

BULLYING POLICY

The School District of Rib Lake strives to provide a safe, secure and respectful learning environment for all students in school buildings, on school grounds, and school buses and at school-sponsored activities. Bullying has a harmful social, physical, psychological and academic impact on bullies, victims and bystanders. The school district consistently and vigorously addresses bullying so that there is no disruption to the learning environment and learning process.

Definition

Bullying is deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions, intended to cause fear, intimidation or harm. Bullying may be repeated behavior and involves an imbalance of power. The behavior may be motivated by an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, such as, but not limited to: age; national origin; race; ethnicity; religion; gender; gender identity; sexual orientation; physical attributes; physical or mental ability or disability; and social, economic or family status.

Bullying behavior can be:

1. Physical (e.g. assault, hitting or punching, kicking, theft, threatening behavior)
2. Verbal (e.g. threatening or intimidating language, teasing or name-calling, racist remarks)
3. Indirect (e.g. spreading cruel rumors, intimidation through gestures, social exclusion and sending insulting messages or pictures by mobile phone or using the internet – also known as cyber bullying)

Bullying behavior is prohibited in all schools, buildings, property and educational environments, including any property or vehicle owned, leased or used by the school district. This includes public transportation regularly used by students to go to and from school. Educational environments include, but are not limited to, every activity under school supervision.

Procedure for Reporting/Retaliation

All school staff members and school officials who observe or become aware of acts of bullying are required to report these acts to their building principal and his/her designee.

Any other person, including a student who is either a victim of the bullying or is aware of the bullying or any other concerned individual is encouraged to report the conduct to their building principal and his/her designee.

Reports of bullying may be made verbally or in writing and may be made confidentially. All such reports, whether verbal or in writing, will be taken seriously and a clear account of the incident is to be documented. A written record of the report, including all pertinent details, will be made by the recipient of the report.

The school official receiving a report of bullying shall immediately notify the school district employee assigned to investigate the report. Pupil services staff, including guidance counselor, school psychologist, or building principal, shall investigate the report.

There shall be no retaliation against individuals making such reports. Individuals engaging in retaliatory behavior will be subject to disciplinary action.

Procedure for Investigating Reports of Bullying

The person assigned by the district to conduct an investigation of the bullying report shall, within one school day, interview the person(s) who are the victim(s) of the bullying and collect whatever other information is necessary to determine the facts and the seriousness of the report.

School District of Rib Lake

Parents and/or guardians of each pupil involved in the bullying will be notified prior to the conclusion of the investigation. The district shall maintain the confidentiality of the report and any related pupil records to the extent required by law.

Sanctions and Supports

If it is determined that students participated in bullying behavior or retaliated against anyone due to the reporting of bullying behavior, the school district administration and school board may take disciplinary action, including: suspension, expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials for possible legal action as appropriate. Pupil services staff will provide support for the identified victim(s).

Disclosure and Public Reporting

The policy will be distributed annually to all students enrolled in the school district, their parents and/or guardians and employees. It will also be distributed to organizations in the community having cooperative agreements with the schools. The school district will also provide a copy of the policy to any person who requests it.

Records will be maintained on the number and types of reports made, and sanctions imposed for incidents found to be in violation of the bullying policy.

An annual summary report shall be prepared and presented to the school board, which includes trends in bullying behavior and recommendations on how to further reduce bullying behavior. The annual report will be available to the public.

LEGAL REFERENCE: Wisconsin Act 309 Section 118.13 Wisconsin Statutes PI 9, Wisconsin Administrative Code Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964 Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972 Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Americans with Disabilities Act Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Civil Rights Act of 1991

CROSS REFS: 411.1 Student Harassment 411.1-Rule, Student Harassment Guidelines 411 Equal Educational Opportunity 411-Rule, Student Discrimination Complaint Procedures 441 Student Conduct 441-Rule, Code of Classroom Conduct

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