

ALBANY HUSKIES
MSHSL
Athletics / Activities Handbook



PURPLE PRIDE!!!

ALBANY HUSKIES ATHLETICS / ACTIVITIES PHILOSOPHY

Athletics / Activities play an important part in the educational experience at Albany Area Schools. Young people learn a great deal from their participation in interscholastic sports and activities. Lessons in sportsmanship, teamwork, competition, and how to win and lose gracefully are an integral part of each team in our athletic program. Athletics / Activities can play an important part in helping the individual student develop a healthy self-concept as well as a healthy body. The competition involved in athletics / activities adds to our school spirit and helps all students, spectators as well as participants, develop pride in their school.

We believe that the opportunity for participation in a wide variety of student selected activities is a vital part of the student's educational experience. We encourage participation in multiple sports, and discourage "specialization", as we feel both the student and the school are better served when students are involved in more than just one sport. Participation is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the school, to the activity, to the student body, to the community and to the students themselves. These experiences contribute to the development of learning skills and emotional patterns that enable our students to make maximum use of their education.

Albany Athletics / Activities shall be conducted in accordance with existing MSHSL and Board of Education policies, rules and regulations. While we take pride in winning, we do not condone "winning at any cost" and discourage any and all pressures which might tend to neglect good sportsmanship and good mental health.

Albany Area Schools is committed to keeping our student's athletic / activity endeavors in perspective. Our young people must be students first and participants second. No student should be allowed to entertain thoughts of not having to study because their athletic / activity prowess will allow him/her to coast through school. At all times, the Athletic / Activities program must be conducted in such a way as to justify it as an educational activity.

The cornerstone of any quality athletic / activity program is good sportsmanship, and this is a major goal at Albany Area Schools. Sportsmanship is defined as that quality of responsible behavior characterized by a spirit of generosity and genuine concern for an opponent. The responsibility for good sportsmanship is vested in all of us who are in anyway associated with the Albany Athletic / Activities program: Coaches/Advisors, Players, Administrators, Officials and Spectators!

CONTACT INFO:

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ALBANY ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES WEBSITE:

www.district745.org

Click on the Athletics & Activities link

MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE (MSHSL)

Mission Statement: The Minnesota State High School League provides educational opportunities for students through interscholastic athletic and fine arts programs and provides leadership and support for member schools. **Education and Leadership for a Lifetime!**

Beliefs: We believe that...

- * participation in school activity programs is a privilege and not a right.
- * sportsmanship needs to have a constant presence in all school-based activity programs.
- * students should have an equal opportunity to participate in all activities offered by their school.
- * ethical behavior, dignity and respect are non-negotiable.
- * student participants who choose to be chemically free must be supported.
- * collaborative relationships with parents enhance a school's opportunity to positively impact student success.
- * academic priorities must come before participation in athletic or fine arts activities.
- * positive role models and an active involvement in a student's life by parents and others are critical to student success.
- * high school activity programs are designed for student participants, and adults must serve in a supportive role.
- * the success of the team is more important than individual honors.
- * compliance with school, community and League rules is essential for all activity participants.
- * participation in school-sponsored activities must be inclusive, not exclusive.
- * ethical behavior, fairness, and embracing diversity best serve students and school communities.

MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE WEBSITE:

www.mshsl.org

MSHSL ATHLETICS/ACTIVITIES OFFERED AT ALBANY JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL

- Fall:** Cross Country - Boys & Girls
Football - Boys
Swimming - Girls
Volleyball - Girls
- Winter:** Band
Basketball - Boys & Girls
Choir
Dance - Girls
Hockey - Boys & Girls (part of the River Lakes Co-op)
One Act Play
Robotics
Speech
Wrestling - Boys
- Spring:** Adapted Bowling
Baseball - Boys
Golf - Boys & Girls
Softball - Girls
Track & Field - Boys & Girls
Trap Shooting
Visual Arts

NEEDED TO PARTICIPATE IN MSHSL ATHLETICS

- * Athletic Fees paid.
- * MSHSL Eligibility Form - this needs to be completed every year by the student and parents.
- * Sports Physical - All student athletes are required to have a sports physical on file with the school. These are good for three calendar years - students typically get these before their 7th and 10th grade athletic seasons.
- * **BOTH THE MSHSL ELIGIBILITY FORM AND THE SPORTS QUALIFYING PHYSICAL EXAMINATION CLEARANCE FORM NEED TO BE TURNED IN TO THE ATHLETICS OFFICE BEFORE STUDENTS WILL BE ALLOWED TO PARTICIPATE IN ATHLETICS!!!**
- * THESE FORMS AND ALL REGISTRATION CAN BE DONE ONLINE VIA THE LINK FOUND ON OUR ATHLETICS & ACTIVITIES WEBSITE.

