

The Oakwood School Anti-Bullying Policy

Oakwood School's Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy

Anti-Bullying Coordinator: Mr. Christopher Farrell

Anti-Bullying Specialist: Mrs. Coleen Bock

Policy Statement

The Oakwood School prohibits acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying, we also promote the use of Famedwriting, which is a kid's help site for those students who have a hard time finishing assignments. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for pupils to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a pupil's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate its pupils in a safe environment. Since pupils learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers should be commended for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Definition

"Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any gesture, written, verbal or physical act that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, over the phone or internet or on a school bus, and that:

Is motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as but not limited to race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability; or

By any other distinguishing characteristic; and

A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of harming a pupil or damaging the pupil's property, or placing a pupil in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or damage to his/her property; or

Has the effect of insulting or demeaning any pupil or group of pupils in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school, or by the victim's participation in school.

Acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may also be a pupil exercising power and control over another pupil, in either isolated incidents (e.g., intimidation, harassment) or patterns of harassing or intimidating behavior (e.g., bullying).

Expected Behavior

Oakwood School expects pupils to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity and demonstrated capabilities with proper regard for the rights and

welfare of other pupils and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment.

Oakwood School believes that standards for pupil behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the pupils, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), staff and community members, producing an atmosphere that encourages pupils to grow in self-discipline. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for school district and community property on the part of pupils, staff and community members.

Oakwood School believes the best discipline is self-imposed, and it is the responsibility of the Oakwood School staff to use disciplinary situations as opportunities to help pupils learn to assume and accept responsibility for their behavior and the consequences of their behavior. Staff members who interact with pupils shall apply the best practices designed to prevent discipline problems and encourage pupils' abilities to grow in self-discipline.

General guidelines for pupil conduct will be developed by the Executive Director or his designee, in conjunction with school staff, and approved by the Board of Directors.

Oakwood School prohibits active and passive support for harassment, intimidation or cyber bullying statistics, pupils are encouraged to support other pupils who walk away from these acts when they see them, constructively attempt to stop them, and report these acts to the Principal or his/her designee.

Pupils are required to conform to reasonable standards of socially acceptable behavior; respect the person, property and rights of others; obey constituted authority; and respond to school district teaching, support and administrative staff. The Principal will develop and provide a school-based program for appropriate recognition for positive reinforcement for good conduct, self-discipline, good citizenship and academic success.

The Executive Director or his/her designee will provide annually to pupils and their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) the rules of the district regarding pupil conduct, pupil's due process and other rights. This Policy will appear in all publications of Oakwood School's comprehensive rules, procedures and standards of conduct for our school, including pupil handbooks. Provisions will be made for informing parent(s) or legal guardian(s) whose primary language is other than English.

Consequences and Appropriate Remedial Actions

The following factors will be considered in determining the appropriate response to pupils who commit one or more acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying:

The developmental and maturity levels of the parties involved

The levels of harm

The surrounding circumstances

The nature of the behavior(s)

Past incidences or continuing patterns of behavior

The relationships between the parties involved

The context in which the alleged incidents occurred

Concluding whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all of the facts and surrounding circumstances.

An appropriate consequence will be determined after meaningful consideration of these factors. Consequences and appropriate remedial action for pupils who commit acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may range from counseling interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion. The appropriate consequence will be consistent with case law, Federal and State statutes, and Oakwood School policies and regulations.

Reporting Procedures

Complaints alleging violations of this Policy shall be reported to the Principal or his/her designee. All school employees are required to report alleged violations of this Policy to the Principal or his/her designee. All other members of the school community, including pupils, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), volunteers and visitors are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this Policy. Submission of an Incident Report Form to the Principal or his/her designee is required. The Incident Report Form is available from the Principal or available at the school office. Oral reports will also be considered official reports. Oral Reports must be followed in writing using the appropriate form filled out by the individual receiving the oral report. Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action may not be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Investigation

The Principal or his/her designee is responsible for determining whether an alleged act constitutes a violation of this Policy. The Principal or his/her designee shall conduct a prompt, thorough and complete investigation of the alleged incident. The Principal or his/her designee will maintain a record of each investigation regarding allegations of harassment, intimidation and bullying.

Response to an Incident of Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying

Some acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying may be isolated incidents requiring the school to respond appropriately to the individual(s) committing the acts. Other acts may be so serious or part of a larger pattern of harassment, intimidation or bullying that require a response either at the classroom, school building or by law enforcement officials.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for pupils who commit an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying range from counseling interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as permitted under N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1, Discipline of Pupils.

In considering whether a response beyond the individual level is appropriate, the administrator will consider the factors on page 3-5 of this policy. Oakwood School's responses can range from school and community surveys, to mailings, to focus groups, to adoption of research-based bullying prevention program models, to training for certificated and non-certificated staff. Oakwood School's responses may include participation of parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and other community members and organizations, to small or large group presentations for fully addressing the actions and the school district's response to the actions in the context of acceptable student behavior or the consequences of such actions and involvement of law enforcement officers, including school resource officers.

Reprisal or Retaliation Prohibited

Oakwood School prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying. The consequence and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the Principal or his/her designee after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, in accordance with case law, Federal and State statutes and regulations and Oakwood School and procedures.

Consequences for False Accusation

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a pupil found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation or bullying range from counseling interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, as permitted under N.J.S.A. 18A:37-1, Discipline or Pupils.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a school employee found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be disciplined in accordance with Oakwood School policies and procedures.

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for a visitor or volunteer, found to have falsely accused another as a means of harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be determined by the Principal or his/her designee, after consideration of the nature and circumstances of the act, including reports to appropriate law enforcement officials.

Policy Publication

This Policy will be disseminated annually to all school staff, pupils, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), along with a statement explaining that the Policy applies to all acts of harassment,

intimidation and bullying that occur on school property, at school-sponsored functions or on a school bus.

The Executive Director or his/her designee shall develop a process for the Principal to discuss the school's policy on harassment, intimidation and bullying with pupils on an annual basis.

Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Prevention Programs

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-17.c., information regarding the Oakwood School's Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying Policy shall be incorporated into a school's employee training program.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-17.a., Oakwood School will establish bullying prevention programs, and other initiatives involving school staff, pupils, administrators, volunteers, parent(s) or legal guardian(s), law enforcement and community members in developing such programs and initiatives.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-17.b., Oakwood School is encouraged to, and to the extent funds are appropriated for these purposes, provide training on the Oakwood School's harassment, intimidation and bullying policies to school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with pupils and develop a process for discussing Oakwood School 's harassment, intimidation and bullying policies with pupils.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:37-19, the Oakwood School may apply to the Commissioner of Education for additional costs due to the implementation of the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:37-13 through N.J.S.A. 18A:37-18.