



Responsible Office: Office of the Superintendent

BOARD POLICY 9031

SAFE AND RESPECTFUL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

PURPOSE

The Board of Trustees believes that a working and learning environment that is safe and respectful is essential for all staff and students to achieve success. Any form of bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or discrimination interferes with the ability of teachers to teach in the classroom and pupils to learn. This policy and the associated governing documents shall establish the commitment by the Washoe County School District to create a safe and respectful working and learning environment, and to investigate accusations of bullying, cyber-bullying and discrimination.

POLICY

1. The District shall provide an environment in which persons of differing beliefs, characteristics and backgrounds can realize their full academic and personal potential.
2. All persons are entitled to maintain their own beliefs and to respectfully disagree without resorting or being subjected to bullying, cyber-bullying and/or discrimination.
3. By declaring this goal, the Board of Trustees is not advocating or requiring the acceptance of differing beliefs in a manner that would inhibit freedom of expression. The Board does require that any persons with differing beliefs be free from bullying, cyber-bullying and/or discrimination.
4. All students, administrators, faculty, and other District staff shall demonstrate appropriate behavior by treating other persons, including students, with civility and respect and by refusing to tolerate bullying, cyber-bullying and/or discrimination.
5. Use of the internet and other technology by staff and students shall be in a manner that is ethical, safe and secure.
6. The Board of Trustees ensures the aforementioned by enacting the following:
 - a. All members of the Board of Trustees, administrators, teachers, support personnel, and other staff employed by the District shall comply with state and federal laws by:

- i. Participating in training regarding the appropriate methods to facilitate positive human relations among students and staff without the use of bullying, cyber-bullying and/or discrimination as well as methods for reporting suspected violations. School administrators shall also receive training in:
 1. Methods for recognizing bullying and cyber-bullying behaviors;
 2. Effective intervention and remediation strategies regarding bullying and cyber-bullying;
 3. The prevention of violence and suicide associated with bullying, cyber-bullying and/or discrimination as well as the appropriate methods to respond to such incidents; and
 4. Employing strategies to improve the climate of schools and the overall District environment in a manner that will facilitate respectful positive human relations among students, families and staff.
 - ii. Using positive behavioral interventions and supports to foster and guide student learning of skills to replace bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or discrimination;
 - iii. Reporting allegations of bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or discrimination to school police and school administration immediately to ensure cases are investigated and harmful behavior stopped. Additionally, incidents are further reported to police, legal, counseling or community agencies while interventions are used, and victims are supported. The process for reporting potential violations is detailed within Administrative Regulation 5700, Student Complaint and Appeal Procedures – Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination (Pending).
- b. Each school will establish a school safety team to help to support and promote safe school environments including investigation of bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or discrimination in addition to the implementation of crisis management and emergency response duties and site support.
 - c. The District prohibits the active or passive support for acts of bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or discrimination. Both students and staff are expected to support attempts to constructively prevent and/or stop such acts and, thereby, promote safe schools.

2. Notice

- a. The District shall inform students, parents/guardians, faculty/staff, and other interested parties of the District's "Safe and Respectful Learning Environment" policy and student complaint process. Such notice shall be included on the District's website (www.washoeschools.net), the District's bullying reporting website (www.wcsdbullying.com), and posting of anti-discrimination notices in all District buildings and the parent/student handbook.
 - b. Reports of student discrimination based on race, national origin, disability, sex or religion may also be filed with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights.
3. The District prohibits the retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or discrimination, or against any person who has testified, assisted, or participated in the investigation of a report. Such retaliation is itself a violation of law and may lead to disciplinary or other appropriate action against the offender.
 4. This policy applies to bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or discrimination, by any individual on school district property, including a school bus, at a school-sponsored event, or while acting on school district business. This includes a member of a club or organization which uses a District facility, regardless of whether the club or organization has any connection to the school.

DEFINITIONS

1. "Bullying" means written, verbal or electronic expressions or physical acts or gestures, or any combination thereof, that are directed at a person or group of persons, or a single severe and willful act or expression that is directed at a person or group of persons, and:
 - a. Have the effect of: physically harming a person or damaging the property of a person; or placing a person in reasonable fear of physical harm to the person or damage to the property of the person; or
 - b. Interfere with the rights of a person by: creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment for the person; or substantially interfering with the academic performance of a pupil or the ability of the person to participate in or benefit from services, activities or privileges provided by a school; or
 - c. Are acts or conduct described in paragraph (a) or (b) and are based upon the: actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability of a person, sex or any other distinguishing characteristic or

background of a person; or association of a person with another person having one or more of those actual or perceived characteristics.