ATHLETIC / ACTIVITY FEES

Fine Arts / Academic Activities - \$45

Junior High Athletics - \$70

Senior High Athletics - \$75

Family Cap for Athletic / Fine Arts / Academic Activities - \$375/school year

SEASON ACTIVITIES PASSES

Individual Student (K-12) - \$30

Individual Adult - \$70

Family (2 parents and students K-12) - \$120

**** SENIOR CITIZENS 65 AND OLDER CAN RECEIVE A FREE LIFETIME ALBANY ACTIVITIES PASS AT THE SENIOR HIGH OFFICE WITH PERSONAL PHOTO ID!!**

****These activity passes do not include any admission to tournaments or playoffs.**

ALBANY HUSKIES BOOSTER CLUB

Albany Huskies parents, fans and supporters are invited to become a member of the Albany Huskies Booster Club. All effective clubs rely on volunteerism as their backbone. We have a special feeling of pride, "PURPLE PRIDE", that we rely on and this is our backbone.

Volunteerism here is ticket taking (usually one event a year - FB, VB, SWIM, Boy's BB, Girl's BB, Wrestling) and working at fundraisers (youth wrestling tournaments, softener salt sale, Heritage Day hamburger stand) which make our club strong and unified and help support the Huskies athletic programs here at Albany High School. The Huskies Boosters also sponsor an apparel order 3 times a year. Please consider joining as another way to support our Huskies Booster Club and our student athletes. Membership forms can be found on the Athletics & Activities website. Please contact the Athletics Office if you have any questions.

ALBANY HUSKIES STUDENT ATHLETE CHECKLIST & EXPECTATIONS

* **GENERAL STUDENT ELIGIBILITY:** In order to be eligible for regular season and MSHSL tournament competition, a student must be fully enrolled as defined by the Minnesota Department of Education and a bona fide member of his or her high school in good standing.

CHECKLIST: If you cannot check all of the following items see your AD or Principal

- Making academic progress toward graduation.
- Will not have turned 21 before the start of the season in which I participate.
- Have not dropped out of school or repeated a grade while in high school.
- Have not and will not use or possess tobacco or alcoholic beverages, use, consume, have in possession, buy, sell, or give away any other controlled substance, including steroids, or drug paraphernalia.
- Have not and will not violate the racial/religious/sexual harassment/violence/ and hazing bylaws of the MSHSL.
- I agree to fully cooperate in any investigation honestly and truthfully.
- Regardless of my age I agree to follow all of the MSHSL Bylaws in order to be eligible to represent my school in League-sponsored activities.
- Both the student and parent have reviewed the concussion management information contained in the MSHSL Eligibility Brochure and found on the following website:
www.cdc.gov/concussion
- Physical exam within the last three years on file with the school.
- Have not transferred schools.
- Will not participate in more than six seasons in any sport in grades 7-12 or participate after twelve semesters in grades 7-12, with the twelve semesters beginning in the 7th grade and being consecutive.
- Have not accepted cash in any amount or merchandise valued at more than \$100 for participating in a sport.
- Have not and will not compete in non-school events in my sport after reporting for the school team.

MSHSL Student Code of Responsibilities: A student whose character or conduct violates the Student Code of Responsibilities or is suspended or expelled is not in good standing and is ineligible for a period of time as determined by the principal. While a student not in good standing, a student may not serve and penalty for MSHSL Bylaw violations.

1. I will respect the rights and beliefs of others and will treat others with courtesy and consideration.
2. I will be fully responsible for my own actions and the consequences of my actions.
3. I will respect the property of others.
4. I will respect and obey the rules of my school and the laws of my community, state and country.
5. I will show respect to those who are responsible for enforcing the rules of my school and the laws of my community, state and country.

* MSHSL in-season sports and activities take priority over non-school, out of season sports and activities. By joining an Albany High School team or activity, you are committing to that practice and game schedule and all other required functions. Missing practices, games or other required functions due to outside conflicts will affect your performance, involvement and the group's ultimate success. Attendance policies will be administered by the Head Coach/Advisor.

