

### **Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment**

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important school goals.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, military status, unfavorable discharge status from military service, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited in each of the following situations:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on transportation school vehicles, at designated school transportation stops waiting for the school transportation, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events and activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of school. This paragraph (item#4) applies only when a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred; it does not require staff members to monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

#### Definitions from 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7

*Bullying* includes *cyberbullying* and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act of conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property.
2. Causing a substantial detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health.
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

*Cyberbullying* means bullying using technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sound, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. *Cyberbullying* includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in

which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of *bullying*. *Cyberbullying* also includes the distribution by electronic means of communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of *bullying*.

*Restorative measures* mean a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that: (i) are adapted to the needs of the school and community, (ii) contribute to maintaining school safety, (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they need to be successful in school and society, (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, and (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of student's behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school.

*School personnel* means person employed by, on contract with, or who volunteers in the school, including without limitation school and school district administrators, teachers, school guidance counselors, school social workers, school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, cafeteria workers and custodians.

#### Bullying Prevention and Response Plan

The Director of Education shall develop and maintain a bullying prevention and response plan that advances the school's goal of providing all students with a safe learning environment free of bullying and harassment.

1. The school uses the definition of bullying as provided in this policy.
2. Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of this school. However, nothing in the school's bullying prevention and response plan is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression of the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.
3. Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the Director of Education, or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the school officials or any staff members. The Director of Education and all staff members are available for help with a bully or to make a report about bullying. Anonymous reports are also accepted.

Reports can be made directly to:

**Director of Education**

Wendy Pikula

2705 Mullanphy Ln, Florissant, MO 63031

Email: [wpikula@mgstl.org](mailto:wpikula@mgstl.org)

314-830-6203

Anonymous reports can be made to:

314-830-6204-School Office

4. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the Director of Education shall promptly inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) of every student involved in an alleged incident of bullying and discuss, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures.
5. The Director of Education shall promptly investigate and address reports of bullying, by, among other things:
  - a. Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date the report of a bullying incident was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported bullying incident.
  - b. Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate in the investigation process.
  - c. Notifying the school staff of the reported incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received.
  - d. Consistent with the federal and State laws and rule governing student privacy rights, providing parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the Building Principal of his or her designee to discuss the investigation, the finding of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

The Director of Education shall investigate whether a reported incident of bullying is within the permissible scope of the school's jurisdiction and shall require that the school provide the victim with information regarding services that are available within the school and community, such as counseling, support services, and other programs.

6. The Director of Education, therapists and teacher shall use interventions to address bullying, that may include, but are not limited to, school social work services, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, school psychological services, and community-based services.
7. A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying **is prohibited**. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as *bullying* for purposes of determining and consequence or other appropriate remedial actions.
8. A student will nor be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the school's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as *bullying* for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.
9. The school bullying prevention and response plan must be based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students, parents/guardians, and therapists.
10. The school shall post this policy in the school and include it in the student handbook, and, where applicable, post it where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted. The policy must be distributed annually to parents/guardians, students, and school

personnel (including new employees when hired) and must also be provided periodically throughout the school year to student and faculty.

11. The Director of Education shall assist the Board with its evaluation and assessments of this policy's outcomes and effectiveness, this process shall include, without limitation:
  - a. The frequency of victimization.
  - b. Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school.
  - c. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs.
  - d. The types of bullying utilized; and
  - e. Bystander intervention or participation.

The evaluation process may use relevant data and information that the school already collects for other purposes. The Director of Education must post the information developed as a result of the policy evaluation in a report, the information must be provided to the school administrators, Board members, school personnel, parents/guardians, and students annually.