

Prohibition of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

The District is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students, employees, parents/legal guardians, volunteers and patrons that is free from harassment, intimidation, bullying or retaliation. Harassment, intimidation, bullying or retaliation is prohibited and will not be tolerated by students or employees of the Bremerton School District. “Harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any intentionally written message or image – including those that are electronically transmitted - verbal or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by any characteristic in RCW 28A.640.010 and 28A.642.010 or other distinguishing characteristics, when an act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student’s property;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education;
- Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment;
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

This policy recognizes that ‘harassment’, ‘intimidation,’ and ‘bullying’ are separate but related behaviors. Each must be addressed appropriately. Nothing in this section requires the affected student to actually possess a characteristic that is a basis for the harassment, intimidation, bullying.

“Other distinguishing characteristics” can include but are not limited to: physical appearance, clothing or other apparel, socioeconomic status; and weight.

“Intentional acts” refers to the individual’s choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s).

Behavior/Expressions

Harassment refers to any malicious act, which causes harm to any person’s physical or mental well-being. It can be discriminatory harassment, malicious harassment, or sexual harassment.

Intimidation refers to implied or overt threats of physical violence.

Bullying refers to unwanted aggressive behavior(s) by another youth or group of youths that involves an observed or perceived power imbalance and is repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated. Bullying may inflict harm or distress on the targeted youth including physical, psychological, social, or educational harm. Bullying can also occur through technology and is called electronic bullying or cyberbullying

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying can take many forms including, but not limited to, slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendoes, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats or other written, oral, physical or electronically transmitted messages or images.

This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the educational environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment, intimidation or bullying may still be prohibited by other District policies or building, classroom, or program rules.

Training

This policy is a component of the District's responsibility to create and maintain a safe, civil, respectful and inclusive learning community and is to be implemented in conjunction with comprehensive training of staff and volunteers. Specific training requirements are included in the accompanying procedure.

Prevention

The District will provide students with strategies aimed at preventing harassment, intimidation and bullying. In its efforts to train students, the District will seek partnerships with families, law enforcement and other community agencies.

Interventions

Interventions are designed to remediate the impact on the targeted student(s) and others impacted by the violation, to change the behavior of the perpetrator, and to restore a positive school climate. The District will consider the frequency of incidents, developmental age of the student, and severity of the conduct in determining intervention strategies. Interventions will range from counseling, correcting behavior and discipline, to law enforcement referrals.

Students with Individual Education Plans or Section 504 Plans

If allegations are proven that a student with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Section 504 Plan has been the aggressor or target of harassment, intimidation or bullying, the school will convene the student's IEP or Section 504 team to determine whether the incident had an impact on the student's ability to receive a free, appropriate public education (FAPE). The meeting should occur regardless of whether the harassment, intimidation or bullying incident was based on the student's disability. During the meeting, the team will evaluate issues such as the student's academic performance, behavioral issues, attendance, and participation in extracurricular activities. If a determination is made that the student is not receiving a FAPE as a result of the harassment, intimidation or bullying incident, the District will provide additional services and supports as deemed necessary, such as counseling, monitoring and/or reevaluation or revision of the student's IEP or Section 504 plan, to ensure the student receives a FAPE.

Retaliation/False Allegations

Retaliation is prohibited and will result in appropriate discipline. It is a violation of this policy to threaten or harm someone for reporting harassment, intimidation, or bullying or participating in an investigation.

It is also a violation of District policy to knowingly report false allegations of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Students or employees will not be disciplined for making a report in

good faith. However, persons found to knowingly report or corroborate false allegations will be subject to appropriate discipline.

Compliance Officer

The superintendent will appoint a compliance officer as the primary district contact to receive copies of all formal and informal complaints and ensure policy implementation. The name and contact information for the compliance officer will be communicated throughout the District. The District compliance officer will participate in at least one mandatory training opportunity offered by OSPI.

The superintendent is authorized to direct the implementation of procedures addressing the elements of this policy.

Legal Reference:	RCW 28A.300.285	Harassment, intimidation and bullying prevention policies
Cross References:	Policy 2161 Policy 3200 Policy 3210 Policy 3211 Policy 3240 Policy 3241 Policy 6590	Special Education and Related Services Rights and Responsibilities Nondiscrimination Gender-Inclusive Schools Student Conduct Classroom Management, Corrective Action and Punishment Sexual Harassment
Management Resources:	Office for Civil Rights Dear Colleague Letter: Responding to Bullying of Students with Disabilities (OCR 10/21/2014) <i>Policy News</i> , December 2014 Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy Strengthened Office for Civil Rights Dear Colleague Letter: Responding to Bullying of Students w/Disabilities (OCR 10/21/2014)	

Bremerton School District

Adopted:	06/19/03		
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