

HARASSMENT AND/OR AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR INCLUDING BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING AND DATING VIOLENCE

The Board of Education encourages the promotion of positive interpersonal relations between members of the school community. Harassment and/or Aggressive Behavior including Bullying/Cyber bullying toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited. This prohibition includes written, physical, verbal, graphic, psychological, and/or electronically transmitted acts, which create a hostile, intimidating, and/or offensive learning environment. The Board of Education will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, and/or actions, which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm and/or personal degradation.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT may include, but is not limited to:

- Verbal harassment or abuse.
- Pressure for sexual activity.
- Repeated remarks with sexual and/or demeaning implications.
- Unwelcome touching.
- Sexual jokes, posters, cartoons, etc.
- Suggesting and/or demanding sexual involvement, accompanied by implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades and/or safety.
- A pattern of conduct, which can be subtle in nature, that has sexual overtones and is intended to create or has the effect of creating discomfort and/or humiliation to another.
- Remarks speculating about a person's sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one's sexual activities or sexual history.

HARASSMENT ON THE BASIS OF RACE, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, RELIGION, GENDER, DISABILITY, OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION, may take different forms, including, but not limited to the following:

- **VERBAL:**
The making of offensive written or oral innuendoes, comments, jokes, insults, threats, or disparaging remarks concerning a person's race, color, national origin, religious beliefs, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.
- **NON-VERBAL:**
Placing offensive objects, pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment or making insulting and/or threatening gestures based upon a person's race, color, national origin, religious beliefs, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.
- **PHYSICAL:**
Any intimidating or disparaging action such as hitting, punching, shoving, hissing, spitting, on or by a fellow school employee, student, or third parties, based upon the person's race, color, national origin, religious beliefs, gender, disability, or sexual orientation.

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR:

Is defined as inappropriate conduct that is repeated enough and/or serious enough to negatively influence a student's educational, physical, and/or emotional wellbeing. This type of behavior is a form of intimidation and harassment, although it need not be based on any of the legally protected characteristics, such as sex, race, color, marital status, or disability. It would include, but is not limited to, menacing, coercion, name-calling, taunting, making threats, and hazing.

CYBERBULLYING:

Is defined as the use of information and communication technologies, such as email, cell phone, instant messaging, defamatory personal websites, social networking sites, and/or defamatory online personal polling websites, to support deliberate, repeated, and/or hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm others. The use of the school's network to engage in cyber bullying is prohibited. Cyber bullying includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Posting slurs, rumors, and/or other disparaging remarks about school employees or students on a website or on a web blog.
- Sending email or instant messages that are mean and/or threatening, or so numerous as to cause the victim emotional distress.
- Using a camera phone to take and/or send embarrassing photographs/recordings of students or school employees or post these images on picture sharing or video sharing websites.
- Posting misleading and/or fake photographs of school employees or students on any websites.

- To the extent permitted by the First Amendment, instances of Cyber bullying off school grounds that disrupt the school environment or interfere with the learning process, will be considered violations of the Student Code of Conduct.

HARASSMENT REPORTING PROCEDURES

Any student who believes that he/she is the victim of any of the above actions or has observed such actions by another student, school employee, or third party, should contact the Discipline Office.

The Discipline Office is available during school hours to discuss a student's concerns related to harassment and/or bullying/cyber bullying, to assist a student who seeks support or advice when informing another individual about "unwelcome" conduct, or to intercede informally on behalf of the student.

The student may report their concerns to the Discipline Office either by written report, telephone, or by a personal visit. In reporting their concerns, the student should provide the name of the person(s) who he/she believes to be responsible for the harassment and or bullying/cyber bullying and the nature of the harassing and/or bullying/cyber bullying incident(s).

Complaints will be acted on by an investigation conducted by the Discipline Officer in a timely and confidential manner after the signed complaint has been filed. If the investigation reveals that any harassment and/or bullying/cyber bullying is valid, appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action will be taken promptly to prevent the continuance of the harassment and/or bullying/cyber bullying or its recurrence.

Given the nature of harassing and/or bullying/cyber bullying behavior, the school recognizes that false accusations can have serious effects on innocent individuals. Therefore, all students are expected to act responsibly, honestly, and with the utmost candor whenever they present harassment and/or bullying/cyber bullying allegations or charges. False accusations may result in disciplinary measures against the accuser.

Retaliation against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participated in an investigation or inquiry concerning allegations of harassment and /or aggressive behavior is prohibited. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation and independent of whether a harassment and/or bullying/cyber bullying complaint is filed. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as harassment or aggressive behavior.