

BHMSD Bullying Curriculum Resources 2025-2026

In 2023, Indiana passed HEA 1483, Discipline Rules Regarding Bullying. Additional guidance was provided with SEA 255 effective July 1, 2025 which updates the timetable for investigating and reporting an alleged bullying incident:

Provides that discipline rules adopted by the governing body of a school corporation must include timetables for reporting bullying incidents to parents of both the targeted student and the alleged perpetrator. The new legislation states the timetable for reporting the investigation of an incident to the parent of the targeted student and alleged perpetrator by the end of the school day after the school becomes aware of a possible incident. The timetable for reporting the conclusion of an investigation to the parents of both the targeted student and alleged perpetrator must occur before the end of the next school day after the conclusion of the investigation. Provides that discipline rules adopted by the governing body of a school corporation: (1) must include provisions that require a school to prioritize the safety of the victim; (2) may include provisions to determine: (A) the severity of an incident of bullying; and (B) whether an incident of bullying may warrant the transfer of the victim or the alleged perpetrator to another school in the school corporation; and (3) must include policies to allow a parent of a child in the school corporation to review any materials used in any bullying prevention or suicide prevention program. Requires public schools to document acts of bullying and abusive behaviors against a victim and committed by a verified perpetrator.

BHMSD is well-prepared to meet the guidelines of this legislation due to the current practices of our school administrators, counselors, and teachers. Student handbooks in all three buildings include information about bullying.

BHES: Bullying is defined as an overt, unwanted, repeated act or gesture, including written or verbal communications or images transmitted in any manner, physical acts, or any other behaviors that are committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, or harm the other targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment.

Bullying will not be tolerated at Bluffton-Harrison Elementary School. Using data or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of the school corporation to bully another student is prohibited. To be effective in dealing with bullying issues, all students and faculty are to report such incidents to the school administrator immediately. Punishment for violations of our anti-bullying policy will be fair, firm, and consistent, ranging up to expulsion. Each case will be decided upon the facts and education will be available for bullies, victims, and bystanders.

This applies when a student is:

- On school grounds immediately before or during school hours, immediately after school hours or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group (including summer school);
- Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event;
- Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or
- Using property or equipment provided by the school.

BMS:

1. Bullying committed by students toward other students is strictly prohibited. Engaging in bullying conduct described in this rule by use of data or computer software that is accessed through any computer, any computer system, or any computer network is also prohibited.
2. For the purpose of this rule, bullying is defined as overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner including electronically or digitally, physical acts committed, aggression, or any other similar behaviors that are committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:
 - a. places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted student's person or property;
 - b. has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health;
 - c. has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's academic performance; or
 - d. has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school.
3. This rule may be applied regardless of the physical location of the bullying behavior when a student committing bullying behavior and the targeted student attend a school within the school corporation and disciplinary action is reasonably necessary to avoid substantial interference with school discipline or prevent an unreasonable threat to the rights of other students to a safe and peaceful learning environment.
4. Any student or parent who has knowledge of conduct in violation of this rule or any student who feels he/she has been bullied in violation of this rule should immediately report the conduct to the [school administrator] who has responsibility for all investigations of student misconduct including bullying. A student or parent may also report the conduct to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the [school administrator]. This report may be made anonymously.
5. The [school administrator] shall investigate immediately all reports of bullying made pursuant to the provisions of this rule. Such investigation must include any action or appropriate responses that may be taken immediately to address the bullying conduct wherever it takes place. The parents of the bully and the targeted student(s) shall be notified on a regular, periodic basis of the progress and the findings of the investigation and of any remedial action that has been taken.
6. The [school administrator] will be responsible for working with the school counselors and other community resources to provide information and/or follow-up services to support the targeted student and to educate the student engaging in bullying behavior on the effects of bullying and the prevention of bullying. In addition, the school administrator and school counselors will be responsible for determining if the bullying behavior is a violation of law required to be reported to law enforcement under Indiana law based upon their reasonable belief. Such determination should be made as soon as possible and once this determination is made; the report should be made immediately to law enforcement.

7. False reporting of bullying conduct as defined in this rule by a student shall be considered a violation of this rule and will result in any appropriate disciplinary action or sanctions if the investigation of the report finds it to be false.
8. A violation of this rule prohibiting bullying may result in any appropriate disciplinary action or sanction, including suspension and/or expulsion.
9. Failure by a school employee who has a responsibility to report bullying or investigate bullying or any other duty under this rule to carry out such responsibility or duty will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment with the school corporation.
10. Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator. This includes appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the bullying.
11. Educational outreach and training will be provided to school personnel, parents, and students concerning the identification, prevention, and intervention in bullying.
12. All schools in the corporation are encouraged to engage students, staff and parents in meaningful discussions about the negative aspects of bullying. The parent involvement may be through parent organizations already in place in each school.
13. The superintendent or designee will be responsible for developing detailed administrative procedures consistent with the Indiana Department of Education guidelines for the implementation of the provisions of this rule.

IC 20-33-8-0.2 (b) states six specific circumstances that are not to be included in the new definition and may “not be interpreted to impose any burden or sanction” if the alleged bully’s conduct consisted of:

1. Participating in a religious event.
2. Acting in an emergency involving the protection of a person or property from an imminent threat of serious bodily injury or substantial danger.
3. Participating in an activity consisting of the exercise of a student’s rights protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and/or Article 1, Section 31 of the Constitution of the State of Indiana.
4. Participating in an activity conducted by a nonprofit or governmental entity that provides recreation, education, training, or other care under the supervision of one or more adults.
5. Participating in an activity undertaken at the prior written direction of the student’s parent.
6. Engaging in interstate or international travel from a location outside Indiana to another location outside Indiana.

