

BULLYING PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

The Board of Education believes that all students are entitled to a safe and secure school environment, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment, and any type of bullying behavior. The purpose of this policy is to promote consistency of approach and to create an inclusive and supportive school culture and climate in which all types of bullying are regarded as unacceptable.

Definitions

Bullying is any written or verbal expression, no matter the medium or method of delivery, including, without limitation, electronic transmission, or a physical act or gesture, or a pattern thereof, that is intended to coerce, intimidate, or cause any physical, mental, or emotional harm to another person.

Retaliation in violation of this policy is defined as any adverse or negative action or behavior taken or intended against a person as a consequence of such person raising good faith concerns about conduct prohibited by this policy; opposing bullying; reporting bullying; cooperating or participating in any way in the procedures or processes of this or other disciplinary policies arising out of bullying behavior. A person may be found to be retaliating against another for knowingly making false accusations of bullying or acting to influence the investigation, or the response to, a report of bullying.

Prohibited Behavior

The district does not tolerate bullying against any person involved in the district's educational program and activities, whether such programs or activities take place on district property, at district sanctioned activities and events, in any vehicle dispatched by the district or one of its schools, or off school property when such conduct has a nexus to district activities or events.

Bullying is prohibited against any person for any reason, including but not limited to any such behavior that is directed toward a person based on the person's actual or perceived academic performance or protected characteristics, including race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, immigration/citizenship status, age, marital status, conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth, genetic information, disability, need for special education services or other status protected by federal or state law.

To further this commitment, the district prohibits retaliation against anyone participating in an investigation of alleged violations of this policy or in any related disciplinary proceeding. The district does not tolerate reports of bullying that are filed in bad faith, such as but not limited to, reports that lack any reasonable basis or that are intended to harass, embarrass or cause harm to another person.

Disciplinary Actions and Reporting

A student who engages in any act of bullying, retaliation against another in violation of this policy, or reporting bullying in bad faith will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action including but not limited to restorative practices, suspension, expulsion, and/or termination of employment, as appropriate, and such reports of bullying may be referred to law enforcement authorities. The severity and pattern, if any, of the behavior will be taken into consideration when disciplinary decisions are made. Bullying behavior that constitutes unlawful discrimination or harassment will be promptly investigated and, if appropriate, the individual who has demonstrated the bullying behavior will be disciplined in accordance with related Board policies and procedures. Individuals who are targets of bullying behavior that may constitute unlawful discrimination or harassment have additional rights and protections provided by Board policies and procedures prohibiting unlawful discrimination and harassment.

Any student who believes they have been a target of bullying and/or other behaviors prohibited by this policy, or who has witnessed such bullying and/or other prohibited behaviors, is strongly encouraged to immediately report such conduct to a school administrator, counselor or teacher or to complete policy exhibit JICDE-E-1, Bullying Report Form, and submit it to an administrator, teacher, or any other staff member. Reports can be made anonymously. Students who have been subjected to bullying that may be criminal in nature or that otherwise requires an immediate response or where safety is an immediate concern are strongly encouraged to seek immediate assistance, including from law enforcement.

Comprehensive Bullying Prevention Program

The district will develop a comprehensive bullying prevention program for all school levels that sends a clear message to students, staff, parents and community members that bullying and retaliation in violation of this policy are prohibited. The district's comprehensive program to address bullying will incorporate provisions for adequate due processes and safeguards for students accused of bullying behaviors in accordance with applicable law and Board policy. The comprehensive program will also initiate efforts to change the behavior of students engaged in bullying behaviors, and support targets of bullying.

The program shall be aimed toward accomplishing the following goals:

1. To partner with schools, families, and community members to help maintain a bullying-free environment, including increasing their awareness of the warning signs that students are being targeted by or are perpetrating bullying, and bullying definitions, prevention, and intervention strategies.
2. To train staff and students in skills to help prevent bullying from occurring. This includes individual, small group, classroom, and schoolwide activities to teach and reinforce expected behaviors, social skills, and how to recognize, prevent, and respond to bullying behaviors. Such skills are supported through strategies including, but not limited to, age-appropriate evidence-based best practices for social and emotional learning, school counseling, restorative practices, and peer support practices.
3. To implement procedures for safe reporting of, immediate intervention in, and

investigation and confrontation of bullying behavior, including disciplinary actions as appropriate.

4. To promote a positive school climate and culture through intentional prosocial efforts intended to develop and maintain positive relationships between all members of the school community.
5. To include students in the development and implementation of bullying prevention efforts as developmentally appropriate.
6. To support targets of bullying through evidence-based best practices such as, but not limited to, school counseling, intervention, and education in prevention strategies, as well as through family partnering.
7. To measure implementation fidelity of bullying prevention best practices, including the adherence to policy and intervention strategies. Implementation fidelity and other data will be used to inform and improve practices, strategies, and systems.
8. To provide periodic training to school staff related to recognizing, reporting, and preventing bullying as well as best practices for handling reports of bullying, including providing support to targets of bullying.

To support bullying prevention efforts, the district may administer surveys of students' impressions of the severity of bullying in their schools. If administered, such surveys will be conducted in accordance with applicable law and Board policy. Students' survey responses will be confidential. Participation in the surveys will not be required and students may voluntarily "opt in" to participate in the survey.

To further support the district's bullying prevention efforts, school(s) may elect to appoint a team of persons to advise school administration concerning the severity and frequency of bullying incidents. The school team(s) may include, but need not be limited to, counselors, teachers, school administrators, parents, students, law enforcement officials, social workers, prosecutors, health professionals, and mental health professionals.

Adopted December 5, 2001

Revised April 22, 2009

Revised June 15, 2011

Revised November 14, 2012

Revised February 17, 2021

Legal refs: C.R.S. § 22-32-109.1 (2)(a)(I)(K) (policy required as part of safe schools plan)
1 CCR [301-99](#), Rule 3.03.5

Cross refs.: AC, Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity
JB, Equal Educational Opportunities
Thompson School District R2-J, Loveland, Colorado

JBB*, Sexual Harassment
JICDA, Code of Conduct
JICDD, Violent and Aggressive Behavior
JICDE E-1, (Bullying Prevention and Education Reporting Form)
JS, (Student Use of the Internet and Electronic Communication)
JK, Student Discipline, and sub codes
JKD/JKE, (Suspension/Expulsion of Students)
JLDAC, (Screening/Testing of Students (and Treatment of Mental Disorders))