* Athletes are responsible for all uniforms, warm ups, school equipment etc. that they are issued at the beginning of a season, and these must be turned in to the coaching staff at the end of their participation or the end of the season. The student athlete will be charged for any issued equipment or uniform that is not returned.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CODE OF CONDUCT AND EXPECTATIONS

The purpose of this code is to develop parental support and positive role models in all Albany Huskies athletics and activities. The purpose of all Albany Huskies athletics and activities is to help your child grow and to promote the physical, mental, moral, social and emotional well being of each student. Parents/Guardians are an integral part of this process.

EXPECTATIONS: As an Albany Huskie parent/guardian I agree to:

*be familiar with the Albany Huskies MSHSL Athletics & Activities Handbook found on the school website

*display PURPLE PRIDE by always being a positive role model for my student, school and community and demonstrating GREAT SPORTSMANSHIP through positive attitudes, behaviors

*show respect for all participants, officials/judges and advisors/coaches and follow the Albany Athletics and Activities, Granite Ridge Conference and MSHSL Sportsmanship and Behavior Policies

*assist in providing for student safety and welfare at all times

*expect my student to attend school and perform academically

*discourage the use of and inform my student about the dangers of drugs, alcohol and tobacco

*not put my child in the bad position of having to split or choose their loyalty between you and their coach by voicing negative opinions and concerns in front of them. This is not a positive action for your child, other athletes, the team or program.

*adhere to the following Albany High School Athletics and Activities chain of command and protocol when addressing concerns. These steps should be followed in order to ensure clear communication and resolve concerns at the lowest level possible. Each step should be completed before moving on to the next. Students, parents and coaches/advisors should and are expected to maintain open lines of communication and utilize these in the proper way if issues or questions arise - it is counterproductive to create or spread rumors, gossip or misinformation.

1. Student with Coach/Advisor -
2. Parent/Student with Coach/Advisor
3. Parent/Student with Coach/Advisor and AD

4. Parent/Student, Coach/Advisor, AD and High School Principal
5. All Parties and Superintendent
6. All Parties and School Board

- **None of the above steps should be attempted before, during or immediately following any practice, game or activity - times that can be emotional for both parents and coaches. If you desire a meeting, an appointment should be set with all necessary parties involved.**
- **The student should be involved in this process to make sure communications are clear and not misstated or misunderstood between any of the involved parties.**
- **The complaint/issue should be put in writing to help clarify the concern and ensure that all understand it.**
- **Playing time, team selection, team strategy, play calling and other sport specific decisions will be determined by the coaching staff/advisors and will be decided at their discretion.**
- **Calls to coaches, advisors or school officials should be directed to school phone numbers or email addresses.**
- **Data privacy rules will be followed at all times, other students will not be discussed.**
- **Respectful communication is expected at all times between all parties involved. If at any time the meeting becomes confrontational it will be ended and rescheduled.**

*Team / Athlete / Coaching areas (field/court, sidelines, bench, etc) are off limits to non-team members during practices and games unless prior arrangements have been made with the AD or Coaching Staff. Interactions should only occur when needed for an emergency, injury or extenuating / unique circumstance or situation.

MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL LEAGUE **MINIMAL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS FOR COMPETITION**

- * Respect the American flag and the National Anthem.
- * Spectators must wear clothing that covers the entire torso. Those who do not comply or who wear clothing that is vulgar, obscene or that in some other way inappropriate, as determined by school/tournament personnel, will be removed from the arena/stadium if they do not cooperate with this behavior expectation.
- * The use of appropriate language is expected at all times. Profanity, negative chants, booing, trash talk, name calling, personal attacks or other acts of disrespect are unacceptable and must be immediately addressed by school and/or tournament administrators.
- * Respect the game/contest. Under no condition shall anyone other than the members of the official squad enter the playing surface. No one may interfere with the contest in any way.
- * Hand held signs, which do not obstruct the view of others, will be permitted provided they are in good taste. Signs, message boards, “white” boards or other similar items contest/tournament officials deem to be in poor taste will be removed.
- * Signs on sticks, balloons, or any other type of artificial, celebratory items are not permitted.
- * Artificial noise makers (i.e. megaphones, cowbells, sirens, whistles, thunder sticks, and other similar items) are not allowed.
- * Laser lights are strictly prohibited.

GRANITE RIDGE CONFERENCE SPORTSMANSHIP CREED/RULES

Sportsmanship is expected in all activities. It is the responsibility of coaches/advisors, participants, cheerleaders, students, adult spectators, officials and media. Promotion of sportsmanship at activities should include a demonstration of respect for opponents and officials. Rules of the event should be respected and skill and performance should be recognized regardless of school affiliation. Sportsmanship is a cornerstone of any quality activity program.

