

UPDATED POLICY – PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING (HIB)

3207

The District is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students, that is free from harassment, intimidation or bullying (hereinafter known as HIB).

Definition of Bullying:

“Harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any intentional written message or image, including those that are electronically transmitted, verbal or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by any characteristic in RCW 9A.36.080(3), including race, creed, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, age, veteran or military status, gender, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, the presence of any sensory or mental or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability, or other distinguishing characteristics, when an act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student’s property; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education; or
- Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Nothing in this section requires the affected student to actually possess a characteristic that is a basis for the harassment, intimidation or bullying.

“Other distinguishing characteristics” can include but are not limited to: physical appearance, clothing or other apparel, socioeconomic status and weight.

“Intentional acts” refers to the individual’s choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s).

HIB is Prohibited:

The North Thurston Public Schools and staff shall not tolerate any form of HIB on District grounds or conveyance, or at any school activity on or off campus. All persons are expected to model appropriate behavior that maintains a safe, healthy and civil learning environment.

Behaviors/Expressions

Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms including, but not limited to, slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendoes, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats or other written, oral, physical or electronically transmitted messages or images.

This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the educational environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment, intimidation or bullying may still be prohibited by other district policies or building, classroom or program rules.

Training

This policy is a component of the District’s responsibility to create and maintain a safe, civil, respectful and inclusive learning community and shall be implemented in conjunction with comprehensive training of staff and volunteers.

Prevention

The District will provide students with strategies aimed at preventing harassment, intimidation and bullying. In its efforts to train students, the District will seek partnerships with families, law enforcement and other community agencies.

Interventions

Interventions are designed to remediate the impact on the targeted student(s) and others impacted by the violation, to change the behavior of the perpetrator, and to restore a positive school climate.

The District will consider the frequency of incidents, developmental age of the student, and severity of the conduct in determining intervention strategies. Interventions will range from counseling, correcting behavior and discipline, to law enforcement referrals.

Students with Individual Education Plans or Section 504 Plans

If allegations are proven that a student with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan has been the target of harassment, intimidation or bullying, the school will convene the student's IEP or Section 504 team to determine whether the incident had an impact on the student's ability to receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE). The meeting should occur regardless of whether the harassment, intimidation or bullying incident was based on the student's disability. During the meeting, the team will evaluate such issues as the student's academic performance, behavioral issues, attendance, and participation in extracurricular activities. If a determination is made that the student is not receiving FAPE as a result of the harassment, intimidation and bullying incident, the District will provide additional services and supports as deemed necessary, such as counseling, monitoring and/or reevaluation or revision of the student's IEP or Section 504 plan to ensure the student receives a FAPE.

Retaliation/False Allegations

Retaliation is prohibited and will result in appropriate discipline. It is a violation of this policy to threaten or harm someone for reporting harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

It is also a violation of District policy to knowingly report false allegations of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Students or employees will not be disciplined for making a report in good faith. However, persons found to knowingly report or corroborate false allegations will be subject to appropriate discipline.

Compliance Officer

The Superintendent will appoint a compliance officer as the primary District contact to receive copies of all formal and informal complaints and ensure policy implementation. The name and contact information for the compliance officer will be communicated throughout the District.

The Superintendent is authorized to direct the development and implementation of procedures to implement this policy.

Legal Reference

Chapter 207 Laws of 2002
RCW 28A.300.285

Adopted:

March 11, 2003 North Thurston Public Schools
Board of Directors

Amended:

June 16, 2008 North Thurston Public Schools
Board of Directors

Amended:

June 16, 2015 North Thurston Public Schools
Board of Directors