

JFCE-R - ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**Statement of Intent**

The Highmore-Harrold School District is committed to providing a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all so they can work and learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all students and parents should be able to report and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

I. Definitions

- A. **"Bullying"** means systematically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as: unwanted purposeful written, verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior, including but not limited to any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, or wrongful and intentional accusations by an adult or student, that has the potential to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment or cause long term damage; cause distress or humiliation; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation, is carried out repeatedly and is often characterized by an imbalance of power.
- B. **"Harassment"** means any threatening, insulting or dehumanizing gesture, use of technology, computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:
 - places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property;
 - has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, or employee's work performance, or either's opportunities, or benefits;
 - has the effect of substantially negatively impacting a student's or employee's emotional well-being; or
 - has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.
- C. **"Cyber stalking"** means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at or about a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.
- D. **"Cyber bullying"** is defined as the willful and repeated harassment and intimidation of a person through the use of digital technologies, including, but not limited to, email, blogs, social websites (e.g., MySpace, Facebook), chat rooms, and instant messaging.
- E. **"Bullying", "Cyber bullying", and/or "Harassment"** also encompass:
 - retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
 - retaliation also includes reporting a baseless act of bullying, harassment, or discrimination that is not made in good faith.
 - perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying, harassment, and/or discrimination by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student or school employee by:
 - a. incitement or coercion;

- b. accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the District school system; or
- c. acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying, harassment, or discrimination.

F. “Bullying”, “Cyber bullying”, “Harassment”, and “Discrimination” (hereafter referred to as bullying, as defined in Section A, for the purpose of this Policy) also encompass, but are not limited to, unwanted harm towards a student or employee in regard to their real or perceived: sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability (physical, mental, or educational), marital status, socio-economic background, ancestry, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, linguistic preference, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or social/family background or being viewed as different in its education programs or admissions to education programs and therefore prohibits bullying of any student or employee by any Board member, District employee, consultant, contractor, agent, visitor, volunteer, student or other person in the school or outside the school at school-sponsored events, on school leased/owned vehicle, and at training facilities or training programs sponsored by the District.

- II.** **Expectations:** The Highmore-Harrold School District expects students and employees to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment.

A. The Highmore-Harrold School District prohibits the bullying of any student or school employee:

- during any educational program or activity conducted by the Highmore-Harrold School District;
- during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity or on a Highmore-Harrold School District owned/leased vehicle;
- through the use of any electronic device or data while on school grounds or on a Highmore-Harrold School District owned/leased computer, computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of the Highmore-Harrold School District. The physical location or time of access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action initiated under this section.
- Through threats using the above to be carried out on school grounds. This includes threats made outside of school hours, which are intended to be carried out during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity, or on a Highmore-Harrold School District owned/leased vehicle.
- While the District does not assume any liability for incidences that occur at a bus stop or in route to and from school, a student or witness may file a complaint following the same procedures for bullying against a student and the school will investigate and/or provide assistance and intervention as the principal/designee deems appropriate.
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- III.** **Disciplinary sanctions (consequences) and due processes for a person who commits an act of bullying under this policy.**

A. Concluding whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all of the facts and surrounding circumstances, followed by the determination of disciplinary sanctions appropriate to the perpetrator’s position within the District.

- Consequences and appropriate interventions for students who commit acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to, but not limited to suspension and or expulsion.
- Consequences and appropriate interventions for a school/district employee found to have committed an act of bullying will be instituted in accordance with District policies, procedures, and agreements.
- Consequences and appropriate intervention for a visitor or volunteer, found to have committed an act of bullying shall be determined by the school administrator after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.
- These same actions will apply to persons, whether they be students, school employees, or visitors/volunteers/independent contractors, who are found to have made wrongful and intentional accusations of another as a means of bullying.

IV. Reporting an act of bullying

- A. All district faculty and staff will report any allegations of bullying.
- B. Any other members of the school community who credible information that an act of bullying has taken place may file a report of bullying, whether a victim or witness.
- C. Any student (and/or the parent on that complainant's behalf if the complainant is a minor) who believes the/she is a victim of bullying (or any individual, including any student who has knowledge of any incident(s) involving bullying of students) is strongly encouraged to report the incident(s) in writing to a school official. Complaints should be filed as soon as possible after the alleged incident and must be filed within twenty (20) school days after the alleged incident(i.e., within 20 school days of the last act of alleged bullying). Failure on the part of the complainant to initiate and/or follow up on the complaint within this period may result in the complaint being deemed abandoned.
- D. Anonymous reports may be made utilizing the Highmore-Harrold Public Schools Anonymous Bullying Report Form. This reporting form can be found on the School's Website or in the Administrative offices. Formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Adoption History

First Reading

4-9-12

Adoption

5-14-12