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| Book         | Policy Manual          |
| Section      | 200 Pupils             |
| Title        | Bullying/Cyberbullying |
| Code         | 249 Vol IV 2024        |
| Status       | Second Reading         |
| Last Revised | November 21, 2024      |

### **Purpose**

The Joint Operating Committee is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for its students. The Joint Operating Committee recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the Joint Operating Committee prohibits bullying by students.

### **Definitions**

**Bullying** means an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting

{X} and/or outside a school setting, online or through social media,

that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:[\[1\]](#)

1. Substantially interfering with a student's education.
2. Creating a threatening environment.
3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the center (school).

**Bullying**, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

**School setting** means in the center (school), on center (school) grounds, in center (school) vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the center (school).[\[1\]](#)

### **Authority**

The Joint Operating Committee prohibits all forms of bullying by students.[\[1\]](#)

The Joint Operating Committee encourages students who believe they or others have been bullied to promptly report such incidents to the building administrator or designee.

Students are encouraged to use the center's (school's) report form, available from the building administrator, or to put the complaint in writing; however, oral complaints shall be accepted and documented. The person accepting the complaint shall handle the report objectively, neutrally and professionally, setting aside personal biases that might favor or disfavor the student filing the complaint or those accused of a violation of this policy.

The Joint Operating Committee directs that verbal and written complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and appropriate corrective or preventative action shall be taken when allegations are substantiated. The Joint Operating Committee directs that any complaint of bullying brought pursuant to this policy shall also be reviewed for conduct which may not be proven to be bullying under this policy but merits review and possible action under other Joint Operating Committee policies.

When a student's behavior indicates a threat to the safety of the student, other students, school employees, school facilities, the community or others, staff shall report the student to the threat assessment team, in accordance with applicable law and Joint Operating Committee policy.[\[2\]](#)[\[3\]](#)

### **Discrimination/Harassment**

Every report of alleged bullying that can be interpreted at the outset to fall within the provisions of policies addressing potential violations of laws against discrimination **or harassment** shall be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations and coordinated with the full participation of the Compliance Officer and Title IX Coordinator. If, in the course of a bullying investigation, potential issues of discrimination **or harassment** are identified, the Title IX Coordinator shall be promptly notified, and the investigation shall be conducted jointly and concurrently to address the issues of alleged discrimination **or harassment** as well as the incidents of alleged bullying.[\[4\]](#)[\[5\]](#)

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality of all parties, witnesses, the allegations, the filing of a complaint and the investigation shall be handled in accordance with applicable law, regulations, this policy and the center's (school's) legal and investigative obligations.

### **Retaliation**

Reprisal or retaliation relating to reports of bullying or participation in an investigation of allegations of bullying is prohibited and shall be subject to disciplinary action.

## Delegation of Responsibility

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying.

The Administrative Director or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy.

The Administrative Director or designee shall ensure that this policy and administrative regulations are reviewed annually with students.<sup>[1]</sup>

The Administrative Director or designee, in cooperation with other appropriate administrators, shall review this policy every three (3) years and recommend necessary revisions to the Joint Operating Committee.<sup>[1]</sup>

The administration shall annually provide the following information with the **school safety and security incident report**:<sup>[1]</sup><sup>[6]</sup>

1. Joint Operating Committee's Bullying Policy.
2. Report of bullying incidents.
3. Information on the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention or education programs.

## Guidelines

The Code of Student Conduct, which shall contain this policy, shall be disseminated annually to students.<sup>[1]</sup><sup>[7]</sup><sup>[8]</sup>

This policy shall be accessible in every classroom. The policy shall be posted in a prominent location within the center's (school) buildings and on the center's (school's) website.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Education

The center (school)

{ } may

{X} shall

develop, implement and evaluate bullying prevention and intervention programs and activities. Programs and activities shall provide staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in and reporting incidents of bullying.<sup>[1]</sup><sup>[9]</sup><sup>[10]</sup><sup>[11]</sup>

## Consequences for Violations

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct, which may include:<sup>[1]</sup><sup>[7]</sup><sup>[12]</sup>

1. {X } Counseling within the center (school).
2. {X } Parental conference.
3. {X } Loss of center (school) privileges.
4. {X } Exclusion from center (school)-sponsored activities.
5. {X } Detention.
6. {X } Suspension.
7. {X } Expulsion.
8. { } Counseling/Therapy outside of the center (school).
9. { } Referral to law enforcement officials.

## **PSBA Revision 7/24 © 2024 PSBA**

Legal

[1. 24 P.S. 1303.1-A](#)

[2. 24 P.S. 1302-E](#)

3. Pol. 236.1

4. Pol. 103

5. Pol. 103.1

6. Pol. 805.1

7. Pol. 218

[8. 22 PA Code 12.3](#)

[9. 20 U.S.C. 7118](#)

[10. 24 P.S. 1302-A](#)

11. Pol. 236

12. Pol. 233

Pol. 113.1

