

WESTSIDE ACADEMY BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

Westside Academy believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment and have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance.

Westside Academy will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student.

Bullying and hazing are serious matters. **Bullying** is any mean or disrespectful behavior that is done on purpose to hurt someone physically or emotionally. **Hazing** is any initiation into a team or group that may cause humiliation, physical or emotional harm. A student shall not intimidate or harass another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes: direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling; and social isolation or manipulation. Students who bully are in violation of this policy and are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

There are different types of bullying and misconduct including, but not limited to:

Physical Bullying: hitting, kicking, pushing or other unwelcome physical contact. *Serious physical bullying may be regarded as a criminal act, such as battery or assault.*

Cyberbullying: using electronic devices to embarrass, spread rumors, threaten or intimidate. This includes posting or sending inappropriate messages or images by text, cell phone or on social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. *Sending nude or sexual images may be considered distribution or possession of child pornography, which is a crime.*

Social Bullying: leaving people out, rejecting, manipulating relationships, rating or ranking people, or trying to ruin the reputation of another.

Verbal Bullying: name calling, teasing, spreading hurtful rumors or gossip, making threats or rude noises. *All threats are taken seriously and may be reported to law enforcement.*

Non-verbal Bullying: posturing, dirty looks, stalking, damaging property, graffiti, making gang signs or other efforts to intimidate or pressure someone.

Indirect Bullying: getting someone to do something mean or hurtful to someone else on your behalf.

Sexual Harassment: any unwanted or demeaning behavior about someone's sex, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity or gender expression. *Sexual harassment may require additional investigation.* (Even if I like the person I must be respectful at all times.)

Discrimination: targeting someone based on their real or perceived race, color, national origin, religion, disability or medical condition, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or gender expression may be considered an act of hate and may be a crime.

Westside Academy expects students, parents and/or staff to immediately report incidents of bullying to the principal or designee. Each complaint of bullying shall be promptly investigated. This policy applies to students on school grounds, while traveling to and from school or a school-sponsored activity, during the lunch period, whether on or off campus and during a school-sponsored activity.

To help ensure bullying does not occur on our school campus, Westside Academy will provide staff development training in bullying prevention. Students will participate in campus-wide bully prevention lessons which will take place during designated class times.

We have reviewed the Bullying Prevention Policy.

****PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE TO YOUR STUDENT'S TEACHER****

We have read and discussed the bullying prevention policy.

Student Name (PRINT)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Student's Teacher

Date

NOTE: A hard copy of this policy was signed and provided to you at enrollment.