

Students

Harassment of Students Prohibited

Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment Prohibited

The Board of Education believes that a safe and civil environment is necessary for students to learn and achieve and that bullying can cause physical, psychological and emotional harm to students and interfere with students' ability to learn and participate in school activities. In addition, bullying has been linked to other forms of antisocial behavior, such as vandalism, shoplifting, skipping and dropping out of school, fighting, using drugs and alcohol, sexual harassment and sexual violence. The engagement of a range of stakeholders, including students and parents, is necessary to prevent bullying.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, military status, sexual orientation, gender-related identity or expression, unfavorable discharge from military service, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic, is prohibited. Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of this School District.

No student of Worth School District 127 shall be subject to bullying:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity;
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities;
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment; or
4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a nonschool-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a District 127 school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This item (4) applies only in cases in which a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred and does not require the District, a school or school staff to monitor any nonschool-related activity, function or program.

"Bullying" includes "cyber-bullying" and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying, as defined above, may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

“Cyber-bullying” means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photoelectric system, or photooptical system, including without limitation electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying includes the creation of a web page or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying above. Cyber-bullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying above.

“School personnel” means persons employed by, on contract with, or who volunteer in Worth School District 127, including without limitation school and school district administrators, teachers, guidance counselors, social workers, counselors, psychologists, nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, school resource officers and security guards.

“Restorative measures” means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that (1) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, (2) contribute to maintaining school safety, (3) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, (4) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, (5) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families schools and communities, and (6) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students’ behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school.

Students are encouraged to promptly report claims or incidents of bullying first to the Building Principal or Assistant Building Principal (if applicable). Secondly, a student may report claims or incidents of bullying to the District’s Complaint Managers. A student may choose to report to a person of the student’s same sex. Complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible given the need to investigate. Reprisals or retaliation against individuals who make good faith complaints of bullying are prohibited and any person who engages in reprisals or retaliation shall be subject to appropriate remedial action. Any person found to have falsely accused another shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the District’s disciplinary policies.

The District’s Complaint Managers are:

Name	Tim Hathhorn	Sinead Chambers
Address	11218 S. Ridgeland Ave. Worth, IL 60482	11218 S. Ridgeland Ave. Worth, IL 60482
Phone No.	708-448-2800	708-448-2800
Email	thathorn@worthschools.org	schambers@worthschools.org

An allegation that a student was the victim of bullying by another student will be referred as soon as possible after receipt to the Building Principal or Assistant Building Principal (if applicable) for appropriate action. The Building Principal or Assistant Building Principal (if applicable) shall investigate the allegation to determine if the reported act(s) of bullying is/are within the permissible scope of the district’s or school’s jurisdiction. Anonymous reports will be investigated to the extent possible. If it is determined that the reported act(s) is/are within the district’s or school’s jurisdiction, the Building Principal or Assistant Building Principal (if applicable) shall take or recommend appropriate action. Consistent with federal and State privacy laws, parents or guardians of all students involved shall be informed, and discussions shall be had, as appropriate, regarding the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions and restorative measures. All reasonable efforts shall be made to complete the investigation within ten (10) school days of the receipt of the report, taking into consideration any additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation. Appropriate school personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience and training on bullying prevention shall be involved in the investigation process as appropriate. Consistent with federal and State privacy laws, parents and guardians of the

students involved shall be provided with information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the Building Principal or Assistant Building Principal (if applicable) to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the action(s) taken to address the reported incident(s) of bullying.

Any victim of bullying who makes a report of bullying shall be provided with information regarding services that are available within the district and the community, such as counseling, support services and other programs, and restorative measures. Interventions may include: school social work services; restorative measures; social-emotional skill building; counseling; school psychological services and community based services.

Nothing in this Policy is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or under Section 3 of Article I of the Illinois Constitution.

This Policy shall be posted on the District's website and included in the District's student handbook, and shall be distributed annually to parents, guardians, students, and school personnel, including new employees when hired.

This Policy shall be filed with the Illinois State Board of Education, and shall be reviewed and re-evaluated every two (2) years. This review and re-evaluation shall include a process to assess the outcomes and effectiveness of the policy which includes, but is not limited to, factors such as the frequency of victimization; student, staff and family observations of safety at a school; identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs; the types of bullying utilized; and bystander intervention or participation. Other relevant data may be used. Any information developed as a result of the review and re-evaluation will be made available on the District's website.

Sexual Harassment Prohibited

Sexual harassment of students is prohibited. Any person, including a district employee or agent, or student, engages in sexual harassment whenever he or she makes sexual advances, requests sexual favors, and engages in other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual or sex-based nature, imposed on the basis of sex, that:

1. Denies or limits the provision of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or that makes such conduct a condition of a student's academic status; or
2. Has the purpose or effect of:
 - a. Substantially interfering with a student's educational environment;
 - b. Creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment;
 - c. Depriving a student of educational aid, benefits, services, or treatment; or
 - d. Making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for academic decisions affecting a student.

The terms "intimidating," "hostile," and "offensive" include conduct that has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment, or discomfort. Examples of sexual harassment include touching, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, teasing related to sexual characteristics, and spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities.

Making a Complaint; Enforcement

Students are encouraged to report claims or incidences of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, or any other prohibited conduct first to the Building Principal or Assistant Building Principal, if applicable. Secondly, a student may report claims or incidents of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment or any other prohibited conduct to the District's Complaint Managers. A student may choose to report to a person of the student's

same sex. Complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible given the need to investigate. Students who make good faith complaints will not be disciplined.

An allegation that a student was a victim of any prohibited conduct perpetrated by another student shall be referred to the Building Principal or Assistant Building Principal (if applicable) for appropriate action.

The Superintendent shall insert into this policy the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the District's current Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers. At least one of these individuals will be female, and at least one will be male.

Nondiscrimination Coordinator:

Name	Sinéad Chambers
Address	11218 South Ridgeland Avenue Worth, IL 60482
Telephone No.	448-2800

Complaint Managers:

Name	Tim Hathhorn	Sinéad Chambers
Address	11218 South Ridgeland Avenue Worth, IL 60482	11218 South Ridgeland Avenue Worth, IL 60482
Telephone No.	448-2800	448-2800

The Superintendent shall use reasonable measures to inform staff members and students of this policy, such as, by including it in the appropriate handbooks.

Any District employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any District student who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and expulsion consistent with the discipline policy. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge, with regard to employees, or suspension and expulsion, with regard to students.

LEGAL REF.: 20 U.S.C § 1681 et seq. Title IX of the Educational Amendments,
34 C.F.R. Part 106.
105 ILCS 5/10-20.12, 10-22.5, 5/27-1, and 5/27-23.7.
775 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq., Illinois Human Rights Act.
23 Ill. Admin. Code §1.240 and Part 200.
Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education, 119 S.Ct. 1661 (1999).
Franklin v. Gwinnett Co. Public Schools, 112 S.Ct. 1028 (1992).
Gebser v. Lago Vista Independent School District, 118 S.Ct. 1989 (1998).
West v. Derby Unified School District No. 260, 206 F.3d 1358 (10th Cir., 2000).

CROSS REF.: 5:20 (Sexual Harassment), 7:10 (Equal Educational Opportunities), 7:190 (Student Discipline)

DATE ADOPTED: December 9, 1998
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