

BULLYING, HARASSMENT, AND/OR HAZING

Introduction

The Mukwonago Area School District strives to provide a safe, secure and respectful learning environment for all students in school buildings, on school grounds, and school buses and at school-sponsored activities. The Mukwonago Area School District will not tolerate any form of pupil bullying, harassment, or hazing.

Bullying has a harmful social, physical, psychological and academic impact on bullies, victims and bystanders. The school district consistently and vigorously addresses bullying so that there is no disruption to the learning environment and learning process.

Definitions

Bullying: Bullying is deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions, intended to cause fear, intimidation or harm. Bullying is repeated behavior and involves an imbalance of power. The behavior may be motivated by an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, such as, but not limited to: age; national origin; race; color; ethnicity; religion; gender; gender identity; sexual orientation; physical attributes; physical or mental ability or disability; and social, economic or family status.

Harassment: Behavior towards students based in whole or part on sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability which substantially interferes with a student's school performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school environment.

Hazing: Intentionally or recklessly engaging in acts which endanger physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or admission into affiliation with any organization.

Bullying, harassment, and hazing behavior can be:

1. Physical (e.g. assault, hitting or punching, kicking, theft, threatening behavior)
2. Verbal (e.g. threatening or intimidating language, racist remarks)
3. Indirect (e.g. spreading cruel rumors, intimidation through gestures, social exclusion and sending insulting messages or pictures by mobile phone or using the internet – also known as cyber bullying)

Prohibition

Bullying, harassment, and hazing are prohibited in all schools, buildings, property and educational environments, including any property or vehicle owned, leased or used by the school district. This includes public transportation regularly used by students to go to and from school. Educational environments include, but are not limited to, every activity under school supervision.

Procedure for Reporting/Retaliation

All school staff members and school officials who observe or become aware of acts of bullying, harassment, hazing or intimidation are required to report these acts to the principal/designee.

Any other person, including a student who is either a victim of the bullying or is aware of the bullying or any other concerned individual is encouraged to report the conduct to the principal/designee.

Reports of bullying, harassment, hazing and/or intimidation may be made verbally or in writing and may be made confidentially. All such reports, whether verbal or in writing, will be taken seriously and a clear account of the incident is to be documented. A written record of the report, including all pertinent details, will be made by the recipient of the report.

The school official receiving a report of bullying, harassment, or hazing shall immediately notify the school district employee assigned to investigate the report. The following school district employees have been identified as the investigator: school principals or designees.

There shall be no retaliation against individuals making such reports. Individuals engaging in retaliatory behavior will be subject to disciplinary action.

Procedure for investigating reports of bullying, harassment, or hazing

The person assigned by the district to conduct an investigation of the bullying, harassment or hazing report shall, within three school days, interview the person(s) who are the victim(s) of the bullying and collect whatever other information is necessary to determine the facts and the seriousness of the report.

Parents and/or guardians of each pupil involved in the bullying, or harassment, or hazing will be notified. The district shall maintain the confidentiality of the report and any related pupil records to the extent required by law.

Sanctions and supports

If it is determined that students participated in bullying, harassment or hazing behavior or retaliated against anyone due to the reporting of bullying, harassment or hazing

behavior, the school district administration and school board may take disciplinary action, including: suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials for possible legal action as appropriate. Pupil services staff will provide resources for the identified victim(s).

Training and Education

The school district will annually provide information and any applicable training to school district staff and bus drivers regarding this policy.

The school district annually will provide education and information to students regarding bullying, harassment, and hazing including information regarding this school district policy prohibiting bullying, harassment, and hazing; the harmful effects of bullying, harassment, and hazing; and other applicable initiatives to prevent bullying, harassment, and hazing.

The administration of the school district will implement programs and other initiatives to prevent bullying, harassment, and hazing; to respond to bullying, harassment, and hazing in a manner that does not stigmatize the victim; and to make resources or referrals to resources available to victims of bullying, harassment, or hazing.

Disclosure and Public Reporting

The policy will be distributed annually to all students enrolled in the school district, their parents and/or guardians and employees. It will also be distributed to organizations in the community having cooperative agreements with the schools. The school district will also provide a copy of the policy to any person who requests it.

Records will be maintained on the number and types of reports made, and sanctions imposed for incidents found to be in violation of the harassment, hazing, acts of intimidation/ bullying policy.

An annual summary report shall be prepared and presented to the school board, which includes trends in bullying harassment or hazing behaviors and recommendations on how to further reduce bullying, harassment and hazing behaviors. The annual report will be available to the public.

DATE APPROVED:	June 19, 1995
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BOARD OF EDUCATION
Mukwonago Area School District
Mukwonago, Wisconsin