

SCHOOLCRAFT LEARNING COMMUNITY BULLYING PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

I. PURPOSE

A safe and compassionate environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. Bullying is conduct that interferes with students' ability to learn and teachers' ability to educate students in a safe environment. To the extent possible, it is the school's intent to prevent bullying and to take action to investigate, respond, remediate, and discipline those acts of bullying which have not been successfully prevented. Appropriate administrative and staff follow-up will be provided for targets and offenders of bullying. The purpose of this policy is to assist the school in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, violence, and other similar disruptive behavior.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

Schoolcraft is committed to creating a safe and caring environment for all students. We will endeavor to be kind and respectful in our interactions with others and will refuse to tolerate bullying of any kind. It is especially important for adults to model these behaviors (even when disciplining) in order to provide positive examples for student behavior.

- A. No school employee shall permit, condone, or tolerate bullying directed towards any person (including a person's actual or perceived race, ethnicity, color, creed, religion, national origin, immigration status, sex, marital status, familial status, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, sexual orientation- including gender identity and expression, academic status, disability, or age).
- B. Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
- C. Retaliation against a target, good faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.
- D. False accusations or reports of bullying against another student are prohibited.
- E. A person who engages directly or indirectly in an act of bullying, reprisal, or intentional false reporting of bullying or permits, condones, or tolerates bullying may be subject to discipline for that act in accordance with the school's policies and procedures. The school may take into account the following factors:
 - 1. The age, developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved;
 - 2. The levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature and severity of the behavior;
 - 3. Past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior;
 - 4. The relationship between the parties involved; and
 - 5. The context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Consequences for students who commit acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion.
- F. Consequences for students who commit acts of bullying may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension and/or expulsion. Consequences for school employees or other individuals who permit, condone, or tolerate bullying or engage in an act of reprisal or intentional false reporting of bullying may result in disciplinary action.

- G. The school will act to investigate all complaints of bullying and will take appropriate action against any student or school employee who is found to have violated this policy.

III. THE SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

- A. This policy applies to school related bullying wherever it occurs, including:
1. On Schoolcraft grounds immediately before or during school hours, immediately after school hours, or at any other school activity, function, or event;
 2. At a school activity, function, or event, including field trips and other school activities which take place off of school grounds;
 3. Traveling to or from school or a school activity, function or event; or
 4. On school computers or other equipment.
- B. Off-campus student behavior, including behavior on computers, cell phones, or other electronic devices whether at home or in other places is subject to consequences under this policy if the behavior creates a material and substantial disruption of the educational process at school for one or more students.

IV. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy, the definitions included in this section apply.

- A. Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that is intentional, repeated and involves a real or perceived power imbalance.
1. An imbalance of power: Students who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
 2. Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once, or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose. There are four types of bullying:

1. Verbal bullying is saying or writing mean things. Verbal bullying includes:
 - Teasing
 - Name-calling
 - Taunting
 - Threatening to cause harm
2. Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Social bullying includes:
 - Leaving someone out on purpose
 - Telling other children not to be friends with someone
 - Spreading rumors about someone
 - Embarrassing someone in public
3. Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes:

- Hitting/kicking/pinching
 - Spitting
 - Tripping/pushing
 - Taking or breaking someone's things
 - Making mean or rude hand gestures
4. Cyberbullying can include the misuse of technology in any form, including sending or posting e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, blog or social media postings, digital pictures or images, or other electronic postings.

B. "School employee" for purposes of this policy includes school board members, school employees, agents, volunteers, contractors/vendors, or persons subject to the supervision and control of the school.

V. STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Schoolcraft students must not bully others, must not be a bystander to bullying, and must report bullying to an adult. Students are expected to do the following:

Treat others with kindness and respect;

- A. Refuse to bully others;
- B. Refuse to let others be bullied;
- C. Refuse to watch, laugh, or join in when someone is being bullied;
- D. Try to include everyone in activities, especially those who are often left out;
- E. Report bullying to an adult.

VI. STAFF EXPECTATIONS

Teachers and staff at Schoolcraft are expected to do the following things to prevent bullying and help children feel safe at school:

- A. Closely supervise students in all areas of the school and playground;
- B. Watch for signs of bullying and stop it when it happens;
- C. Respond quickly and sensitively to bullying reports using an appropriate response process;
- D. Report bullying to the Schoolcraft Director;
- E. Notify the Director when efforts to address the bullying prove unsuccessful;
- F. Help create a school culture of respect and kindness by modeling and fostering these traits.

VII. SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR EXPECTATIONS

Schoolcraft administrators are expected to foster a school culture of respect and kindness. Administrators are expected to oversee the following, at a minimum:

- A. Identify and schedule appropriate staff training opportunities on the topic of bullying prevention;
- B. Use annual parent surveys or other appropriate methods to obtain from stakeholders input relevant to the topic of bullying prevention at Schoolcraft;
- C. Ensure that this policy is annually disseminated to all Schoolcraft staff, students, and parents, along with a statement explaining that it applies to all applicable acts of bullying that occur on school property, at school-sponsored functions, or on a school bus, and to off-campus behavior if that behavior materially and substantially disrupts the educational process for one or more students at school.

VIII. REPORTING PROCEDURE

- A. Any person who believes he or she has been the target of bullying or any person with knowledge or belief of conduct that may constitute bullying shall report the alleged acts immediately to the director or other school staff. A student may report bullying anonymously. However, the school's ability to take action against an alleged offender based solely on an anonymous report may be limited.
- B. A report (verbal or written) should be made immediately, or as soon after the incident as possible.
- C. The school encourages the target or other reporting party report the bullying either orally or electronically. Bullying claims can be sent to the child's teacher or the school director. Alternative means of filing a complaint are available.
- D. Reports of bullying are classified as private educational and/or personnel data and/or confidential investigative data and will not be disclosed except as permitted by law.