BHS:

Bluffton-Harrison Metropolitan School District and Bluffton High School strive to be proactive in regards to bullying. Also, Bluffton High School has in place a Safe School Committee composed of the principal, assistant principal, guidance counselors, and School Resource Officer to ensure the safety of all students.

Bullying is defined as “overt, repeated acts or gestures including verbal or written communications transmitted, physical acts committed, or any other behavior by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the other student.” Bullying will not be tolerated at Bluffton High School. To be effective in dealing with bullying issues, all students and faculty are to report such incidents to school administrators immediately. Punishment for violations of bullying will be fair, firm, and consistent ranging up to expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement. Educational outreach and training will be provided to school personnel and students concerning the identification, prevention and intervention of bullying.

This applies when a student is:

1. On school grounds immediately before or during school hours, immediately after school hours or at any other time when the school is being used by a school group (including summer school);
2. Off school grounds at a school activity, function, or event;
3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function, or event; or 4. Using property or equipment provided by the school.

16 IC 35-45-2-2. Harassment; “obscene message” defined –

Sec. 2. (a) A person who, with intent to harass, annoy, or alarm another person but with no intent of legitimate communication:

- (1) makes a telephone call, whether or not a conversation ensues;
- (2) communicates with a person by telegraph, mail, or other form of written communication;
- (3) transmits an obscene message, or indecent or profane words, on a Citizens Radio Service channel; or
- (4) uses a computer network (as defined in IC 35-43-2-3(a)) or other form of electronic communication to: (A) communicate with a person; or (B) transmit an obscene message or indecent or profane words to a person; commits harassment, a Class B misdemeanor. (b) A message is obscene if: (1) the average person, applying contemporary community standards, finds that the dominant theme of the message, taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest in sex; (2) the message refers to sexual conduct in a patently offensive way; and (3) the message, taken as a whole, lacks serious artistic, literary, political, or scientific value.

Six Statutory Exceptions to the New Definition IC 20-33-8-0.2(b) states six specific circumstances that are not to be included in the new definition and may “not be interpreted to impose any burden or sanction” if the alleged bully’s conduct consisted of:

- (1) Participating in a religious event.
- (2) Acting in an emergency involving the protection of a person or property from an imminent threat of serious bodily injury or substantial danger.

- (3) Participating in an activity consisting of the exercise of a student’s rights protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and/or Article 1, Section 31 of the Constitution of the State of Indiana.
- (4) Participating in an activity conducted by a nonprofit or governmental entity that provides recreation, education, training, or other care under the supervision of one (1) or more adults.
- (5) Participating in an activity undertaken at the prior written direction of the student’s parent.
- (6) Engaging in interstate or international travel from a location outside Indiana to another location outside Indiana.

Additionally, school administrators document alleged acts of bullying as well as the details of investigations and disciplinary action. This allows the school administrator to continually address any emerging patterns with students exhibiting bullying characteristics. BHMSD also utilizes a variety of resources to provide education to all students as well as students who need bully education on a tier 2 and 3 level.

BHMSD believes all students can learn and should have multiple opportunities to be successful. All students are in the Multi-tiered Systems of Support MTSS process and needs are addressed accordingly:

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| <p>Tier 1: Universal</p> <p>All students receive high-quality classroom curriculum through whole group, small group differentiated instruction, teacher-designed interventions by the classroom teacher within the general education setting.</p> | <p>Tier 2: Supplementary</p> <p>In addition to classroom instruction, students identified as needing intervention receive supplemental instruction aligned to the core curriculum that targets specific area or areas of need. Progress is monitored to determine improvement.</p> | <p>Tier 3: Intensive</p> <p>In addition to classroom and supplemental instruction, students needing intensive instruction to target specific skill deficits receive intensive instruction. Progress is monitored to determine improvement.</p> |
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Tier 1 Bully Education: (All students)

| BHES | BMS | BHS |
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| BHES utilizes the “Second Step Bully Prevention Unit” in each K-4 Classroom. This is taught by an elementary school counselor. Bullying reminders are given throughout the school year on the daily announcements. | A middle school administrator meets with each grade level at the beginning of the school year to define bullying and the consequences that can be applied. Bullying reminders are given throughout the school year on the daily announcements. | A high school administrator meets with the students at the beginning of the school year to define bullying and the consequences that can be applied. Bullying reminders are given throughout the school year on the daily announcements. Bully prevention is also taught in Health class under the section entitled Peer Relationships. |

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| | Students attend a convocation, such as Remedy Live, on an annual basis. | |
| Digital Citizenship is taught in the general education classroom, in the Design and Innovation Center related arts class, and in the Tiger Enrichment related arts class. | Cyberbullying prevention is taught in Digital Citizenship to all students. | Digital Citizenship is reviewed in all classes as well as participation in digital citizenship school wide activities annually. |

Tier 2 Bully Education: (Small group work)

| BHES | BMS | BHS |
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| Social Skills Small Groups taught by the school counselors or student support specialist as needed. | Guidance counselors or administrators meet with students to provide education. | Guidance counselors or administrators meet with students to provide education. |
| | Social Skills Small Groups taught by the school counselors or student support specialist as needed. | |

Tier 3 Bully Education: (Students identified as bullies and/or victims.)

| BHES | BMS | BHS |
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| A conference is held with the student including a building administrator and often a school counselor. Parent communication is established and appropriate consequences as well as a bully contract are put into place. | A conference is held with the student including a building administrator and often a school counselor. Parent communication is established and appropriate consequences are given. | A conference is held with the student including a building administrator and often a school counselor. Parent communication is established and appropriate consequences are given as well as a behavior contract. |