

USD 218 BULLYING/HARASSMENT PREVENTION PLAN

Statement of Intent - USD 218 is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students, staff, and parents so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Harassment/bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our district. If harassment/bullying does occur, all students, staff, and parents should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING district. This means that anyone who knows that harassment/bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

The USD 218 Board of Education prohibits acts of harassment or bullying. The Board of Education has determined that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and school's ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of administrators, faculty, staff, and volunteers to provide positive examples for student behavior.

What Is Harassment / Bullying - "Harassment or bullying" is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts- i.e. internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (pda), or wireless hand held device) that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual act or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic. Such behavior is considered harassment or bullying whether it takes place on or off school property, at any school-sponsored function, or in a school vehicle.

"Harassment" is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:

is directed at one or more pupils;
substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils;
adversely affects the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities because the conduct, as reasonably perceived by the pupil, is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive as to have this effect; and,
is based on a pupil's actual or distinguishing characteristic (see above), or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.

"Bullying" is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:

is directed at one or more pupils;
substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils;
adversely affects the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school district's educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing emotional distress; and,
is based on a pupil's actual or distinguishing characteristic (see above), or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.

Harassment / Bullying can be:

Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)

Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence

Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures

Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments

Homophobic because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality

Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing

Cyber: All areas of internet ,such as email & internet chat room misuse

Mobile: threats by text messaging & calls

Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera & video facilities

Signs and Symptoms - A child may indicate by signs or behavior that he or she is being harassed or bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

is frightened of walking to or from school

doesn't want to go on the school / public bus

begs to be driven to school

changes their usual routine

is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)

begins to truant

becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence

attempts or threatens suicide or runs away

cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares

feels ill in the morning

begins to do poorly in school work

comes home with clothes torn or books damaged

has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"

asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)

has lunch or other monies continually "lost"

has unexplained cuts or bruises

comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)

becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable

is bullying other children or siblings

stops eating

is frightened to say what's wrong

gives improbable excuses for any of the above

is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone

is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviors could indicate other problems, but harassment / bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, school staff, volunteers, and contractors.

Standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents and guardians, staff, and community members of the school district, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for district and community property on the part of students, staff, and community members.

USD 218 believes that the best discipline is self-imposed, and that it is the responsibility of staff to use disciplinary situations as opportunities for helping students learn to assume responsibility and the consequences of their behavior. Staff members who interact with students shall apply best practices designed to prevent discipline problems and encourage students' abilities to develop self-discipline.

Since bystander support of harassment or bullying can support these behaviors, the district prohibits both active and passive support for acts of harassment or bullying. The staff should encourage students to support students who walk away from these acts when they see them, constructively attempt to stop them, or report them to the designated authority.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student or staff member who commits one or more acts of harassment or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, in the case of a student, or suspension or termination in the case of an employee.

Consequences for a student who commits an act of harassment or bullying shall be unique to the individual incident and will vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the student, and the student's history of problem behaviors and performance, and must be consistent with the Board of Education's approved code of conduct. Remedial measures shall be designed to: correct the problem behavior; prevent another occurrence of the behavior; and protect the target (victim) of the act. The consequences and remedial measures may include, but are not limited to, the examples below:

Possible Consequences

Admonishment
Temporary removal from the classroom
Loss of privileges
Classroom or administrative detention
Referral to disciplinarian
In-school suspension during the school week or the weekend, for students
Out-of-school suspension
Legal action
Expulsion or termination

Possible Remedial Measures / Outcomes

Personal
Framing the aggressive behavior as a failed attempt to solve a real problem or reach a goal. The adult assists the misbehaving student to find a better way to solve the problem or meet the goal.
Restitution and restoration
Counseling
Peer support group
Corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience
Supportive discipline to increase accountability for the harassment / bullying offense
Behavioral assessment or evaluation, including, but not limited to, a referral to the Student Intervention Team, as appropriate.

The principal and/or the principal's designee shall be responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this policy. In doing so, the principal and/or the principal's designee shall conduct a prompt, thorough, and complete investigation of each alleged incident.

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment or bullying is prohibited. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.

Falsely accusing another as a means of harassment or bullying is prohibited. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion.

School officials will annually educate, train, and disseminate the policy to all school staff, students, and parents.

RESOURCE INFORMATION [BULLYING]

The following are web sites that are excellent resources of information with regard to the aggressive or passive/aggressive behavior known as bullying.

www.StopCyberbullying.org www.teenangels.org www.privacyrights.org
www.WiredSafety.org www.isafe.org www.privacyrights.org
www.wiredkids.org

The Parent's Guide to Protecting Your Children in Cyberspace by Parry Aftab, www.aftab.com

Cyber Bullying: No Muscles Needed by Joan Lisante, www.connectforkids.org

The Newest Breed of Bully, the Cyberbully by Charlene C. Giannetti and Maragaret Sagarese, published by the National PTA, www.pta.org

For teachers: Kansas NEA Educator's Resource Library; Web site; *Bullyproof* series of professional development workshops, www.knea.org

An Educator's Guide to Cyberbullying and Cyberthreats by Nancy Willard, M.S., J.D., published by the Center for Safe and Responsible Internet Use, www.cyberbully.org

SCHOOL VIOLENCE HOT LINE - The Kansas State Highway Patrol has set up a "STOP SCHOOL VIOLENCE" anonymous toll free hotline number - 1-877-626-8203. Students that are frustrated and wanting to vent their feelings need to contact the above number or see your school Principal or Counselor.