The following rules will be adhered to:

- * No throwing of objects onto playing surface.
- * All signs and locations for signs must be approved by the home site supervisor or administrator. Only signs of a positive nature will be permitted.
- * No profane or abusive cheers, gestures, spitting or chanting by individuals or groups.
- * Fighting is prohibited.
- * Use of drugs or alcohol is prohibited.
- * Artificial noise makers (cowbells, sirens, whistles, thunder sticks, etc.) are not allowed.
- * Band playing collectively or individually during the game is limited to time outs, intermissions and quarter breaks. This includes all musical instruments, i.e. drums, trumpets, etc.
- * Official cheerleaders and a mascot only allowed on the floor. Mascot must stay in the area of the cheerleaders. No other leaders of cheers will be allowed on the floor.
- * At all Conference events, where a public address is available, the rules for sportsmanship shall be summarized or read.
- * Masks or costumes that disguise identity are not permitted.
- * Students without shirts or students wearing shirts that are vulgar, obscene or demeaning will be removed.
- * Laser lights are not allowed.

ALBANY HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS / ACTIVITIES **SPECTATOR SPORTSMANSHIP POLICY**

Everyone involved with any athletic or activity contest or event either at Albany High School or in which our teams or programs are involved is expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship and ethical behavior. All contests should be conducted in a safe, fair and controlled atmosphere for athletes, officials and fans alike. Any acts of misconduct will not be tolerated and may result in removal with no refund of admission. Unsportsmanlike behavior from spectators can result in penalties for our teams, groups and participants and may result in offenders being excluded from future events/contests. Unsportsmanlike acts of misconduct may include but are not limited to:

- *those listed above in the MSHSL and Granite Ridge Conference behavior expectations/rules
- *throwing of objects onto the playing surface or in the stands
- *behaviors deemed dangerous
- *behaviors that interfere with the right of others to observe the game
- *possessing, consuming, using or being under the influence of chemicals
- *use of profane, obscene or abusive language or gestures, posters or banners which show disrespect for teams, coaches, officials, cheerleaders, bands or other performing groups
- *entry onto the playing surface or team areas at any time before or during the contest
- *interfering with the participating teams and coaches as they conduct their duties

****FAILURE TO FOLLOW ANY OF THE ABOVE GUIDELINES / EXPECTATIONS / POLICIES MAY LEAD TO REMOVAL FROM AN EVENT AND EXCLUSION FROM FUTURE EVENTS.**

ALBANY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY CODE FOR ATHLETICS / ACTIVITIES

Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege extended to all students who meet the academic standards of eligibility set by the Albany Area School Board. We expect students participating in activities will be doing passing work (D- or higher) in all subjects, and on the day of a game or performance will have been in school a minimum of three periods. Grades will be checked weekly by office staff. In the event a student is not at the level of passing work, the following action(s) will be take:

* Student will be required to attend targeted services until work is at a passing level in all classes. Student may practice, after attending targeted services, but will not be allowed to participate in games or performances until work is at a passing level in all classes.

Failing a class at the end of a quarter will result in 10 school days of ineligibility. During ineligibility, the student must attend targeted services. Student may practice after attending targeted services, but is not allowed to participate in games or performances during the ineligibility period.

Students on an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will have their eligibility determined by the Student Assessment Team (SAT).

ALBANY SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL
ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY CODE FOR ATHLETICS / ACTIVITIES

Participation in extracurricular activities is a privilege granted to all students in the Albany Area Schools. This privilege is extended to all students meeting academic standards of eligibility as set by the Albany Area School Board. We expect students participating in these activities will be doing passing work in all their subjects. Procedures for Academic Eligibility:

*A grade check for all students involved in extracurricular activities will be run at the midpoint of each quarter. If the student is below passing at this time they will be informed of this and put on a watch list. The student will be required to report to that classroom teacher during PAWS for one week.

*If a student is on the watch list they will have one week to get the grade up to a passing level. If the student does not have their grade at a passing level they will immediately become ineligible and will report to remediation/night school until the grade has been brought up to a satisfactory level.

*If the student fails the course at the end of the quarter (or has an incomplete that could lead to failing) they will remain ineligible for extra-curricular activities for a period of 10 days. After ten days, grades in current courses will be checked. If all courses are at a passing level the student's eligibility will be reinstated with weekly monitoring continuing for 3 weeks.

*Note: students on the watch list are eligible for practice and games/performances during this period.

*If a student is not making progress toward graduation they will be ineligible indefinitely, until they are back on track to graduate with the class in which they started ninth grade.

