

The Board of Education believes that a safe and nurturing educational environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Therefore, the District strives to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all of its students. Demonstration of appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment or bullying is expected of students, as well as administrators, faculty, staff, visitors, and volunteers.

#### Bullying is Prohibited

Bullying of a student, whether by other students, staff, visitors, Board members, parents, guests, contractors, vendors, or volunteers, is prohibited. All pupils are protected under this policy, and bullying is prohibited without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus.

#### Definition of Bullying

Bullying is defined as any written, verbal, or physical act, or any electronic communication, including, but not limited to, cyberbullying, that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

1. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils.
2. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school district's or public school's educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
3. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil's physical or mental health.
4. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Cyberbullying is defined as any electronic communication that is intended or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one or more pupils either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following”

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1. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils.
2. Adversely affecting the ability of a pupil to participate in or benefit from the school district’s or public school’s educational programs or activities by placing the pupil in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress.
3. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a pupil’s physical or mental health.
4. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying is prohibited at school. “At school” is defined as in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, at school-sponsored activities or events whether or not it is held on school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle. “At school” includes conduct, using a telecommunications access device or a telecommunications service provider that occurs off school premises if the telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider is owned by or under the control of the school district.

“Telecommunications access device” and “telecommunications service provider” mean those terms as defined in Section 219a of the Michigan Penal Code (MCL § 750.219a).

Bullying that does not occur “at school,” as defined above, including cyberbullying, that does one or all of the following may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with this policy and applicable law:

1. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more pupils.
2. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Reporting and Investigating Reports of Bullying

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Every student is encouraged to report any situation that they believe to be bullying behavior directed toward a student to a teacher, a counselor, a building principal, an assistant principal, or other staff member. Staff members shall report any reports made by students or situations that they believe to be bullying behavior directed toward a student to the building principal or assistant principal. Complaints against administrators shall be reported to the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent shall be reported to the Board President.

Retaliation or false accusation against a target of bullying, a witness, or another person with reliable information about an act of bullying is prohibited. Retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, independent of whether a report is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as suspected bullying behavior. Making intentionally false accusations about bullying is prohibited. Retaliation and making intentionally false accusations about bullying may result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

All complaints about bullying that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated and documented. The building principal or assistant principal is responsible for the investigation. If the investigation results in a finding that an instance of bullying has occurred, it shall result in prompt and appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion for students, up to and including discharge for employees, up to and including exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers, and contractors, and removal from any officer position and/or a request to resign for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

Where the investigation results in a finding that bullying has occurred, notification will be provided to the parent or legal guardian of a victim of bullying and the parent or legal guardian of a perpetrator of the bullying.

Each school shall document any prohibited incident that is reported and shall document all verified incidents of bullying and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals. The Superintendent shall provide a report of all verified

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incidents of bullying and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals, to the Board of Education on an annual basis.

The Superintendent is the school official responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented. However, this shall not reduce or eliminate the duties and responsibilities of a principal or designee as described in this policy.

### Confidentiality

The District will comply with all applicable laws regarding confidentiality of personally identifiable information from education records.

### Training and Educational Programs

Administrators, school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with pupils shall be trained annually on preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

### Notification

This policy will be annually circulated to parents and students, and will be posted on the District website.

The Superintendent is directed to develop administrative guidelines to implement this policy. Guidelines shall include reporting and investigative procedures, as needed.

Approved: June 29, 2009  
Revised: September 21, 2015

LEGAL REF: Matt's Safe School Law, Public Act 241 of 2011 (MCL § 380.1310b).