

Soaring Heights Charter School Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy

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A. Policy Statement

Soaring Heights Charter School Board of Trustees prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying of a pupil. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe and disciplined environment. Since pupils learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying.

B. Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Definition

"Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents that:

1. Is reasonably perceived as being motivated by either any actual 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
2. By any other distinguishing characteristic; and that
3. Takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds, as provided for in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15.3, that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other pupil; and that
4. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or
5. Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil by interfering with a pupil's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the pupil.

"Electronic communication" means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone, computer or pager.

The Board of Trustees prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying against any student. School responses to harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be aligned with the Board of Trustees approved code of conduct, which establishes standards, policies and procedures for positive student development and student sponsored functions. The chief school administrator shall be responsible for ensuring the prompt

investigation and responses to all reports of harassment, intimidation and bullying committed on school grounds, at school activities and on school buses. In addition, the chief school administrator shall ensure that this policy is applied to incidents of harassment, intimidation and bullying that are committed off school grounds in cases where a school employee is made aware of such actions. The chief school administrator has the right and authority to impose a consequence on a student for conduct away from schools grounds that is consistent with the Board of Trustees' approved code of student conduct, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A: 16-7.1 and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.6

This authority shall be exercised only when it is reasonable necessary for the student's physical or emotional safety, security and well-being or for reasons relating to the safety, and well-being of other students, staff or school grounds, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A: 25-2 AND 18A: 37-2, and when the conduct which is the subject of the proposed consequence materially and substantially interferes with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school. The Board of Trustees directs the school chief administrator or his or her appropriately trained and qualified designee to develop detailed regulations suited to the age level of the students and the physical facilities of the individual schools.

C. Pupil Expectations

The Board of Trustees expects pupils to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity and demonstrated capabilities with proper regard for the rights and welfare of other pupils and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities and the care of school facilities and equipment consistent with the Pupil Discipline Policy/Code of Conduct.

The Board of Trustees believes that standards for pupil behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the pupils, parents, school employees, school administrators, school volunteers and community representatives, producing an atmosphere that encourages pupils to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school district and community property on the part of pupils, staff and community members.

Pupils are expected to behave in a way that creates a supportive learning environment. The Board of Trustees believes that the best discipline is self-imposed, and it is the responsibility of staff to use instances of violations of the Pupil Discipline Policy/Code of Conduct as opportunities to help pupils learn to assume and accept responsibility for their behavior and the consequences of the behavior. Staff members who interact with pupils shall apply best practices designed to prevent conduct problems and foster pupils' abilities to grow in self-discipline.

The Board of Trustees expects the pupils will act in accordance with the pupil behavioral expectations and standards regarding harassment, intimidation and bullying, including:

- Pupil responsibilities (e.g., requirements for pupils to conform to reasonable standards of socially accepted behavior; request the person, property and

rights of others; obey constituted authority; and respond to those who hold that authority);

- Appropriate recognition for positive reinforcement for good conduct, self-discipline, and good citizenship;
- Pupil rights; and
- Sanctions and due process for violations of the Pupil Discipline Policy/Code of Conduct.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15(a) and N.J.A.C. 6A-7.1(a)1, the district has involved a broad-base of school and community members, including parents, pupils, instructional staff, pupil support services staff school administrators and school volunteers, as well as community organizations, such as faith-bases, health and human service, business and law enforcement, in the development of this Policy. Based on locally determined and accepted core ethical values adopted by the Board of Trustees, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1(a)2, the Board of Trustees must develop guidelines for pupil conduct pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1. These guidelines for pupil conduct will take into consideration the developmental ages of pupils, the severity of the offenses and pupils' histories of inappropriate behaviors, and the mission and physical facilities of the individual school in the district. This Policy requires all pupils in the district to adhere to the rules established by the school district and to submit to the remedial and consequential measures that are appropriately assigned for infractions of these rules.

