

## WASHINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

### ANTI-BULLYING

No. 415

#### PURPOSE

The Washington School District recognizes that a student's ability to learn, and the District's ability to safely educate its students, is adversely affected by bullying. The School District seeks to avoid these adverse affects and maintain the safety of the school environment.

#### DEFINITION

Bullying - the willful and repeated use by one student of his/her power, size, age and/or superior position, physically, verbally and/or psychologically, with the intent to harm another student, and/or the encouragement or condoning of any such behavior. Bullying creates an imbalance of power between the student- victim and the perpetrator, and the repeated and willful targeting of the student- victim adversely impacts upon his/her ability to properly participate in or fully benefit from the School District's educational program.

#### GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. It shall be a violation of this Policy for any student to engage in, encourage and/or condone, or communicate, any form of bullying. It shall also be a violation of this Policy for any employee, approved volunteer or chaperone of the School District to encourage and/or condone, through action or lack of action, any form of bullying. This prohibition shall apply to all acts of bullying that occur on school district property, through the use of school district equipment and resources (including but not limited to, school district computers and Internet connections), at school district functions (whether on school property or not), and/or on school district provided transportation.

2. School District employees are required to report alleged violations of this Policy to the Building Principal or the Superintendent in accordance with the procedures set forth herein.

3. The Administration is directed to evaluate the need, if any, for District-wide or building-level bullying prevention programs, and to report its findings to the Board of School Directors with appropriate recommendations.

4. The Administration is directed to continue to assess, and to make recommendations to the Board of School Directors, for any appropriate changes to existing intervention programs and practices in place to address the needs of students who are bullied, and the issues relating to students who engage in bullying.

## **DISSEMINATION OF POLICY**

This Anti-bullying Policy will be disseminated annually to all school staff, students, and parents. It will be distributed each year to all students with a copy of the Student Handbook, or will be incorporated into the Handbook. Building administrators will develop a procedure for discussing the Policy with students in individual buildings. The Policy will also be posted on the District web page and published at a minimum of once each year in the District newsletter. Copies of the Anti-bullying Policy shall be posted in all classrooms and information on the Anti-bullying Policy will also be incorporated in training programs for all new school employees, as well as being referenced in the staff handbooks.

In addition, the Administration will develop procedures for training all chaperones and sponsors on the Policy.

## **GENERAL PROCEDURES RELATING TO COMPLAINT**

Each student shall be advised that the fact that he/she alleges bullying by another student or who reports an incident of bullying will not reflect upon the student's status. Any retaliation based upon a student's good faith initiation of a complaint, participation in the investigation of a complaint or provision of information relating to a bullying complaint is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. If any student believes he or she is being retaliated against for filing a complaint under this policy, or the student's parent believes that his/her child is being retaliated against for filing a complaint under this policy, he or she shall report the retaliations in the same manner as indicated below.

The Principal of the grade level to which the alleged victim is assigned will investigate all complaints, PROVIDED HOWEVER, that if the complaint alleges that the perpetrator of the bullying is an Administrator or Supervisor employed by the School District and it is alleged that the Administrator or Supervisor encouraged, condoned, or turned a blind eye to the bullying of the alleged student-victim, the Superintendent or his designee shall investigate the complaint.

## **INVESTIGATION PROCEDURE**

1. Separate interviews of the Complainant and the alleged bully will be conducted and all information will be documented in written form on Form A. Each of the involved individuals will be asked to sign an Acknowledgment of the statements provided during the interview. At the time of the interview, a copy of this Policy will be provided to the individuals involved and the Policy and complaint procedure will be reviewed with each individual.

2. During the interviews each individual will be given the opportunity to state his/her side of the incident, to identify any witnesses to corroborate his/her statements, and to provide input as to the possible resolution of the situation. Each student may have his or her

parent or guardian present during the interview and parental involvement in this process will be encouraged.

If the appropriate Principal/Superintendent determines that measures are required during the period of investigation to alleviate the potential bullying, such a separation of the alleged victim and the alleged bully or close monitoring of the alleged bully, such measures shall be taken until the investigation is completed.

3. A fact-finding investigation will be conducted and a written record of the fact-finding investigation including witness interviews, findings of the investigation and recommended action shall be set forth on Form B.

