

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF WEST DE PERE**  
**BULLYING**

**5119**

The Board of Education is committed to providing a safe, positive, productive, and nurturing educational environment for all of its students. The Board encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community. Bullying toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes physical, verbal, and psychological abuse. The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation.

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. This includes public transportation regularly used by students to go to and from school. Educational environments include, but are not limited to, every activity under school supervision. Instances of bullying that occur outside of regular school hours or outside of school sponsored activities that are reported to school district officials will be referred to local law enforcement.

Bullying is deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions, intended to cause fear, intimidation or harm. Bullying may be a repeated behavior and involves an imbalance of power. Furthermore, it may be serious enough to negatively impact a student's educational, physical or emotional well being. 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, but may not be motivated by these characteristics. Bullying is a form of intimidation and harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics. It includes, but is not necessarily limited to such behaviors as stalking, cyberbullying, intimidating, menacing, coercing, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hazing. Some examples of bullying are:

- A. Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling, taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, unwelcome physical contact.
- B. Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats.
- C. Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation.

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- D. "Cyberbullying" – the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone and text messages, instant messaging (IM), defamatory personal websites, defamatory online personal polling websites and all forms of Social Media.

Any student that believes s/he has been or is the victim of bullying should immediately report the situation to the building principal or assistant principal, or the District Administrator. The student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal should be filed with the District Administrator. Complaints against the District Administrator should be filed with the Board President.

Every student is encouraged to report any situation that they believe to be aggressive behavior directed toward a student. Reports may be made to those identified above.

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 or assistant principal, or the District Administrator.

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. A written record of the report, including all pertinent details, will be made by the recipient of the report.

All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be investigated promptly by the building Principal or his or her designee. The staff member who is investigating the report of bullying shall interview the victim(s) of the alleged bullying and collect whatever other information is necessary to determine the facts and the seriousness of the report.

Parents and/or guardians of each pupil involved in the bullying report will be notified prior to 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.

If the investigation finds that bullying has occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action. This may include student reprimand, suspension, or possible expulsion for students, up to discharge for employees, exclusion for parents, guests, volunteers,

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and contractors, and removal from any official position or resignation for Board members. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement officials.

The complainant shall be notified of the findings of the investigation, and as appropriate, that remedial action has been taken.

This policy shall not be interpreted to infringe upon the First Amendment rights of students (i.e., to prohibit a reasoned and civil exchange of opinions, or debate, that is conducted at appropriate times and places during the school day and is protected by State or Federal law).

Retaliation against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of bullying is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy and independent of whether a complaint is substantiated. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying. Making intentionally false reports about bullying for the purpose of getting someone in trouble is similarly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation and intentionally making a false report may result in disciplinary action as indicated above.

**Privacy/Confidentiality**

The School District will respect the privacy of the complainant, the individual(s) against who the complaint is filed, and the witnesses as much as possible, consistent with the Board's legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to conform to any discovery or disclosure obligations. All records generated under this policy and its related administrative guidelines shall be maintained as confidential to the extent permitted by law. To the extent appropriate in conducting a thorough investigation and/or as legally permitted, confidentiality will be maintained during the investigation process.

**Notification**

Notice of this policy will be annually distributed to all students enrolled in the school district, their parents and/or guardians and employees. The policy will also be distributed to organizations in the community having cooperative agreements with the schools. Additionally, the policy will be posted in conspicuous locations in all school buildings and departments within the District and discussed with students, as well as incorporated into the teacher, student, and parent/guardian handbooks. State and Federal rights posters on discrimination and harassment

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shall also be posted at each building. The school district will also provide a copy of the policy to any person who requests it.

**Records & Reports**

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.

An annual summary report shall be prepared and presented to the school board, which includes trends in bullying behavior and recommendations on how to further reduce bullying behavior. The annual report will be available to the public.

**Education and Training**

In support of this policy, the Board promotes preventative educational measures to create greater awareness of bullying behavior. The District Administrator or designee shall provide appropriate training to all members of the School District community related to the implementation of this policy and its accompanying administrative guidelines. All training regarding the Board's policy and administrative guidelines bullying will be age and content appropriate. The complaint procedure established by the District Administrator and set forth in Administrative Guidelines shall be followed.

LEGAL REFERENCE:       Wisconsin Statute 118.46

CROSS REFERENCE:       5117-Student Nondiscrimination  
                                  4117-Staff Nondiscrimination  
                                  4117(E) / 5117(E)-Discrimination Complaint Form

ADOPTED: 9/20/10

REVISED:7/17/2020, 8/12/2020