STUDENT ATTENDANCE POLICY

To be eligible for extracurricular activities students must maintain good attendance. If a student misses five days in a quarter they become ineligible until all work has been made up as verified by all the student's teachers. For each successive absence a student will be ineligible until all work has been made up and teachers have signed the make-up slip.

Students must be in attendance for two complete blocks of the school day to participate in extracurricular activities. This pertains to practice and games or performances. Situations with pre-arranged appointments or extenuating circumstances should be discussed with the Activities Director.

GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA USE

Below are some guidelines and reminders for the usage of social media by AHS students. Student athletes/activities participants may face discipline measures for content, postings, videos, etc that violate MSHSL Bylaw 206 (Student Code of Responsibilities), AHS policies, team policies or are illegal.

- * Understand that anything posted online enters the public realm and thus is out of your control. Remember that as a student athlete you are in the public eye and are seen as a representative of your family, team, school and community. Make sure the image of yourself that is portrayed is one that you and everyone connected with you can be proud of. Colleges, employers and law enforcement can all use social media to access information about you.
- * Exercise extreme caution in ever posting, giving or sharing any kind of identifying or personal information about you and/or your family, teammates, peers, etc.
- * Avoid posting information, photos, demeaning or derogatory statements, etc (or supporting, reposting, replying etc) about students, teammates, coaches/school personnel (from our school and other schools), the community at large and other communities.
- * Avoid the distribution or possession of photos, videos, postings, statements, etc of inappropriate and illegal behaviors

ATHLETIC / ACTIVITY BUS PROCEDURE

All Albany students in school athletics / activities are expected to ride the school transportation home after away athletic / activity events. If they wish to leave an event with their parents/guardians there must be face to face contact between the parent/guardian and the coach responsible for that child at the event. There must also be a presentation of a signed note to the coach/advisor from the parent/guardian stating that they are taking responsibility for transporting their child. Students CAN NOT ride home with anyone other than their parent/guardian unless previous arrangements have been made with either Mr. Buntje (Activities Director), Mr. Wege (Albany High School Principal) or Mr. Conrad (Albany Middle School Principal) by that student's parents/guardians. Thank you for taking these steps to help us ensure that all of our students and their transportation are accounted for.

SCHOOL DELAYS / EARLY DISMISSALS / CLOSURES

If school is dismissed early or closed due to weather all after school athletic / activity events are cancelled as well. Likewise, any before school activities are cancelled if school is having a 2 hour late start due to weather. Exceptions and accommodations may be made if teams/groups are in MSHSL Tournament play.

INSURANCE

Albany Area Schools does not provide insurance coverage for any medical expenses incurred by a student as a result of injury while participating in school sponsored activities. A supplemental insurance plan for students is available through Student Assurance Services, Inc. for families interested in purchasing this coverage. Information regarding this coverage is available in the Activities Office.

SCHOOL BOARD POLICY AGAINST SEXUAL, RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE

(The following is a summary of the district policy. A complete copy of the policy is available upon request to the superintendent of schools.)

Harassment is a form of discrimination which violates Section 703 of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2000e, et seq., and Minnesota Statute 363.01.14, the Minnesota Human Rights Act. Violence is a physical act of aggression that may include a sexual act or sexual purpose. It is the policy of District #745 to maintain a learning and working environment that is free from harassment and violence. Our school district prohibits any form of sexual, racial, or religious harassment and any form of violence. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student or employee through conduct or communication of any kind as defined by this policy. The policy also prohibits any violence from either a student or employee to any other student or employee. The school district will act to investigate complaints either formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual, racial, or religious harassment or acts of violence and to discipline any student or employee who harasses or is violent to a student or employee. Local law enforcement will be notified in the cases of violence.

BULLYING PROHIBITION POLICY

I. PURPOSE: A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying, like other violent or disruptive behavior, is conduct that interferes with a student's ability to learn and/or a teachers' ability to educate students in a safe environment. The school district cannot monitor the activities of students at all times and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when students are not under the direct supervision of school personnel. However, to the extent such conduct affects the educational environment of the school district and the rights and welfare of its students and is within the control of the school district in its normal operations, the school district intends to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond to, and to remediate and discipline for those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. The

purpose of this policy is to assist the school district in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, reprisal, retaliation and other similar disruptive and detrimental behavior.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY:

A. An act of bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, is expressly prohibited on school premises, on district property or at school functions or activities, or on school transportation. 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. This policy also applies to any student whose conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying or other prohibited conduct that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school district or the safety or welfare of the student or other students. Materially and substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services or privileges. This policy also applies to an act of cyberbullying regardless of whether such act is committed on or off school district property and/or with or without the use of school district resources.

