BULLYING PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES

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Bullying

Legal Definition of Bullying Per Indiana Code

As defined by IC 20-33-8-.2, bullying means overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically), physical acts committed, aggression, or any other behaviors, that are committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:

1. Places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted student's person or property;

2. Has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health;

3. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's academic performance; or

4. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school.

Each handbook, taken from Board Policy and follows Indiana Code
School Board Policy 5517-01

Bullying vs. Conflict

Conflict vs. Bullying - What's the difference?

Conflict

- Disagreement or argument in which both sides express their views

- Equal power between those involved

- Generally stop and change behavior when they realize it is hurting someone

Bullying

- Goal is to hurt, harm, or humiliate

- Person bullying has more power*

- Continue behavior when they realize it is hurting someone.

* "Power" can mean the person bullying is older, bigger, stronger, or more popular.

PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center®
Create a World Without Bullying | PACER.org/Bullying

Student Education

Indiana Code requires all schools to conduct Bullying Education by October 15 of each school year.   Each building engages students in educational activities regarding bullying, depending upon the developmental level of their students.

Examples include, but not limited to:

- Student handbooks K-12
- Teacher reinforcement K-12
- Disciplinary discussions to prevent future issues K - 12
- Guidance lessons K-6
- School/grade level assembly 4-12

Staff Education and Protocol

- Shared by administrators and/or counselors in back-to-school meetings and ongoing throughout the school year
- Memos, weekly newsletters, emails shared throughout the school year
- Protocols for reporting include documentation to allow for follow up with administrator and counselor
- Currently working collaboratively as a K-12 team to have common protocols

Reporting Bullying Concerns

Each school has protocols for receiving information from stakeholders (student, staff, parent, community members).

All concerns shared with staff, including bullying behaviors, are taken seriously and investigated promptly.

Investigating and Reporting

- Administrator gathers information by speaking with students and adults involved
- Camera footage or technology sources *may* be reviewed if available and appropriate
- Parents of students reportedly involved as a bully or victim are contacted.
- Student statements are gathered (oral and/or written)
- During the investigation, administrators must review if the behaviors meet the legal definition of bullying

Not all conflict meets the definition of bullying

If bullying is identified, all required documentation is sent to the IDOE, parents are notified, and corrective actions are taken. If it is determined that conflict took place, rather than bullying, appropriate disciplinary measures will be taken per the Student Code of Conduct.

Support for Students Involved in Verified Bullying Cases

- Administrator communicates with students and parents.
- School counselor meets individually with all students involved.
- Adjustments to the school schedule may be made, depending upon the situation.
  - Examples could include changes to keep students separated or alternate lunch hours.
- Staff are made aware of the bullying situation and expectations for moving forward.
- Documentation is recorded.

Questions?