

Mid Valley Middle School/ High School Bullying Protocol

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Rationale

The House Judiciary Committee amended and approved SB71. The bill requires each school to adopt a bullying policy. Each bullying policy must prescribe disciplinary consequence for bullying and may include programs for intervention, prevention, and education. School bullying policies must be published on school district Web sites and distributed with each school's student code of conduct. SB71 was amended to require districts to post a copy of the policy in all classrooms and to review the policy with students at least twice during the school year.

Philosophy

The Mid Valley School District is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for all students. Therefore, we prohibit bullying and intimidation and will not tolerate it in any form.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any student to bully or intimidate any other student. We will investigate all informal and formal verbal and written complaints of bullying and/or intimidation. Any student who is found to have bullied and/or intimidated another student will be disciplined.

Definition

A person is being bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on part of one or more persons. Students may bully a particular student on the basis of the student's appearance, national origin, interests, academic achievements, economic status, or any number of other factors.

The behavior of bullying occurs in four forms: physical, verbal, emotional or exclusion, and cyberbullying.

- a. **Physical Bullying**- hitting, kicking, or any physical aggression.
- b. **Verbal Bullying**- teasing, name calling, put downs, or other behavior that would deliberately hurt others' feelings or make them feel bad.
- c. **Emotional or Exclusion Bullying**- starting rumors, telling others not to be friends with someone or other actions that would cause someone to be without friends.
- d. **Cyber-bullying**- using electronic device mediums such as but not limited to computers, cell phones, and pagers to bully (bullying defined above) others through methods such as posting comments, statements, or pictures on blogs or websites (ie. myspace, facebook, youtube etc.), text messaging, instant messaging, and e-mail.

Bullying/Intimidating behaviors can include but are not limited to:

- Taunting
- Name calling
- Rumor spreading
- Making up stories to get other children in trouble
- Telling other children not to be friends with a target child
- Kicking, tripping, or pushing another child
- Teasing other children and making remarks about their culture, religion, ethnicity, weight, physical appearance, disabilities, or medical conditions
- Intimidating others
- Taking other children's possessions or demanding money from them
- Damaging other children's property
- Hiding other children's books, bags, or other property
- Picking on other children, even when they're upset
- Making threats to other children
- Manipulating others, getting them to do things that they may not want to do

Response and reporting procedures

School personnel must report and/or investigate all incidents of bullying/intimidation and take appropriate action, whether they personally observe incidents or are made aware of them by some other means. Reporting, investigation, and action must occur even if the victim does not file a formal complaint, and even if the victim does not express any overt disapproval of the bullying/intimidating act.

Staff members will intervene immediately and have 5 school days for the team to address the behavior upon receiving the referral. The intervention will consist of identifying the inappropriate behavior, debriefing the student(s) about his/her role, applying consequences according to the Bullying Rubric, and may include a referral to the administration. A verbal warning may be given at the discretion of the committee or administration. Repeated or severe incidents of bullying/intimidation may require parent contact and a mandatory administrative referral. In certain incidents the school psychologist and/ or school social worker may intervene with parental permission. Information concerning any complaints of bullying/intimidation shall be treated confidentially.

Suggested interventions

- Identify Bully behaviors
- Stop the behavior
- Submit referral to team for review
- Conference with the student or students
- Provide mediations for students engaging in bully behaviors
- Review and apply consequences according to the school-wide bully behavioral rubric

The student's previous record may be accessed at the discretion of the bully committee members and administration when applying consequences

- complete self reflection form developed by the Bullying Committee.
- Initiate a counselor referral
- Initiate an administrative referral
- Initiate a referral to the school psychologist
- Initiate a referral to the school social worker

Procedures after an administrative referral

1. An immediate investigation will be completed, which may include verbal and written statement from witnesses. All facets of the investigation will be documented and all information will be kept confidential.

2. All parties and their parents will be notified that:

- Bullying and/or intimidation are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in school
- Consequences will occur for inappropriate behavior
- Retaliation against victims or witnesses will not be tolerated

In addition, the following information will be discussed:

- The types of behavior which constitutes bullying/intimidation
- The rights and responsibilities of the individual to prevent bullying/intimidation from happening

3. Consequences will be assigned which may include the following:

- Verbal warning/reprimand
- Written warning/reprimand entered in student's file
- Suspension or school service
- Guidance counselor referral
- School psychologist referral
- School social worker referral
- A parent/student/administrator conference
- Referral to an appropriate agency
- Police involvement
- Other consequences deemed appropriate by the school or district
- Notification of Superintendent of Schools

References

Abington Heights Middle School Bullying Policy