

Body Shaming Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to foster a safe, respectful, and inclusive learning environment by preventing and addressing body shaming in all its forms. This policy is designed to protect the mental and emotional well-being of all students and staff, recognizing the profound impact body shaming has on school climate, relationships, and learning.

Policy Statement

Victor Elementary School District (VESD) is committed to cultivating a school environment where every individual, regardless of body size, shape, or appearance, feels valued, accepted, and safe. Body shaming in any form is strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, unsolicited comments, gestures, or digital communication that mock, stigmatize, or draw attention to an individual's physical appearance.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the LEA/school community—including students, staff, faculty, administrators, families, and visitors—and in all school settings, including:

- Classrooms and school facilities
- Physical education and athletics
- Extracurricular programs and school events
- Online learning platforms and digital spaces
- Transportation and off-campus school activities

Definition of Body Shaming

Body shaming refers to the unsolicited act of mocking, stigmatizing, or commenting on a person's body or appearance in a manner that is perceived as negative, regardless of the intent. This includes:

- Verbal comments (e.g., teasing, nicknaming, judgmental observations)
- Nonverbal cues (e.g., staring, mimicking, exclusionary behavior)
- Digital content (e.g., memes, social media posts, text messages)
- Self-directed comments on body image expressed publicly
- Comments perceived as compliments that reinforce harmful norms

Body shaming may occur as a one-time event or as part of a repeated behavior and may intersect with bullying, sexual harassment, or other forms of discrimination.

Prevention Strategies

To prevent body shaming and promote a culture of belonging, **VESD** will:

- Promote identity-affirming and culturally responsive practices in all classrooms
- Integrate body positivity, body neutrality, and media literacy into health and wellness education
- Elevate student voice through focus groups and school participation

Professional Development

Ongoing professional learning for all staff will include:

- Understanding the definition and impacts of body shaming
- Intervening in harmful behaviors in real time
- Modeling inclusive language and respectful engagement
- Practicing trauma-informed, healing-centered, and restorative approaches

Response Protocols

VESD will:

- Provide confidential, accessible reporting systems for students and staff
- Use restorative, non-punitive responses to address incidents

- Notify parents/guardians and offer appropriate support when incidents occur
- Follow all Board Policies and Administrative Regulations (5131.2 and 5145.3) in regards to addressing bullying and nondiscrimination/harassment

Student Supports and Resources

- School-based mental health professionals will offer counseling and peer support spaces
- Staff will receive guidance on making referrals for students impacted by body shaming

Family and Community Engagement

VESD will:

- Have information and resources regarding body shaming within the annual student handbooks and the district website
- Welcome community and parent input

Integration with Other Policies

This policy aligns with and complements:

- Bullying and Hate-Motivated Behavior Prevention Policies
- Digital Citizenship and Responsible Use Guidelines
- Gender Equity and Title IX Compliance
- Mental Health Referral and Wellness Protocols (e.g., Senate Bill 153)
- Transformative SEL and Whole Child frameworks

Monitoring and Evaluation

The policy will be reviewed annually in collaboration with MTSS teams, student focus groups, and parent or caregiver groups. Updates will be based on:

- Data on reported incidents and outcomes

- Feedback from school surveys and focus groups
- Emerging research and best practices
- Legal or regulatory updates

Communication and Accessibility

This policy will be:

- Included in parental annual rights and school handbooks
- Posted on the school's website and shared through family communication channels
- Discussed during orientation, staff meetings, and student assemblies
- Made available in multiple languages and accessible formats as needed

For more resources, visit:

[<https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/mh/bodyshaming.asp>]