

## **CIVILITY**

This procedure is not intended to manage threatening or intimidating behavior which is serious enough to constitute harassment or to cause one to fear for his/her safety. Rather, it is meant to:

1. Underscore the expectation of civil conduct in all interactions between staff members within the school district;
2. Provide all individuals with the tools and knowledge to eliminate uncivil conduct they experience; and
3. Provide a model of respectful problem solving.

### **Definitions of Uncivil Conduct**

The perception of uncivil conduct is partially subjective, and this procedure recognizes that the standard by which its violation is determined is interpreted by each individual. Generally, uncivil conduct is defined as behavior that would cause a reasonable individual to feel a sense of threat, cause undue stress, and/or cause disturbances of good order. Examples of uncivil conduct include, but are not limited to:

1. Using language, behavior, or tone of voice that is hostile, threatening, intimidating, malicious, derisive, sarcastic, disdainful, or degrading to another individual;
2. Directing vulgar, obscene, or profane gestures or words at another individual;
3. Taunting, jeering, or inciting others to taunt or jeer at another individual;
4. Raising one's voice at another individual;
5. Repeatedly interrupting another individual who is speaking at an appropriate time and place;
6. Using personal epithets, slurs, or other references as terms of abuse, contempt, or hostility toward another individual;
7. Invading the personal space of another individual after being directed to move away;
8. Physically blocking another individual's exit from a room or location;
9. Remaining in a classroom or school area after a teacher or administrator in authority has directed the individual to leave; and/or
10. Violating the privacy of another individual's belongings (except for lawful searches by school officials conducted in connection with the administration of school rules and applicable laws).

Uncivil conduct does not include the expression of controversial or differing viewpoints that may be offensive to some persons, so long as:

1. The ideas are presented in a respectful manner and at a time and place that are appropriate; and
2. Such expression does not materially disrupt, and may not be reasonably anticipated to disrupt, the educational process or work environment.

### **Response Protocol**

In all cases, employees who believe they have been treated in an uncivil manner will be urged to resolve their concerns through simple, direct, or assisted communication with the person(s) at the source of the concern by following the steps outlined below:

- Step 1: Within two days of the incident, the employee should speak directly and respectfully with the individual, in an appropriate time, place, and manner, seeking to resume communications on a civil basis.
- Step 2: At any time after Step 1 has been attempted, if civil discussion and/or behavior cannot be resumed, the employee should document the uncivil behavior in writing and report the incident to an immediate supervisor or building administrator.
- Step 3: The supervisor/administrator will facilitate a conversation between the staff member and the individual(s) perceived to have been uncivil. Such a facilitated conversation should focus on the expectation of civility and requirements for achieving civil exchanges in the future. Written documentation of the meeting will be kept in the supervising administrator's working file for each affected staff member until the end of the year unless further issues arise.
- Step 4: At any time after Step 3 has been attempted, if it is determined that civil communications and appropriate problem-solving cannot be restored between/among the individuals affected, the employee's supervisor should help the employee to establish requirements for further communications (i.e., the presence of a specified third person, restrictions on physical access to the employee's work space) in order to protect the employee's rights. The supervisor may also suggest such additional resources as mentoring, specific training, and/or written materials that address the employee's needs.
- Step 5: At any time after Step 4 has been implemented, if uncivil conduct toward an employee becomes chronic or escalates, disciplinary action and/or legal remedies and interventions (including contacting law enforcement) may be warranted.

The Executive Director of Human Resources may be used as a resource at any point during this process.

No retaliation will be tolerated against individuals for working in good faith under this policy and its related procedures to resolve concerns.

## **Training**

Training opportunities will be provided as needed to ensure the district's policy and procedure on civility are implemented in the district. The purpose of civility training is to:

1. Familiarize staff with the district's policy and procedure on civility and their rights and obligations under the policy;
2. Provide situational awareness in dealing with common occurrences of uncivil conduct;
3. Encourage the use of conflict resolution, de-escalation, and appropriate communication strategies; and
4. Promote positive and courteous communication and relationships among and between staff members.

## **Dissemination of Civility Expectations**

1. This policy and procedure will be posted on the district website and referenced, as needed, in district publications.
2. All staff must review the civility policy and procedures annually.
3. As necessary, the superintendent and Board of Directors will communicate to the staff the expectation that their interactions will be civil, that a policy concerning civil conduct exists, and that the policy is enforced in the district.