

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

No. 249

Section: 200 Pupils/Students

Title: Bullying/Cyberbullying

Adopted: September 22, 2010

Revised: January 30, 2025

249 BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING

Purpose

The Board of Education (“Board”) is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for all students in the School District of Philadelphia (“District”). The Board recognizes the negative impact that bullying has on student health, welfare, and safety and on the learning environment at school. The Board recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from a safe environment, and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the Board prohibits bullying by District students and staff.

Authority

The Board prohibits all forms of bullying. The Board encourages students or parents/guardians of students who believe they have been bullied or witness bullying behavior to immediately report such incidents using the online reporting process or to the building principal or bullying designee, or to any other member of the school staff, including teachers, guidance counselors, coaches and administrators. Any staff member who receives a report of alleged bullying must immediately notify the principal or bullying designee.[1][2]

The Board directs the principal or bullying designee to investigate complaints of alleged bullying promptly and thoroughly, and directs appropriate school personnel to take corrective action when allegations are substantiated, including the convening of an IEP or Section 504 team when appropriate for either the Complainant or the Respondent.

The person accepting the complaint must 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.

Each report of alleged bullying that can be interpreted at the outset to fall within the provisions of Policy 248, addressing potential violations of laws against discrimination or harassment, must be handled as a joint, concurrent investigation into all allegations. If the allegations include sex-based harassment or discrimination the report must be referred to Title IX Coordinator or

designee and should be conducted jointly and concurrently to address the issues of alleged discrimination or harassment as well as the incidents of alleged bullying.

Delegation of Responsibility

In order to maintain an educational environment that discourages and prohibits bullying, the Board authorizes the Superintendent or their designee to coordinate the District's efforts to comply with this policy and applicable laws and regulations, including:[1]

1. Ensuring that this policy and administrative procedures are reviewed with students within 90 days of adoption of this policy and on an annual basis; and
2. Annually providing the following information with the Annual School Safety Report to the Pennsylvania Department of Education:
 - a. This policy and administrative procedures;
 - b. Report of bullying incidents; and
 - c. Information on the development and implementation of any and all research-based bullying prevention and intervention programs.
3. Informing staff about this policy and its administrative procedures, including the availability and use of the online reporting process;
4. Posting this policy and administrative procedures on the District's website; and
5. Reviewing this policy every three years and recommending necessary revisions to the Board.

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere that is conducive to learning and free from bullying. A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the Code of Student Conduct.[1][3][4]

The Superintendent or designee through the Office of Student Support Services shall develop administrative procedures to implement this policy.

Mandatory Regulatory Procedures

The Board prohibits all forms of bullying and cyberbullying of students and third parties by all District students and staff members, contracted individuals, vendors, volunteers, and third parties in the schools. All investigations must be conducted in accordance with the Administrative Procedures A to Policy 249.

The Superintendent, through their designee, shall implement research-based bullying prevention and intervention programs in all schools. Such programs shall provide training for District staff on this policy and for effectively responding to, intervening in, and reporting incidents of alleged bullying.[1][5]

Legal References

1. [24 P.S. § 1303.1-A](#)
2. [22 Pa. Code § 12.3](#)
3. [Policy 218](#) - Code of Student Conduct

4. [Policy 233](#) - Suspension and Expulsion
5. [24 P.S. § 1302-A](#)

Related References

1. [Policy 248](#) - Harassment and Discrimination of Students
2. [Policy 815](#) - Acceptable Use of Internet, Technology, and Network Resources
3. [“What is Bullying?” - The US Department of Education](#)
4. [20 U.S.C. § 7118](#)