B. No teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district shall permit, condone, or tolerate bullying.

C. Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen or negate the prohibitions contained in this policy.

D. Retaliation against a victim, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.

E. False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are prohibited.

F. A person who engages in an act of bullying, reprisal, and retaliation or false reporting of bullying or permits, condones, or tolerates bullying shall be subject to discipline or other remedial responses for that act in accordance with the school district's policies and procedures, including the school district's discipline policy. The school district may take into account the following factors:

1. The developmental ages and maturity levels of the parties involved;
2. The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature of the behavior;
3. Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior;
4. The relationship between the parties involved; and
5. The context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

Consequences for students who commit prohibited acts of bullying may range from remedial responses or positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. The school district shall employ research based developmentally appropriate best practices that include preventative and remedial measures and effective discipline for deterring violations of this policy, apply throughout the school district, and foster student, parent, and community participation.

Consequences for employees who permit, condone, or tolerate bullying or engage in an act of reprisal or intentional false reporting of bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination or discharge.

Consequences for other individuals engaging in prohibited acts of bullying may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from school district property and events.

G. The school district will act to investigate all complaints of bullying reported to the school district and will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who is found to have violated this policy.

III. DEFINITIONS: For purposes of this policy, the definitions included in this section apply.

A. “Bullying” means intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:

1. an actual or perceived imbalance of power exists between the student engaging in the prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct, and the conduct is repeated or forms a pattern; or
2. materially and substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.

The term “bullying” specifically includes cyberbullying as defined in this policy.

B. “Cyberbullying” means bullying using technology or other electronic communications, including, but not limited to, a transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network Internet website or forum, transmitted through a computer, cell phone or other electronic device. The term applies to prohibited conduct which occurs on school premises, on school district property, at school functions or activities, on school transportation, or on school computers, networks, forums, and mailing lists or off school premises to the extent that it substantially and materially disrupts student learning or the school environment.

C. “Immediately” means as soon as possible but in no event longer than 24 hours.

D. “Intimidating, threatening, abusive or harming conduct” means, but is not limited to conduct that does the following:

1. Causes physical harm to a student or a student’s property or causes a student to be in reasonable fear of harm to person or property;
2. Under Minnesota common law, violates a student’s reasonable expectation of privacy, defames a student, or constitutes intentional infliction of emotional distress against a student; or
3. Is directed at any student or students, including those based on a person’s actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, immigration status, sex, marital status, familial status, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation including gender identity and expression, academic status related to student performance, disability or status with regard to public assistance, age, or any additional characteristic defined in the Minnesota Human Rights Act (MHRA). However, prohibited conduct need not be based on any particular characteristic defined in this paragraph or the MHRA.

E. “On school premises, on district property at school functions or activities, or on school transportation” means all school district buildings, school grounds, and school property or property immediately adjacent to school grounds, school bus stops, school buses, school vehicles, school contracted vehicles, or any other vehicles approved for school district purposes, the area of entrance or departure from school grounds, premises, or events, and all school-related functions, school-sponsored activities, events, or trips. School district property also may mean a student’s walking route to or from school for purposes of attending school or school-related

functions, activities, or events. While prohibiting bullying at these locations and events, the school district does not represent that it will provide supervision or assume liability at these locations and events.

F. "Prohibited conduct" means bullying or cyberbullying as defined in this policy or retaliation or reprisal for asserting, alleging, reporting, or providing information about such conduct or knowingly making a false report about bullying.

G. "Remedial response" means a measure to stop and correct prohibited conduct, prevent prohibited conduct from recurring, and protect, support, and intervene on behalf of a student who is the target or victim of prohibited conduct.

H. "Student" means a student enrolled in a public school or a charter school.

IV. REPORTING PROCEDURE:

A. Any person who believes he or she has been the target or victim of bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or prohibited conduct under this policy shall report the alleged acts immediately to an appropriate school district official designated by this policy. A student may report bullying anonymously. However, the school district may not rely solely on an anonymous report to determine discipline or other remedial responses.

B. The school district encourages the reporting party or complainant to use the report form available from the principal or building supervisor of each building or available from the school district office, but oral reports shall be considered complaints as well.

