

## **BULLYING**

The Skyline Education School's mission is to provide a safe, respectful and caring environment free of any bullying or intimidation. Such an environment is necessary for optimal academic achievement. Therefore, any bullying, harassment, intimidation, or cyberbullying will not be tolerated.

### **Definitions**

Bullying means any act(s) by a student or group of students that: (i) include any form or intimidation or harassment; (ii) have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging another student's property or placing another student in reasonable fear of physical harm or property damage; (iii) is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive environment. Bullying may include a real or perceived imbalance of power or strength between the parties. Some forms of bullying may also violate law in addition to violating this policy. Bullying may come in the form of: (a) derogatory comments in spoken, written or electronic communication form, including name calling, extortion, rumors, cyberbullying, etc.; (b) other derogatory communications, including the use of emoji's, graphics, images, photographs, videos, or other multimedia in written or electronic form; (c) social exclusion or ostracism; (d) physical contact, such as pushing, hitting, kicking, spitting, or threatened physical contact; (e) damage to personal property or threatened damage to personal property; or (f) theft of personal property. Bullying may cause physical or emotional harm.

Harassment means behavior by a student or group of students that is intended to disturb, threaten or intimidate another student. Harassment may come in the form of stalking, hazing, exclusion, ostracism, name calling, physical contact, verbal or written comments, photographs, social media use, or cyberbullying. Harassment may be related to race, ethnicity, religion, culture, socioeconomic state, gender orientation, sexual preference, or physical size or appearance. Harassment may cause physical or emotional harm.

Intimidation means behavior by a student or group of students that is intended to place another student in fear of physical harm, property damage or theft of personal property. Intimidation may come in the form of hazing, name calling, physical contact, verbal or written comments, photographs, social media use, or cyberbullying. Intimidation may cause physical or emotional harm.

Cyberbullying means any act of bullying, harassment or intimidation committed via electronic or digital technology, devices, services, or other electronic means, such as telephones, computers, social media, email, text, or similar means.

### **Prohibited Conduct**

Skyline Education Schools ("School") prohibits all bullying, harassment, intimidation or cyberbullying that occurs on school grounds or property, on school buses, at school bus stops, at school events and activities, or through the use of school computers, networks, email, forums or mailing lists.

In addition, bullying, harassment, intimidation or cyberbullying that occurs outside of the school is also prohibited when it results in any substantial negative effect(s) on the victim(s) while the victim(s) are on school grounds or property, on school buses, at school bus stops, at school events and activities or when such conduct interferes with the lawful operations and authority of School to maintain orderly educational programs.

Any student found to have engaged in such conduct may face disciplinary action. All suspected violations of law will be reported to local law enforcement.

## **Reporting**

Any student, family or bystander who feels he or she has been the victim of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or cyberbullying should file a complaint with the principal or the principal's designees or other school employee. The student's report may be provided verbally or in writing. A student's verbal report will be documented in writing by the employee receiving the report.

Any staff member who becomes aware of, or suspects, that a student is experiencing bullying, harassment, intimidation, or cyberbullying shall immediately notify the principal or the principal's designee. Employees may initially give verbal notice to the principal or the principal's designee but shall submit a written report to the principal or the principal's designee within one (1) school day of the verbal report.

The principal or the principal's designee shall notify local law enforcement when there is a reasonable belief or reasonable suspicion that the reported conduct is a violation or otherwise present a safety concern outside the authority and control of School.

Retaliation directed toward a student or employee for the reporting of a case of bullying harassment or intimidation or a suspected case of bullying, harassment, intimidation, or cyberbullying will not be tolerated and may result in additional disciplinary action and may also result in a report to local law enforcement when appropriate. Students involved directly or indirectly in retaliation will be disciplined pursuant to School's Code of Conduct.

Knowingly submitting a false report under this policy may subject the student to discipline pursuant to School's Code of Conduct.

## **Investigations**

Investigations of submitted complaints shall be initiated by the principal or the principal's designee as soon as is feasible, but not later than two (2) school days after the initial report. The course, scope and depth of each investigation will be determined by the principal or the principal's designee. In investigating a complaint, the principal or the principal's designee will maintain confidentiality to the extent reasonably possible, subject to the restrictions pertaining to disclosure of personally identifiable student information established in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). However, students, parents and legal guardians acknowledge and agree that absolute anonymity may not be possible in the course of investigating, addressing and resolving these matters.

Each investigation will be documented by the principal or the principal's designee. Such documentation will be maintained by School for six (6) years. If School must report incidents to persons other than school officials or law enforcement, all individually identifiable information shall be redacted pursuant to applicable law.

Should the principal or the principal's designee determine that bullying, harassment, intimidation, or cyberbullying has occurred, School will take prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to end the prohibited conduct and student discipline will be administered pursuant to the School's Code of Conduct. Regardless of the outcome of the investigation, the principal or the principal's designee will meet with the alleged victim to review the findings of the investigation. Additionally, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the involved students will be informed of the findings of the investigation.

## **Bullying Awareness**

The principal or principal's designee shall establish procedures for the dissemination of School's Bullying Policy: **(i)** during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of the school year; **(ii)** to incoming students at the time of registration; **(iii)** posted in school common areas; and **(iv)** as provided in the Student Handbook

and School Website. The principal or principal's designee may arrange for student education program(s) regarding bullying, as deemed appropriate by the principal.