

FROM THE BURNS JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL HANDBOOK

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING

Laramie County School District #2 enacts this policy to offer compliance with all expectations of the Safe School Climate Act (W.S 21-4-311 through 21-4-315). Harassment, intimidation or bullying of students by students, of students by staff, or of staff by students at any school or school sponsored or school operated activity is prohibited.

Harassment, intimidation or bullying means any intentional gesture, or any intentional written, verbal or physical act that a reasonable person under the circumstances should know will have the effect of:

1. Harming a student physically or emotionally, damaging a student's property or placing a student in reasonable fear of personal harm or property damage;
2. Insulting or demeaning a student or group of students causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of school; or
3. Is so sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for a student or group of students.

“Written” acts include, but are not limited to handwritten or typed communications, e-mails, text messages, blogs and other forms of electronic communications.

School, as used in this policy includes a classroom or other location on school premises, a school bus or other related vehicle, a school bus stop, and activity or event sponsored by a school, whether or not it is held on school premises, and any other program or function where the school is responsible for the child.

Students and staff shall conduct themselves according to the rules and policies of the school district, and shall conduct themselves in a respectful manner towards all staff and all other students.

All staff members have a responsibility to be familiar with, and abide by, the applicable laws of the state, the policies of the Board, and the regulations designed to implement them.

A substantiated charge of the prohibitions in this policy against an employee of the District shall subject such employee to disciplinary actions which may result but not be limited to verbal warnings, letters of reprimand, suspension or termination.

To the extent possible every student of this school district will have equal educational opportunities.

Harassment, intimidation and Bullying will be seen by the Board as a form of denial of this equal educational opportunity. As such students are required to uphold the following expectations of this policy.

A student who engages in any act of bullying, harassment or intimidation is subject to appropriate disciplinary action including suspension, expulsion, and / or referral to law enforcement authorities. The severity and pattern, if any, of bullying, harassment, or intimidation behavior shall be taken into consideration when disciplinary decisions are made.

Counseling, corrective discipline, referral to law enforcement, proven best practice, and / or other administrative insight may be used to positively influence (or change if possible) the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact on the victim. This may include, but is not limited to, appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate, student based programs, anti-bullying programs, mentor based initiatives, code of conduct initiatives, and support for victims and others impacted by the violation.

Students who witness, harassment, intimidation or bullying of another student shall report that conduct to a teacher, principal, or other school staff member as soon as possible. The staff member who receives the complaint shall request that the student make a written report describing the conduct they witnessed, including but not limited to the date, time and location of the incident, and the names of the students involved, to the extent possible. If the complaining student chooses not to file a written report, the staff member shall ask the student to verbally describe the incident, including the information described above. The staff member shall then forward that information, including the written report, if any, to the building principal, who shall immediately investigate the complaint, or designate another staff member to investigate the complaint. Students may anonymously report any harassment, intimidation or bullying. Anyone making or receiving an anonymous report shall provide or collect as much information as possible, including but not limited to a description of the conduct, the date, time and location of the incident and the names of the individuals involved. Disciplinary action shall not be taken against a student based solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Once a staff member receives a report of harassment, intimidation or bullying, the report shall be immediately given to the building principal who shall initiate an investigation or designate another staff member to investigate the complaint.

During the investigation, the principal or his/her designee shall interview witnesses, including, but not limited to the alleged victim and the student(s) alleged to have engaged in the harassment, intimidation or bullying. The person conducting the investigation shall prepare a written report of the findings and conclusions of the investigation. If the person who conducts the investigation determines that a student or students engaged in harassment, bullying or intimidation, the building principal shall take appropriate disciplinary action toward the student or students. Decisions by the building principal may be appealed to the Superintendent.

Retaliation or reprisal against a student or other individual who makes a good faith report or complaint of harassment, intimidation or bullying is prohibited and shall not be tolerated. Anyone who engages in such retaliation or reprisal against an individual who makes a report of harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be subject to discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion.

When a student reports that he or she has been harassed, bullied or intimidated in violation of this policy, and the report is substantiated using the investigative procedures outlined in this policy, the principal shall schedule a meeting with the student, student's parent(s), the student's teacher(s), and any other appropriate staff members or any other individuals, as determined by the principal to discuss steps or strategies to protect that student from additional harassment, intimidation or bullying and from retaliation.

Any student who is found to have made a deliberate or intentional false accusation, report or complaint is subject to discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion. At the start of each school year, every teacher shall be required to review the district's harassment, intimidation and bullying policy with the student in his/her class and discuss that policy with them. This policy shall be included in the student manual or handbook and shall also be available to the public on the school district's web site in a manner to be determined by the superintendent or his/her designee. The school shall provide copies of the anti-bullying policy to parents in a manner and method to be determined by each principal, which may include distribution of the student handbook to parents.

Students will be provided with age-appropriate information on the recognition and prevention of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, and their responsibilities under this policy. Parents shall be provided with copies of this policy and its associated procedures.

The school district shall incorporate training and education on this policy in its professional development program and the policy shall be provided to volunteers and other noncertified employees of the district who have significant contact with students.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT: The district prohibits employees and students, sales representatives, vendors or visitors on school properties or at school activities, from sexually harassing Burns Jr/Sr High School students.

Four Points to Remember:

1. Harassment is prohibited against members of the same sex as well as against members of the opposite sex.
2. Persons may have the right to file a civil suit if actions of harassment/retaliation do not stop. If the actions involve a criminal activity, the victim could pursue criminal remedies.
3. Retaliation is prohibited. Retaliation can take different forms including threatening witnesses, physical attacks, or spreading rumors. Actions taken to punish the victim, reporting party, witnesses, or accused person from pursuing their rights are prohibited.
4. Respect people's rights of privacy and confidentiality. Do not unnecessarily talk about the case. Confidentiality cannot be guaranteed but all parties should respect one another's rights.

Distinctions between Sexual Harassment and Flirting

Flirting feels good. **Sexual harassment feels bad.**

Flirting makes me feel attractive. **Sexual harassment is degrading.**

Flirting is a compliment. **Sexual harassment makes me feel cheap.**

Flirting is two-way. **Sexual harassment is one-way.**

Flirting is positive. **Sexual harassment makes me feel helpless.**

Flirting – I like it. **Sexual harassment – I feel out of control.**

TO CORRECT A SEXUAL HARASSMENT SITUATION A DISCIPLINE REFERRAL AND DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES WILL BE FOLLOWED.

updated 10/18/12