C. The building principal or the principal's designee or the building supervisor (hereinafter the "building report taker") is the person responsible for receiving reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct at the building level. Any person may report bullying or other prohibited conduct directly to a school district human rights officer or the superintendent. If the complaint involves the building report taker, the complaint shall be made or filed directly with the superintendent or the school district human rights officer by the reporting party or complainant. The building report taker shall ensure that this policy and its procedures, practices, consequences, and sanctions are fairly and fully implemented and shall serve as the primary contact on policy and procedural matters. The building report taker or a third party designated by the school district shall be responsible for the investigation. The building report taker shall provide information about available community resources to the target or victim or the bullying or other prohibited conduct, the perpetrator, and other affected individuals as appropriate.

D. Teacher, school administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other school employee shall be particularly alert to possible situations, circumstances, or events that might include bullying. Any such person who witnesses, observes, receives a report of, or has other knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying or other prohibited conduct shall make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the bullying or prohibited conduct and shall inform the building report taker immediately. School district personnel who fail to inform the building report taker of conduct that may constitute bullying or other prohibited conduct or who fails to make reasonable efforts to address and resolve the bullying or prohibited conduct in a timely manner may be subject to disciplinary action.

E. Reports of bullying or other prohibited conduct are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as

permitted by law. The building report taker, in conjunction with the responsible authority, shall be responsible for keeping and regulating access to any report of bullying and the record of any resulting investigation.

F. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying or other prohibited conduct will not affect the complainant's or reporter's future employment, grades, work assignments, or educational or work environment.

G. The school district will respect the privacy of the complainant(s), the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the school district's obligation to investigate, take appropriate action, and comply with any legal disclosure obligations.

V. SCHOOL DISTRICT ACTION:

A. Within three days of the receipt of a complaint or report of bullying or other prohibited conduct, the school district shall undertake or authorize an investigation by the building report taker or a third party designated by the school district.

B. The building report taker or other appropriate school district official may take immediate steps, at their discretion, to protect the target or victim of the bullying or other prohibited conduct the complainant, the reporter, and students, or others pending completion of an investigation of the bullying or prohibited conduct, consistent with applicable law.

C. The alleged perpetrator of the bullying or other prohibited conduct shall be allowed the opportunity to present a defense during the investigation or prior to the imposition of discipline or other remedial responses.

D. Upon completion of an investigation that determines that bullying or other prohibited conduct has occurred, the school district will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, warning, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, remediation, termination, or discharge. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to try to deter violations and to appropriately discipline prohibited conduct. Remedial responses to the bullying or other prohibited conduct shall be tailored to the particular incident and nature of the conduct and shall take into account the factors specified in Section II. F. of this policy. School district action taken for violation of this policy will be consistent with the requirements of applicable collective bargaining agreements; applicable statutory authority, including the Minnesota Pupil Fair Dismissal Act; school district policies; and regulations.

E. The school district is not authorized to disclose to a victim private educational or personnel data regarding an alleged perpetrator who is a student or employee of the school district. School officials will notify the parent(s) or guardian(s) of students who are targets of bullying or other prohibited conduct and the parents or guardians of alleged perpetrators of bullying or other prohibited conduct who have been involved in a reported and confirmed bullying incident and of remedial or disciplinary action taken, to the extent permitted by law.

F. In order to prevent or respond to bullying or other prohibited conduct committed by or directed against a child with a disability, the school district shall, when determined appropriate by the child's individualized education program (IEP) team or section 504 team, allow the child's IEP or section 504 plan to be drafted to address the skills and proficiencies the child needs as a result of the child's disability to allow the child to respond to or not to engage in bullying or other prohibited conduct.

VI. RETALIATION OR REPRISAL: The school district will discipline or take appropriate action against any student, teacher, administrator, volunteer, contractor, or other employee of the school district who commits an act of reprisal or who retaliates against any person who asserts, alleges, or makes a good faith report of alleged bullying or prohibited conduct, who provides information about bullying or prohibited conduct, who testifies, assists, or participates in an investigation of alleged bullying or prohibited conduct, or who testifies, assists, or participates in a proceeding or hearing relating to such bullying or prohibited conduct. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, harassment, or intentional disparate treatment. Disciplinary consequences will be sufficiently severe to deter violations and to appropriately discipline the individual(s) who engaged in the prohibited conduct. Remedial responses to the prohibited conduct shall be tailored to the particular incident and nature of the conduct and shall take into account the factors specified in Section II.F. of this policy.

