



**NORTH ALLEGHENY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

SECTION:	PUPILS
TITLE:	ANTI-BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING
ADOPTED:	8/19/15
REVISED:	05/23/2018

249 - ANTI-BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING POLICY

Section 1. Regulations

The North Allegheny School District is committed to providing all students and employees with the right to a safe and civil educational environment, free from harassment or bullying, in accordance with 22 Pa .Code § 12.3 (c). It is the intent of the North Allegheny School District Board of School Directors to provide all students with an equitable opportunity to learn. The District recognizes that bullying interferes with the learning process and may present an obstacle to the academic, vocational, and social/emotional development of students. To that end, the Board has a significant interest in providing a safe, orderly, and respectful school environment that is conducive to teaching and learning.

Section 2. Definitions

a. **Bullying** shall be defined as an intentional and unwelcome electronic (cyber), written, verbal, psychological, or physical act, or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting and/or outside of a school setting, are severe, persistent, or pervasive and ~~that~~ has the effects of doing any of the following:

1. Substantially interfering with education opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more students;
2. Creation of a threatening environment; or
3. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying, as defined in this Policy, also includes cyberbullying. Bullying consists of a pattern of repeated, harmful behavior by a person with more physical or social power toward a less powerful person. This may include a wide variety of behaviors, with deliberate intent to hurt, embarrass, or humiliate the other person. Researchers have identified four (4) forms of bullying:

1. Physical – the most commonly known forms include hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, and taking personal belongings.

SC1303.1-A

2. Verbal – includes taunting, malicious teasing, name-calling, and making threats.
3. Psychological or Relational – involves spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, and engaging in social exclusion or intimidation.
4. Cyberbullying – involves haranguing by spreading mean words, lies and false rumors through email, text messages, and social media posts.

Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to, physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student; damaging, extorting, or taking a student’s property; placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional, or mental harm; placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student’s education opportunities; or perpetuation of conduct by an individual or group, with the intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or incite a student. It is directed at another student or group of students that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race; color; intellect; religion; ancestry; national origin; gender; sexual orientation; gender identity and expression; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability.

- b. **Communicates** - conveys a message without intent of legitimate communication or address by oral, nonverbal, written, or electronic means, including telephone, cell phones, smart phones, personal digital communication devices, electronic mail, Internet, facsimile, telex, wireless communication, instant messaging, blogs, interactive and digital technologies, or similar transmission.
- c. **Course of Conduct** - a pattern of conduct composed of two or more acts, evidencing a continuity of purpose.
- d. **Cyber-Bullying** - includes any form of verbal or psychological bullying that may occur on the Internet through social media. Cyber-bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher, or employee of the District by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or web site postings including any social networking accounts, for example, blogs. All forms of cyberbullying are unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive of the educational process of the District, offenders shall be the subject of appropriate discipline, which may include legal and/or police proceedings.
- e. **Cyber Harassment of a Child** – A person commits the crime of cyber harassment of a child if, with intent to harass, annoy, or alarm, the person engages in a continuing course of conduct of making any of the following by electronic means directly to a child or by publication through an electronic

<p>SC 1303.1A</p>	<p>social media service: (i) seriously disparaging statement or opinion about the child’s physical characteristics, sexuality, sexual activity, or mental or physical health or condition; or (ii) threatens to inflict harm.</p> <p>f. Emotional Distress - A temporary or permanent state of mental anguish.</p> <p>g. Family or Household Member - Spouses or persons who have been spouses; persons living as spouses or who lived as spouses, parents, and children; other persons related by consanguinity or affinity; current or former sexual or intimate partners or persons who share biological parenthood.</p> <p>h. School Setting - shall mean in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop, or during any activity sponsored, supervised, or sanctioned by the school and/or District and on the way to and from school.</p> <p>i. Seriously Disparaging Statement or Opinion - A statement or opinion which is intended to and under the circumstances is reasonably likely to cause substantial emotional distress to a child of the victim's age and which produces some physical manifestation of the distress.</p> <p>Section 3. <u>Authority</u></p>
<p>SC 1303.1-A</p>	<p>a. The Board prohibits all forms of bullying by District students in all school settings. The Board also prohibits all forms of bullying by District students in non-school settings, and will enforce consequences provided under this policy to acts of bullying occurring in a non-school setting to the fullest extent permitted by law if those acts meet the definition of bullying.</p>
<p>SC1303.1-A</p>	<p>b. The Board encourages students who have been bullied to promptly report such incidents.</p>
<p>SC 1303.1-A</p>	<p>c. Students shall be encouraged to report bullying and cyberbullying complaints to the building administrator(s) or other District employees.</p> <p>d. The Board directs that complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when allegations are verified. If the behavior is found to meet the definition of bullying, written documentation shall be submitted to the building administrator. The building principal or designee will inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the victim and person accused according to the Code of Conduct. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the District’s legal and investigative obligations. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith reports of bullying.</p>

SC 1303.1-A
 Title 22
 Sec 12.3
 Pol. 218, 233

Section 4. Delegation of Responsibility

- a. Each staff member shall be responsible to maintain an educational environment free of bullying and cyberbullying.
- b. Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying.
- c. The Superintendent or designee shall develop Administrative Procedures to implement this policy.
- d. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that this policy and Administrative Procedures are reviewed annually with students.
- e. The North Allegheny School District will review this Policy every three (3) years and recommend necessary revisions to the Board.
- f. The North Allegheny School District will provide the Office of Safe Schools on an annual basis the following information with the Safe School Report:
 - 1. Board’s Anti-Bullying/Cyberbullying Policy;
 - 2. Report of bullying/cyberbullying incidents; and.
 - 3. Information on the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention, or education programs.

SC 1302-A
 SC 1303. 1-A

Section 5. Guidelines

- a. The Anti-Bullying Policy will be incorporated into the District’s Code of Student Conduct and shall be disseminated annually to students.
- b. The North Allegheny School District shall post the Anti-Bullying Policy in a prominent location where such notices are usually posted within each school building and on the District website.
- c. Each building level administrator will ensure that the Policy and procedures for reporting bullying incidents are reviewed with students within ninety (90) days after their adoption and thereafter at least once each school year.
- d. Students shall be directed to report bullying complaints to District employees, and the procedures for doing so will be explained to them. Employees are then responsible for following the Administrative Procedure #249 pertaining to this Policy to address complaints received. The report will be forwarded to the building principal.

SC 1303.1-A
 Act 26 of 2015

Section 6. Education

The District may develop and implement bullying prevention and intervention programs. Such programs shall provide District staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Section 7. Consequences for Violation

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the District Code of Student Conduct which may include, but shall not be limited to:

1. Parental conference.
2. Counseling services and/or education activities.
3. Recommendation for counseling/therapy outside of school.
4. Referral to Student Assistance Program.
5. Transfer to another classroom or school bus.
6. Loss of school privileges.
7. Exclusion from school-sponsored activities.
8. Detention.
9. In- or out-of-school suspension.
10. Transfer to an outside of District placement.
11. In- or out-of-school suspension.
12. Referral to law enforcement officials. If convicted, cyber harassment of a child is a third-degree criminal misdemeanor in Pennsylvania punishable by a maximum \$2,500 fine and/or one year in prison.
13. Expulsion.

References:

Act 26 of 2015

Board Policy 218, 233

School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 1302-A, 1303.1-A

State Board of Education Regulations – 22 PA Code Sec. 12.3