Pursuant N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1, the Supervisor must annually provide to pupils and their parents or guardians the rules of the district regarding pupil conduct. Provisions shall be made for informing parents or guardians whose primary language is other than English.

The district prohibits active or passive support for acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Pupils are encouraged to support other pupils who:

- Walk away from acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying when they see them;
- Constructively attempt to stop acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying;
- Provide support to pupils who have been subjected to harassment, intimidation or bullying; and
- Report acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying to the designated school staff member.

D. Consequences and Appropriate Remedial Actions

The Board of Trustees requires the Management Collaborative to implement procedures that ensure both the appropriate consequences and remedial responses for pupils who commit one or more acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying, consistent with the Pupil Discipline Policy/Code of Conduct, and the consequences and remedial responses for staff members who commit one or more acts of harassment, intimidation and bullying. The following factors, at a minimum, shall be given full consideration by the Management Collaborative in the implementation of appropriate consequences and remedial measures for each act of harassment,

intimidation and bullying by pupils. Appropriate consequences and remedial actions are those that are graded according to the severity of the offense(s), consider the developmental ages of the pupil offenders and pupils' histories of inappropriate behaviors, per the Pupil Discipline Policy/Code of Conduct and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.

Factors for Determining Consequences

- Age, development and maturity levels of the parties involved and their relationship to the school district;
- Degrees of harm;
- Surrounding circumstances;
- Nature and severity or continuing patterns of behavior;
- Relationships between the parties involved; and
- Context in which the alleged incidents occurred.

Factors for Determining Remedial Measures

Personal

- Life skill deficiencies;
- Social relationships;
- Strengths
- Talents;
- Traits;
- Interests;
- Hobbies;
- Extra-curricular activities;
- Classroom participation;
- Academic performance; and
- Relationship to Pupils and the school district.

Environmental

- School culture;
- School climate;
- Pupil-staff relationships and staff behavior toward the pupil;
- General staff management of classrooms or other educational environments;
- Staff ability to prevent and manage difficult or inflammatory situations;
- Social-emotional and behavioral supports;
- Social relationships;
- Community activities;
- Neighborhood situation; and
- Family situation.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a pupil or staff member who commits one or more acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may range from

positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion of pupils, as set forth in the Board of Trustees' approved Pupil Discipline Policy/Code of Conduct pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1. Consequences for a pupil who commits an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be varied and graded according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the pupil and the pupil's history of problem. Consequences for a pupil who commits an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be varied and graded according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the pupil and the pupil's history of problem behaviors and performance, and must be consistent with the district's Pupil Discipline Policy/Code of Conduct. Remedial measures shall be designed to correct the problem behavior, prevent another occurrence of the problem, protect and provide support for the victim of the act, and take corrective action for documented systemic problems related to harassment, intimidation and bullying. The consequences and remedial measures may include, but are not limited to, the examples listed below:

Examples of Consequences

- Admonishment;
- Temporary removal from the classroom;
- Deprivation of privileges;
- Classroom or administrative detention;
- Referral to school Supervisor;
- In-school suspension during the school week or the weekend;
- After-school programs;
- Out-of-school suspension (short-term or long-term);
- Reports to law enforcement or other legal action;
- Expulsion; and
- Bans from providing services, participating in school sponsored programs, or being in school buildings or on school grounds. (e.g. field trips, concerts, Walk-A-Thon, and/or fundraisers)

Examples of Remedial Measures

Personal

- Restitution and restoration;
- Mediation;
- Peer support group;
- Recommendations of a pupil behavior or ethics council;
- Corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience;
- Supportive pupil interventions, including participation of the Intervention and Referral Services Team, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8;
- Behavioral assessment or evaluation, including, but not limited to, a referral to the Child Study Team, as appropriate;
- Behavioral management plan, with benchmarks that are closely monitored;
- Assignment of leadership responsibilities (e.g., hallway or bus monitor);
- Involvement of school disciplinarian;
- Pupil counseling;
- Parent conferences;

- Pupil treatment; or
- Pupil therapy.

