PREVENTION OF BULLYING

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Deer Creek Schools is committed to creating a safe, healthy learning environment for all students that enhances personal safety and encourages respect, dignity and equality among students.

Deer Creek Schools is committed to creating and maintaining a learning environment that is free from bullying.

DEFINITION

1. Statutory definition of harassment, intimidation, and bullying:

70 O.S. §24-100.3(c) of the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act defines the term "bullying," as including, but not limited to a pattern of harassment, intimidation, threatening behavior, physical acts, verbal or electronic communication~~,~~ directed toward a student or group of students that results in or is reasonably perceived as being done with the intent to cause negative educational or physical results for the targeted individual or group and is communicated in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student that a reasonable person should recognize will:

A. Harm another student;

B. Damage another student's property;

C. Place another student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or damage to the student's property; or

D. Insult or demean any student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student.

2. The "Reasonable Person" Standard

In determining what a "reasonable person" should recognize as an act placing a student in "reasonable" fear of harm, staff will determine "reasonableness" not only from the point of view of a mature adult, but also from the point of view of an immature child of the age of the intended victim along with, but not limited to, consideration of special emotional, physical, or mental needs of the particular child; personality or physical characteristics, or history that might cause the child

to be particularly sensitive to efforts by a bully to humiliate, embarrass, or lower the self-esteem of the victim; and the discipline history, personality of, and physical characteristics of the individual alleged to have engaged in the prohibited behavior.

BULLYING ON CAMPUS CAN HAVE LONG-LASTING RESULTS FOR MANY STUDENTS:

These acts cause feelings of anxiety, fear, and shame in the students who are targets. They can interfere with concentration, inhibit full participation in class and interrupt academic and social learning.

Witnesses and bystanders also experience similar feelings, as they know they could be the bully's next target.

Bullying can trigger tragically violent responses in some students with other risk factors as have been seen in schools across the nation.

Bullying can be the early warning sign for further anti-social, aggressive and increasingly violent behavior.

EXAMPLES OF PROHIBITED BULLYING BEHAVIOR:

Name calling, racial slurs, pushing, crowding, or hitting, pinching, making fun of a person's body, telling mean jokes about someone, threatening to hurt someone, rude hand gestures, taking things without permission

BULLYING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED ANYWHERE AT DEER CREEK SCHOOLS:

This includes school facilities, premises, and non-school property if the student is at a school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity, event or function where students are under the supervision of staff.

SPEAK UP WHEN POSSIBLE:

If possible the target should tell the bully/harasser to stop. To the extent that a person feels safe and comfortable doing so a target is first encouraged to confront the bully/harasser, telling them to stop because their actions are unwelcome.

Bystanders are also encouraged to speak up when possible, telling the bully or harasser to stop the conduct because it is disrespectful, unwelcome, hurtful, unfair, etc.

REPORTING:

Reporting bullying to school staff is encouraged. Anyone may report bullying. They may report it to any school staff member. Each school has specific protocol that indicates the proper "chain of command" for reporting procedures. The staff is expected to act on all reports and to pass the report on to the school administrator.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Deer Creek Schools' staff will strive to maintain confidentiality of any student target or bystander who reports bullying. The school staff will also respect the confidentiality of the student accused of bullying. Any disclosure of reported information, including the identity of a student, will be made only to individuals involved in the school's response to the incident and to law enforcement as required under state law.

NO RETALIATION:

Deer Creek Schools will not tolerate retaliation for reporting bullying. School staff will discipline any student who retaliates against anyone who reports an incident, or against any person who testifies or assists in an investigation. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment, whether physical or verbal.

STUDENT ACCOUNTABILITY:

Deer Creek Schools expect students to demonstrate respectful behavior throughout the campus, on the bus, and at all school-sponsored events. Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate actions as identified in this policy.

STAFF ACCOUNTABILITY:

All school staff is expected to model respectful interaction with all incidents immediately, and in a manner consistent with school policy. Training will be provided on an annual basis to provide education and to enhance staff skills for responding effectively to bullying.

