



## USD 110 BULLYING POLICY

The board of education prohibits bullying in any form on school property, in a school vehicle or at a school-sponsored activity or event. The administration has proposed, and the board has reviewed and approved the following plan to address bullying on school property, in a school vehicle or at a school-sponsored activity or event.

Students who have bullied others in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and expulsion. If appropriate, students who violate the bullying prohibition shall be reported to local law enforcement.

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- **An Imbalance of Power:** Students who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, physical gestures, attacking someone physically, verbally or written, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Some bullying situations can be very linear and easily addressed. Other situations are more complex because of the situation and personalities involved. The more complex the more time it may take to resolve. The effort in the more time intensive situations will be to ensure the reporter that they are supported and safe.

### Steps to address Bullying:

All bullying reports will be documented on the bullying report form. The form will ask the student to describe the situation and name all students that were involved or witnessed the bullying activity. The student may verbalize it to the counselor and they can log it into the system.

Student report:

- The student will report to the counselor, who will investigate, either through consultation with staff or administration, to decide on the appropriate action. Not all reports will require action, but every situation will be documented as well as the action taken (or no action). If the situation requires staff awareness, staff will be notified to take notice. Staff will report if bullying is observed or reported.

### Two types of reports:

**Actionable** - With permission from the reporter, the counselor will have a conversation with the reported bully. Resolution will be pursued. If no

resolution is needed (just a conversation) it will be documented as such. The counselor will consult with the reporter at a later date to ensure all is well. If the situation is more problematic, is not possible to resolve at the counselor level, and needs further investigation, it will be referred to the principal. The principal will investigate. Parents will be notified by phone, email and/or letter. Resolution will continue to be pursued, but if there is no resolve, the principal will exercise options ranging from issuing a cease and desist email, disciplinary action, professional external counseling to or recommending parents contact police. Note: The district will not pay for external counseling and parents should not interpret a conversation about counseling as an agreement for the district to cover the cost.

**Monitoring with possible action** - Because the student cannot be protected by the school 24 hours a day and an extreme imbalance of power, the student may not be comfortable bringing the situation out in the open. If needed, parents may be consulted to decide if the issue can be brought out to gain resolution. If not, the counselor and principal, with the aid of all staff will continue to monitor the situation. ALL staff will be made aware to monitor.

The principal will guide the process from this point. Depending on how it moves forward the principal may use any form of action as described previously in this document they see as necessary to support all involved and achieve resolution.

## **CYBERBULLYING**

Cyberbullying is when a child, preteen or teen is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another child, preteen or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technology or mobile phones. It has to have a minor on both sides, or at least have been instigated by a minor against another minor. Once adults become involved, it is plain and simple cyberharassment or cyberstalking. Adult cyberharassment or cyberstalking is NEVER called cyberbullying.

The methods used are limited only by the child's imagination and access to technology. And the cyberbully one moment may become the victim the next. The kids often change roles, going from victim to bully and back again.

Cyberbullying is usually not a one-time communication, unless it involves a death threat or credible threat of serious bodily harm. Kids usually know it when they see it, while parents may be more worried about the lewd language used by the kids than the hurtful effect of rude and embarrassing posts.

Cyberbullying may arise to the level of a misdemeanor cyberharassment charge, or if the child is young enough may result in the charge of juvenile delinquency. Most of the time the cyberbullying does not go that far, although parents often try and pursue criminal charges. It typically can result in a child losing their computer access as a terms of service violation. And in some cases, if hacking or password and identity theft is involved, it can be a serious criminal matter under state and federal law.