

Regulation 5131.2: Bullying

Status: ADOPTED

Original Adopted Date: 05/29/2020 | **Last Reviewed Date:** 05/29/2020

Definitions

Bullying is an unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power between individuals with the intent to cause emotional or physical harm. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or social/relational and involves repetition or potential repetition of a deliberate act.

Cyberbullying includes the electronic creation or transmission of harassing communications, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account or assuming that person's online identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

Examples of the types of conduct that may constitute bullying and are prohibited by the district include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical bullying that inflicts harm upon a person's body or possessions, such as hitting, kicking, pinching, spitting, tripping, pushing, taking or breaking someone's possessions, or making cruel or rude hand gestures
2. Verbal bullying that includes saying or writing hurtful things, such as teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, or threats to cause harm
3. Social/relational bullying that harms a person's reputation or relationships, such as leaving a person out of an activity on purpose, influencing others not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors, or embarrassing someone in public
4. Cyberbullying, such as sending demeaning or hateful text messages or emails, sending rumors by email or by posting on social networking sites, or posting embarrassing photos, videos, web site, or fake profiles

Measures to Prevent Bullying

The Superintendent or designee shall implement measures to prevent bullying in district schools, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Ensuring that each school establishes clear rules for student conduct and implements strategies to promote a positive, collaborative school climate
2. Providing to students, through student handbooks and other age-appropriate means, information about district and school rules related to bullying, mechanisms available for reporting incidents or threats, and the consequences for engaging in bullying
3. Encouraging students to notify school staff when they are being bullied or when they suspect that another student is being bullied, and providing means by which students may report threats or incidents confidentially and anonymously
4. Conducting an assessment of bullying incidents at each school and, if necessary, increasing supervision and security in areas where bullying most often occurs, such as classrooms, playgrounds, hallways, restrooms, and cafeterias
5. Annually notifying district employees that, pursuant to Education Code 234.1, any school staff who witnesses an act of bullying against a student has a responsibility to immediately intervene to stop the incident when it is safe to do so

Staff Development

The Superintendent or designee shall make the California Department of Education's online training module on the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, which includes the identification of bullying and cyberbullying and the implementation of strategies to address bullying, available annually to all certificated staff and to other employees

who have regular interaction with students. (Education Code 32283.5)

The Superintendent or designee shall provide training to teachers and other school staff to raise their awareness about the legal obligation of the district and its employees to prevent discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying of district students. Such training shall be designed to provide staff with the skills to:

1. Discuss the diversity of the student body and school community, including their varying immigration experiences
2. Discuss bullying prevention strategies with students, and teach students to recognize the behavior and characteristics of bullying perpetrators and victims
3. Identify the signs of bullying or harassing behavior
4. Take immediate corrective action when bullying is observed
5. Report incidents to the appropriate authorities, including law enforcement in instances of criminal behavior

Student Instruction

As appropriate, the district shall provide students with instruction, in the classroom or other educational settings, that promotes social-emotional learning, effective communication and conflict resolution skills, character/values education, respect for cultural and individual differences, self-esteem development, assertiveness skills, and appropriate online behavior.

The district shall also educate students about the negative impact of bullying, discrimination, intimidation, and harassment based on actual or perceived immigration status, religious beliefs and customs, or any other individual bias or prejudice.

Students should be taught the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, how to advocate for themselves, how to help another student who is being bullied, and when to seek assistance from a trusted adult. As role models for students, staff shall be expected to demonstrate effective problem-solving and anger management skills.

To discourage cyberbullying, teachers may advise students to be cautious about sharing passwords, personal data, or private photos online and to consider the consequences of making negative comments about others online.

Reporting and Filing of Complaints

Any student, parent/guardian, or other individual who believes that a student has been subjected to bullying or who has witnessed bullying may report the incident to a teacher, the principal, a compliance officer, or any other available school employee.

When a report of bullying is submitted, the principal or a district compliance officer shall inform the student or parent/guardian of the right to file a formal written complaint in accordance with AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures. The student who is the alleged victim of the bullying shall be given an opportunity to describe the incident, identify witnesses who may have relevant information, and provide other evidence of bullying.

Within one business day of receiving such a report, a staff member shall notify the principal of the report, whether or not a uniform complaint is filed. In addition, any school employee who observes an incident of bullying involving a student shall, within one business day, report such observation to the principal or a district compliance officer, whether or not the alleged victim files a complaint.

When the circumstances involve cyberbullying, individuals with information about the activity shall be encouraged to save and print any electronic or digital messages that they feel constitute cyberbullying and to notify a teacher, the principal, or other employee so that the matter may be investigated. When a student uses a social networking site or service to bully or harass another student, the Superintendent or designee may file a request with the networking site or service to suspend the privileges of the student and to have the material removed.

Discipline/Corrective Actions

Corrective actions for a student who commits an act of bullying of any type may include counseling, behavioral intervention and education, and, if the behavior is severe or pervasive as defined in Education Code 48900, may include suspension or expulsion in accordance with district policies and regulations.

When appropriate based on the severity or pervasiveness of the bullying, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the parents/guardians of victims and perpetrators and may contact law enforcement.

