

BULLYING

What is Bullying?

In general, the District considers bullying to be negative student behavior or action, including electronic communications, *that intends to harm, involves a power imbalance between the aggressor and the targeted student, and is repeated over time*. This type of behavior will be addressed with interventions and corrective actions to eliminate and prevent the negative behavior.

However, for purposes of student suspension or expulsion, bullying is defined under California Education Code (48900(r)) and discussed in DJUSD Administrative Regulations (5144.1/5145.3). The definition is paraphrased below:

Bullying is defined as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act(s) or conduct, including electronic communications, directed toward one or more students that has or can reasonably be predicted to have, the effect of:

- Reasonable fear of harm to person or property.
- Substantially detrimental effect on physical or mental health.
- Substantial interference with academic performance.
- Substantial interference with the ability to participate in or benefit from school services, activities, or privileges.
- Bullying shall also include any act of: sexual harassment, hate violence or harassment, threat or intimidation as defined in Education Code 48900.2, 48900.3, and 48900.4 and that has any of the effects described above.

Bullying is one form of aggression, discrimination and oppression. Even if negative behavior does not meet the definitions presented above, it must still be addressed.

What can Bullying look like? (Types of Bullying)

Behaviors which constitute bullying may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Verbal:** Hurtful name-calling, teasing, gossiping, making threats, making slurs or epithets, making rude noises, or spreading hurtful rumors.
- **Nonverbal:** Posturing, making gang signs, leering, staring, stalking, destroying property, insulting or threatening notes, using graffiti or graphic images, or exhibiting inappropriate and/or threatening gestures or actions.
- **Physical:** Hitting, punching, pushing, shoving, poking, kicking, tripping, blocking egress, strangling, hair pulling, fighting, beating, pinching, slapping, "pantsing", biting or spitting.
- **Emotional (Psychological):** Rejecting, terrorizing, extorting, defaming, intimidating, humiliating, blackmailing, manipulating friendships, isolating, shunning, ostracizing, using peer pressure, or rating or ranking personal characteristics.
- **Cyber-bullying:** Sending insulting or threatening messages by phone, e-mail, Web sites, or any other electronic or written communication.

DJUSD Goals and Policies:

Our goal is always to prevent bullying before it happens by creating a positive school climate and strong, healthy classroom communities that have clear and high expectations for student values and behavior. *It is important for educators to respond quickly and consistently to bullying behavior in order to send the message that it is not acceptable.* Research shows that consistent intervention procedures can stop bullying behavior over time.

The Davis Joint Unified School District recognizes that often conflict can provide a learning opportunity for people to develop resilience and problem solving skills that will help them to successfully navigate through

life. Therefore, school staff assess conflicts between children through a lens of safety, child development, age, school level, legal parameters and other factors to determine when problematic behaviors become *bullying*

Bullying Intervention as Defined by Board Policy 5131.2 and Education Code 234.1:

- Any school employee who witnesses an incident of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation, or bullying shall immediately intervene to stop the incident when it is safe to do so. When an employee intervenes in a bullying incident, they are not infringing on the bullying student's right to free speech.
- Any school employee who observes an incident of unlawful discrimination, including discriminatory harassment, intimidation, retaliation or bullying, or to whom such an incident is reported, shall report the incident to the principal, or the district compliance officer (Director of Student Support Services), within one business day of the observation of the incident, whether or not the victim files a complaint.
- When any such report is submitted to or received by the principal or compliance officer, he/she will investigate the incident and shall inform the student or parent/guardian of the right to file a formal complaint pursuant to the provisions in AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures.
- Any report of unlawful discrimination involving the principal, compliance officer, or any other person to whom the complaint would ordinarily be reported or filed shall instead be submitted to the Superintendent or designee.
- Even if the student or parent/guardian chooses not to file a formal complaint, the principal or compliance officer shall implement immediate measures necessary to stop the discrimination and to ensure all students have access to the educational program and a safe school environment.

How can school staff help?

- Stop the incident immediately. Seek help from other adults if necessary. Seek immediate help if a weapon is involved, there is bodily harm, and/or there are threats of serious physical injury, hate motivated violence, sexual abuse, robbery or extortion.
- Separate the people involved. Stand between them to block eye contact.
- Make sure everyone is safe and address any immediate medical or mental health needs.
- Remain calm and model respectful behavior and work to preserve the dignity of every person involved.
- Reassure those involved, including bystanders. If the bystanders did stand-up, thank them for speaking up in an effort to help others. If the bystanders did not intervene, meet with bystanders at a later time to give examples of how to intervene appropriately the next time they see bullying.
- Support the person who has been harmed by asking if they are okay. They must hear the message that caring adults will protect them.
- Do not require people to apologize or make amends immediately when you stop the incident. Advise all parties involved in the bullying that the incident will be investigated.
- Contact the appropriate administrator/supervisor who will investigate and document the incident.

How can families help?

If you begin to notice *changes* in your student's behavior, such as an unexpected drop in grades or interest, unusual moodiness, anxiety, crying, frequent headaches or stomach aches, trouble sleeping or any complaints of fear of specific situations, please contact your school counselor or administrator for support and resources.

Reporting a concern:

DJUSD encourages students and families to contact their site principal immediately to address and investigate concerns of bullying. DJUSD also encourages employees to contact their supervisor to address any concerns of bullying they may be experiencing in their workplace. Employees, students and families may also contact Student Support Services or the Climate Office for support and resources. If you wish to file a complaint with the District Office, please do so by filling out the Uniform Complaint Form posted on the DJUSD website.