



JICDE - BULLYING PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

Statement of Purpose

The Board of Education recognizes the negative impact that bullying has on student health, welfare, and safety and on the learning environment at school. The Board supports a secure and positive school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment, and any type of bullying behavior. The purpose of this policy is to promote consistency of approach and to help create a climate in which all types of bullying are regarded as unacceptable.

Bullying and other behaviors as defined below are prohibited on all Poudre School District property, at District or school-sanctioned activities or events, when students are being transported in District vehicles, and off school property when such conduct has a reasonable connection to school or any District curricular or non-curricular activity or event.

Prohibited Behavior by students, staff, and/or volunteers:

- Bullying;
- Retaliation against those reporting bullying; and
- Making knowingly false accusations of bullying behavior.

Definitions

“**Bullying**” is to willfully cause physical, mental, or emotional harm to any student or to use coercion or intimidation to influence and/or obtain control over another person. This can occur through written, verbal, or electronically transmitted expressions (i.e., cyberbullying) or by means of a physical act or gesture. This includes but is not limited to such expression, act or gesture directed toward a student on the basis of that student’s academic performance, disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, family composition, national origin, religion, ancestry, or the need for special education services, whether such characteristic(s) is actual or perceived.

For the purposes of this policy, bullying may occur between two or more students or between adults and students. However, bullying that occurs against an adult is addressed separately from this policy.

There are three general types of bullying: physical, verbal, and relational. Physical bullying occurs when a student is bodily harmed (e.g., hitting, kicking, spitting, or pushing). Verbal bullying is harmful written or verbal communication (e.g., name-calling or threatening another student). Relational, or social, bullying occurs when a student's relationships or social status are harmed (e.g., spreading rumors or anonymously posting private or unflattering information online).

Bullying usually consists of three components that differentiate it from other forms of aggression or conflict. Bullying behavior is:

1. intentional;
2. repeated or likely to be repeated; and
3. marked by an imbalance of physical, social, or socio-economic power (e.g., physical strength/size, access to private information, or perceived social status). Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same students.

Cyberbullying that occurs off school grounds and is not connected to any school or District curricular or non-curricular activity or event may still be within the scope of the District's ability to respond when it affects a student's welfare, their ability to access their education, and/or the behavior has a nexus, or connection, to the school or District.

What "bullying" is not: Bullying is not teasing, conflict, or fights between students where a real or perceived imbalance of power does not exist.

Signs that teasing is actually bullying include:

1. the teasing is hostile;
2. the student teasing intends to hurt the student being teased; and
3. the student being teased is harmed by the behavior.

"Conflict": is a disagreement or argument between two or more people in which all sides express their views. This occurs when individuals hold equal power in a relationship but have different points of view.

When bullying is "harassment": Bullying may be considered or include acts of harassment when the behavior directed at a student is also based on a protected class (i.e., disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, family composition, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, or the need for special education services). This may include acts that could be considered micro-aggressions when repeated in nature and the student engaged in the acts has been made aware that the behavior is not acceptable and continues with the conduct. In

those circumstances, the behavior is subject to the process and procedures in District Policy JBB – Harassment of Students.

“Retaliation” is an act or communication intended as revenge against an individual who reports an act of bullying. Retaliation can also include knowingly making false accusations of bullying or acting to influence the investigation of, or the response to, a report of bullying.

“False accusations” of bullying are those made knowingly by an individual or group of individuals with the purpose of causing harm to another individual and which are false.

Prevention and Intervention

The District will develop a comprehensive District-wide program to address bullying at all school levels and will ensure that the program is consistently applied across all students and staff. The program will be aimed toward accomplishing the following goals:

1. To send a clear message to students, staff, parents/guardians/caregivers, families, and community members that bullying and retaliation against a student who reports bullying will not be tolerated.
2. To train staff on an annual basis in taking proactive steps to prevent bullying from occurring. This includes but is not limited to, training on the District’s policy, how to recognize and intervene in bullying situations, and positive school climate practices.
3. To implement procedures for immediate intervention, investigation, and confrontation of students engaged in bullying behavior.
4. To initiate efforts to change the behavior of students engaged in bullying behaviors through education on acceptable behavior, discussions, counseling, and appropriate negative consequences. In instances that result in disciplinary action or negative consequences, educational interventions should still be applied, as appropriate.
5. To foster a productive partnership with parents/guardians/caregivers, families and community members in order to help maintain a bullying-free environment across all settings.
6. To support targets of bullying through a layered continuum of supports that includes, but is not limited to, individual counseling and supports that may be short in duration or ongoing.
7. To help develop peer support networks, social skills, and confidence for all students.