Environmental (Classroom, School Building or School District)

- School and community surveys or other strategies for determining the conditions contributing to harassment, intimidation or bullying;
- School culture change;
- School climate improvement;
- Adoption of research-based, systemic bullying prevention programs;
- School policy and procedures revisions;
- Modifications of schedules;
- Adjustments in hallway traffic;
- Modifications in pupil routes or patterns traveling to and from school;
- Targeted use of monitors;
- Teacher assistants;
- Small or large group presentations for fully addressing the behaviors and the responses to the behaviors;
- General professional development programs for certificated and non-certificated staff;
- Professional development plans for involved staff;
- Disciplinary action for school staff who contributed to the problem;
- Supportive institutional interventions, including participation of the Intervention and Referral Services Team, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:16-8;
- Parent conferences;
- Family counseling;
- Involvement of Adult Guild;
- Development of a general bullying response plan;
- Mediation;
- Alternative placements (e.g., alternative education programs);
- Law enforcement (e.g., safe schools resource officer, Juvenile officer) involvement or other legal action.

Classified students are subject to the same disciplinary procedures as nondisabled students and may be disciplined in accordance with their IEP and/or 504 plan. However, before discipline a classified student, it must be determined that:

- The student's behavior is not primarily caused by his/her educational disability;
- The program that is being provided meets the student's needs.

N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.9(a)2.vi requires appropriate consequences and remedial actions for any staff member who commits an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The consequences may include, but not be limited to, verbal or written reprimand, increment withholding, legal action, disciplinary action, and/or termination. Remedial measures may include, but not be limited to, in or out-of-school counseling, professional development programs, and work environment modifications.

E. Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Off School Grounds

This Policy and the Pupil Discipline Policy/Code of Conduct shall apply to instances when a school employee is made aware of alleged harassment, intimidation, or bullying occurring off school grounds when:

1. The alleged harassment, intimidation, or bullying has substantially disrupted or interfered with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other pupils; and either
2. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the alleged behavior will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or
3. The alleged behavior has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils; or
4. The alleged behavior creates a hostile educational environment for the pupil by interfering with a pupil's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the pupil.

F. Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Reporting Procedure

The Board of Trustees requires the Supervisor at school to be responsible for receiving complaints alleging violations of this Policy. All Board members, school employees, and volunteers and contracted service providers who have contact with pupils are required to verbally report alleged violations of this Policy to the Supervisor or a member of the Management Collaborative on the same day when the individual witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident. All Board of Trustees members, school employees, and volunteers and contracted service providers who have contact with pupils, also shall submit a report in writing to the Supervisor within two school days of the verbal report. The Supervisor will inform the parents of all pupils involved in alleged incidents, and, as appropriate, may discuss the availability of counseling and other intervention services. The Supervisor, upon receiving a verbal or written report, may take interim measures to ensure the safety, health, and welfare of all parties pending the findings of the investigation.

Pupils, parents, and visitors are encouraged to report alleged violations of this Policy to the Supervisor on the same day when the individual witnessed or received reliable information regarding any such incident. Pupils, parents, and visitors may report an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying anonymously. Formal action for violations of the Pupil Discipline Policy/Code of Conduct may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

A Board of Trustees member or school employee who promptly reports an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying and who makes this report in compliance with the

procedures set forth in this Policy, is immune from a cause of action for damages arising from any failure to remedy the reported incident.

In accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-18, the harassment, intimidation, and bullying law does not prevent a victim from seeking redress under any other available law, either civil or criminal, nor does it create or alter any tort liability.

A school Supervisor who receives a report of harassment, intimidation, and bullying from a district employee, and fails to initiate or conduct an investigation, fails to take sufficient action to minimize or eliminate the harassment, intimidation, or bullying, may be subject to disciplinary action.

