

WASHINGTON STATE SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

POLICY

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SUBJECT: Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying by Students

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Approved by: Dr. Dean O. Stenehjem, Superintendent

I. Purpose: To outline WSSB's position regarding harassment, intimidation or bullying by students.

II. Policy:

WSSB is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students, employees, parents/ legal guardians, volunteers, and patrons that is free from harassment, intimidation, or bullying. "Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any intentionally written message or image—including those that are electronically transmitted—verbal, or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, mental or physical disability or other distinguishing characteristics, when an act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student's property.
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education.
- Is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment.
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Nothing in this section requires the affected student to actually possess a characteristic that is a basis for the harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

"Other distinguishing characteristics" can include but are not limited to: physical appearance, clothing or other apparel, socioeconomic status, and weight.

"Intentional acts" refers to the individual's choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s).

Behaviors/Expressions (constant and/or repeated)

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying can take many forms including, but not limited to slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendos, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, inappropriate sexual contacts, threats or other written, oral, physical, or electronically transmitted messages or images.

This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the educational environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment, intimidation, or bullying may still be prohibited by other WSSB policies or building, classroom or program rules.

Training

This policy is a component of WSSB's responsibility to create and maintain a safe, civil, respectful, and inclusive learning community and shall be implemented in conjunction with comprehensive training of students, staff and volunteers.

Prevention

WSSB will provide students with strategies aimed at preventing harassment, intimidation, and bullying. In its efforts to train students, the WSSB will seek partnerships with families, law enforcement, and other community agencies. All WSSB employees are expected to be committed to prevention of bullying, harassment and/or intimidation. WSSB personnel will lead by example and educate students on prevention by being positive role models who demonstrate respect and courtesy toward students, parents, stakeholders, volunteers, community member and each other.

Interventions

Interventions are designed to remediate the impact on the targeted student(s) and others impacted by the violation, to change the behavior of the perpetrator, and to restore a positive school climate.

WSSB will consider the frequency of incidents, developmental age of the student, and severity of the conduct in determining intervention strategies. Interventions will range from counseling, correcting behavior and discipline, to law enforcement referrals.

Retaliation/False Allegations

Retaliation is prohibited and will result in appropriate discipline. It is a violation of this policy to threaten or harm someone for reporting harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

It is also a violation of WSSB policy to knowingly report false allegations of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Students or employees will not be disciplined for making a report in good faith. However, persons found to knowingly report or corroborate false allegations will be subject to appropriate discipline.

Compliance Officer

The Superintendent will appoint compliance officer as the primary WSSB contact to receive copies of all formal and informal complaints and ensure policy implementation. The name and contact information for the compliance officer will be communicated throughout WSSB.

The Superintendent is authorized to direct the implementation of procedures addressing the elements of this policy.

III. Procedures:

Informal Complaint Process: Informal complaints of harassment, intimidation or bullying may be made to any staff member. Staff shall inform the person making the complaint of their right to, and the process for, filing a formal complaint. The Director of Education, Associate Principal and/or Director of Transition shall be notified when any staff member receives a complaint of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Informal remedies may include the following:

§ A statement from a staff member to the alleged perpetrator that the alleged conduct is not appropriate and could lead to discipline if proven or repeated

Formal Complaint Process: Anyone may initiate a formal complaint of harassment, intimidation or bullying even if the informal complaint process is being utilized.

- All complaints shall be in writing and shall outline the specific acts, conditions or circumstances alleged to have occurred that may constitute harassment, intimidation or bullying utilizing the "WSSB Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying (HIB) – Incident Report Form" (included at the end of this policy).
- The Director of Education, Associate Principal and/or Director of Transition shall investigate all formal written complaints of harassment, intimidation or bullying.
- When the investigation is completed the Director of Education, Associate Principal and Director of Transition shall compile a full written report of the complaint and the results of the investigation. This report shall be submitted to

the person making the complaint and the accused. This report shall include:

- 1. That WSSB intends to take corrective action; or
- 2. That the investigation is incomplete to date and will be continuing; or
- 3. That WSSB does not have adequate evidence to conclude that bullying, harassment or intimidation occurred.
- If the matter has not been resolved to the person making the complaints satisfaction, they may appeal to the Superintendent for their review of the report and final determination.
- The Superintendent shall respond in writing to the person making the complaint and the accused within thirty days stating:
 - 1. That WSSB intends to take corrective action; or
 - 2. That WSSB does not have adequate evidence to conclude that bullying, harassment or intimidation occurred.
- Corrective measures deemed necessary will be instituted within thirty days of the completion of the investigation, or after the appeal process is concluded.

Cross References: Policy 3200	Rights and Responsibilities
Policy 3210	Nondiscrimination
Policy 3240	Student Conduct
Policy 3241	Classroom Management, Corrective Action and Punishment
Policy 6590	Sexual Harassment

Legal Reference: RCW 28A.300.285	Harassment, intimidation, and bullying prevention policies
RCW 28A.600.480	Reporting of harassment, intimidation, or bullying – Retaliation prohibited – Immunity
RCW 9A.36.080	Malicious Harassment – Definition and criminal penalty
RCW 28A.642	K-12 Education – Prohibition of discrimination
RCW 49.60	Discrimination – Human Rights Commission

U.S. Dept. of Education Dear Colleague Letter, 2010
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.html>

Management Resources: *Policy News*, April 2008 Cyberbullying Policy Required
Policy News, April 2002 Legislature Passes and Anti-Bullying Bill

WSSB Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying (HIB) - Incident Report Form

Reporting person (optional): _____

Targeted student: _____

Your email address (optional): _____

Your phone number (optional): _____ **Today's date:** _____

Name of school adult you've already contacted (if any): _____

Name(s) of bullies (if known): _____

On what dates did the incident(s) happen (if known): _____

Where did the incident happen? Circle all that apply.

Classroom Hallway Restroom Playground Locker room Lunchroom Sport field Parking
lot School bus Internet Cell phone During a school activity Off school property On the way to/from
school Other (Please describe) _____

Please check the box that best describes what the bully did. Please choose all that apply.

- Hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, hair pulling or throwing something at the student
- Getting another person to hit or harm the student
- Teasing, name calling, making critical remarks or threatening in person, by phone, by e-mail, etc.
- Putting the student down and making the student a target of jokes
- Making rude and/or threatening gestures
- Excluding or rejecting the student
- Making the student fearful, demanding money or exploiting
- Spreading harmful rumors or gossip
- Cyber bullying (bullying by calling, texting, emailing, web posting, etc.
- Inappropriate sexual contact and/or comments.
- Other

If you select other, please describe: _____

Why do you think the harassment, intimidation or bullying occurred?

Were there any witnesses? Yes No If yes, please provide their names:

Did a physical injury result from this incident? If yes, please describe.

Was the target absent from school as a result of the incident? Yes No If yes, please describe

Is there any additional information? _____

Thank you for reporting!

-----**For Office Use**-----

Received by: _____

Date received: _____

Action taken: _____

Parent/guardian contacted: _____

Circle one: Resolved Unresolved

Referred to: _____