4. The results of the fact-finding investigation, including any recommended action will be shared with the Complainant and with the accused bully.

5. If the Building Principal has conducted the investigation, he/she shall report his/her findings to the Superintendent. The Superintendent may consult with the Solicitor or special counsel as appropriate, in instances where disciplinary action is contemplated.

6. If the investigation results in a finding that a student has engaged in bullying in violation of this Policy, the appropriate Principal shall determine the appropriate discipline to be imposed, which may include, but not be limited to, suspension from school, or a recommendation to the Superintendent that the student be expelled from school following a hearing before a committee of the Board or the Board. In determining the level of discipline to be imposed, the Building Principal shall consider:

- a. the prior disciplinary record of the student-perpetrator;
- b. the relative ages and maturity levels of the students;
- c. the nature and frequency of the inappropriate conduct by the student-perpetrator toward the student-victim;
- d. the degree of harm experienced by the student-victim;
- e. the extent, if any, to which the student-perpetrator encouraged or involved other students of the bullying of the student-victim;
- f. any other circumstances or factors deemed relevant on this issue.

7. If it is determined that an employee, volunteer or chaperone has encouraged and/or condoned through action or lack of action any form of bullying, the Superintendent shall consult with the Solicitor, or special counsel, as appropriate, in instances where disciplinary action may need to be taken. The Superintendent may suspend any accused employee, pending a hearing if required. In situations of volunteers and/or chaperones, appropriate action will be taken which

could include revocation of volunteer status, termination of their permission to enter school grounds and/or notification of law enforcement agencies, if appropriate.

Legal Authority and References:

**Sections 1302A(C) and 1303.1A of the Public School Code of 1949, as amended, 24 P.S. Sections 13-1302A(C) and 1303.1A**

Cross References:

Policy No. 014 - Volunteers

Policy No. 403 - Child Abuse Identification and Reporting

Policy No. 408 - Unlawful Harassment/Discrimination

Policy No. 412 - Disability Based Discrimination

Policy No. 413 - Anti-Hazing

Policy No. 516 - Student Discipline

Policy No. 524 - Dysfunctional and/or Self Destructive Behavior

Policy No. 550 - Nondiscrimination Policy for Students

Approved: 12/08/08

**INCIDENT REPORT  
ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

1. Name of Complainant\_\_\_\_\_

2. Date(s)/Time(s) of Alleged Incident(s)\_\_\_\_\_

3. a. Notification of Complainant's Parent(s)/Guardian(s)\_\_\_\_\_ Date

b. Notification of Accused's Parent(s)/Guardian(s)\_\_\_\_\_ Date

4. Location of Alleged Incident(s)\_\_\_\_\_

5. Accused Party\_\_\_\_\_

6. Witnesses to the Alleged Incident\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Description of Incident\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Additional pages attached ( ) yes ( ) no

8. Other pertinent history and/or information\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Additional pages attached ( ) yes ( ) no

9. Were the Civil Authorities notified? ( ) yes ( ) no

10. Do you wish to have a conciliatory meeting? ( ) yes ( ) no\*  
\*If no, fact-finding will take place.

Signature of Complainant

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

\*Attach incident report to fact-finding sheet when appropriate

**FACT-FINDING FORM  
ANTI-BULLYING**

1. Accused party notified of the complaint \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

2. Accused party provided an opportunity to respond ( ) yes ( ) no  
\*If no, why not?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\*Additional statement attached. ( ) yes ( ) no

3. Witness Interviewed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Statement \_\_\_\_\_

\*Additional statement attached. ( ) yes ( ) no

4. Witness Interviewed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Statement \_\_\_\_\_

\*Additional statement attached. ( ) yes ( ) no

5. Witness Interviewed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Statement \_\_\_\_\_

\*Additional statement attached. ( ) yes ( ) no

6. Summary of Findings \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Recommended Action by Investigator \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Fact-finding results and recommended action shared with:
- a. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of the Accused \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Complainant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Complainant \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewed policy ( ) yes ( ) no  
Signature\*
  - d. Accused Party \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewed policy ( ) yes ( ) no  
Signature\*

\*Signature does not necessarily connote agreement with the results and/or recommendation, but only that the information (exclusive of disciplinary action taken toward the accused) was provided.