G. Anti-Bullying Coordinator, Anti-Bullying Specialist and School Safety Team(s)

1. The Board of Trustees shall appoint a school Anti-Bullying Coordinator.

The school Anti-Bullying Coordinator shall:

- Be responsible for coordinating and strengthening the school's policies to prevent, identify, and address harassment, intimidation or bullying of pupils;
- Collaborate with school Anti-Bullying Specialists, the Board of Trustees, and the Supervisor to prevent, identify, and respond to harassment, intimidation, or bullying of pupils in the school;
- Provide data, in collaboration with the Supervisor, to the Department of Education regarding harassment, intimidation or bullying of pupils;
- Execute such other duties related to school harassment, intimidation or bullying as requested by the Board of Trustees President; and
- Meet at least twice a school year with the school Anti-Bullying Specialist(s) to discuss and strengthen procedures and policies to prevent, identify, and address harassment, intimidation and bullying in the school.

2. The Supervisor in each school shall appoint a school Anti-Bullying Specialist. When a school guidance counselor, school psychologist, or another individual similarly trained is currently employed in the school, the Supervisor shall appoint that individual to be the school Anti-Bullying Specialist. If no individual meeting this criteria is currently employed in the school, the Supervisor shall appoint a school Anti-Bullying Specialist from currently employed school personnel.

The school Anti-Bullying Specialist shall:

- Chair the School Safety Team as provided in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-21;

- Lead the investigation of incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying in the school; and
- Act as the primary school official responsible for preventing, identifying, and addressing incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying in the school.

3. A School Safety Team shall be formed in the school to develop, foster, and maintain a positive school climate by focusing on the on-going, systemic process and practices in the school, and to address school climate issues such as harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The School Safety Team shall meet at least two times per school year. The School Safety Team shall consist of the Supervisor or the Supervisor's designee who, if possible, shall be a senior administrator in the school and the following appointees of the Supervisor: a teacher in the school; a school Anti-Bullying Specialist; a parent of a pupil in the school; and other members to be determined by the Supervisor. The school Anti-Bullying Specialist shall serve as the chair of the School Safety Team.

The School Safety Team shall:

- Receive any complaints of harassment, intimidation or bullying of pupils that have been reported to the Supervisor;
- Receive copies of any report prepared after an investigation of an incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying;
- Identify and address patterns of harassment, intimidation or bullying of pupils in the school;
- Review and strengthen school climate and the policies of the school in order to prevent and address harassment, intimidation or bullying of pupils;
- Educate the community, including pupils, teachers, administrative staff and parents, to prevent and address harassment, intimidation or bullying of pupils;
- Participate in the training required pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13 et seq. and other training which the Supervisor or the school Anti-Bullying Coordinator may request;
- Collaborate with the school Anti-Bullying Coordinator in the collection of school-wide data and in the development of school policies to prevent and address harassment, intimidation or bullying of pupils; and
- Execute such other duties related to harassment, intimidation or bullying as requested by the Supervisor or school Anti-Bullying Coordinator.

The members of the School Safety Team shall be provided professional development opportunities that address effective practices of successful school climate programs

or approaches. Notwithstanding any provision of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-21 to the contrary, a parent who is a member of the School Safety Team shall not participate in the activities of the team set forth in 3. a., b., or c. above or any other activities of the team which may compromise the confidentiality of a pupil.

H. Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Investigation

The Board of Trustees requires a thorough and complete investigation to be conducted for each report of an alleged incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying. The investigation shall be initiated by the Supervisor or the Supervisor's designee within one school day of the verbal report of the incident. The investigation shall be conducted by the school Anti-Bullying Specialist. The Supervisor may appoint additional personnel who are not school Anti-Bullying Specialists to assist the school Anti-Bullying Specialist in the investigation.

