

**BULLYING/CYBER BULLYING**

The Board of Education strives to provide a safe, positive learning climate for students in the schools. Therefore, it shall be the policy of the Northern Humboldt Union High School District to maintain an educational environment in which bullying and cyber bullying in any form are not tolerated.

The District and each of its school sites work to prevent all forms of bullying. As research indicates, proactive responses that include the following techniques can be effective for preventing bullying:

- Raising awareness of bullying
  - Formation of a bullying prevention committee
  - Clear definitions of bullying and that it is not acceptable
  - Implementation of bullying prevention policies
  - Training of all stakeholders for appropriate response to bullying
  - Providing counseling for bullies, targets, and parents/guardians
  - Regular review of an effective anti-bullying program
1. All forms of bullying and cyber bullying by school district students are hereby prohibited. Anyone who engages in bullying and cyber bullying in violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate discipline.
  2. Students who have been bullied or cyber bullied shall promptly report such incidents to any staff member.
  3. School personnel that witness bullying or cyber bullying shall take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so.
  4. Complaints of bullying and cyber bullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when a complaint is verified. Neither reprisals nor retaliation shall occur as a result of the submission of a complaint.

The District shall annually inform students that bullying and cyber bullying of students will not be tolerated.

**Definitions**

Bullying shall mean unwelcome, pervasive and/or severe, verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a student or staff member by a student that has the effect of any or all of the following:

1. Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student or staff member;
2. Damaging, extorting or taking a student's or a staff member's personal property;
3. Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;
4. Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or,

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BP 5145.10(b)

5. Creating an intimidating and/or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or the ability of a staff member to perform his or her duties.

Cyber bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student or staff member by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting an inappropriate or derogatory email message, telephone message, instant message, text message, digital picture or image, or website posting (including an individual or collective blog) which has the effect of the following:

1. Physically, emotionally, or mentally harming a student or staff member;
2. Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of physical, emotional, or mental harm;
3. Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or,
4. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities or a staff member's ability to perform his or her duties.

All forms of bullying are unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive of the educational process of the District, offenders shall be subject to appropriate staff intervention, which will result in administrative disciplinary measures and notification of appropriate authorities.

The term "bullying" and "cyber bullying" shall not be interpreted to infringe upon a student's right to engage in legally protected speech or conduct.

### **Delegation of Responsibility**

1. Each staff member shall be responsible to maintain an educational environment free of bullying and cyber bullying while maintaining a proactive approach utilizing research proven techniques for bullying prevention.
2. Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of his/her fellow students and those of staff members and to ensure an atmosphere free from all forms of bullying and cyber bullying.
3. Students shall be encouraged to report bullying and cyber bullying complaints to any staff member.
4. Any staff member who receives a bullying or cyber bullying complaint shall gather information and immediately seek administrative assistance to determine if bullying and/or cyber bullying has occurred. If the behavior is found to meet the definition of bullying and cyber bullying, the principal or designee will take the appropriate disciplinary action.
5. The principal or designee will inform the parents or guardians of the victim and also the parents or guardians of the accused.

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### **Complaint Procedure**

Upon receiving a complaint of bullying or cyber bullying, the principal or designee shall immediately investigate the complaint in accordance with site-level grievance procedures specified in AR 5145.3 – Nondiscrimination/Harassment. Where the principal or designee finds that bullying or cyber bullying has occurred, he/she shall take prompt, appropriate action to end the harassment and address its effects on the victim.

A violation of this policy shall subject the offending student to appropriate disciplinary action, consistent with the student discipline code, which may include suspension, a recommendation for expulsion and/or notification to the appropriate authorities.

Policy Adopted: 7

#### Legal References:

Education Codes: §48900 (r), §32261 (g), §48900 (s), §48900.2, §48900.3, §48900.4 California AB 86

#### Related Policies:

5145.3 – Nondiscrimination/Harassment

Approved: June 26, 2012

Revised: September 12, 2012