

## **Students**

### **Prohibition Against Bullying, Hazing, Harassment, and Cyberbullying**

It is the policy of Wheaton-Warrenville Community Unit School District 200 to provide an educational environment free from bullying, hazing, harassment, and cyberbullying. The School District is committed to protecting its students from any form of physical, verbal, or mental abuse.

### **Definitions**

#### **1. Bullying**

Bullying is defined to include, but is not limited to, any aggressive or negative gesture, electronic communication, or written, verbal or physical act that places another student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or property, or that has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student. Bullying most often occurs when a student asserts physical or psychological power over, or is cruel to, another student perceived to be weaker. Such behavior may include but is not limited to: pushing, hitting, threatening, name-calling or other electronic, written, physical or verbal conduct of a belittling or browbeating nature.

#### **2. Hazing**

Hazing is any act that subjects a student to electronic, written, physical, or verbal harassment, mental or physical discomfort, intimidation, embarrassment, ridicule, or demeaning activity committed by an individual student or group of students for the purpose of initiation, maintaining membership, or holding office in any organization, club, or athletic team.

#### **3. Harassment**

Harassment includes any unwelcome electronic, written, physical, or verbal conduct, contact or communication that is motivated by or related to individual characteristics such as race, color, national origin, gender, economic status, disability, religion, religious affiliation or sexual orientation and that creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment. Although harassment that creates a hostile environment may take many different forms, some examples include name calling and other derogatory comments, jokes, gestures or looks, posting or distribution of derogatory pictures, notes or graffiti, blocking, pushing, hitting or other forms of physical aggression. Where harassment is sexual, it may also include such conduct as

persistent unwelcome attempts to interact with someone, spreading of rumors, aggressive physical contact such as kissing, touching or pulling at clothes in a sexual way.

Sexual harassment also includes unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors when:

a. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the receipt of educational or other school-related benefits,

or

b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for educational or other school-related decisions affecting that individual.

#### **4. Cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is a subset of bullying, hazing, and harassment. For purposes of this policy, cyberbullying is defined as the use of e-mail, instant messaging, chat rooms, pagers, cell phones, or other forms of information technology to deliberately bully, haze, harass, threaten, or intimidate someone. Cyberbullying can include, but is not limited to, such acts as making threats, provocative insults or racial or ethnic slurs, or demeaning remarks about one's sexual orientation.

#### **Prohibited Conduct**

1. It shall be a violation of the Board of Education policy for a student, employee or any school visitor to bully, haze, harass, or cyberbully a student or to engage in conduct which would actively or passively support acts of bullying, hazing, harassment, or cyberbullying.
2. It shall be a violation of the Board of Education policy for a student to report false allegations or a false complaint of bullying, hazing, harassment, or cyberbullying.
3. It shall also be a violation of the policy for an employee, student, or any school visitor to retaliate against a student for instituting a good-faith complaint of bullying, hazing, harassment, or cyberbullying.

#### **Complaints**

A student who feels that he or she has been bullied, hazed, harassed, or cyberbullied

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should inform a School District staff member, Building Principal, Assistant Principal, or Dean of Students. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the principal or his/her designee. All other members of the school community, including students, parents/legal guardians, volunteers and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy.

There are no express time limits for initiating complaints under this Board policy; however, every effort should be made to bring complaints to the attention of appropriate authorities as soon as possible while memories are fresh and witnesses continue to be available.

Complaints will be investigated. If it is determined that a violation has occurred, prompt corrective action will be taken. During the investigation, confidentiality will be maintained to the utmost extent possible. Complainants will be offered counseling and other assistance when appropriate and will be informed of the results of any investigation.

### **Intervention/Remediation**

In addition to the prompt investigation of complaints of bullying, hazing, harassment, or cyberbullying and direct intervention when such prohibited activities are verified, the following learning strategies may be implemented:

1. Planned professional development programs addressing targeted problems including what constitutes safe and acceptable internet use;
2. Formal or informal information or data collection regarding specific disciplinary or student problems;
3. Modeling by school personnel of positive, respectful, and supportive behavior towards students;
4. Employing classroom strategies that instruct students on how to work together in a collaborative and supportive atmosphere; and
5. Gather input from parents, law enforcement, and other community members regarding positive responses to bullying, hazing, harassment, and cyberbullying.

### **Disciplinary Consequences**

1. Violation of this policy may result in discipline. If the harasser is an employee, discipline will be determined in accordance with Board policy and the provisions of any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Students who violate the policy will also be subject to appropriate discipline in accordance with Board policy and the District's Code of Conduct. This may include suspension and/or expulsion.

2. Students may be disciplined for acts of bullying, hazing, harassment, or cyberbullying occurring on or off-campus and/or outside of school hours in the same manner they are otherwise subject to discipline for acts that violate School District policies and/or procedures when acts could: (1) affect the school climate or atmosphere; (2) affect the peace, health, safety, or welfare of students, teachers, or any other personnel, and/or (3) disrupt or interfere with school or school activities. Any violation is subject to suspension or recommendation for expulsion.
3. The parents/guardians of students who commit any act of bullying, hazing, harassment, or cyberbullying will be notified.
4. The School District reserves the right to make referrals for these students to appropriate mental health and law enforcement professionals.

### **Notification**

The School District shall annually communicate this policy to students and their parents/guardians. This annual notification shall include disseminating information to all students and parents/guardians explaining the serious disruption caused by bullying, hazing, harassment, and cyberbullying and that these behaviors will be taken seriously and are not acceptable in any form.

### **Adoption and Update of Policy**

The Board of Education shall update this policy beginning every 2 years after the policy's initial adoption and shall file this policy with the Illinois State Board of Education after the Board adopts or updates it.

LEGAL REF.: 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7

CROSS REF.: 5.186 (Discipline of Employees); 7.190 (Student Discipline)

Adopted: October 11, 1995

Amended: August 12, 2009