

# BULLYING

## Rationale

The purpose of the procedure on bullying is to promote consistency of approach and to create a climate in which all types of bullying are regarded as unacceptable. Attitudes and practices can contribute to bullying, to lower levels of confidence, self-esteem and lack of achievement.

## Aims

The anti-bullying program with Greene County Schools seeks to accomplish the following goals:

- To promote a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behavior.
- To take positive action to prevent bullying from occurring.
- To inform parents and students of the school's expectations and to foster a productive partnership which helps to maintain a bully-free environment.
- To make staff aware of their role in fostering the knowledge and attitudes which will be required to achieve the above items.

## Definition of Bullying

Bullying/Intimidation/Harassment - An act that substantially interferes with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, and the act has the effect of:

- Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;
- Knowingly placing a student or students in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage to the student's property;
- Causing emotional distress to a student or students; or
- Creating a hostile educational environment.

Bullying, intimidation, or harassment may also be unwelcome conduct based on a protected class (race, national, origin, color, gender, age, disability, religion) that is severe, pervasive, or persistent and creates a hostile environment. For further clarification, see Policy 6.304.

## Crucial Factors to Combat Bullying

1. Awareness and involvement on the part of adults, with regards to bully-victim problems.
2. Survey of bully/victim problems to determine the scope of the problem in each school.
3. A school conference day devoted to bully/victim problems.
4. Appropriate supervision during recess, lunch time and changing of classes by adult staff.
5. Consistent and immediate consequences for aggressive behavior.
6. Generous praise for pro-social and helpful behavior by students.
7. Specific class rules against bullying.
8. Class meetings about bullying.
9. Serious individual talks with bullies and with victims.
10. Serious talks with parents of bullies and victims.
11. A meeting of the school's parent organization on this topic.

12. A curriculum which promotes communication, friendship and assertive skills.
13. Improved communication among administrators, teachers, parents and staff.
14. Listening respectfully to bullying concerns raised by student, parents and staff.
15. Avoidance of sex-role stereotyping. (e.g. males need to be strong and tough).
16. Avoidance of competitiveness at school.
17. Use of classmates to help alleviate the plight of victims and include them in group activities.

The above measures are considered part of an effective school- wide anti-bullying program, per research on this topic.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

1. To implement procedures to confront bullying in any form.
2. To listen to all parties involved in incidents.
3. To investigate as fully as possible.
4. To take appropriate action, or to refer the matter to a member of the administration.
5. To record and inform parents of bullying incidents.
6. To promote the use of a range of teaching and learning styles and strategies which challenge bullying behavior.
7. To promote open management styles which facilitate communication and consultation throughout the school setting.
8. To foster by example the values the school believes in.
9. To promote the use of interventions which are the least intrusive and most effective.
10. To hold regular discussions on this issue with administration, staff, students and parents.
11. To support victims of bullying by means of individual and peer counseling.
12. To initiate efforts to change the behavior of the bullies through class discussions, counseling, reinforcement and sanctions where appropriate