

NORTHERN WESTMORELAND CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY CENTER

No. 249

SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING

ADOPTED: February 19 2009

REVISED: February 20, 2025

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 and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and as the effect of doing any of the following:

1. Substantial interference with a student's education.
2. Creation of a threatening environment.
3. Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

School setting means in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

Authority

The Joint Operating Committee prohibits all forms of bullying by students.

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 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.

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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 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.

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 and discriminatory 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.

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 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.

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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.

The school's administration shall annually provide the following information with the Safe School and Security Incident Report:

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.

This policy shall be accessible in every classroom. The policy shall be posted in a prominent location within the school building and on the web site, ~~if available~~.

Education

The school may 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.

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:

- Counseling within the school
- Parental conference
- Loss of center privileges
- Exclusion from center-sponsored activities
- Detention
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Counseling/Therapy outside of the center
- Referral to law enforcement officials

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Legal

24 P.S. 1303.1-A

24 P.S. 1302-E

Pol. 236.1

Pol. 103

Pol. 103.1

22 PA Code 12.3

Pol. 218

24 P.S. 1302-A

Pol. 236

20 U.S.C. 7118

Pol. 233

Pol. 113.1