

**Note:** This policy addresses bullying of District students. For provisions regarding discrimination, harassment, and retaliation involving District students, see FFH. For reporting requirements related to child abuse and neglect, see FFG.

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. The purpose of this policy is to assist the school district in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior. An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school district property or at school-related functions. This policy applies not only to students who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student's act of bullying.

The Dallas ISD Board of Trustees expects students to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, school staff, volunteers, and contractors.

The Board believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents and guardians, staff, and community members of the school district, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for district and community property on the part of students, staff, and community members.

The Board believes that the best discipline is self-imposed, and that it is the responsibility of staff to use disciplinary situations as opportunities for helping students learn to assume responsibility and the consequences of their behavior. Staff members who interact with students shall apply best practices designed to prevent discipline problems and encourage students' abilities to develop self-discipline.

Since bystander support of harassment or bullying can support these behaviors, the district prohibits both active and passive support for acts of harassment or bullying. The staff should encourage students to support students who walk away from these acts when they see them, constructively attempt to stop them, or report them to the designated authority.

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Dallas ISD

057905

BLACKBURN'S - DRAFT

STUDENT WELFARE  
FREEDOM FROM BULLYINGFFI  
(LOCAL)BULLYING  
PROHIBITED

The District shall incorporate information regarding the policy against harassment or bullying into school employee handbooks and appropriate training programs.

The standards of this policy constitute a specific, focused, coordinated, integrated, culturally sensitive system of supports for all students, staff, families, and community agencies that will improve relations within each school. It is designed to ensure that every school has staff that have been trained and are supported in their school's efforts to provide awareness, intervention training, and instructional strategies on prevention, including violence prevention, to each staff, parent, and student in the District and to direct follow up when incidents are reported and/or occur.

The District prohibits bullying as defined by this policy. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of District policy.

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression or physical conduct that:

1. Will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property, or
2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student, or
3. Has the effect of substantially negatively impacting a student's emotional or mental well-being, or

Such behavior is considered harassment or bullying whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle.

DEFINITION

**Bullying** means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students. Bullying of a student may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, ridicule, name calling, rumor spreading, slurs, jokes, innuendo's, demeaning comments, and ostracism.

It is further defined as any unwanted purposeful gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts - i.e. internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (pda), or wireless hand held device) that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, ethnicity, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital

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status, socio-economic background, social/family background, linguistic preference, political beliefs, or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment, or by any other distinguishing characteristic.

Bullying also includes, but not limited to, any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, by an adult or student, that has the potential to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment or cause long term damage, cause discomfort or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation, is carried out repeatedly and is often characterized by an imbalance of power.

Bullying may involve, but is not limited to:

1. Verbal: Hurtful name-calling, teasing, gossiping, making threats, making rude noises, or spreading hurtful rumors.
2. Nonverbal: Posturing, making gang signs, leering, staring, staking, destroying property, using graffiti or graphic images, or exhibiting inappropriate and/or threatening gestures or actions.
3. Physical: Hitting, punching, pushing, shoving, poking, kicking, tripping, strangling, hair pulling, fighting, beating, biting, spitting, or destroying property.
4. Emotional (Psychological): Rejecting, terrorizing, extorting, defaming, intimidating, humiliating, blackmailing, manipulating friendships, isolating, ostracizing, using peer pressure, or rating or ranking personal characteristics.
5. Cyber Bullying: Sending insulting or threatening messages by phone, e-mail, Web sites, or any other electronic or written communication. Accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the District school system.

**Cyberstalking** means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at or about a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

**Cyberbullying** is defined as the willful and repeated harassment and intimidation of a person through the use of digital technologies, including, but not limited to, email, blogs, texting on cell phones,

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social websites (e.g., MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, etc.), chat rooms, "sexting", instant messaging, or video voyeurism.

**"Accused"** is defined as any District employee, consultant, contractor, agent, visitor, volunteer, student, or other person in the school or outside the school at school-sponsored events, on school buses, and at training facilities or training programs sponsored by the District who is reported to have committed an act of bullying, whether formally or informally, verbally or in writing.

**"Complainant"** is defined as any District employee, consultant, contractor, agent, visitor, volunteer, student, or other person who formally or informally makes a report of bullying, orally or in writing.

**"Victim"** is defined as any District employee, consultant, contractor, agent, visitor, volunteer, student, or other person in the school or outside the school at school-sponsored events, on school buses and at training facilities or training programs sponsored by the District, who is reported to have been the target of an act of bullying during any educational program or activity.

Expectations

The District expects students and employees to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment.

The District prohibits the bullying of any student:

1. during any educational program or activity conducted by the District;
6. during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity or on a school bus;
7. through the use of any electronic device or data while on school grounds or on a school bus, computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of the District. The physical location or time of access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action initiated under this section.
8. through threats using the above to be carried out on school grounds. This includes threats made outside of school hours, which are intended to be carried out during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity, or on a school bus.
9. while the District does not assume any liability for incidences that occur at a bus stop or en route to and from school, a student or witness may file a complaint following

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the same procedures for bullying against a student and the school will investigate and/or provide assistance and intervention as the principal/designee deems appropriate, which may include the use of the School Security Officer.

10. though an incident of alleged of bullying may occur off campus and may not entail threats of acts to occur during school hours, if a student's ability to receive an education or a school's ability to provide an education is significantly impaired, as determined by the school district administration, disciplinary sanctions may be issued.

All administrators, faculty, and staff, in collaboration with parents, students, and community members, will incorporate systemic methods for student and staff recognition through positive reinforcement for good conduct, self discipline, good citizenship, and academic success, as seen in the required school plan to address positive school culture and behavior (aka Discipline Plan).

Student rights shall be explained as outlined in this policy and in the Student Code of Conduct: Respect for Persons and Property.

Proper prevention and intervention steps shall be taken based on the level of severity of infraction as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and this policy.

TRAINING

At the beginning of each school year, the school principal/designee and/or appropriate area/district administrator shall provide awareness of this policy, as well as the process for reporting incidents, investigation and appeal, to students, school staff, parents, or other persons responsible for the welfare of a students through appropriate references in the Student Code of Conduct, Employee Handbooks, the school website, and/or through other reasonable means.

Students will be provided with age-appropriate information on the recognition and prevention of harassment, intimidation or bullying, and their rights and responsibilities under this and other district policies and rules at student orientation sessions and on other appropriate occasions, which may include parents. Parents shall be provided with copies of this policy and procedure and appropriate materials on the recognition and prevention of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

REPORTING  
PROCEDURES

Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to promptly report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.

Any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should

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The District may take action based on the results of an investigation, even if the District concludes that the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying under this policy.

CONFIDENTIALITY

To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

APPEAL

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through FNG(LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level.

RETENTION  
ACCESS TO POLICY

Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC(LOCAL).

Information regarding this policy shall be distributed annually to District employees and included in the student handbook. Copies of the policy shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.

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