
Note: This regulation addresses procedures for reporting a bullying incident, including cyberbullying, and investigation of reports of bullying of District students. For procedures regarding transfer of a student who is a victim of bullying or who engaged in bullying, see FDB. For provisions regarding discrimination and harassment involving District students, including sex-based discrimination such as sexual harassment, see the FFH series. Note that FFI should be used in conjunction with FFH series for certain prohibited conduct.

The District focuses on building healthy relationships between students and staff.

District Committee to Address Bullying

The District will establish campus-based committees that include parents and secondary-level students to address bullying by focusing on prevention efforts and health and wellness initiatives. The committee will consider student survey results to develop action plans and address student concerns. The committee will develop a rubric or checklist to guide District personnel in assessing and responding to a bullying or cyberbullying incident.

The members of the committee will be selected by the campus principal. The committee will meet at least twice a year.

The committee will share information with District staff and the public through District publications.

The Guidance and Counseling and Leadership departments will be responsible for developing and overseeing the implementation of action plans based on the results.

Bullying Curriculum and Teaching

Each grade level will receive instruction on building relationships and bullying prevention training, including cyberbullying. Students will also be taught how to report bullying.

Student Surveys

Each school year, the District will collect information regarding bullying and cyberbullying through age-appropriate student surveys. The survey will be completed each school year in the Fall and Spring.

The Guidance and Counseling and Leadership departments will be responsible for developing and overseeing the implementation of action plans based on the results of the survey data.

Reporting a Bullying Incident

Student Report

Bullying, including cyberbullying, is defined in FFI(LEGAL). A student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying, including cyberbullying, or that another student has, or that other students have, experienced bullying is encouraged to report the

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incident, in accordance with District policy. A student may report an incident of bullying anonymously.

The method(s) for a student to report bullying anonymously will be the following:

Visit the Odessa Crime Stoppers website at www.odessa-crimestoppers.org, and click the "Submit a Tip" button. The reporter should be sure to complete the "School Related/Bullying" section of the electronic form in its entirety, or to the very best of their ability.

Employee Report An employee will adhere to the requirements of District policy in reporting an alleged bullying incident.

Report Format The report may be made orally or in writing by completing the Incident Report form [see FFI(EXHIBIT) — A and B]. If the report is made orally, the principal or designee will document the allegations in writing and record the date and circumstances of the interview on a form designated by the District, as applicable.

The parent of the alleged victim will be notified of the incident of bullying on or before the third business day after the incident is reported. The alleged bully's parent will be notified within a reasonable amount of time after the incident, but no later than 10 days.

**Investigative
Procedures**

The principal or designee must determine whether the allegations, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct under FFH series. If so, the principal or designee must refer the report for processing under the policies and procedures at FFH series. If not, the principal or designee, herein referred to as the investigator, will proceed under this policy following the guidelines below, as appropriate. [See FFI(EXHIBIT) — C]

*General
Considerations*

The investigator must maintain confidentiality to the extent possible and as required by law and should advise the complainant that limited disclosure may be necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

If a student desires to be accompanied by a parent or friend during his or her interview, the District will consider the request and determine whether the presence of a parent or friend in the interview will help or hinder the investigation process. If the student's request is granted, the District will adhere to all applicable laws, policies, and associated procedures to protect the privacy of all students involved.

Guidelines In conducting the investigation, the investigator will:

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1. If appropriate, take action to protect the student and to prevent bullying during the investigation. If the District determines that a serious risk to the student's physical safety exists, the principal or designee may contact law enforcement directly. [See GRAA for classes of offenses for which the District is required to contact law enforcement.]
2. Secure any evidence.
3. If the investigator did not receive the initial complaint, interview the complainant first, proceeding chronologically through the allegations, and advise the complainant that the District does not tolerate bullying. If the complainant is a student, help the student feel secure about presenting allegations of wrongdoing. Ask the names of any witnesses who might confirm the complainant's version of the events. Also ask if the complainant is aware of or able to provide evidence that supports his or her version of the events. Assure the complainant of protection from retaliation.
4. Interview the alleged victim if that person is not also the complainant and explain how the investigation process will work. Advise the alleged victim that the District does not tolerate bullying and help the student feel secure about presenting allegations of wrongdoing. Ask the names of any witnesses who might confirm the alleged victim's version of the events. Also ask if the alleged victim is aware of or able to provide evidence that supports his or her version of the events. Assure the alleged victim of protection from retaliation.
5. Interview the alleged bully and explain how the investigation process will work. The alleged bully will be presented with each allegation and provided an opportunity to respond. Ask the names of any witnesses who might confirm the alleged bully's version of the events. Also ask if the alleged bully is aware of or able to provide evidence that supports his or her version of the events. Advise the alleged bully that retaliation against the victim, the complainant, or any witnesses is strictly prohibited by District policy.
6. Interview any witnesses. Help a student witness feel secure and assure him or her of protection from retaliation. Ask the names of any additional witnesses who might have information about the alleged incident(s).
7. Do not divulge information regarding the identity of the alleged victim, alleged bully, complainant, or witnesses unnecessarily when interviewing other witnesses.

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8. If necessary, interview the alleged bully, alleged victim, and any witnesses again to address any new information discovered during the course of the investigation.
9. Maintain detailed notes of all interviews. Notes will be read to the person being interviewed to verify details and to ensure accuracy. In addition, the interviewer may audio record the interview with permission of the person being interviewed.
10. Document all efforts made to investigate the alleged bullying. Gather all relevant evidence.

Resolution of the Complaint

The investigator will prepare a written report of the investigation, which will include a determination of whether bullying occurred, and, if so, whether the victim used reasonable self-defense. The investigator will notify the parties to the complaint of the resolution.

Disciplinary Action

If upon completion of the investigation the investigator determines that disciplinary action against a student is warranted, the investigator will proceed with the appropriate course of action, in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct. After an investigation is completed, the principal or designee may report to law enforcement if the principal has reasonable grounds to believe that a student has engaged in harassment using electronic communications or assault. In accordance with law, a school counselor may not be designated as the person to report to law enforcement because a counselor's duties include serving as an impartial, non-reporting conciliator.

Counseling Options

If the students involved have not yet been notified, the District will notify the victim, the student who engaged in bullying, and any students who witnessed the bullying of available counseling options. [See FFI(EXHIBIT) — D]

Improper Conduct

If upon completion of the investigation the investigator determines that the alleged incident does not rise to the level of bullying, the District will proceed in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or any other appropriate corrective action.

Notice to Superintendent

Within 10 District business days of the completion of an investigation, the principal will submit the Investigation Report [see FFI(EXHIBIT) — C] and any appropriate materials associated with the investigation to the Superintendent or designee.

Notice to Parents

If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the investigator will promptly notify the parents of the victim and of the student who engaged in bullying. The investigator must document that notice was provided to parents on the Investigation Report.

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**Notice of Right to
Appeal**

A student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal through FNG(LOCAL), beginning at the appropriate level.

**Reporting Child
Abuse**

In accordance with law, if the District has reason to believe that a child has been or may be abused or neglected, the District must contact a local or state law enforcement agency or Child Protective Services (CPS). [See FFG]

Follow-Up

After concluding the investigation, the District should periodically follow up with the complainant or other persons involved in the incident(s), as appropriate.