



BULLYING

The Board of Education supports a school climate conducive to teaching and learning that is free from any type of bullying behavior. The purpose of this policy is to promote consistency of approach and to help create a safe, equitable, and positive climate in which all types of bullying are regarded as unacceptable.

A. Definitions

1. **Bullying:** Any written text or image, or verbal expression, or physical or electronic act or gesture, or a pattern thereof, that is intended to coerce, intimidate, or cause any physical, mental, or emotional harm to any student.
2. **Cyberbullying:** Bullying involving the use of communication technologies such as computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices to support deliberate and hostile behavior intended to do harm to others. Examples of cyberbullying can be in the form of text messages, instant messaging, emails, threatening or embarrassing photos or videos, and any use of any social media platform.

B. Prohibition

Bullying is prohibited against any student for any reason, including but not limited to any such behavior that is directed toward a student on the basis of academic performance or any basis protected by federal and state law, including disability, race, creed, color, sex (which includes marital status), sexual orientation, gender identity/expression (national origin, religion, ancestry, immigration status, the need for special education services, or physical characteristics, whether such characteristic(s) is actual or perceived.

Bullying is prohibited on district property, at district or school-sanctioned activities and events, when students are being transported in any school or district vehicle, or off school property when such conduct has a nexus to school or any district curricular or non-curricular activity or event.

C. Prevention

Bullying prevention efforts are most effective when implemented school-wide and designed to send a message that bullying will not be tolerated in schools. Well-designed bullying prevention efforts can reduce, eliminate and prevent bully/victim problems, as well as significantly improve the overall school climate. Effective bullying prevention also requires a commitment on the part of all adults to reduce or eliminate bullying and accessible reporting procedures for victims and witnesses.

Effective prevention programs may be implemented at the school level or the classroom level.

The use of prevention programs may vary according to maturity level of students, grade level, learning environment goal(s) for the school, etc.

Monitoring data related to bullying is crucial to the bullying prevention efforts. Data shall be collected and may be evaluated through surveys, questionnaires, analyzing discipline statistics, and data collected for school social emotional learning goal(s).

All kids involved in bullying--whether they are bullied, bully others, or witness bullying--may experience negative outcomes including impacts on mental health, substance abuse and suicide. Parents, school staff and community all play a role in supporting our students when providing for their physical, social and emotional needs. A variety of resources are available regarding bullying prevention:

- StopBullying.gov
- Cyberbullying.org
- Safe2Tell.org
- adl.org/what-we-do/promote-respect/bullying-cyberbullying-prevention

D. Expectations for Reporting and Investigation

All administrators, teachers, classified staff, parents/guardians and students should take all reasonable steps to prevent and address bullying.

- All students who believe they have been victims of bullying, harassment, hazing, intimidation or threatening behavior should immediately report the situation to school personnel.
- All students who witness bullying are expected to make all reasonable efforts to seek the help of school staff. Failure to report such behavior is detrimental to the school learning environment and may be grounds for disciplinary consequences.
- All administrators, teachers, and classified staff who receive reports of and/or witness student bullying, in any circumstance, shall immediately take appropriate action to stop the behavior. Such behaviors shall be reported to school administration. In addition, school administrators shall communicate with parents of all students involved, alleged victims, alleged bullies, and witnesses.
- Each school administrator shall ensure that reports of bullying are promptly and thoroughly investigated in accordance with the guidelines in JDHB-E and applicable law. Administrators are directed to attend to the needs of the victim(s) of the behavior as well as to the needs of the alleged bully(s). Interventions or sanctions may be warranted, as well as addressing broader issues of school culture and climate of which the behavior may be symptomatic. A written summary of the investigation and its findings must be provided to the parent/guardian of any student alleging to have bullied or been bullied and to the parent/guardian of any student alleged to have bullied.

- School administrators shall provide the protections and procedures (including timelines for investigation and resolution) under Board Policy AC and AC-R if allegations of bullying concern unlawful discrimination or harassment on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, sex (which includes marital status), sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, national origin, religion, ancestry, immigration status, the need for special education services, or physical characteristics, whether such characteristic(s) is actual or perceived.
- Notify parent/guardian that they may seek further review of the school's investigation through Board Policy AC if alleging unlawful discrimination or harassment or through Board Policy KE.
- All incidents are to be documented in the student information system and any behavior or safety plan communicated to parents.

E. Consequences

Violations of this policy are detrimental to the welfare and safety of the victim, as well as disruptive to the school learning environment. In deciding on appropriate discipline and interventions, the circumstances surrounding the behavior, the severity of the conduct, and whether the conduct represents a pattern should be considered. Interventions and discipline for student bullying may range from counseling, restorative justice and in-school suspension to suspension and/or expulsion. In its sole discretion, the School District may conduct a threat assessment regarding bullying behavior. A referral to law enforcement shall be made when appropriate. The Board expects that parents/guardians shall be informed about their student's significant behaviors and school discipline. Also, the Board expects schools will notify parents about threat assessments and referrals to law enforcement, as appropriate and as soon as possible which may be after the referral has been made.

If parents/guardians/students are not satisfied with the outcome of the school's investigation and resolution, they may pursue additional District review. Board Policy AC governs the review of allegations concerning unlawful discrimination or harassment on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, sex (which includes marital status), sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, national origin, religion, ancestry, immigration status, the need for special education services, or physical characteristics. Board Policy KE governs the review of all other allegations of bullying.

LEGAL REFS:

C.R.S. § 22-32-109.1 (1)(b) (definition of bullying)

C.R.S. § 22-32-109.1(2)(a)(I)(K) (policy required as part of safe schools plan)

CROSS REFS.:

AC, Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity

JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

All JD and JR policies, Student Conduct and Discipline Code KE, Complaints and Concerns