The investigation shall be completed and the written findings submitted to the Supervisor as soon as possible, but not later than ten school days from the date of the written report of the alleged incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying. Should information regarding the reported incident and the investigation be received after the end of the ten-day period, the school Anti-Bullying Specialist or the Supervisor shall amend the original report of the results of the investigation to ensure there is an accurate and current record of the facts and activities concerning the reported incident.

The Supervisor shall proceed in accordance with the Pupil Discipline Policy/Code of Conduct, as appropriate, based on the investigation findings. The Supervisor shall submit the report to the Board of Trustees President within two school days of the completion of the investigation and in accordance with the Administrative Procedures Act (N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 et seq.). As appropriate to the findings from the investigation, the Board of Trustees President shall ensure the Pupil Discipline Policy/Code of Conduct has been implemented and provide intervention services, order counseling, establish training programs to reduce harassment, intimidation, or bullying and enhance school climate, or take or recommend other appropriate action, as necessary.

The Board of Trustees President shall report the results of each investigation to the Board of Trustees no later than the date of the regularly scheduled Board of Trustee meeting following the completion of the investigation. The Board of Trustees President's report also shall include information on any consequences imposed under the Pupil Discipline Policy/Code of Conduct, intervention services provided, counseling ordered, training established or other action taken or recommended by the Board of Trustees President.

Parents of the pupils who are parties to the investigation shall be provided with information about the investigation, in accordance with Federal and State law and regulation. The information to be provided to parents or guardians shall include the nature of the investigation, whether the school found evidence of harassment, intimidation or bullying, or whether consequences were imposed or services provided to address the incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. This information shall

be provided in writing within five school days after the results of the investigation are reported to the Board of Trustees.

A parent or guardian may request a hearing before the Board of Trustees after receiving the information. When a request for a hearing is granted, the hearing shall be held within ten school days of the request. The Board of Trustees shall conduct the hearing in executive session, pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act (N.J.S.A. 10:4-1 et seq.), to protect the confidentiality of the pupils. At the hearing, the Board of Trustees may hear testimony from and consider information provided by the school Anti-Bullying Specialist and others, as appropriate, regarding the alleged incident, the findings from the investigation of the alleged incident, recommendations for consequences or services, and any programs instituted to reduce such incidents, prior to rendering a determination.

At the regularly scheduled Board of Trustees meeting following its receipt of the report or following a hearing in executive session, the Board of Trustees shall issue a decision, in writing, to affirm, reject, or modify the Board of Trustees President's decision. The Board of Trustees' decision may be appealed to the Commissioner, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:3, Controversies and Disputes, no later than ninety days after issuance of the Board of Trustees's decision.

A parent, pupil, legal guardian, or organization may file a complaint with the Division on Civil Rights within one hundred eighty days of the occurrence of any incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying based on membership in a protected group as enumerated in the "Law Against Discrimination," P.L.1945, c.169 (C.10:5-1 et seq.).

I. Range of Responses to an Incident of Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying

The Board of Trustees authorizes the Supervisor of the school, in conjunction with the Anti-Bullying Specialist, to define the range of ways in which school staff will respond once an incident of harassment, intimidation, or bullying is confirmed, and the Board of Trustees President shall respond to confirmed harassment, intimidation, and bullying, according to the parameters described in this Policy. The Board of Trustees recognizes that some acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may be isolated incidents requiring the school officials respond appropriately to the individual(s) committing the acts. Other acts may be so serious or parts of a larger pattern of harassment, intimidation, or bullying that they require a response either at the classroom, school building or school level or by law enforcement officials.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a pupils who commits an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as permitted under N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1, Discipline of Pupils and as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2, Short-term Suspensions, N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.3, Long-term Suspensions and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.5, Expulsions.

In considering whether a response beyond the individual level is appropriate, school officials shall consider the nature and circumstances of the act, the degree of harm, the nature and severity of the behavior, past incidences or past or continuing patterns

of behavior, and the context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred. Institutional (i.e., classroom or school building) responses can range from school and community surveys, to mailings, to focus groups, to adoption of research-based harassment, intimidation or bullying prevention program models, to training for certificated and non-certificated staff, to participation of parent and other community members and organizations, too small or large group presentations for fully addressing the actions and the school's response to the actions, in the context of the acceptable pupil and staff member behavior and the consequences of such actions, and to the involvement of law enforcement officers, including safe schools resource officers.

For every incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying, the school officials must respond appropriately to the individual who committed the act. The Board of Trustees is encouraged to set the parameters for the range of responses to be established by the Supervisor and for the Board of Trustees President to follow. The range of responses to confirmed harassment, intimidation, or bullying acts should include individual, classroom or school responses, as appropriate to the findings from each incident. Examples of responses that apply to each of these categories are provided below:

1. Individual responses can include positive behavioral interventions (e.g., peer mentoring, short-term counseling, life skills groups) and punitive actions (e.g., detention, in-school or out-of-school suspension, expulsion, law enforcement report, or other legal action).
2. Classroom responses can include class discussions about an incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying, role plays, research projects, observing and discussing audio-visual materials on these subjects, and skill-building lessons in courtesy, tolerance, assertiveness, and conflict management.
3. School responses can include theme days, learning station programs, parent programs, and information disseminated to pupils and parents or guardians, such as fact sheets or newsletters explaining acceptable uses of electronic and wireless communication devices or strategies for fostering expected pupil behavior.
4. Other school responses can include community involvement in policy review and development, professional development programs, adoption of curricula and school-wide programs, coordination with community-based organizations (e.g., mental health, health services, health facilities, law enforcement officials, faith-based organizations), and disseminating information on the core ethical values adopted by the school Board of Trustees' Pupil Discipline Policy/Code of Conduct, per N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.1(a)2.

The school will identify a range of strategies and resources, which could include, but not be limited to, the following actions for individual victims: counseling; teacher assistants; hallway and playground monitors; schedule changes; before and after school supervision and therapy.

J. Reprisal or Retaliation Prohibited

The Board of Trustees prohibits a Board of Trustees member, school employee, contracted service provider who has contact with pupils, school volunteer, or pupil from engaging in reprisal, retaliation, or false accusation against a victim, witness, one with reliable information, or any other person who has reliable information about an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying or who reports an act of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The consequence and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the Supervisor after consideration of the nature, severity and circumstances of the act, in accordance with case law, Federal and State statutes and regulations and school policies and procedures.

All suspected acts of reprisal or retaliation will be taken seriously and appropriate responses will be made in accordance with the totality of the circumstances. Examples of consequences and remedial measures are listed in the Consequences and Appropriate Remedial Actions section of this policy.

K. Consequences and Appropriate Remedial Action for False Accusation

The Board of Trustees prohibits any person from falsely accusing another as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

1. Pupils - Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a pupil found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying or as a means of retaliation may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as permitted under N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1 et seq., Discipline of Pupils and as set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.2, Short-term Suspensions, N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7, Long-term Suspensions and N.J.A.C. 6A:16-7.5, Expulsions.
2. School Employees - Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee or contracted service provider who has contact with pupils found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying or as a means of retaliation could entail discipline in accordance with school policies, procedures, and agreements which may include, but not be limited to, reprimand, suspension, increment withholding or termination.
3. Visitors or Volunteers - Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a visitor or volunteer found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation, or bullying or as a means of retaliation could be determined by the school administrator, after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act, including law enforcement reports or other legal actions, removal of buildings or grounds privileges, or prohibiting contact with pupils or the provision of pupil services.

L. Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy Publication and Dissemination

This Policy will be disseminated annually by the Board of Trustees President to all school employees, contracted service providers who have contact with pupils, school volunteers, pupils, and parents who have children enrolled in a school in the district, along with a statement explaining the Policy applies to all acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14 that occur on school property, at school-sponsored functions, or on school sponsored transportation and, as appropriate, acts that occur off school grounds.

The Board of Trustees President shall ensure that notice of this Policy appears in the registration packet and all other publications of the school district that sets forth the comprehensive rules, procedures, and standards for the school.

The Board of Trustees President shall post a link to the district's Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy that is prominently displayed on the homepage of the school district's website. The school will notify pupils and parents this Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy is available on the school district's website.

The Supervisor shall post the name, school phone number, address, and school email address of both the Anti-Bullying Specialist and the school Anti-Bullying Coordinator on the home page of the school's website.

M. Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Training and Prevention Programs

The Board of Trustees President and Supervisor(s) shall provide training on the school's Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy to employees, contracted service providers, and volunteers who have significant contact with pupils. The training shall include instruction on preventing bullying on the basis of the protected categories enumerated in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14 and other distinguishing characteristics that may incite incidents of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying. The school's employee training program shall include information regarding the school's Policy against harassment, intimidation, or bullying, which shall be provided to full-time and part-time staff members, contracted service providers, and school volunteers who have significant contact with pupils.

Each school teacher shall be required to complete at least two hours of instruction in harassment, intimidation, and bullying prevention in each professional development period as part of the professional development requirement pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18:37-22.d.

The required two hours of suicide prevention instruction for teaching staff members shall include information on the relationship between the risk of suicide and incidents of harassment, intimidation, or bullying in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:6-112.

Board of Trustees members shall be required to complete a training program on harassment, intimidation, and bullying in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:12-33.

The school shall annually observe a "Week of Respect" beginning with the first Monday in October. In order to recognize the importance of character education, the

school will observe the week by providing age-appropriate instruction focusing on the prevention of harassment, intimidation, and bullying as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-14. Throughout the school year the school will provide ongoing age-appropriate instruction on preventing harassment, intimidation, or bullying, in accordance with the Core Curriculum Content Standards, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-29.

The school will annually establish, implement, document, and assess harassment, intimidation, and bullying prevention programs or approaches, and other initiatives in consultation with school staff, pupils, administrators, volunteers, parents or guardians, law enforcement, and community members in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-17 et seq.

N. Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy Reevaluation, Reassessment and Review

The Board of Trustees President shall develop and implement a process for annually discussing the school's Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy with pupils.

The Board of Trustees President and the Supervisor(s) shall annually conduct a reevaluation, reassessment, and review of the Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy, with input from the schools' Anti-Bullying Specialists, and recommend revisions and additions to the Policy as well as to harassment, intimidation, and bullying prevention programs and approaches based on the findings from the evaluation, reassessment and review.

O. Reports to Board of Trustees and New Jersey Department

The Board of Trustees President shall report two times each school year at a public hearing all acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:17-46. The information shall also be reported to the New Jersey Department in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:17-46. The information reported shall be used to grade the school in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:17-46. The grade received by the school shall be posted on the homepage of the school's website and the school's website in accordance with the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:17-46. A link to the report that was submitted by the Board of Trustees President to the Department of Education shall also be available on the school's website. This information shall be posted on the website within ten days of receipt of the grade for the school.

P. Reports to Law Enforcement

Some acts of harassment, intimidation, and bullying may be bias-related acts and potentially bias crimes and school officials must report to law enforcement officials either serious acts or those which may be part of a larger pattern in accordance with the provisions of the Memorandum of Agreement Between Education and Law Enforcement Officials.

Q. Collective Bargaining Agreements and Individual Contracts

Nothing in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13.1 et seq. may be construed as affecting the provisions of any collective bargaining agreement or individual contract of employment in effect on the Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act's effective date (January 5, 2011). N.J.S.A. 18A:37-30. R. Pupils with Disabilities Nothing contained in N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13.1 et seq. may alter or reduce the rights of a pupil with a disability with regard to disciplinary actions or to general or special education services and supports. N.J.S.A. 18A:37-32.

The school shall submit all subsequent amended Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policies to the appropriate Executive County Board of Trustees President of Schools within thirty days of Board of Trustees adoption.

