

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY FOR STUDENTS

The Board of Trustees of the Jackson Public School District intends to provide all students with an equitable opportunity to learn. The Board of Trustees has a significant interest in providing a safe, orderly, and respectful school environment that is conducive to student learning.

It shall be against District policy for any student to engage in bullying or harassing behavior that includes, but is not limited to, bullying or harassing behavior that is based on race, religion, sex, creed or color, national origin, physical appearance, physical appearance, gender identity, ancestry, academic status, behavior, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics, or other actual or perceived differentiating characteristics. Such behavior will not be condoned by the District. Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, that takes place on District property, at any District-sponsored function, or on a school bus that:

- (1) Places a student or District employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or
- (2) Creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits or an employee's work performance, opportunities, or benefits. A hostile environment means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Bullying or harassing behavior that takes place off District property will not be condoned or tolerated by the District when such conduct, in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, renders the offending person's presence in the classroom a disruption to the educational environment of the school, or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a whole.

Some examples of bullying include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling, taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student and employee movement, or unwelcome physical contact.
- B. Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name calling, making threats, or telephone calls.

- C. Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation.
- D. Cyberbullying – the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, cell phone text messages, instant messaging, defamatory personal websites, computers, other electronic devices, and defamatory online personal polling websites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to harm, humiliate, tease, intimidate, or harass others.

The District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no student or District employee is subjected to bullying or harassment by other persons students.

#### **Retaliation:**

It shall be against District policy for any student or District employee to engage in any act of intimidation, reprisal or retaliation against a victim, witness or a person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior. As such, the District shall make every reasonable effort to ensure that no student or District employee engages in any act of intimidation, reprisal or retaliation against a victim, witness or a person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior. No retaliation against the victim, witness, or any person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior is permitted.

#### **Reporting:**

The District requires all its employees, and strongly encourages anyone else who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or District employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior, to report the incident to the appropriate school official.

The District has enacted procedures for reporting, investigating, and addressing bullying and harassing behaviors.

#### **Education and Training:**

In support of this policy, the Board of Trustees promotes preventative and intervention educational measures to create greater awareness of bullying and harassing behavior. This policy and its accompanying procedures shall be printed in the code of conduct handbook, each school's employee handbook, and in the policy manual. The superintendent or designee shall provide appropriate training to all students and District employees related to the implementation of this policy and procedures. All training regarding this policy and its procedures will be age and content appropriate.

#### **Disciplinary Actions:**

Students who engage in bullying or harassing behaviors or retaliation are subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the code of conduct handbook. The discipline policies and procedures must recognize the fundamental right of every student to take "reasonable actions" as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through

bullying or harassing. Furthermore, the Jackson Public School District defines “reasonable action” as promptly reporting the behavior to a teacher, principal, counselor, or other school employee when subjected to bullying or harassing behavior. District employees who engage in bullying or harassing behaviors or retaliation are subject to disciplinary actions up to and including termination.

SOURCE: National School Boards Association  
Mississippi School Boards Association

LEGAL REF.: ~~\_\_\_\_\_~~Senate Bill 2015  
Miss. Code Ann. §37-7-301(e)

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