

## STUDENTS – ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION

The Mount Horeb Area School District strives to maintain healthy, positive, and safe learning environments for all students. It is important to promote a social climate with social norms free of bullying, harassment, and intimidation.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Bullying:** According to [www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov), “Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- An Imbalance of Power: Individuals who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or social status—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.”

**Harassment** - Any behavior motivated by an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic protected under state or federal law, such as, but not limited to: age; national origin; race; ethnicity; religion; sexual orientation; physical or mental ability or disability. Harassment may also be motivated by distinguishing characteristics not protected under law (e.g., gender, gender identity, physical attributes, social/economic/family status, except for federal food service programs, etc.).

**Intimidation** - means to frighten into submission, compliance, or acquiescence and or implying the presence or operation of a fear-inspiring force.

Bullying, harassment, and intimidating behaviors can be:

1. physical (e.g. assault, hitting or punching, kicking, theft, threatening behavior)
2. verbal (e.g. threatening or intimidating language, teasing or name-calling, racist remarks)
3. indirect - (e.g. communication including frequent face-to-face contact, e-mails or phone calls, spreading cruel rumors, intimidation through gestures, veiled threats, social exclusion and sending insulting messages or pictures by mobile phone or using the internet – also known as cyber bullying); and/or between students and students or students and adults.

### **WHAT IS NOT BULLYING/HARASSMENT/INTIMIDATION**

Perceptions of rudeness, criticism, “not getting your way,” healthy peer conflict, isolated and unintentional physical contact, or lack of consideration are examples of conduct that is unlikely to constitute bullying, harassment, and/or intimidation.

## **PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING**

All school personnel, volunteers, parents, and students are responsible for maintaining a safe, healthy school environment. All schools will prominently publicize how to report an incident. A District wide reporting form will be available on each school's website, in each school's front office, and is attached to this document. All submitted reports will be carefully reviewed and will be addressed in accordance with the following process. Anonymous complaints will not be acted upon.

Students who allege such behaviors have occurred with another student or adult should directly inform the offending party to stop. If that cannot resolve the matter, the aggrieved student shall report the act(s) to a trusted adult (This might be the first step in the event a student alleges a perpetrator is an adult). This may be done verbally. In instances whereby this does not stop the problem, the aggrieved student shall complete the reporting form and submit it to the Building Principal or his/her designee. Individuals who observe or become aware of acts of bullying, harassment and/or intimidation shall adhere to this process as well.

## **INVESTIGATING REPORTS OF BULLYING**

When it is determined an investigation is warranted, it will take place in a timely manner. A maximum of 10 school days shall be the time limit from initial filing of an incident to completion of the District investigative procedural steps unless extenuating circumstances preclude closure. When appropriate, affected individuals' parents will be notified that a report has been made and the steps taken to address the concern.

The following steps will be considered when investigating a complaint:

1. Initially, the alleged victim and perpetrator should not be interviewed together.
2. Interviews of the alleged victim, perpetrator and any witnesses will be conducted privately and separately when possible. In the event of a joint interview, the interview will be conducted by an administrator, or their designee.
3. Where appropriate, students may be asked to provide a written explanation of his/her version of events.
4. The investigator shall collect and evaluate facts, which may include:
  - a. description of the incidents: nature of the behavior and context in which the alleged incident took place; the actions of all involved parties; etc.
  - b. how often the conduct occurred;
  - c. any past incidents or continuing patterns of behavior;
  - d. the relationship between the parties involved (e.g. inconsistent friendships)
  - e. characteristics of the parties involved (age, grade, etc.); and/or
  - f. identity and credibility of all individuals involved in incident.
5. A determination of policy violation is made based on the facts presented.
6. Remedial steps to stop the bullying and/or harassment behavior are recommended (for victim and/or perpetrator).
7. A completed Bullying Report of the investigation and outcome is submitted to the principal.  
If the principal is the investigator, he/she will maintain a written report.
8. The school will report violations of the policy through reports in the student information system.