Staff members who witness an incident among students are expected to intervene by:

- Responding immediately
- Establishing the safety of the target
- Educating both students by identifying the unacceptable behavior and explaining its harmful impact on the target and other students
- Setting a logical, reasonable and educational consequence for the bully or harasser, which promotes the safety of the target. Targets will not receive consequences.

EVALUATION:

The Safe School Committees from each school site have given input into the development of this policy. These committees will annually review the policy and provide comments to the Board of Education on the policy's effectiveness and make recommendations for improvement.

BULLYING PREVENTION PROCEDURES

Procedures Related to Bullying: This policy will be in effect while the students are on school grounds, in school vehicles, at designated bus stops, at school-sponsored activities, or at school-sanctioned events, and while away from school grounds where the misconduct directly affects the order, management, welfare, and learning environment of the school district.

If any person is aware of or sees or is a victim of bullying as defined in this Policy and Policy JGA, such person must report the same to the principal of the building immediately. Reports may be made anonymously; however, no formal disciplinary action will be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Any written documentation of the alleged incident(s) shall be provided to the principal. If the bullying involves electronic communication as defined in Policy JGA, a printed copy of the communication as well as any identifying information, such as an email or web address, shall be provided to the principal.

The principal will contact the superintendent within twenty-four (24) hours of a report of bullying and begin conducting an investigation to determine the severity of the event and potential for future violence. If during the course of the investigation it appears a crime may have been committed, the principal and/or superintendent shall notify local law enforcement and request that the alleged victim also contact law enforcement to report the matter for potential criminal investigation.

During the pendency of the investigation, the Principal should take appropriate action to ensure the safety of all students involved. The principal shall make a determination as to whether the alleged conduct is actually occurring. If it is determined that the school's discipline code has been violated, consideration will be given to alternative methods of punishment to determine that the most effective method of discipline is carried out in each specific case. Some methods of discipline which may be considered, include, but are not limited to:

1. Conference with the student and/or parents
2. In-school suspension
3. Detention
4. Referral to a counselor
5. Behavioral contract
6. Changing of student's seat or class assignment
7. Requiring student to make financial restitution for damaged

property
8. Requiring student to clean items or facilities damaged by student's behavior
9. Restriction of privileges
10. Notification of law enforcement
11. Suspension

If it is determined that an act of bullying has occurred, a referral will be made to a delinquency prevention and diversion program administered by the Office of Juvenile Affairs.

Once the investigation has been completed, the principal or superintendent may recommend that available community mental health care counseling be provided to the student, if appropriate. If such a recommendation is made, the Superintendent may further require the student (if 18 or over) or the parent or guardian of the student to allow disclosure of any information concerning students who have received mental health care pursuant to this policy that indicates an explicit threat to the safety of students or District personnel as a condition of being allowed to return to school provided that such disclosure is in compliance with the law.

Notification shall be provided to the parents/guardians of a victim of verified, documented bullying as well as to the parents/guardians of the perpetrator within three (3) days of the conclusion of the investigation.

Bullying Prevention and Education: In conjunction with its disciplinary and investigatory measures, District shall work to prevent bullying, threatening behavior, harassment and intimidation by providing students and staff with education regarding bullying and threatening behavior, harassment, and intimidation. Such educational programs may include, but are not limited to, discussions with classroom teachers, assemblies, multimedia presentations, and in-service training and exercises. The purpose of the educational programs shall be to assist District students and staff in the identification of bullying behaviors, reporting procedures, and the consequences for violation of school rules and policies.

Annual written notice of this policy will be provided to parents, guardians, staff, volunteers, and students with age-appropriate language for students. Notice of the policy will be posted at various locations within each school site, including but not limited to, cafeterias, school bulletin boards, and administrative offices. The policy will be posted on the school district's website at and at each school site that has an Internet website. The policy will be included in all student and staff handbooks.

AMENDED: JULY 15, 2019
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DEER CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICT