

**Lancaster Community School District
Bullying Prevention Policy**

Bullying

It is the intent of the Lancaster Community School District to provide all students with an equitable opportunity to learn. To that end, the District has a significant interest in providing a safe, orderly and respectful school environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. Bullying is detrimental to student learning and achievement. It interferes with the mission of the schools to educate their students and disrupts the operations of the schools.

Bullying Defined

For the purpose of this policy, bullying means any aggressive or hostile act or any verbally, written, or electronically communicated expression that:

- A. A reasonable person should expect will have the effect of:
 - 1. Physically harming a student/staff member or damaging a property
 - 2. Placing a student/staff member in fear of physical harm or damage to his/her property; or
 - 3. Substantially disrupting the instructional program or the orderly operations of the school
- B. Is so severe, persistent, and pervasive that it creates an intimidating, hostile educational environment for student/staff member who is bullied.

Examples of conduct that may constitute bullying include, but are not limited to:

- A. Physical contact or injury to another person or his/her property
- B. Threats of harm to a student, to his/her possessions, or to other individuals, whether transmitted verbally, in writing, or through cyberspace
- C. Social exclusion and isolation
- D. Blackmail, extortion, demands for money, or involuntary loans or donations
- E. Non-verbal threats and/or intimidations such as use of aggressive or menacing gestures
- F. Blocking access to school property or facilities
- G. Stealing or hiding books, backpacks, or other possessions
- H. Repeated or pervasive taunting, name-calling, belittling, mocking, put-downs, or demeaning humor relating to a student's race, color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, religion, disability, or other personal characteristics, whether or not the student actually possesses them, that could reasonably be expected to result in disruption of the instructional program or operations of the schools, or that results in a hostile educational environment for the student.

Application of Policy

This policy applies to bullying that takes place at school or on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity or event, while students/staff members are being transported to or from school or school-sponsored activities or events, or through use of school equipment in the case of cyber-bullying.

The determination whether particular conduct constitutes bullying requires reasonable consideration of the circumstances, which include the frequency of the behavior at issue, the location in which the behavior occurs, the ages and maturity of the students involved, the activity or context in which the conduct occurs, and the nature and severity of the conduct.

Reporting and Complaint Procedures:

Students who have been bullied or those who observe incidents of bullying are encouraged to report this behavior to a staff member or school administrator. Staff should report bullying to the building principal, or designated staff outlined in each school's procedural guidelines. It is the responsibility of building

principals, and/or designated staff, to establish specific complaint procedures and consequences for bullying that take into consideration the seriousness of the offense, the frequency and severity of the behavior, and ages and maturity of the individuals involved.

Students and staff making prompt, accurate, and thorough reports either verbally or in writing will have those reports recorded by designated staff or administrator. An investigation to determine the facts will take place immediately or as soon as practicable, in order to verify the validity and seriousness of the report.

Filing a report in good faith will not reflect upon the individual's status nor will it affect his/her grades or employment status by the District, if the complaint is by a staff member. The District shall keep all information related to the complaint confidential between the accused and the accuser, until such time as the misconduct is confirmed and sanctions are imposed.

Sanctions and Support

It is the responsibility of building principals, and/or designated staff, to establish and develop specific procedures for:

- A. Student and parent reporting of bullying to staff and school administrators;
- B. Staff reporting of bullying to school administrators;
- C. Review of reports and investigation of bullying incidents;
- C. Intervention with and/or discipline of students who engage in bullying;
- E. Support for students who are victims of bullying;
- F. Training staff and students in bullying prevention; and
- G. Periodic evaluation of bullying prevention, intervention, and training efforts in Lancaster School District

Students who engage in conduct that constitutes bullying shall be subject to disciplinary consequences up to and including suspension and expulsion. Students' bullying behaviors may also be addressed through other behavioral interventions.

Employees found to have participated in bullying behavior, or having become aware that bullying was taken place and failed to report the behavior, are considered to be in violation of the prohibition expressed in this policy. They may be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the collective bargaining agreement and disciplinary action established by policy or practice.

Adopted: February 13, 2008

Cross-Reference

Student Handbook
Student Code of Conduct
Employee Handbook