### **SANCTIONS AND SUPPORTS**

If it is determined a student participated in bullying, harassing, and/or intimidating behavior, lied, or retaliated against anyone due to the reporting of bullying behavior, the school district administration may take disciplinary action. This may include actions up to and/or including suspension, referral to the board for expulsion and/or referral to law enforcement officials for possible legal action as appropriate. Pupil services staff will provide support for the identified victim(s) and aggressor(s) as appropriate.

### **PROACTIVE EFFORTS TO AVOID BULLYING, HARASSMENT, AND/OR INTIMIDATING BEHAVIORS**

As part of the District's ongoing efforts to mitigate these behaviors, administration and pupil services staff will routinely and formally/informally notify students, school staff, parents, and others responsible for the welfare of students of the District's bullying prevention policy and steps that may be taken to alleviate bullying (social skills management, cyber-bullying, etc.). This can be done through the District's *Code of Student Conduct*, community newsletters, Parent/Teacher Association meetings, and/or other reasonable means.

### **All school employees are mandated reporters of any known bullying or harassment incidents.**

Each school year, principals will:

- Provide all employees and volunteers with instruction in methods of reporting and investigating claims of bullying and harassment, and on the District bullying prevention policy and procedures.
- Explain where copies of the Reporting Form may be found.
- Develop a process for discussing the District's policy with students in a reasonable format such as guidance courses, public service announcements, parent and student handbooks, PBIS assemblies, and morning meetings.
- Display reminders of the policy and bullying prevention messages such as posters and signs in each school.

### **COUNSELING REFERRALS**

When bullying or harassment is suspected, or a bullying incident has been reported, a teacher or parent/guardian may request an informal consultation with school personnel – teachers, counselors, administrators - to determine the severity of concern and appropriate steps to address the concern. A referral may also be made directly to the school's Problem Solving Teams (PST).

If a formal discipline report or a formal complaint is made, the principal or designee may refer the involved student(s) to the PST for determination of interventions and counseling support. Parent/legal guardian involvement is required at this point. As a result of the referral, the PST may, among other things:

- address any counseling and support needed to address the needs of the victim of bullying or harassment;

- determine if research-based counseling /interventions need to be implemented to address the behavior of students who bully or harass others; and
- provide research-based counseling/interventions to parents/guardians if needed or appropriate.

If school-based expertise is not available, referral to outside agencies may be provided.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

The highest level of confidentiality possible is to be upheld regarding the submission of a complaint or report of bullying, harassment or intimidation, and the investigation that follows. Parent notification is to be consistent with student privacy rights under FERPA regulations.

**DISCLOSURE AND PUBLIC REPORTING**

The policy will be available to all students enrolled in the school district, their parents and/or guardians. The school district will post the policy and these Administrative Regulations on the District’s website.

An annual summary will be provided to the school board including information about maintained records on the number and types of reports made and sanctions imposed for incidents found to be in violation of the bullying policy. The summary will also include trends in bullying behavior, programing intended to curb bullying behaviors, and recommendations on how to further reduce bullying behavior.

**RETALIATION**

Students engaging in retaliatory behavior will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including a recommendation for expulsion; moreover, the same disciplinary action may also be appropriate if it has been verified that an individual has made a report for malicious purposes. Anyone, other than the perpetrator(s) who report to the appropriate school official in good faith, an alleged violation of the Board’s policy, is immune from disciplinary action arising out of the reporting itself.

Current Related Board Policies:

- 165 Conflicts of Interest
- 374 Fundraising Activities
- 850 Public Solicitations/Promotions on School Premises
- 851 Advertising in Schools

Legal Reference: Wis. Stat. §§ 118.13; 120.13; 121.52 (2)

Board of Education Notified: December 9, 2016

# Help, I feel like I have been bullied.

INSTRUCTIONS: If a K-2 grade student reports they have been bullied, please assist them in completing this form.

What is your name? \_\_\_\_\_

Name of person assisting you (if anyone) with this form? \_\_\_\_\_

Who hurt your feelings? \_\_\_\_\_

What did they do or say? \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the box (s):



hitting



kicking



name calling



pushing



tripping



making fun of you

Other \_\_\_\_\_

When did this happen? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did this happen? \_\_\_\_\_

Who did you tell? \_\_\_\_\_

Has this happened before? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you respond? \_\_\_\_\_

Please tell us who saw this happen. 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

This matter has been reviewed and has been found substantiated unsubstantiated

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigating Personnel

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Complete

## STUDENT BULLYING, HARASSMENT OR INTIMIDATION REPORTING FORM

**Directions:** Bullying, harassment, or intimidation are serious and will not be tolerated. This is a form to report alleged bullying, harassment, or intimidation that occurred on school property; at a school-sponsored activity (even off campus), in the current school year. If you are a student victim, the parent/guardian of a student victim, a close adult relative of a student victim, or a school staff member and wish to report an incident of alleged bullying harassment or intimidation, complete this form and return it to the Principal or designee at the student victim's school. Contact the school for additional information or assistance at any time.

**Definitions:**

**Bullying** – any deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions, intended to cause fear, intimidation or harm. Bullying includes aggressive or hostile behavior that is intentional and involves an imbalance of power between the bully and the bullied. It is repeated over time.

**Harassment** – any behavior motivated by an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic protected under state or federal law, such as, but not limited to: age; national origin; race; ethnicity; religion; gender; gender identity; sexual orientation; physical attributes; physical or mental ability or disability; and social, economic or family status.

**Intimidation** – means to frighten into submission, veiled threats, compliance, or acquiescence and/or implying the presence or operation of a fear-inspiring force, communication including frequent face-to-face contact, electronic mail, social media or phone calls.

**PERSON REPORTING INCIDENT** Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Place an **X** in the appropriate box:

Student     
  Student (witness/bystander)     
  Parent/Guardian     
  School Staff  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

1. Name of student victim: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name(s) of alleged offender(s) (if known): (Please Print)	Age	School (if known)	Is he/she a student?
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
_____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

3. On what date(s) did the incident happen?

_____ /            / Month    Day    Year	_____ /            / Month    Day    Year	_____ /            / Month    Day    Year
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4. Where did the incident happen (Place an **X** by all that apply)?

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> On school property | <input type="checkbox"/> At a school-sponsored activity or event off school property |
| <input type="checkbox"/> On a school bus    | <input type="checkbox"/> On the way to/from school                                   |

DETAILS regarding location:

5. What did the alleged offender(s) say or do (Attach additional paper, if necessary)?

6. Name(s) of witness(es): (Please Print)

Is he/she a staff member?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Yes  No  
 Yes  No  
 Yes  No

7. Why do you believe the bullying, harassment or intimidation occurs (Attach additional paper, if necessary)?

8. Did a physical injury result from this incident? Place an X next to one of the following:

- No     Yes, but it did not require medical attention     Yes, and it required medical attention

9. Please place an X next to the statement(s) that best describes what happened and frequency on the line after statement (choose all that apply):

- Name-calling, making direct or veiled threats or by other means: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Demeaning and making the victim of jokes: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Making rude and/or threatening gestures: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Intimidating (bullying), extorting, or exploiting: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Spreading harmful rumors or gossip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Electronic Communication (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

10. How did you respond to the offender'(s) bullying, harassment, and/or intimidation (attach more paper, if needed)?

11. Was the student victim absent from school as a result of the incident?  Yes  No  
If yes, how many days was the student victim absent from school as a result of the incident? \_\_\_\_\_

By signing this report form, I attest that all information on this form is accurate to the best of my knowledge and I understand the serious nature of this report. By signing this report form, I understand and agree to be contacted by school, local, state or federal authorities to assist in the matters of this report. Furthermore, I am well intentioned in completing this form and understand disciplinary action, up to and including a recommendation for termination of my employment, if it is evident this document has been completed with less than honorable intentions.

This matter has been reviewed and has been found  substantiated  unsubstantiated

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Investigating Personnel

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Completed