

Fresno Unified Board Policy (BP) 5131.2 Anti-Bullying

The Governing Board recognizes the harmful effects of bullying on student learning and school attendance and desires to provide safe school environments that protect students from physical and emotional harm. District employees shall establish student safety as a high priority and shall not tolerate bullying of any student.

No individual or group of students shall, through physical, written, verbal, or other means, harass, sexually harass, threaten, intimidate, retaliate, cyberbully, cause bodily injury to, or commit hate violence against any other student or school personnel.

(cf. 5131 – Conduct)

(cf. 5136 – Gangs)

(cf. 5145.3 – Nondiscrimination/Harassment)

(cf. 5145.7 – Sexual Harassment)

(cf. 5145.9 – Hate-Motivated Behavior)

Cyberbullying includes the creation or transmission of harassing communications, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images as defined in Education Code 48900 (Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device). Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

(cf. 5145.2 – Freedom of Speech/Expression)

(cf. 6163.4 – Student Use of Technology)

Strategies for addressing bullying in district schools shall be developed with involvement of key stakeholders including students, parents/guardians, and staff, and may be incorporated into the comprehensive safety plan, the local control and accountability plan, and other applicable district and school plans.

(cf. 0420 – School Plans/Site Councils)

(cf. 0450 – Comprehensive Safety Plan)

(cf. 0460 – Local Control and Accountability Plan)

(cf. 1220 – Citizen Advisory Committees)

(cf. 1400 – Relations between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)

(cf. 6020 – Parent Involvement)

As appropriate, the Superintendent or designee may collaborate with law enforcement, courts, social services, mental health services, other agencies, and community organizations in the development and implementation of joint strategies to promote safety in schools and the community and to provide services for alleged victims and perpetrators of bullying.

(cf. 1020 – Youth Services)

Bullying Prevention

To the extent possible, district and school strategies shall focus on prevention of bullying by establishing clear rules for student conduct and strategies to establish a positive, collaborative school climate. Students shall be informed, through student handbooks and other appropriate means, of district and

school rules related to bullying, mechanisms available for reporting incidents or threats, and the consequences for perpetrators of bullying.

(cf. 5137 – Positive School Climate)

The district may provide students with instruction, in the classroom or other educational settings, that promotes effective communication and conflict resolution skills, social skills, character/values education, respect for cultural and individual differences, self-esteem development, assertiveness skills, and appropriate online behavior.

(cf. 6163.4 – Student Use of Technology)

(cf. 6142.8 – Comprehensive Health Education)

(cf. 6142.94 – History-Social Science Instruction)

Such instruction shall also educate students about the negative impact of bullying, discrimination, intimidation, and harassment based on actual or perceived immigration status, medical information, color, marital status, religious beliefs and customs, or any other individual bias or prejudice.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide training to teachers and other school staff to raise their awareness about the legal obligation of the district and its employees to prevent discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying of district students. Such training shall be designed to provide staff with the skills to:

1. Discuss the diversity of the student body and school community, including their varying immigration experiences
2. Discuss bullying prevention strategies with students, and teach students to recognize the behavior and characteristics of bullying perpetrators and victims
3. Identify the signs of bullying or harassing behavior
4. Take immediate corrective action when bullying is observed
5. Report incidents to the appropriate authorities, including law enforcement in instances of criminal behavior

(cf. 4131 – Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 – Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 – Staff Development)

Based on an assessment of bullying incidents at school, the Superintendent or designee may increase supervision and security in areas where bullying most often occurs, such as classrooms, playgrounds, hallways, restrooms, cafeterias.

Intervention

Students are encouraged to notify school staff when they are being bullied or suspect that another student is being victimized. In addition, the Superintendent or designee shall develop means for students to report threats or incidents confidentially and anonymously.

School staff who witness an act of bullying shall immediately intervene to stop the incident when it is safe to do so. (Education Code 234.1)

When appropriate based on the severity or pervasiveness of the bullying, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the parents/guardians of victims and perpetrators and may contact law enforcement.

The Superintendent, principal, or principal's designee may refer a victim, witness, perpetrator, or other student affected by an act of bullying to a school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, child welfare attendance personnel, school nurse, or other school support service personnel for case management, counseling, and/or participation in a restorative justice program as appropriate. (Education Code 48900.9)

(cf. 6164.2 - Guidance/Counseling Services)

Filing of Complaints and Investigation

Any student, parent/guardian, or other individual who believes that a student has been subjected to bullying or who has witnessed bullying may report the incident to a teacher, the principal, a compliance officer, or any other available school employee. Complaints of bullying shall be investigated and resolved in accordance with site-level grievance procedures specified in AR 5145.7 – Sexual Harassment.

