



MODEL SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

This document presents our Model School Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy, which is meant to be readily accessible to administrators, students, teachers and parents. Please note that this document is distinct from GLSEN's Model District Policy, which is more comprehensive and further addresses issues of bullying and harassment at the school district level. While this document provides a useful model, it is still necessary to carefully consider the legislative background of your state, the local political environment and the fiscal impact of any proposal.

If you have questions about this document or would like GLSEN's assistance to construct your own anti-bullying and harassment policy, you may contact our Public Policy Department at 202-621-5821 or by email at publicpolicy@glsen.org.

1. Prohibition Against Bullying and Harassment

Bullying and harassment are prohibited in <Name of school>.

2. Definition of Bullying

Bullying means written, verbal or physical conduct that adversely affects the ability of one or more students to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs or activities by placing the student (or students) in reasonable fear of physical harm. This includes conduct that is based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion or any other distinguishing characteristics that may be defined by the state or local educational agency. This also includes association with a person or group with one or more of the abovementioned characteristics, whether actual or perceived.

3. Definition of Harassment

Harassment means written, verbal or physical conduct that adversely affects the ability of one or more students to participate in or benefit from the school's educational programs or activities because the conduct is so severe, persistent or pervasive. This includes conduct that is based on a student's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion or any other distinguishing characteristics that may be defined by the state or local educational agency. This also includes association with a person or group with one or more of the abovementioned characteristics, whether actual or perceived.

4. Scope

This policy covers conduct that takes place in the school, on school property, at school-sponsored functions and activities, on school buses or vehicles at bus stops. This policy also pertains to usage of electronic technology and electronic communication that occurs in the school, on school property, at school-sponsored functions and activities, on school buses or vehicles at bus stops, and on school computers, networks, forums, and mailing lists.

5. Notice

This policy will be distributed annually and will also be included in any student codes of conduct, disciplinary policies, student handbooks and school websites.

6. Reporting Bullying and Harassment

All allegations of bullying or harassment shall be reported to the principal or a designated staff member. The principal or designated staff member shall keep a written or electronic record of complaints and shall notify the parents of all students involved. Whoever is designated to accept complaints will also

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be responsible for investigating the allegation in a timely manner and taking an appropriate course of action. The principal or designated staff member will be held accountable for doing everything possible, within reason, to resolve the situation.

7. Anonymous Reports

Reports may be filed anonymously. However, disciplinary action cannot be taken solely based on an anonymous report. Anonymous reports will be investigated with the same procedure, timeliness and vigor as other reports and disciplinary action can occur based on the results of the investigation.

8. False Reports

Students who file false reports of bullying or harassment will be subject to discipline.

9. Parental Reports

Reports alleging bullying or harassment may be filed with the principal or the principal's designee by parents and school volunteers.

10. Responsibility of Students

Any student who observes an act of bullying or harassment should report the bullying or harassment to school authorities.

11. Responsibility of Staff

All staff members will take reasonable measures to prevent bullying and harassment and are obligated to report any such acts that come to their attention.

12. Retaliation

Retaliation or threats of retaliation meant to intimidate the victim of bullying or harassment or toward those investigating the incident will not be tolerated. If threats or actual retaliation occurs, suspension will be the likely outcome. Referral to the police will occur when appropriate.

13. Investigation of Bullying and Harassment

Once reported, any allegation of bullying or harassment will be promptly investigated by the principal or a designated staff member. Proper disciplinary action will be taken immediately following the conclusion of the investigation.

14. Disciplinary Sanctions and Counseling

Disciplinary actions for bullying and harassment may include, but are not limited to: warnings; counseling; loss of opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities, school social events or graduation exercises; loss of school bus transportation; community service; in-school suspension; short term suspension; or transfer to another school among others. The specific consequences should be consistent, reasonable, fair, age appropriate and match the severity of the incident.

If necessary, counseling will be provided for the target and/or the student perpetrating the bullying or harassment.

15. Training and Prevention

Students and staff will be given instruction on how to prevent bullying and harassment. This will also include instruction on the process for filing complaints and the process/consequences that will result from the complaint.