The Superintendent, principal, or principal's designee may refer a victim, witness, perpetrator, or other student affected by an act of bullying to a school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, child welfare attendance personnel, school nurse, or other school support service personnel for case management, counseling, and/or participation in a restorative justice program as appropriate. (Education Code 48900.9)

If any student involved in bullying exhibits warning signs of suicidal thought or intention or of intent to harm another person, the Superintendent or designee shall, as appropriate, implement district intervention protocols which may include, but are not limited to, referral to district or community mental health services, other health professionals, and/or law enforcement.

Policy Reference Disclaimer: These references are not intended to be part of the policy itself, nor do they indicate the basis or authority for the board to enact this policy. Instead, they are provided as additional resources for those interested in the subject matter of the policy.

State

5 CCR 4600-4670

Description

Uniform complaint procedures

Bus. and Prof. Code 22589-22589.4

[Cyberbullying Protection Act](#)

Ed. Code 200-270

[Prohibition of discrimination](#)

Ed. Code 32280-32289.5

[School safety plans](#)

Ed. Code 35181

[Governing board authority to set policy on responsibilities of students](#)

Ed. Code 35291-35291.5

[Rules](#)

Ed. Code 46600

[Student transfers](#)

Ed. Code 48900-48925

[Suspension and expulsion](#)

Ed. Code 48985

[Notices to parents in language other than English](#)

Ed. Code 52060-52077

[Local control and accountability plan](#)

Pen. Code 422.55

[Definition of hate crime](#)

Pen. Code 647

[Use of camera or other instrument to invade person's privacy; misdemeanor](#)

Pen. Code 647.7

[Use of camera or other instrument to invade person's privacy; punishment](#)

Pen. Code 653.2

[Electronic communication devices; threats to safety](#)

Federal

Description

28 CFR 35.107

[Nondiscrimination on basis of disability; complaints](#)

34 CFR 104.7

[Section 504; Designation of responsible employee and adoption of grievances procedures](#)

34 CFR 106.8

[Designation of coordinator; dissemination of policy, and adoption of grievance procedures](#)

34 CFR 110.25

[Notification of nondiscrimination on the basis of age](#)

47 USC 254

[Universal service discounts \(E-rate\)](#)

Management Resources

Description

CA Office of the Attorney General Publication

[Promoting a Safe and Secure Learning Environment for All: Guidance and Model Policies to Assist California's K-12 Schools in Responding to Immigration Issues, April 2018](#)

Management Resources

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California Department of Education Publication	Social and Emotional Learning in California: A Guide to Resources, October 2018
California Department of Education Publication	Health Education Content Standards for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve, 2008
California Department of Education Publication	Bullying at School, 2003
California Department of Education Publication	Online Bullying Training Module and Bullying Module
California Department of Education Publication	California's Social and Emotional Learning: Guiding Principles, 2018
Court Decision	J.C. v. Beverly Hills Unified School District (2010) 711 F.Supp.2d 1094
Court Decision	Lavine v. Blaine School District (2002) 279 F.3d 719
Court Decision	Wynar v. Douglas County School District (2013) 728 F.3d 1062
CSBA Publication	Building Healthy Communities: A School Leaders Guide to Collaboration and Community Engagement, 2009
CSBA Publication	School Safety: Bullying and Cyberbullying, Policy Brief, October 2023
CSBA Publication	Providing a Safe, Nondiscriminatory School Environment for Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming Students, Policy Brief, February 2014
CSBA Publication	Addressing the Conditions of Children: Focus on Bullying, Governance Brief, December 2012
CSBA Publication	Cyberbullying: Policy Considerations for Boards, Policy Brief, rev. July 2010
CSBA Publication	Final Guidance: AB 1266, Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students, Privacy, Programs, Activities & Facilities, Legal Guidance, March 2014
CSBA Publication	Legal Guidance on Rights of Transgender and Gender Nonconforming Students in Schools, October 2022
U.S. DOE Office for Civil Rights Publication	Dear Colleague Letter: Responding to Bullying of Students with Disabilities, October 2014
U.S. DOE Publication	Creating Inclusive and Nondiscriminatory School Environments for LGBTQI+ Students, June 2023
U.S. DOE, Office for Civil Rights Publication	Dear Colleague Letter: Addressing Discrimination Against Jewish Students, May 2023
U.S. DOE, Office for Civil Rights Publication	Dear Colleague Letter: Discrimination, Including Harassment, Based on Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics, November 2023
U.S. DOE, Office for Civil Rights Publication	Dear Colleague Letter: Harassment and Bullying, October 2010
US Department of Health and Human Services	Social Media and Youth Mental Health: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory, 2023
US Dept of Health and Human Services Publication	Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Health Effects of Social Connection and the Community, 2023
Website	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Stop Bullying
Website	CSBA District and County Office of Education Legal Services
Website	National School Safety Center
Website	Partnership for Children and Youth
Website	Center on Great Teachers and Leaders
Website	Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning
Website	Common Sense Media
Website	California Department of Education, Safe Schools
Website	California Office of the Attorney General

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[U.S. Department of Education](#)**Cross References**

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[Philosophy](#)

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[Nondiscrimination In District Programs And Activities](#)

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[District Technology Plan](#)

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[Comprehensive Safety Plan](#)

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