

ILTexas Bullying Protocol

Bullying Background Information

The physical and emotional wellbeing of our students is a top priority. No student at ILTexas should ever feel unsafe at school. ILTexas will immediately provide for the safety of students, investigate, and address any report or observation of behavior which could be bullying or harassment. In addition, through character education, proactive counseling programming, and the execution of the mission of ILTexas, students are not only given the opportunity to identify these behaviors, but given the skills to avoid bullying and harassment through an emphasis on others before self, servant leadership, and strengthening the mind, body and character.

What Is Bullying?

The Texas Education Agency defines bullying and cyber bullying as:

Bullying

Bullying occurs when a person is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself. It is aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions. It often involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time. It involves an imbalance of power or strength. However, bullying can also be the result of one specific act. For more information and specific details, please refer to the link below regarding David's law: <http://ri82c2s6axf2qwz9l40mb9xw.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Davids-Law-One-Page-R2.pdf>

Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others. "Cyber-bullying" is when a child, preteen, or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed, or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen, or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, or mobile phones. It has to involve a minor on both sides or at least have been instigated by a minor against another minor. Once adults become involved, it is plain and simple cyber-harassment or cyber-stalking. Adult cyber-harassment or cyber-stalking is never called cyber-bullying.

http://tea.texas.gov/Texas_Schools/Safe_and_Healthy_Schools/Coordinated_School_Health/Coordinated_School_Health_-_Bullying_and_Cyber-bullying/

What is Harassment?

The United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights defined harassment as:

Harassment

Harassing conduct may take many forms, including verbal acts and name-calling; graphic and written statements, which may include use of cell phones or the Internet; or other conduct that may be physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. Harassment creates a hostile environment when the conduct is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or opportunities offered by a school. When such harassment is based on race, color, national origin, sex, or disability, it violates the civil rights laws that OCR enforces.

http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201010_pg2.html

Warning Signs that a Child is Being Bullied

According to stopbullying.gov, the following are warning signs a child is being bullied:

- Unexplainable injuries
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewelry
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Kids may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch.
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares

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- Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
<https://www.stopbullying.gov/at-risk/warning-signs/#bullied>
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide

Warning Signs that a Child is Bullying

- Get into physical or verbal fights
- Have friends who bully others
- Are increasingly aggressive
- Get sent to the principal's office or to detention frequently
- Have unexplained extra money or new belongings
<https://www.stopbullying.gov/at-risk/warning-signs/#bullied>
- Blame others for their problems
- Don't accept responsibility for their actions
- Are competitive and worry about their reputation or popularity

Reporting Bullying

Kids often fail to report bullying because they feel embarrassed, fear retaliation, feel isolated, fear that they will not fit in, or they feel powerless in the situation. According to the [2012 Indicators of School Crime and Safety](#), only 40% of bullying behavior is reported.

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1. A report of bullying is received

Report of bullying can come from students or parents, and is required by any staff member who observes behavior that could be considered bullying or the result of bullying. Student and parent reports can be anonymous.

2. An immediate administrative investigation begins

Campus Administration will initiate an immediate investigation. During the investigative process, a safe and secure environment will be created for all involved students. Involved students, witnesses, and other appropriate sources will be interviewed for statements (Order: 1 – Alleged victim, 2-Witnesses, 3-Alleged Bully). All involved will be assured of the steps taken to ensure student safety and confidentiality, as well as notices that any act of retaliation is a direct violation of the student code of conduct subject to separate disciplinary action.

3. The investigation is completed with a determination made

A determination of bullying will be made if the behavior investigated meets the criteria. Even if the behavior is not deemed to be bullying, a determination of disrespect, harassment, or other violation of the student code of conduct may be made.

4. All parties are notified of the results of the investigation

Parents will be notified of the findings and as to whether the complaint did or did not lead to a determination of bullying.

5. Disciplinary actions occur as appropriate

Disciplinary action will occur based on the student code of conduct. Targets/alleged victims are not subject to disciplinary action. The appeal process will be available to the applicable parties. A written statement will be given warning that retaliation is a violation of the student code of conduct and is subject to separate disciplinary action.

Reporting Forms:

While the following forms are preferred and should be completed if possible, they are not required to initiate bullying procedures and investigation. Procedures and investigation will occur immediately when suspected bullying is reported, suspected, or observed.