

Bullying Policy

Child's Voice

8.1 Bullying, Intimidation & Harassment

Child's Voice will not tolerate harassing or intimidating conduct, or bullying, whether verbal, physical, sexual, visual, or electronic, that adversely impacts the education of any student, that unreasonably interferes with a student's educational performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

Child's Voice is committed to having all students treated with dignity and respect. Bullying, intimidation and harassment in any form by any representative of Child's Voice including but not limited to students, employees, clients, agents, parents or suppliers is contrary to school policy and will not be tolerated. To this end, we provide you with the following information to educate you, as you too are responsible adhering to our policy.

Child's Voice is committed to adhering to and enforcing our bullying, intimidation and harassment policy and will not tolerate behavior of any kind in regard to Title VII i.e. race, religion, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, disability, gender, and gender identity.

Further, our bullying policy includes other characteristics that are not a protected class under Title VII such as, but not limited to order of protection status; status of being homeless. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, also prohibits retaliation for opposing any form of discrimination, including harassment, for filing a complaint, testifying, assisting, or participating in any manner in an investigation or proceeding regarding any form of discrimination, including harassment, of any association with a person or group with one or more of these perceived characteristics; or any other distinguishing characteristic.

All representatives of Child's Voice have the responsibility to prevent bullying, intimidation and harassment. This means taking immediate and appropriate action, including disciplinary action and/or adverse action, with respect to individuals found to have engaged in harassment. Students and parents are encouraged to report all incidents of bullying, intimidation and harassment to the Executive Director and/or their classroom teacher.

8.2 Prohibited Conduct

Child's Voice considers the following conduct to represent some of the types of acts, which violate Child's Voice bullying, intimidation and harassment policy:

- A. Physical assaults of a sexual nature, such as: rape, sexual battery, molestation or attempts to commit these assaults; and intentional physical conduct which is sexual in nature, such as touching, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against a student's body, or poking a student's body.
- B. Preferential treatment pertaining to a student's race, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, or sexual preference or physical disability, promises or preferential treatment to a student(s) for submitting to sexual conduct, including soliciting or attempting to solicit any student to engage in sexual activity or compensation or reward; and

- C. Subjecting, or threats of subjecting, student to unwelcome sexual attention or conduct or intentionally creating a hostile, or offensive educational environment.
- D. Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in Child's Voice educational environment such as:
 - 1. Displaying pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, promotional materials, reading materials, or other materials that are sexually or discriminatory suggestive, sexually or discriminatory demeaning, or pornographic, or bringing into Child's Voice educational environment or possessing any such material to read, display or view at work.
 - 2. Displaying signs or other materials purporting to segregate or discriminating against a student(s) pertaining to their race, gender, religion, national origin, ethnicity, or sexual preference or physical disability, in any area of the educational

8.2.1 Consequences of Harassment Policy Violation

If monitoring of Internet usage and/or any Child's Voice information system reveals possible evidence of a violation of criminal statutes, this evidence and any other related information, including identification information about the user, may be provided to law enforcement officials. All communications, including text and images, are considered public communication and may be disclosed to law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent or knowledge of the sender or receiver.

What to do if you feel you have been bullied, intimidated and/or harassed

Students who feel mistreated by bullying, intimidation and/or harassment are encouraged to report the incident to the Executive Director immediately. Our policy is that all incidents are to be reported verbally and in writing. In the event of a complaint, Child's Voice will:

- Conduct a thorough investigation of the complaint and charges
- Result of the findings, will take appropriate action

Harassment is unlawful and hurts everyone at the school. Any of the prohibited conduct described here is harassment of anyone at whom it is directed or who is otherwise subjected to it. Each incident of bullying, intimidation and/or harassment, moreover, contributes to a hostile educational environment. Anyone who engages in such conduct should be and will be made to bear the full responsibility for such unlawful conduct.

8.2.2 Students Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors is an important goal. Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited in each of the following situations:

- A. During any school sponsored education program or activity.
- B. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school sponsored or school sanctioned events or activities.
- C. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.

- D. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This item (4) applies only in cases in which a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred and it does not require a district or school to staff or monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

8.3 Definitions from Section 27-23.7 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/27-23.7)

Bullying includes cyber-bullying and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property.
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical or mental health.
3. Substantially interfering with the student's academic performance.
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Cyber-bullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. *Cyber-bullying* includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identify of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of *bullying*.

Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of *bullying*.

8.4 Bullying Prevention and Response Plan

The Executive Director or designee shall develop and maintain a bullying prevention and response plan that advances Child's Voice goal of providing all students with a safe learning environment free of bullying and harassment. This plan must be consistent with the following requirements:

Child's Voice uses the definition of bullying as provided in this policy.

- A. Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of this Child's Voice. However, nothing in Child's Voice bullying prevention and response plan is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution or under Section 3 of Article I of the Illinois Constitution.
- B. Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally to any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the Executive Director or School Social Worker. Anonymous reports are also accepted.
- C. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, the Executive Director or designee shall promptly inform parent(s)/guardian(s) of all students involved in an alleged incident of bullying and discuss, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, psychological services, or other interventions, and restorative measures.

- D. The Executive Director or designee shall promptly investigate and address reports of bullying, by, among other things:
1. Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date the report of the incident of bullying was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported incident of bullying
 2. Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
 3. Notifying the Principal or school administrator or designee of the report of the incident of bullying as soon as possible after the report is received.
 4. Consistent with federal and state laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing parents and guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the principal or school administrator or his or her designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

The Executive Director or designee shall investigate whether a reported act of bullying is within the permissible scope of the Child's Voice jurisdiction and shall require that the school provide the victim with information regarding services that are available within the school and community, such as counseling, support services, and other programs.

- E. The Executive Director or designee shall use interventions to address bullying, which may include, but are not limited to, school social work services, restorative measures, social emotional skill building, counseling, psychological services, and community-based services.
- F. A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for purpose of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.
- G. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if Child's Voice investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for the purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.
- H. Child's Voice bullying prevention and response plan must be based on the engagement of a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians.
- I. The Executive Director or designee shall post this policy on the Child's Voice intranet, and include it in the family handbook, and, where applicable, post it where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted. The policy must also be distributed annually to parents/guardians, students, and school personnel, including new employees when hired.
- J. The Executive Director or designee shall assist the Board with its evaluation and assessment of this policy's outcomes and effectiveness. This process shall include, without limitation:
 1. The frequency of victimization;
 2. Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school;
 3. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs;
 4. The types of bullying utilized; and
 5. Bystander intervention or participation

The evaluation process may use relevant data and information that Child's Voice already collects for other purposes. The Executive Director or designee must post the information developed as a result of the policy evaluation on the website, or if a website is not available, the information must be provided to school administrators, Board members, school personnel, parents/guardians, and students.

The Child's Voice's bullying prevention plan must be consistent with other Child's Voice policies and reviewed annually.

Restorative measures means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that: (i) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, (ii) contribute to maintaining school safety, (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, and (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school.

School personnel means persons employed by, on contract with, or who volunteer in a school district, including without limitation school and school district administrators, teachers, school guidance counselors, school social workers, school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, school resource officers, and security guards.