

PREVENTION OF STUDENT BULLYING

The Linn J4 School District strives to provide a safe, secure and respectful learning environment for all students in school buildings, on school grounds, in school buses and at school-sponsored activities. Bullying has a harmful social, physical, psychological and academic impact on victims, bystanders and bullies themselves. The school district consistently and vigorously addresses bullying so that there is no disruption to the learning environment and learning process.

Definition

Bullying is deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions, intended to cause fear, intimidation or harm. Bullying typically is a repeated behavior and involves an imbalance of power. The behavior may be motivated by an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, such as, but not limited to: age; national origin; race; ethnicity; religion; gender; gender identity; sexual orientation; physical attributes; physical or mental ability or disability; and social, economic or family status.

Bullying behavior may be:

1. Physical (e.g. assault, hitting or punching, kicking, theft, threatening behavior)
2. Verbal (e.g. threatening or intimidating language, teasing or name-calling, racist remarks)
3. Indirect (e.g. spreading cruel rumors, intimidation through gestures, social exclusion and sending insulting messages or pictures by mobile phone or using the internet – also known as cyber bullying)

Prohibition

Bullying behavior is prohibited in all schools, buildings, property and educational environments, including any property or vehicle owned, leased or used by the school district. Educational environments include, but are not limited to, every activity under school supervision.

Procedure for Reporting/Retaliation

All school staff members and school officials who observe or become aware of acts of bullying are required to report these acts to the building principal.

Any other person, including a student who is either a victim of the bullying or is aware of the bullying or any other concerned individual is encouraged to report the conduct to the school counselor or building principal.

Reports of bullying may be made verbally or in writing and may be made confidentially. All such reports, whether verbal or in writing, will be taken seriously and a clear account of the incident is to be documented. The recipient of the report will make a written record of the report, including all pertinent details. The school official receiving a report of bullying shall immediately notify the building principal who will investigate the report. There shall be no retaliation against individuals making such reports. Individuals engaging in retaliatory behavior will be subject to disciplinary action.

Procedure for investigating reports of bullying

The building principal shall, in a timely manner, interview the person(s) who are the victim(s) of the bullying and collect whatever other information is necessary to determine the facts and the seriousness of the report. In his/her absence, the principal may designate the counselor or other staff member the responsibility to investigate the report. Parents and/or guardians of each pupil involved in the bullying will be notified during or at the conclusion of the investigation. The district shall maintain the confidentiality of the report and any related pupil records to the extent required by law.

Sanctions and supports

If it is determined that students participated in bullying behavior or retaliated against anyone due to the reporting of bullying behavior, the school district administration and school board may take disciplinary action, including: suspension, expulsion, and/or referral to law enforcement officials for possible legal action as appropriate. Pupil services staff may provide support for the identified victim(s).

Disclosure and Public Reporting

The policy will be distributed annually to all students, their parents and/or guardians, employees and others upon request. Records will be maintained on the number and types of reports made, and sanctions imposed for incidents found to be in violation of the bullying policy.

The Linn J4 School District shall not discriminate in standards and rules of behavior or disciplinary measures on the basis of sex, race, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability.

Legal Reference: Wisconsin Statutes, Sections 118.46(2)

Policy Adopted: August 10, 2010