



Parent and Community Guide to Bullying

The safe and supportive schools act widely known as the anti-bullying law, recently was passed by the Minnesota legislature. The act requires public schools to begin implementing new policies and procedures beginning with the 2014 and 2015 school year. As a result we are implementing a revised bullying policy and updating many of our present policies. Students will receive information in school as to their obligations under these new policies and procedures. As a parent or guardian, you can help your child understand these expectations in the reporting procedures.

What are the behavioral expectations for my child?

Under the policy, students are prohibited from engaging in any act of bullying on school premises, school district property, and at school functions or activities, or on transportation. School policy also applies to the act of cyber bullying that occurs on school premises or through the use of school resources as well as cyber bullying that occurs off school premises to the extent that the act substantially and materially disrupt student learning or the school environment. Retaliation for asserting, alleging reporting, or providing information about impact of bullying or cyber bullying, as well as knowingly making a false reporting of bullying are also prohibited.

What is bullying?

Per Minnesota law, bullying is defined as: intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that is objectively offensive and:

There is an actual or perceived imbalance of power between the student engaging in a prohibited conduct and the target of the prohibited conduct.

Materially and substantially interferes with the student's educational opportunities or performance or ability to participate in school functions or activities or receive school benefits, services, or privileges.

The act has a history of occurrence.

What conduct is considered to be intimidating, threatening, abusive, or otherwise harming?

Intimidating, threatening, abusive, or harming conduct that constitutes to bullying means, but is not limited to, conduct that does the following:

Causes physical harm to a student or student's property or causes a student to be in reasoning fear of harm to persons or property.

Under Minnesota common law, violates the students were reasonable expectation of privacy, defames a student, or constitutes intentional infliction of emotional distress and gives the student; or

It is directed at any student or students including those based on a person's actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, immigration status, sex, marital status, familial status, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation including gender identity and expression, academic status related to students' performance, disability, or status with regard to public assistance, age or any additional characteristic defined in the Minnesota human rights act. Prohibited conduct need not be based on any particular characteristic defined in this paragraph or the MHRA.

What is cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying means bullying using technology or other electronic communication, including, but not limited to, the transfer of a sign, signal, writing, image, sound, or data, including a post on a social network Internet website or form, transmitted through a computer, cell phone, or other electronic device. The term applies to prohibited conduct which occurs on school premises, on school district property, at school functions or activities, on transportation, or on school computers, networks, forms, and mailing lists, or off school premises to the extent that it has substantially and materially disrupts student learning or the school environment.

What happens if my child is accused of bullying?

If there is a report that your child allegedly engaged in conduct that made the bullying under the above definitions, we will take the following actions:

We will investigate the report.

While the investigation is pending, intermediate steps may be taken to protect the alleged victim, the reporter as well as your child including, but not limited to, separating the parties involved an increasing supervision when the parties may be together.

Your child will be informed of the complaint and allowed to tell his or her side of the story both during the investigation and a disciplinary action is taken, before such action is taken.

When a bullying incident is confirmed, depending upon the circumstances, parents/guardians will be given notice of the alleged bullying content to the extent permitted by data privacy laws.

If your child is determined to have engaged in an act of bullying, he or she may be disciplined as set forth in the student code of conduct. Please refer to the student handbook for more information on the student code of conduct.

What happens if my child is the victim of bullying?

If you, your child, or anyone else reports that your child may be the victim of bullying under the above definitions, we will take the following actions:

We will investigate the report.

While the investigation is pending, intermediate steps may be taken to protect the alleged victim, the reporter as well as your child including, but not limited to, separating the parties involved an increasing supervision when the parties may be together.

We will ask to speak with your child to determine what kind of did or did not occur.

Parents last Guardians will be given notice of the alleged bullying conduct to the extent permitted by data privacy laws.

We will take action to address a confirmed report of bullying including any actions listed in the student handbook. To the extent permitted by the state and Federal privacy laws, we will inform you of the remedial action taken in response to the report.

What can I do has a para to help my child of bullying?

Parents can help their children by being informed as to the behavioral expectations their child must meet at school and assisting their children in understanding the need to treat others with respect. Students can also be alert to warning signs of bullying and talk to their children if the suspect and bullying maybe occur. Finally, we can all address and prevent bullying by communicating with each other. If you know or suspect bullying is occurring in school, whether it involves your child or another student, it is important that school officials received that information as soon as possible. Valuable information can be lost when investigations are delayed in action cannot be taken to address the situation if we do not know in incident occurred.