
AURORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
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APS Code: JBC

PREVENTION OF BULLYING

The Board of Education recognizes the negative impact that bullying has on student health, welfare and safety and on the learning environment at school. Bullying prevention efforts will be utilized in Aurora Public Schools through school-wide, classroom, and/or individual measures. All programs and efforts will communicate that bullying is not acceptable behavior and will not be tolerated.

Bullying by students is prohibited on all district property, at district or school-related activities, in district vehicles, and off school property when such conduct has a connection to school or any district curricular or noncurricular activity.

Bullying may imply an imbalance of power or strength in which one student is victimized by others. Students who are exposed to the negative actions generally have difficulty defending themselves and in specific situations may be helpless against the student or students who harass. Friendly or playful teasing may be considered bullying when such repeated behaviors continue despite clear signs of distress and opposition on the part of the victim.

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DEFINITION

"Bullying" means any written, verbal or pictorial expression, physical act or gesture, or a pattern thereof by a student that is intended to cause distress upon one or more students and is sufficiently severe that it has the effect of:

1. creating an intimidating, hostile, or significantly offensive environment for the learning or performance of school-sanctioned activities of any student; or
2. unreasonably interfering with or disrupting the educational performance or participation in any other school-sanctioned activity of any student.

EXAMPLES OF BULLYING

Examples of acts that may constitute bullying include:

- derogatory written or pictorial communications in any media (e.g., letters, notes, voice mail, text messages, pager messages, newspaper articles, invitations, posters, photos, cartoons);
- derogatory verbal comments (e.g., name-calling, taunting, hostile teasing, spreading rumors, epithets, jokes, or slurs);
- threats of force or violence against a person's body, possessions or residence (e.g., obtaining food or money by threats of force); or
- physical conduct (e.g., provocative gestures, overly rough horseplay, restricting freedom of action or movement, violence, defacing or destruction of property).

CYBERBULLYING

Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging, defamatory personal Web sites, and defamatory online personal polling Web sites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group that is intended to harm others.

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated and will constitute the same levels of disciplinary action as other

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types of bullying.

RESPONSES TO BULLYING

All administrators, teachers, classified staff and students share the responsibility to ensure that bullying does not occur at any district school, on district property, at district or school-related activities, in any district vehicle, and/or off school property when such conduct has a connection to school or any district curricular or noncurricular activity or event. Toward that end:

- All students who believe they have been victims of bullying in any such circumstance shall immediately report it to an administrator or teacher at their school.
- All students who witness student bullying in any such circumstance shall immediately report it to an administrator or teacher at their school.
- All building administrators and teachers who have any incident of bullying reported to them shall promptly forward the report(s) to the principal or principal's designee for appropriate action.
- All principals, administrators, teachers and classified staff who witness student bullying in any such circumstance shall immediately take appropriate action to stop the bullying, as prescribed by the district and building principal, and shall promptly report the bullying to the principal or principal's designee for appropriate action.
- Each building principal or principal's designee shall ensure that all reports involving student bullying in any such circumstance are promptly and thoroughly investigated, and that appropriate action is taken.
- Each building principal or principal's designee shall contact law enforcement officials, as appropriate.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION FOR BULLYING

In determining the appropriate action to be taken in response to incidents of student bullying, the building principal or principal's designee shall consider existing policies and regulations that address the type of conduct that may be involved in bullying. Such policies and regulations include, but are

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not limited to, JBB, JBB-R (Racial and Sexual Harassment), JICC, JICC-R (Student Conduct on Buses), JICF, JICF-R (Secret Societies/Gang Activity), JICI (Weapons in School), JK.1, JK.1-R (District Conduct and Discipline Code), JKD.1 and JKD.1-R (Disciplinary Classroom Removal by Teacher (Suspension from Class)). Any necessary discipline shall be imposed pursuant to existing policies.

In deciding on appropriate discipline, the circumstances surrounding the behavior, the severity of the conduct, and whether the conduct represents a pattern should be considered. Administrators shall also be mindful of the principles set forth in the District Philosophy Statement on Student Discipline (Policy ADH), including the concept that the discipline process should be instructive and corrective and that its focus should be on helping the student to change or control inappropriate behavior, rather than on punishment. In making determinations under this policy, due consideration will be given to the rights to freedom of expression of public school students under federal and state law.

Disciplinary consequences for student bullying may include suspension, expulsion and/or classroom suspension. In addition, the building principal shall consider other actions, which may be appropriate in response to student bullying, including but not limited to:

BULLYING PREVENTION EFFORTS

Bullying prevention efforts are most effective when implemented schoolwide and are designed to send a message that bullying will not be tolerated in schools. Well-designed bullying prevention efforts can reduce, eliminate and prevent bully/victim problems, as well as significantly improve the overall school climate. Effective bullying prevention also requires a commitment on the part of all adults to reduce or eliminate bullying.

Effective prevention programs rely on a number of components to reduce and prevent bullying problems. Components may be implemented at the school level, the classroom level, or at the individual level. The use of particular components may vary according to maturity level of students, grade level, learning environment goal(s) for the school, etc.

Taking action at school, classroom and individual levels is vital to counteract any bully/victim problems. In this way, students will be exposed to consistent messages from different persons/sources and in different contexts regarding the district and school's views of and attitudes toward bullying.

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Monitoring data related to bullying is crucial to the bullying prevention efforts. Data may be collected and evaluated through surveys, questionnaires, analyzing discipline statistics, and data for the learning environment goal(s) in the annual school improvement plan.

LEGAL REFS: C.R.S. 22-32-109.1

CROSS REFS: ADH, District Philosophy Statement on Student Discipline
JBB, JBB-R, Sexual and Racial Harassment
JICC, JICC-R, Student Conduct on Buses
JICF, JICF-R, Secret Societies/Gang Activity
JICI, Weapons in School
JK.1, JK.1-R, Student Discipline – District Conduct and Discipline Code
JKD.1 and JKD.1-R, Disciplinary Classroom Removal by Teacher