

Memo to Parents/Guardians Regarding Bullying and School Violence

Re: Bullying

Dear Parents/Guardians:

At our school, bullying of any kind, by any person, is unacceptable. All students should be free from worries about being bullied. Students who bully others must be taught other, appropriate ways of interacting with peers. The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information concerning the School District's anti-bullying program and to encourage you to help us identify students who are being bullied.

The School Board policy on bullying begins with this goals statement:

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors is an important District goal.

Bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property.
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.
3. Substantially interfering with the student's academic performance.
4. Substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying, intimidation, and/or harassment may take various forms, including without limitation: threats, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.

I asked our school staff members to respond immediately and with compassion to a student who reports bullying or school violence. After evaluating the situation to determine if an immediate referral to my office is needed, a staff member will give the student our form for reporting bullying, 7:180-AP1, E5, *Report Form for Bullying and School Violence*. I will inform you whenever your child is involved in a bullying report.

I also asked our staff members for their feedback and concerns specifically regarding locations that may be bullying *hot spots* needing additional supervision or monitoring or if there are any known bullies or targets of bullying in our building. I want to ask you to do the same thing. Please inform me

if you know of any bullying *hot spots* in or around our school, or if you are aware of a known bully or target of bullying.

Finally, I requested our staff members to intervene immediately to stop a bullying incident. They will immediately contact building security and or law enforcement if the incident involves a weapon or other illegal activity.

Below are some of the signs that a young person is being bullied:

- Does not want to go to school and refuses to explain the reason
- Talks about not having any friends
- Has unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches, or abrasions
- Has unexplained damage to clothing, possessions, books, etc.
- Frequently loses money or possessions
- Loses interest in school and/or has declining grades
- Becomes withdrawn and/or has stress or depression symptoms

These signs do not necessarily mean your child is being bullied, but if present, ask your child whether he or she is being bullied.

Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.