



Dallastown Area School District Bullying 101

The Dallastown Area School District is committed to providing a physically safe and emotionally secure environment for all students and staff. Local school policies assist school personnel in identifying bullying, intimidation, and harassment, and provide a framework for an appropriate response that reinforces and encourages positive conduct. The district defines positive behaviors as those which evoke non-violence, cooperation, teamwork, understanding, and acceptance toward all students and staff in the learning and teaching environment. It takes a community to prevent bullying of children. Stopping bullying behavior needs a team of school people, students, and families. Together we can all intervene to stop bullying behaviors.

What is Bullying?

1. It is aggressive behavior with the intent to do harm.
2. It happens when one or more persons with more power unfairly and intentionally hurt someone with less power; the hurt may be physical, social or emotional.
3. It is carried out repeatedly and over time.

Our definition of bullying behaviors:

Bullying shall mean an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act or series of acts:

1. directed at another student or students;
2. that is severe, persistent or pervasive; and,
3. that has the effect of doing any of the following:
 - a. substantially interfering with a student's education;
 - b. creating a threatening environment; or,
 - c. substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school; and "school setting" shall mean in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop, or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

What to Do When Your Child is Bullied

- Offer your support to your child. Let him/her know you will be discussing this matter with the school. Try to alleviate worries about this.
- Communicate with the school about your suspicions.
- In your discussion with staff, try to give helpful information: who is involved? what happened, etc.
- Form a partnership with the school to solve the issue together.

What to Do When Your Child Bullies Others

- Listen to the school's concerns.
- The most helpful thing you can do is to allow your child to experience the consequences set forth by the school.
- Decrease influence of violence (i.e., video games, role models the child has who display aggressive behaviors, etc.).
- Research shows that children who bully lack empathy (ability to understand how someone feels). Do what you can to build your child's skills around understanding how others feel about or are affected by their behavior (both negative and positive).

Who to Contact for Help

Staff are available at each school to assist you and your child. We want to help—communication from you is vital.

When an investigation substantiates that bullying has occurred, the building principal or assistant principal shall inform staff who work with the offending student and the victim about the bullying so that they can more closely monitor the students for future incidents of bullying. The primary purpose of such action is to protect the victim and deter such behavior in the future. The disciplinary action imposed on the offender will match the severity of the offense.

Preventive Measures

Teachers, counselors, specialists, and school administrators will routinely discuss bullying with students and will provide appropriate examples to assist students with recognizing, identifying, and reporting bullying incidents. All students shall be informed that bullying will not be tolerated in any form. All students shall be encouraged to report any bullying regardless of whether they are the victim or an observer.

Reporting Procedures

Victims – All students who believe they have been the victim of bullying shall promptly report the bullying incident to a teacher, counselor or building administrator.

Parents/Guardians – All parents/guardians who become aware of any bullying are encouraged to report the bullying incident(s) to a building administrator.

Witnesses – All students who witness bullying shall immediately report the bullying incident(s) to a teacher, counselor or administrator. Any teacher, counselor or administrator who witnesses bullying shall immediately intervene and take appropriate action to stop the bullying.

Teachers/Counselors – Any teacher/counselor who witnesses bullying or receives a report of bullying shall document such incident and promptly investigate the matter. Administrators shall seek to discuss the bullying incident(s) with the victim in a place where the victim feels secure. The initial discussion with the victim shall not take place in the presence of the offending student(s). If more than one (1) student is involved in perpetrating the bullying, the administrator shall talk to each of the offending students separately. After the investigation has been completed, the building principal shall take appropriate actions consistent with this policy.

Disciplinary and Other Action

If an investigation substantiates that bullying has occurred, a written record of the incident shall be placed in the file of the offending students(s). The district recognizes that parents/guardians can play an important role in educating their children and preventing bullying. Accordingly, the parents/guardians of each offending student shall be informed of any bullying incidents involving their child. Parents/Guardians of the offending students will be encouraged to attend one (1) or more conferences with an administrator to review the bullying behavior and cooperative strategies for correcting it. The building principal or designee shall also inform the victim's parents/guardians of any and all bullying incidents involving their child.

Disciplinary action shall be in accordance with board-approved district procedures and guidelines. Depending on the severity of the offense, the disciplinary action for bullying may include loss of privileges, removal from class, suspensions, and a board expulsion hearing. If the investigation has determined that the conduct rises to the level of a crime, disciplinary action may also include referral to law enforcement officials. In addition to imposing any disciplinary action, the building administrator will discuss the bullying behavior with the offending student and the parent/guardian and review why the behavior is inappropriate.

In some circumstances, mediation may be used as a viable alternative or in addition to disciplinary action when addressing a first offense of bullying. The building administrator shall consider the nature and sensitivity of the

offense in determining whether mediation is appropriate. Mediation shall not be used without the consent of the victim and their parent/guardian or where the building administrator has a concern about retaliation being perpetrated against the victim. Victims shall not be pressured into participating in mediation. The Dallastown Area Board of School Directors recognize that a severe imbalance exists between the victim and the bully and that this imbalance can make mediation an intimidating situation for the victim.

All incidents of confirmed bullying, including those that are mediated, shall be recorded in writing and placed in the offending student's discipline file.

The penalties and prohibitions in this policy are in addition to, and do not replace or supersede any related provisions in district policy prohibiting conduct such as harassment, violence, assault, and hazing.

Web Resources:

Dealing With Bullies

- ✓ <http://www.dontfeedthebully.com/dealing-w-bullies.html>
- ✓ <http://kidshealth.org/kid/feeling/emotion/bullies.html>
- ✓ <http://www.bullystoppers.com/>

Cyber Bullying Info/Tips

- ✓ <http://www.safekids.com/tips-to-stop-cyberbullying/>
- ✓ <http://www.connectsafely.org/tips-to-help-stop-cyberbullying/>
- ✓ <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/abuse/cyberbullying.htm>

For Parents

- ✓ http://www.violencepreventionworks.org/public/bullying_tips_for_parents.page
- ✓ <http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/bullying-tips-parents>