

NORTH PENN SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Board Policy

5115(a)

STUDENTS

Welfare

Bullying

Purpose

The board strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students in the schools. The North Penn School District recognizes that bullying of students has a negative effect on the educational environment of its schools. Students who are bullied, intimidated or fearful of other students may not be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the school district. Bullying can also escalate into more serious violence. Therefore, the school district strives to offer all students an educational environment free from bullying.

Definition

Bullying shall mean an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or a series of acts, directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect, or is likely to have the effect, of (1) substantially interfering with a student's education; (2) creating a threatening environment; or (3) substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to, physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student; damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property; placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm; placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to, or loss of, personal property; creating an intimidating or hostile environment that interferes with a student's educational opportunities; or engaging in conduct that is intended to have the effect of, or has the effect of, demeaning, dehumanizing, embarrassing, ridiculing, taunting, teasing, or threatening a student or group of students.

Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying means an intentional act, or series of acts, directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside a school setting, is carried out through the utilization of computers, the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or electronic devices, is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect, or is likely to have the effect, of (1) substantially interfering with a student's education; (2) creating a threatening environment; or (3) substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

School setting means in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop, during the time students necessarily spend traveling to and from school or school-sponsored activities, and at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

Authority

The school district will not tolerate any act, or acts, of bullying occurring in a school setting and/or outside a school setting that is/are severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect, or is likely to have the effect, of (1) substantially interfering with a student's education; (2) creating a threatening environment; or (3) substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Delegation of Responsibility

The superintendent or designee shall develop administrative procedures to increase the awareness of the problems of bullying, and train teachers to effectively intervene if bullying is witnessed in their presence or brought to their attention.

The superintendent or designee shall ensure (1) that this policy and the procedures for reporting bullying are reviewed with students at least once each school year, (2) that this policy is posted in a prominent location within each school building, (3) that this policy is posted on the district's official website, (4) that this policy is available in every classroom (this may be achieved by ensuring that a classroom computer with access to the district's website is available for student use), (5) that the code of student conduct, which shall contain this policy, is readily available to students and (6) that, in cooperation with other appropriate administrators, this policy is reviewed every three years and that necessary revisions are recommended to the board.

Intervention:

- Teachers and other staff (including, but not limited to, secretaries, custodians, bus drivers, hall monitors, etc.) who observe acts of bullying shall take reasonable steps to intervene to stop such conduct, unless intervention would threaten a staff member's safety. The nature of the intervention will vary depending upon the age of the student (both the victim and aggressor), the severity of the bullying and the student's involvement in prior acts of bullying. The purpose of the intervention is to take prompt remedial steps to ensure observed acts of bullying cease and to teach students that bullying is not an acceptable behavior.

Guidelines

Student, Parent/Guardian and Employee Reporting:

- The school district encourages all students and parents/guardians who become aware of any act of bullying to immediately report that conduct. Students may report acts of bullying to their teachers, building principal or other school employees supervising school-sponsored activities. Parents/guardians may contact the building principal to report acts of bullying.
- If teachers and/or other staff cannot reasonably remediate acts of bullying through their own intervention, they should report the bullying to the building principal. Other school

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employees who observe acts of bullying shall report that conduct to the building principal.

Investigation Procedures:

- Each building principal or designee is authorized to complete an impartial, thorough investigation of the bullying brought to their attention by students, parents/guardians or school employees. Any investigation of a report may include meetings with students, parents/guardians or employees; a review of student records; and other reasonable efforts to better understand the facts surrounding a reported incident.

Consequences/Discipline:

- Consequences for students who are found to have bullied others may include counseling, a parent conference, detention, suspension, expulsion, a loss of school privileges and/or exclusion from school-sponsored activities. Depending upon the severity of a particular situation, the building principal may also take appropriate steps for student safety. Intervention will be in line with approved student code of conduct.

Policy:

Adopted: November 15, 2007

Revised: September 20, 2012

Reviewed: July 16, 2015