(cf. 1312.3 – Uniform Complaint Procedure)

When a student is reported to be engaging in bullying off campus, the Superintendent or designee shall investigate and document the activity and shall identify specific facts or circumstances that explain the impact or potential impact on school activity, school attendance, or the targeted student's educational performance.

When a report of bullying is submitted, the principal or a district compliance officer shall inform the student or parent/guardian of the right to file a formal written complaint in accordance with AR 1312.3. The student who is the alleged victim of the bullying shall be given an opportunity to describe the incident, identify witnesses who may have relevant information, and provide other evidence of bullying.

When circumstances involve cyberbullying, individuals with information about the activity shall be encouraged to save and print any electronic or digital messages that they feel constitute cyberbullying and to notify a teacher, the principal, or other employee so that the matter may be investigated.

If the student is using a social networking site or service to bully or harass another student, the Superintendent or designee also may file a request with the networking site or service to suspend the privileges of the student and to have the material removed.

If, during the investigation, it is determined that a complaint is about nondiscriminatory bullying, the principal or designee shall inform the complainant and shall take all necessary actions to resolve the complaint.

Discipline

Corrective actions for a student who commits an act of bullying of any type may include counseling, behavioral intervention and education, and, if the behavior is severe or pervasive as defined in Education Code 48900, may include suspension or expulsion in accordance with district policies and regulations.

(cf. 5138 – Conflict Resolution/Peer Mediation)

(cf. 5144 – Discipline)
(cf. 5144.1 – Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
(cf. 5144.2- Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process (Students with Disabilities)
(cf. 6159.4 – Behavioral Interventions for Special Education Students)

Any employee who permits or engages in bullying or retaliation related to bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

(cf. 4117.3 - Dismissal)
(cf. 4118 - Suspension/Disciplinary Action)
(cf. 4119.21/4219.21/4319.21 - Professional Standards)
(cf. 4218 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)

Fresno Unified School District prohibits discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying based on actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, national origin, immigration status, ancestry, age, creed, religion, political affiliation, gender, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, mental or physical disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy or parental status, medical information, military veteran status, or association with a person or a group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics or any other basis protected by law or regulation, in its educational program(s) or employment.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

200-262.4 Prohibition of discrimination
32282 Comprehensive safety plan
32283.5 Bullying; online training
35181 Governing board policy on responsibility of students
35291-35291.5 Rules
48900-48925 Suspension or expulsion
48985 Translation of Notices
52060-52077 Local control and accountability plan

PENAL CODE

422.55 Definition of hate crime
647 Use of camera or other instrument to invade person's privacy; misdemeanor
647.7 Use of camera or other instrument to invade person's privacy; punishment
653.2 Electronic communication devices, threats to safety

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

4600-4687 Uniform complaint procedures

UNITED STATES CODE TITLE 47

254 Universal service discounts (e-rate)

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 28

35.107 Nondiscrimination on basis of disability; complaints

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

104.7 Designation of responsible employee for Section 504

106.8 Designation of responsible employee for Title IX

110.25 Notification of nondiscrimination on the basis of age

COURT DECISIONS

Wynar v. Douglas County School District, (2013) 728 F.3d 1062

J.C. v. Beverly Hills Unified School District, (2010) 711 F. Supp. 2d 1094

Lavine v. Blaine School District, (2010) 279 F.3d 719

Management Resources:

CSBA PUBLICATIONS

Safe Schools: Strategies for Governing Boards to Ensure Student Success, 2011

Providing a Safe, Nondiscriminatory School Environment for All Students, Policy Brief, April 2010

Cyberbullying: Policy Considerations for Boards, Policy Brief, July 2007

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

Health Education Content Standards for California Public schools; Kindergarten Through Grade twelve, 2008
Bullying at School, 2003
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS PUBLICATIONS
Dear Colleague letter: Harassment and Bullying, October 2010

Policy FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
adopted: June 5, 2013 Fresno, California
revised: June 17, 2015
revised: June 13, 2018
Revised: December 18, 2019

Policy Section: 5000 Students