each school site, including, but not limited to cafeterias, school bulletin boards, and administrative offices. The policy will be posted on the school district's website at www.stillwaterschools.com and on each school webpage. The policy will be included in all student and employee handbooks.

REFERENCE: 21 O.S. §850.0
70 O.S. §24-100.2

CROSS-REFERENCE: Policy CK, Safety Program and Procedures
Policy FNCC, Hazing