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**Note:** This policy addresses bullying of District students. For purposes of this policy, the term bullying includes cyber-bullying.

For provisions regarding discrimination and harassment involving District students, see FFH. Note that FFI shall be used in conjunction with FFH for certain prohibited conduct. For reporting requirements related to child abuse and neglect, see FFG.

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**Board Expectations, Beliefs, and Standards**

The District shall incorporate information regarding the policy against harassment or bullying into the Student Code of Conduct, the student handbook, and appropriate training programs.

The standards of this policy constitute a specific, focused, coordinated, integrated, and culturally sensitive system of supports for all students, staff, families, and community agencies that will improve relations within each school. It is designed to ensure that every school has staff members who have been trained and are supported in their school's efforts to provide awareness, intervention training, and instructional strategies on prevention, including violence prevention, to each student, staff, and parent in the District and to direct follow up when incidents are reported and/or occur.

**Bullying Prohibited**

The District prohibits bullying, including cyberbullying. Any acts of bullying that are reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race; ethnicity; color; religion; ancestry; national origin; gender; sex; sexual orientation; gender identity and expression; marital status; socio-economic background; social/family background; immigration status; linguistic preference; political beliefs; mental, physical, or sensory disability, difference, or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic or because of one's association with a particular person or group of person are strictly prohibited.

**Examples**

For examples of bullying, refer to FFI(REGULATION). Bullying of a student could occur by physical contact or through electronic means and may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism.

**Definitions**

For definitions, refer to FFI(LEGAL) and (REGULATION).

**Retaliation**

The District prohibits retaliation by a student or District employee against any person who in good faith makes a report of bullying, serves as a witness, or participates in an investigation.

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Examples	Examples of retaliation may include threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Unlawful retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.
<b>False Claim</b>	A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.
<b>Timely Reporting</b>	Reports of bullying shall be made as soon as possible after the alleged act or knowledge of the alleged act. A failure to immediately report may impair the District's ability to investigate and address the prohibited conduct.
<b>Reporting Procedures</b>	To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, school counselor, principal, or other District employee. The Superintendent of Schools or designee shall develop procedures allowing a student to anonymously report an alleged incident of bullying.
Student Report	
Employee Report	Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee.
Report Format	A report may be made orally or in writing. The principal or designee shall reduce any oral reports to written form.
<b>Notice of Report</b>	When an allegation of bullying is reported, the principal or designee shall notify the parent of the alleged victim on or before the third business day after the incident is reported. The principal or designee shall also notify the parent of the student alleged to have engaged in the conduct within a reasonable amount of time after the incident is reported.
<b>Prohibited Conduct</b>	The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH, including dating violence and harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, or disability. If so, the District shall proceed under policy FFH. If the allegations could constitute both prohibited conduct and bullying, the investigation under FFH shall include a determination on each type of conduct.
<b>Investigation of Report</b>	The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying and ensure safety during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

**Concluding the Investigation**

Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten District business days from the date of the initial report alleging bullying; however, the principal or designee shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

The principal or designee shall prepare a final, typed report of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether bullying occurred and, if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. The report shall be maintained in an electronic software system.

**Notice to Parents**

The principal or designee shall promptly notify the parent of the victim and the parent of the alleged bully by sending a determination letter of whether the student was engaged in bullying or not engaged.

**District Action**

**Bullying**

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct. The District may notify law enforcement in certain circumstances.

**Counseling Options**

Victims of bullying, bystanders, witnesses, and the accused shall be offered counseling services ranging from those provided by school counselors to a referral to Psychological and Social Services, and/or to one of the District's youth and family centers.

**Discipline**

A student who is a victim of bullying and who used reasonable self-defense in response to the bullying shall not be subject to disciplinary action.

The discipline of a student with a disability is subject to applicable state and federal law in addition to the Student Code of Conduct.

*Corrective Action*

Examples of corrective action may include a training program for the individuals involved in the complaint, a comprehensive education program for the school community, follow-up inquiries to determine whether any new incidents or any instances of retaliation have occurred, involving parents and students in efforts to identify problems and improve the school climate, increasing staff monitoring of areas where bullying has occurred, and reaffirming the District's policy against bullying.

*Transfers*

On the request of a parent, legal guardian, or adult student who is a victim of bullying, the Superintendent of Schools or designee shall transfer the victim to:

1. Another classroom at the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred; or
2. A campus in the District other than the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred.

The Superintendent of Schools or designee may transfer the student who engaged in bullying to:

1. Another classroom at the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred; or
2. A campus in the District other than the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred, in consultation with a parent or other person with authority to act on behalf of the student who engaged who engaged in bullying.

The transfer of a student with a disability who receives special education services and who engaged in bullying may be made only by a duly constituted ARD committee under Education Code 37.004.

The principal or designee shall refer to FDB(LEGAL) for transfer provisions.

*Counseling*

The principal or designee shall notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options.

Improper Conduct

If the investigation reveals improper conduct that did not rise to the level of prohibited conduct or bullying, the District may take action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action.

**Confidentiality**

To the greatest extent possible, the District shall respect the privacy of the complainant, persons against whom a report is filed, and witnesses. Limited disclosures may be necessary in order to conduct a thorough investigation.

**Appeal**

A parent, legal guardian, or adult student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation or plan of action may appeal through FNG(LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level.

**Records Retention**

Retention of records shall be in accordance with CPC(LOCAL).

**Access to Policy and Procedures**

This policy and any accompanying procedures shall be distributed annually in the employee and student handbooks. Copies of the policy and procedures shall be posted on the District's website, to the extent practicable, and shall be readily available at each campus and the District's administrative offices.

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**Adoption or Last  
Amended Date**

This policy was last adopted or amended on June 21, 2018.