8. To support positive school climate efforts that clearly define, teach, and reinforce prosocial behavior. This includes intentional efforts to promote positive relationships between staff and students as well as students with other students.
9. To designate a team of persons at each school who advise the school administration on the severity and frequency of bullying. This team may include, but need not be limited to, school resource officers, social workers, school psychologists, health professionals, mental health professionals, members of bullying prevention or youth resiliency community organizations, school counselors, teachers, administrators, parents/guardians/caregivers, and students.
10. To survey students' impressions of the severity and frequency of bullying behaviors in their school.
11. To include students in the development, creation, and delivery of bullying prevention efforts as developmentally appropriate.
12. To provide resources for students that includes, but is not limited to, age-appropriate, evidence-based social and emotional behavioral learning as well as information on the recognition, intervention and prevention of bullying behaviors.
13. To engage in restorative practices proactively to develop relationships, encourage a positive school climate, and address conflict. Mediation in response to bullying situations should be avoided.

Reporting

Any student who believes they have been a target of bullying and/or other behaviors prohibited by this policy (i.e., retaliation or making knowingly false accusations of bullying behavior), or who has witnessed such bullying and/or other prohibited behaviors, is strongly encouraged to immediately report it to an administrator, school counselor, teacher or other staff at their school.

All District staff and authorized volunteers who have any incident of bullying reported to them, observe potential bullying behavior, or otherwise have reason to believe it is occurring must promptly forward the report(s) and/or other information to the school principal or principal's designee for appropriate action.

Investigating and Responding

As part of the District's comprehensive program to address bullying, procedures will be developed with the goal of immediate intervention and investigation in response to reports of students engaged in bullying and/or other behaviors prohibited by this policy. Procedures will include, to the extent appropriate as determined by the investigator and designated administrator, and in accordance with applicable law and District policy and

procedures, notification to parents/guardians/caregivers of the results of bullying investigations and their right to appeal investigatory findings to the District.

All District staff and authorized volunteers who witness student bullying in any such circumstance must immediately take appropriate action to stop the bullying, as prescribed by the District and the school principal, and shall promptly report the bullying to the principal or principal's designee for appropriate action.

Each principal or principal's designee must ensure that all reports and other information involving student bullying in any such circumstance are promptly and thoroughly investigated, and that appropriate action is taken. If the target of bullying is a student with a disability who has an Individualized Education Program under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (an "IEP") or a Plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (a "Section 504 Plan"), the investigation shall include a determination of whether the student's receipt of a free appropriate public education ("FAPE") under the IEP or Section 504 Plan may have been affected by the bullying. If it is determined that a student's receipt of FAPE under an IEP or Section 504 Plan may have been affected by bullying, the District shall promptly convene the student's IEP team or Section 504 team to determine whether and to what extent: (a) the student's educational needs have changed; (b) the bullying impacted the student's receipt of FAPE; and (c) different or additional services are needed to ensure the student's ongoing receipt of FAPE. If different or additional services are needed, the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan shall be promptly revised and implemented.

In many cases, bullying involves misconduct that is also addressed in other District policies and regulations. In working with students who engage in bullying, the principal or principal's designee shall consider other policies and regulations that specify various options for responding to student misconduct and that address the type of misconduct that may be involved in the bullying. Such policies and regulations include but are not limited to District Policy JBB – Harassment of Students, Policy JICA – Student Dress, Policy JICF – Secret Societies/Gang Activity Dress, Policy JICI – Student Conduct Involving Weapons, Policy JK – Student Discipline, Policy JKBA – Disciplinary Removal from Classroom, Policy JKC – Discipline of Habitually Disruptive Students, Policy JKD/JKE – Suspension/Expulsion of Students and Policy JKDA/JKEA – Grounds for Suspension/Expulsion of Students.

Supports and Referrals

As part of the District's comprehensive program to address bullying, District procedures that will be implemented at all schools will be developed with the aim toward accomplishing the following goals:

- Initiate efforts to change the behavior of students engaged in bullying behaviors through intervention and support;

- Support targets of bullying in ways that support resolution and increase their sense of safety and protective skills for handling bullying; and
- Support witnesses of bullying.

A student who engages in any act of bullying or retaliation is subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion. In addition, the principal must consider other actions that may be appropriate in response to student bullying, including but not limited to:

- Implementing educational opportunities and programming to inform students that bullying is prohibited, teach students about behaviors that constitute bullying, and advise them how to report and the response and consequences for engaging in bullying activity.
- Holding conferences with the parents/guardians/caregivers of students who continue to engage in bullying after intervention by District personnel, in order to develop cooperative strategies to address the students' behavior.
- Holding training and professional development to assist school staff in being alert to student bullying, taking appropriate action when bullying occurs and creating an atmosphere where bullying is not tolerated at school or school-related activities.

Adopted by Board: August 13, 2001

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Revised by Board: June 14, 2016, effective July 1, 2016

Revised by Board: November 14, 2023

CROSS REFERENCES:

JBB - Harassment of Students

JICA - Student Dress

JICF - Secret Societies/Gang Activity and Dress

JICI - Student Conduct Involving Weapons

JK - Student Discipline

JKC - Discipline of Habitually Disruptive Students

JKBA - Disciplinary Removal from Classroom

JKD/JKE - Suspension/Expulsion of Students

JKDA/JKEA - Grounds for Suspension/Expulsion of Students

LEGAL REFERENCES:

C.R.S. 22-32-109.1(1)(b) & (2)(a)(I)(K) (policy required as part of safe schools plan)

C.R.S. 22-93-101 et seq.