

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Series 100

Policy Title: **Anti-Bullying/Harassment**

Code No. 104.00

Page 1 of 3

The George – Little Rock Community School District is committed to providing all students with a safe and civil school environment in which all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect. Bullying and/or harassing behavior can seriously disrupt the ability of school employees to maintain a safe and civil environment, and the ability of students to learn and succeed.

Bullying and/or harassment of or by students, staff, and volunteers is against federal, state, and local policy, and is not tolerated by the board.

Accordingly, school employees, volunteers, and students shall not engage in bullying or harassing behavior while on school property, while on school-owned or school-operated vehicles, while attending or participating in school-sponsored or sanctioned activities, and while away from school grounds if the conduct materially interferes with the orderly operation of the educational environment or is likely to do so.

Complaints may be filed with the superintendent or superintendent's designee pursuant to the regulation accompanying this policy. Complaints will be investigated within a reasonable time frame.

A school employee, volunteer, or student, or a student's parent or guardian who promptly, reasonably, and in good faith reports an incident of bullying or harassment, in compliance with the procedures in the regulation, to the appropriate school official designated by the school district, shall be immune from civil or criminal liability relating to such report and to participation in any administrative or judicial proceeding resulting from or relating to the report.

Retaliation Prohibited

Individuals who knowingly file false bullying or harassment complaints and any person who gives false statements in an investigation may be subject to discipline by appropriate measures.

Any student found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, suspension and expulsion. Any school employee found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, termination of employment. Any school volunteer found to have violated or retaliated in violation of this policy shall be subject to measures up to, and including, removal from service and exclusion from school grounds.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the defined words shall have the following meaning:

- "Electronic" means any communication involving the transmission of information by wire, radio, optical cable, electromagnetic, or other similar means. "Electronic" includes, but is not limited to, communication via electronic mail, internet-based communications, pager service, cell phones, and electronic text messaging.
- "Harassment" and "bullying" shall mean any repeated or potentially repeated electronic, written, verbal, or physical act or other ongoing conduct toward an individual based on any trait or characteristic of the individual which creates an objectively hostile school environment that meets one or more of the following conditions:
 - (1) Places the individual in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property.
 - (2) Has a substantial detrimental effect on the individual's physical or mental health.

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Series 100

Policy Title Anti-Bullying/Harassment

Code No. 104.00

Page 2 of 2

(3) Has the effect of substantially interfering with the individual's academic or career performance. Has the effect of substantially interfering with the individual's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

- "Trait or characteristic of the individual" includes but is not limited to age, color, creed, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical attributes, physical or mental ability or disability, ancestry, political party preference, political belief, socioeconomic status, or familial status.
- "Volunteer" means an individual who has regular, significant contact with students.

Publication of Policy

The board will annually publish this policy. The policy may be publicized by the following means:

- Inclusion in the student handbook;
- Inclusion in the employee handbook;
- Inclusion in the registration materials;
- Inclusion on the school or school district's web site;
- A copy shall be made to a person at the central administrative office at 309 S. Lincoln St., Suite 1, George, IA 51237

NOTE: This is a mandatory policy. School districts are required to integrate the anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy into the comprehensive school improvement plan and shall collect and report data regarding instances of bullying and harassment as required by law.

NOTE: Some conduct that falls under a school's anti-bullying/anti-harassment policy also may trigger responsibilities under one or more of the federal and state antidiscrimination laws. By limiting the response to a specific application of its anti-bullying/anti-harassment disciplinary policy and the accompanying procedures, a school may fail to properly consider whether the alleged conduct also results in discriminatory bullying and/or harassment.

Legal References:

20 U.S.C. §§ 1221-1234i
29 U.S.C. § 794
42 U.S.C. §§ 2000d-2000d-7
42 U.S.C. §§ 12101 *et. seq.*
Iowa Code §§ 216.9; 280.28; 280.3
281 I.A.C. 12.3(6).
Morse v. Frederick, 551 U.S. 393 (2007).

Cross References:

102.00 Equal Educational Opportunity
502.00 Student Rights and Responsibilities
503.00 Student Discipline
506.00 Student Records

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