

PROHIBITING BULLYING (INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES)

The following procedures will be used by any person for the filing, processing, and resolution of a reported incident of harassment, intimidation, bullying, or threatening behavior. The procedures are to be followed by the administration of the school district in an effort to determine the severity of the incident and the potential to result in future violence.

Definitions

1. “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.

“Electronic communication” means the communication of any written, verbal, or pictorial information or video content by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, a mobile or cellular telephone or other wireless communication device, or a computer.

“Threatening behavior” means any pattern of behavior or isolated action, whether or not it is directed at another person, that a reasonable person would believe indicates potential for future harm to students, school personnel, or school property.

The procedure for investigating reported incidents of bullying is as follows:

1. The matter should immediately be reported to the building principal. If the bullying involved an electronic communication, a printed copy of the communication as well as any identifying information such as email address or web address shall be provided to the building principal. As much detailed information as possible should be provided to the building principal in written form to allow for a thorough investigation of the matter.
2. Upon receipt of a written report, the building principal shall contact the superintendent and begin an investigation to determine the severity of the incident and the potential for future violence.
3. If, during the course of the investigation, it appears that a crime may have been committed the building principal or superintendent shall notify local law enforcement and request that the alleged victim also contact law enforcement to report the matter for potential criminal investigation.
4. If it is determined that the school district's discipline code has been violated, the building principal shall follow district policies regarding the discipline of the student. If it is determined that bullying has occurred, a referral will be made by the building principal or designee to a delinquency prevention and diversion program administered by the Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs.

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5. Upon completion of the investigation, the principal or superintendent may recommend that available community mental health care options be provided to the student, if appropriate. This may include information about the types of support services available to the student bully, victim, and any other students affected by the prohibited behavior. If such a recommendation is made, the administration shall request disclosure of any information that indicates an explicit threat to the safety of students or school personnel provided the disclosure of information does not violate the provisions or requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, Section 2503 of Title 12 of the Oklahoma Statutes, Section 1376 of Title 59 of Oklahoma Statutes, or any other state or federal laws relating to the disclosure of confidential information.
6. Upon completion of an investigation, timely notification of non-confidential information shall be provided to the parents/guardians of a victim of documented and verified bullying. This information should be provided within 5 academic school days of the conclusion of the investigation.
7. Upon completion of an investigation, timely notification of non-confidential information shall be provided to the perpetrator and parent/guardian of the documented and verified bullying. This information should be provided within 5 academic school days of the conclusion of the investigation.

Reports may be made anonymously. However, no formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Reports shall be made immediately to the building principal by any school employee that has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of bullying.

The superintendent shall be responsible for enforcing this policy. The building principal should notify the superintendent within twenty-four hours of any report of bullying. Upon completion of an investigation, the building principal should notify the superintendent of the findings of the investigations. Documentation should also be provided to the superintendent to establish that timely notification was provided to the parents/guardians of both the victim and perpetrator.

Students who report bullying or other inappropriate behavior in good faith, or who participate as witnesses in an investigation, are protected from retaliation. Retaliation of any kind—including threats, intimidation, exclusion, harassment, cyberbullying, spreading rumors, or any other adverse treatment intended to discourage or punish a student for reporting a concern—is strictly prohibited. Any student found to have engaged in retaliatory behavior will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with school policy. Students who believe they have experienced retaliation should report it immediately to a teacher, school counselor, administrator, or other trusted school employee so that the matter can be promptly investigated and addressed. If an employee of the district is found to have engaged in retaliatory action against a student who has reported bullying, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken which could include termination of employment.

Any person who knowingly makes a false report shall receive disciplinary consequences and any accusations found to be false will be removed from the falsely accused student's records.