

Bullying and Harassment - Students

Policy No. 302.9R

REGULATIONS

Bullying and harassment are considered to be significant issues at all age ranges. The Board of Education encourages all schools to actively pursue specific anti-bullying strategies, as well as conflict resolution strategies. Students who commit acts of bullying or harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension from school.

Bullying and harassment is defined as inappropriate remarks, jokes or innuendoes, comments, persistent teasing or leering, false accusations, unwelcome sexual advances, use of sexually demeaning language, stalking, comments or actions that create an uncomfortable or hostile environment.

A bully is someone who:

- Uses power to hurt others or harm their possessions.
- Purposely scares or intimidates others.
- Often hurts the same person repeatedly.
- Is sometimes supported by other people who just watch and laugh, instead of helping the person being bullied.

Harassment may occur:

- Between students (e.g. bullying)
- Student to adult
- Adult to student

1. Reporting Procedures for Students

1.1. Reporting procedures are to be developed by each school and communicated, as appropriate, utilizing assemblies, student handbooks, Parent Advisory Councils and school newsletters.

2. Responsibility of Employees

It is the responsibility of employees within this district to take immediate and appropriate action to report or deal with incidents of bullying and harassment whether brought to their attention or personally observed. Under no circumstances should a legitimate complaint be dismissed, downplayed or the complainants told to deal with it themselves.

2.1. Once complaints are received, they will be kept strictly confidential. However, it must be recognized that fair investigations will require some disclosure. It must also be recognized that

complaints could, in certain circumstances, require reports to the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

- 2.2. Investigations will be undertaken immediately. The complainants and the alleged harassers will be interviewed along with any individuals who may be able to provide relevant information. All information will be kept in confidence. Normally Principals/Vice Principals will conduct the investigations.
- 2.3. Should investigations reveal harassment, the harassers will be disciplined appropriately. Discipline may include training, counseling, suspension and/or expulsion. In the event that a transfer to another school is required, it shall be the harassers who will be transferred, except where the complainant requests to be the one transferred. Documentation will be placed in the harassers' file.
- 2.4. If the investigations fail to find evidence to support the complaints, there will be no documentation concerning the complaints placed in the file of the alleged harassers.
- 2.4. Principals/Vice Principals should follow up with both the victim and the harassers to ensure the conduct does not continue and that counseling is provided if needed or wanted.