

SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING

ADOPTED: November 17, 2008

REVISED: August 13, 2012, March 14, 2016,
September 9, 2019, June 13, 2022

HAMPTON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

<p>1. Purpose</p>	<p>The Hampton Township School District is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for District students. The Board recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the Board prohibits bullying by district students, and it is a violation of this policy for any HTSD staff member to tolerate bullying.</p>
<p>2. Definition</p>	<p>Bullying shall mean an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or a series of acts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Directed at another student or students; 2. Which occurs in a school setting and/or (in some instances) outside a school setting; 3. That is severe, persistent or pervasive; and 4. That has the effect of doing any of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. substantially interfering with a student’s education; ii. creating a threatening environment; or iii. substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school. <p>Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyber-bullying.</p> <p>“Cyberbullying” as defined in this policy, includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher or employee of the district by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or web site postings (including blogs). All forms of cyberbullying are unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive of the educational process of the district, offenders shall be the subject of appropriate discipline, which may include legal and/or police proceedings.</p> <p>Bullying includes but is not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physically harming a student. 2. Damaging, extorting or taking a student’s personal property. 3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm. 4. Placing a student in emotional unrest by spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships or environment, engaging in social exclusion, extortion, intimidation, or ridicule. 5. Cyber-bullying: forms of verbal and psychological bullying may also occur on the Internet through e-mail, instant messaging, or personal profile web sites.

<p>SC 1303.1-A</p> <p>3. Authority</p>	<p>6. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities.</p> <p>7. Creating verbal statements or written remarks that are taunting, malicious, threatening or sexual.</p> <p>Bullying includes retaliation against another student for reporting bullying or for assisting or testifying in the investigation or the hearing. Students who engage in such retaliation will be subject to consequences as defined in the Code of Student Conduct.</p> <p>School Setting shall mean in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.</p> <p>The term bullying shall not be interpreted to infringe upon a student’s right to engage in legally protected speech or conduct.</p> <p>The Board prohibits all forms of bullying by District students.</p> <p>Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying and therefore the Board encourages students who believe they or others have been bullied to promptly report such incidents to the building principal or designee. It is the obligation of the HTSD professional and support staff to report any incident of bullying to the building principal.</p> <p>Students are encouraged to use the District’s report form, available from the building principal, or to put the complaint in writing; however, oral complaints shall be accepted and documented. The person accepting the complaint shall handle the report objectively, neutrally, and professionally, setting aside personal biases that might favor or disfavor the student filing the complaint or those accused of a violation of this policy.</p> <p>The Board directs that verbal and written complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and appropriate corrective or preventative action shall be taken when allegations are substantiated. The Board directs that any complaint of bullying brought pursuant to this policy shall also be reviewed for conduct which may not be proven to be bullying under this policy but merits review and possible action under other Board policies. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the District’s legal and investigative obligations.</p> <p>When a student's behavior indicates a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, district staff shall report the student to the threat assessment team, in accordance with applicable law and Board policy.[2][3]</p>
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<p>4. Delegation of Responsibility</p> <p>5. Guidelines</p>	<p><u>Title IX Sexual Harassment and Other Discrimination</u></p> <p>Every report of alleged bullying that can be interpreted at the outset to fall within the provisions of policies addressing potential violations of laws against discrimination shall be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations and coordinated with the full participation of the Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator. If, in the course of a bullying investigation, potential issues of discrimination are identified, the Title IX Coordinator shall be promptly notified, and the investigation shall be conducted jointly and concurrently to address the issues of alleged discrimination as well as the incidents of alleged bullying.</p> <p><u>Confidentiality</u> Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the allegations, the filing of a complaint and the investigation shall be handled in accordance with applicable law, regulations, this policy and the district’s legal and investigative obligations.</p> <p><u>Retaliation</u> Reprisal or retaliation relating to reports of bullying or participation in an investigation of allegations of bullying is prohibited and shall be subject to disciplinary action.</p> <p>Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying.</p> <p>The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that this policy is appropriately reflected in administrative guidelines and any Code of Student conduct and that such codes are reviewed annually with students.</p> <p>The Superintendent or designee, in cooperation with other administrators, shall review this policy every three (3) years and recommend necessary revisions to the Board.</p> <p>District administration shall annually provide the following information to PDE through the Safe School Report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Board’s Bullying Policy 2. Report of bullying incidents. 3. Information on the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention or education programs. <p>The Student Handbooks, which shall contain this policy, shall be disseminated annually to students.</p> <p>This policy shall be accessible in every classroom. The policy shall be posted in a prominent location within each school building and on the District Website.</p>
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<p>Pol. 218, 233</p>	<p><u>Additional Reporters</u> The school district strongly encourages students, parents/guardians, school employees, or bus drivers who become aware of any act of bullying to immediately report that conduct to the building principal. Each building principal or designee is authorized and directed to investigate reports of bullying brought to their attention by students, parents/guardians, school employees or bus drivers.</p> <p><u>Education</u> The District may develop and implement bullying prevention and intervention programs. Such programs shall provide District staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in and reporting incidents of bullying.</p> <p><u>Consequences for Violations</u> Consequences for students who are found to have bullied others may include counseling within the school; parent/guardian conference; loss of school privileges; transfer to another school building, classroom or school bus; exclusion from school-sponsored activities; detention; suspension; expulsion; or referral to law enforcement agency, in accordance with the District's disciplinary policies and Code of Conduct.</p> <p><u>Interplay With Other School District Policies</u> Nothing in this policy shall prevent school employees from enforcing, or imposing discipline, or fulfilling their professional responsibilities under other school district policies or student disciplinary rules.</p> <p>This policy shall not be interpreted as preventing a student or parent/guardian from filing a complaint under the school district's Unlawful Harassment policy.</p>
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