VII. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

A. The school district shall discuss this policy with school personnel and volunteers and provide appropriate training to school district personnel regarding this policy. The school district shall establish a training cycle for school personnel to occur during a period not to exceed every three school years. Newly employed school personnel must receive the training within the first year of their employment with the school district. The school district or a school administrator may accelerate the training cycle or provide additional training based on a particular need or circumstance. This policy shall be included in employee handbooks, training materials, and publications on school rules, procedures, and standards of conduct, which materials shall also be used to publicize this policy.

B. The school district shall require ongoing professional development, consistent with Minn. Stat. § 122A.60, to build the skills of all school personnel who regularly interact with students to identify, prevent, and appropriately address bullying and other prohibited conduct. Such professional development includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Developmentally appropriate strategies both to prevent and to immediately and effectively intervene to stop prohibited conduct;
2. The complex dynamics affecting a perpetrator, target, and witnesses to prohibited conduct;
3. Research on prohibited conduct, including specific categories of students at risk for perpetrating or being the target or victim of bullying or other prohibited conduct in school;
4. The incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
5. Internet safety and cyberbullying.

C. The school district annually will provide education and information to students regarding bullying, including information regarding this school district policy prohibiting bullying, the harmful effects of bullying, and other applicable initiatives to prevent bullying and other prohibited conduct.

D. The administration of the school district is directed to implement programs and other initiatives to prevent bullying, to respond to bullying in a manner that does not stigmatize the target or victim, and to make resources or referrals to resources available to targets or victims of bullying.

E. The administration is encouraged to provide developmentally appropriate instruction and is directed to review programmatic instruction to determine if adjustments are necessary to help

students identify and prevent or reduce bullying and other prohibited conduct, to value diversity in school and society, to develop and improve students' knowledge and skills for solving problems, managing conflict, engaging in civil discourse, and recognizing, responding to, and reporting bullying or other prohibited conduct, and to make effective prevention and intervention programs available to students. The administration must establish strategies for creating a positive school climate and use evidence-based socialemotional learning to prevent and reduce discrimination and other improper conduct. The administration is encouraged, to the extent practicable, to take such actions as it may deem appropriate to accomplish the following:

1. Engage all students in creating a safe and supportive school environment;
2. Partner with parents and other community members to develop and implement prevention and intervention programs;
3. Engage all students and adults in integrating education, intervention, and other remedial responses into the school environment;
4. Train student bystanders to intervene in and report incidents of bullying and other prohibited conduct to the schools' primary contact person;
5. Teach students to advocate for themselves and others;
6. Prevent inappropriate referrals to special education of students who may engage in bullying or other prohibited conduct; and
7. Foster student collaborations that, in turn, foster a safe and supportive school climate.

F. The school district may implement violence prevention and character development education programs to prevent or reduce policy violations. Such programs may offer instruction on character education including, but not limited to, character qualities such as attentiveness, truthfulness, respect for authority, diligence, gratefulness, self-discipline, patience, forgiveness, respect for others, peacemaking, and resourcefulness.

G. The school district shall inform affected students and their parents of rights they may have under state and federal data practices laws to obtain access to data related to an incident and their right to contest the accuracy or completeness of the data. The school district may accomplish this requirement by inclusion of all or applicable parts of its protection and privacy of pupil records policy (See MSBA/MASA Model Policy 515) in the student handbook.

VIII. NOTICE:

A. The school district will give annual notice of this policy to students, parents or guardians, and staff, and this policy shall appear in the student handbook.

B. This policy or a summary thereof must be conspicuously posted in the administrative offices of the school district and the office of each school.

C. This policy must be given to each school employee and independent contractor who regularly interacts with students at the time of initial employment with the school district.

D. Notice of the rights and responsibilities of students and their parents under this policy must be included in the student discipline policy (See MSBA/MASA Model Policy 506) distributed to parents at the beginning of each school year.

E. This policy shall be available to all parents and other school community members in an electronic format in the language appearing on the school district's or a school's website.

F. The school district shall provide an electronic copy of its most recently amended policy to the Commissioner of Education.

IX. POLICY REVIEW: To the extent practicable, the school board shall, on a cycle consistent with other school district policies, review and revise this policy. The policy shall be made consistent with Minn. Stat. § 121A.031 and other applicable law. Revisions shall be made in consultation with students, parents, and community organizations. The purpose of this policy is to assist the school district in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation and other similar disruptive acts. Any person who believes he or she has been the victim of harassment or violence by a student or employee, or any third person with knowledge or belief of such conduct should immediately report the alleged acts to an appropriate school district official as designated by this policy. The reporting party is encouraged to use the report form available from the building office. [Board adopted 6/21/90, Revised June 1995, 2005]