

MODEL BULLYING POLICY

I. PURPOSE

The [INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL DISTRICT] (the “District”) recognizes that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. The District finds that bullying, like other disruptive or violent behavior, is conduct that disrupts both a student’s ability to learn and a school’s ability to educate its students in a safe environment.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. “Bullying” means systematic, repeated, or recurrent conduct committed by a student or group of students against another student that serves as the greatest or sole cause of a student’s measurable physical harm or emotional distress accompanied by physical manifestations. Purely verbal expression, whether oral, written, or electronic, may only be considered “bullying” provided that it otherwise meets the definition of bullying and:
or:

(1) such expression is lewd, indecent, obscene, advocating for illegal conduct, likely to incite an immediate breach of peace, or the severe and pervasive use of threatening words that objectively inflict injury; or

(2) District administrators or officials reasonably and objectively determine that such expression will cause a substantial and material disruption of school work.

B. “School Premises” means any building, structure, athletic field, sports stadium or other real property owned, operated, leased or rented by the District or one of its schools, including, but not limited to, any kindergarten, elementary, secondary, or vocational-technical school.

C. “School-Sponsored Functions or Activities” means a field trip, sporting event, or any other function or activity that is officially sponsored by the District or one of its schools.

D. “School-Sponsored Transportation” means a motor vehicle owned, operated, leased, rented or subcontracted by the District or one of its schools.

III. PROHIBITION

The District prohibits all bullying on school premises, at school-sponsored functions or activities, or while students are being transported by any means of transportation provided or supported by the school district.

IV. REPORTING

Any student who believes he or she has been or is currently the victim of bullying may report the situation to the school principal or assistant principal. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who shall notify the appropriate school administrator. School officials are

not required to investigate a report if made anonymously unless good cause is shown or stated for filing anonymously or the school officials have good reason to believe that a student may be at imminent risk of physical harm.

Students and staff may also report any situation that they observe and believe to be bullying behavior directed toward a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

If a report of bullying is determined by the principal or designee to warrant further investigation, the investigation will be conducted in accordance with the requirement of parental notification set out in subsection VI below. If the investigation results in a determination that bullying has occurred, prompt and appropriate disciplinary action shall be taken.

V. INTENTIONALLY FALSE REPORTS

Making intentionally false reports about bullying is prohibited and is subject to discipline.

VI. PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

If a report of bullying is determined by the principal or designee to warrant further investigation, before any student is interviewed, his or her parent shall be notified by the school's principal or vice principal of the allegations made and shall have the opportunity to attend any interviews with their child conducted as part of the investigation. The notice may be by telephone or email but must also be confirmed in writing and mailed to the parent's home.

It shall not be the responsibility of an involved student to deliver such notification.

VII. INTERPRETATION & APPLICATION

A. This policy shall not be interpreted to infringe upon the First Amendment rights of students, and is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, or political views.

B. It shall be presumed that all verbal expression, whether oral, written, or electronic, relating to religious, philosophical, or political topics or viewpoints is protected by the First Amendment and shall not be classified as "bullying" under this policy unless specific facts demonstrate otherwise.

C. This section does not impede or preclude a student, the student's parents, or school officials from directly reporting to law enforcement officials any behavior that constitutes a violation of criminal law.

VIII. POSTING

Copies of this policy shall be provided to all employees, students and parents, and it shall be posted electronically on the school district's website.