- d. The term “bullying” includes, without limitation: Repeated or pervasive taunting, name-calling, belittling, mocking or use of put-downs or demeaning humor regarding the actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability of a person, sex or any other distinguishing characteristic or background of a person; Behavior that is intended to harm another person by damaging or manipulating his or her relationships with others by conduct that includes, without limitation, spreading false rumors; Repeated or pervasive nonverbal threats or intimidation such as the use of aggressive, menacing or disrespectful gestures; Threats of harm to a person, to his or her possessions or to other persons, whether such threats are transmitted verbally, electronically or in writing; Blackmail, extortion or demands for protection money or involuntary loans or donations; Blocking access to any property or facility of a school; Stalking; and Physically harmful contact with or injury to another person or his or her property. (NRS 388.122)
2. “Cyber-bullying” means bullying through the use of electronic communication. The term includes the use of electronic communication to transmit or distribute a sexual image of a minor. (NRS 388.123)
3. “Electronic communication device” means any electronic device that is capable of transmitting or distributing an image of bullying, including, without limitation, a cellular telephone, personal digital assistant, computer, computer network and computer system. (NRS 388.124)
4. “Image of bullying” means any visual depiction, including, without limitation, any photograph or video, or a minor bullying another minor. (NRS 200.900)

DESIRED OUTCOMES

1. The District will implement consistent processes for the intervention and prevention of bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or discrimination.
2. Training in the prevention and/or recognition of bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or will take place for all employees and, when appropriate, students.
3. This policy and its accompanying regulations and operating procedures will align with the School Safety Teams.
4. Students, parents and staff will be empowered with information about District mechanisms to prevent and intervene related to bullying, cyber-bullying, and/or discrimination situations.

IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

1. This policy reflects the goals of the District's Strategic Plan.
2. This policy aligns with the following WCSD governing documents:
 - a. Board Policy 5039, Student Discipline.
 - b. Board Policy 9201, Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Prohibited.
 - c. Administrative Regulation 5700, Student Complaint and Appeal Procedures – Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination (Pending)
 - d. Administrative Regulation 5161, Gender Identity and Gender Non-Conformity - Students
 - e. Administrative Procedure PATH-P101, Prohibited Conduct.
 - f. Administrative Regulation 4111.5, Safe and Respectful Learning Environment (Staff).
 - g. Administrative Procedure PATH-P120, Safe and Respectful Learning Environment for Students.
 - h. Administrative Regulation 6163.2, Internet Safety and Public Network Acceptable Use.
3. This policy complies with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) to include:
 - a. Chapter 200, Crimes Against the Person, and specifically:
 - i. NRS 200.571, Harassment
 - ii. NRS 200.605, Hazing
 - iii. NRS 200.900, Bullying By Use of Electronic Communication Device – Penalties; definitions
 - b. Chapter 388, System of Public Instruction, and specifically:
 - i. NRS 388.121 – 388.139, inclusive, Provision of Safe and Respectful Learning Environment
 - c. Chapter 391, Personnel, and specifically:
 - i. NRS 391.312, Grounds for suspension , demotion, dismissal and refusal to reemploy teachers and administrators

- d. Chapter 392, Students, and specifically:
 - i. NRS 392.461 – 392.4676, inclusive, Behavior and Discipline
 - ii. NRS 392.900 – 392.920, inclusive, Unlawful Acts
- 4. This policy complies with federal laws and regulations, to include:
 - a. The Age Discrimination Act of 1975
 - b. Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended
 - c. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended
 - d. Equal Pay Act of 1963
 - e. Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA)
 - f. The Civil Rights Act of 1964
 - g. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

REVIEW AND REPORTING

1. This document shall be reviewed as part of the bi-annual review and reporting process, following each regular session of the Nevada Legislature. The Board of Trustees shall receive notification of any required changes to the policy as well as an audit of the accompanying governing documents.
2. Administrative regulations, and/or other associated documents, will be developed as necessary to implement this policy.
3. Incidents, types and the prevalence of interventions for bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment, and intimidation will be recorded and reported to the Board of Trustees on or about January 1 and June 30 of each year.
4. The District will conduct Climate and Safety Surveys with input from students, parents, and staff. The results of the Climate and Safety Surveys are provided to the Board of Trustees annually.
5. Pursuant to NRS 385.347, the District shall, on or before September 30 of each year, prepare an annual report of accountability that includes data related to bullying and cyber-bullying. Such report will be presented to the Board of Trustees prior to its submission to the Nevada Department of Education.
6. Pursuant to NRS 388.4134, this policy shall be reviewed on an annual basis, and updated when necessary. Should the policy be updated, a copy shall be submitted to the Nevada Department of Education within 30 days after the update.

REVISION HISTORY

Date	Revision	Modification
4/03/2012	1.0	Adopted
2/11/2014	2.0	Revised: pursuant to changes during the 2013 Legislative Session (SB164, SB414, SB427)
7-14-2015	3.0	Revised: pursuant to changes during the 2015 Legislative Session (SB504)