

BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY MODEL

PREVENTIONAND INTERVENTION

OFFICEOFSTUDENT DEVELOPMENT

BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY MODEL

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This model is provided to school districts in accordance with the provisions of the ***School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act at 70 O.S. § 24-100.5(C)(1)***. Local school districts and school boards may use the following document as a model or develop their own policies. Local school district policy must comply with the requirements of 70 O.S. § 24- 100.4 and accompanying regulations at OAC Section 210:10-1-20.



BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY MODEL

[District Name] supports a positive school climate, conducive to teaching and learning that is free from threat, harassment, and all types of bullying. It is the policy of the **[District]** to prohibit all bullying of any person at school. Prohibited conduct includes incidents of bullying instigated by the use of electronic communication specifically directed at students and/or school personnel. This policy shall extend to schools in **[school district name]** in compliance with the school safety and bullying policies.

CONTENTS

Definition and Scope	**4**
Prevention and Intervention	**5**
Reporting and Documenting	**7**
Investigating and Responding	**10**
Safeguards and Supports	**13**
Policy Encouragement	**16**
Bullying Policy Rubric	**16**

I. Definition and Scope

As defined by the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act, "bullying" means any pattern* of harassment, intimidation, threatening behavior, physical acts, verbal or electronic communication directed toward a student or group of students that results in or is reasonably perceived as being done with the intent to cause negative educational or physical results for the targeted individual or group, and is communicated in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student;" ***Okla. Stat. tit. 70, § 24-100.***

At school means on school grounds, in school vehicles, at school- sponsored activities, or at school-sanctioned events.

Electronic communication means the communication of any written, verbal, or pictorial information or video content by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a tablet, a mobile or cellular telephone, or a computer.

Threatening Behaviors means any pattern of behavior or isolated action*, whether or not it is directed at another person, that a reasonable person would believe indicates potential for future harm to students, school personnel, or school property.

Note: Pattern of behavior or isolated action - Upon assessing the severity of the incident, isolated action can be bullying. In other words, severity supersedes pattern. Please refer to the "Investigating and Responding" section for more information.*

II. Prevention and Intervention

All school administrators and school employees at each school site shall be required to complete annual professional development training in school bullying prevention, identification, response, and reporting that meets the requirements of 70 O.S. § 24-100.4 and 210:10-1-20. Selection of the required training at each school site shall be based upon the recommendation of the Safe School Committee established at the site.

[District/School Name] is committed to providing annual training to students regarding identifying, preventing, addressing, and reporting incidents of bullying. Such educational programs may include but are not limited to, classroom discussion, assemblies, multimedia, and presentations. The purpose of the educational programs is to assist students in the identification of bullying behaviors, reporting procedures, and the consequences for violation of school policy.

[District Name] shall implement a research-based educational program as designed and developed by the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE) for students and parents to prevent, identify, respond to, and report incidents of bullying that best address the needs of the school community.

[District Name] shall establish a Safe School Committee that meets the requirements of 70 O.S. § 24-100.5(A). The duties of the Committee shall be the duties set forth in 70 O.S. § 24-100.4(B).

Operational functions of the Safe School Committee include but not limited to;

- Promoting positive social behaviors
- Raising awareness in schools about the dangers of bullying
- Planning and implementing prevention efforts
- Notify the school of unsafe conditions, possible strategies for avoiding harm, student victimization, and other issues that compromise the maintenance of a safe school.

BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY MODEL

When an act of bullying has been determined, consideration must be given to ensure that the most effective discipline and support are administered in each case. In all disciplinary actions, teachers, staff, and administrators shall consider alternatives to strictly punitive measures. Alternatives to punitive measures include but are not limited to those below.

- Referral to counselor
- Conference with student
- Conference with parents
- Behavior contract
- School Restoration Program
- Community service
- Referring student to appropriate social agency or to a delinquency prevention and diversion program administered by the office Juvenile Affairs
- Other appropriate disciplinary action as required and as indicated by the circumstances which may include, but is not limited to, restrictions of privileges such as removal from eligibility to participate or attend extracurricular activities as well as removal from the privilege of attending or participating in certain school activities, and/or class.

To prevent further incidents of bullying and intimidation, targets of bullying should not be impacted directly or indirectly by the consequences assigned to the perpetrator. I.e moving the target/victim out of a particular class or activity.

***This list does not reflect a sequence of events to follow in disciplinary action*

The district's bullying coordinator and individuals designated as school site investigators shall receive additional training regarding appropriate consequences and remedial action for perpetrators, helping targets of bullying, and the district's strategy for counseling and referral for all those affected by bullying.
Students must receive annual education regarding behavioral expectations, understanding bullying and its negative effects, disciplinary consequences for infractions, reporting methods, and consequences for those who knowingly make false reports. Any person who knowingly makes false accusations against another person must be appropriately disciplined pursuant to district policy. Any accusations confirmed to be false must be removed from the falsely accused student's file. Parents and guardians may participate in a parent-education component.

This policy shall be made available to every member of the school community.

III. Reporting and Documenting

Bullying Preventing Officers- The principal of each school site in this district shall designate at least one Bullying Prevention Officer ("BPO") who shall be the primary point of contact to receive reports of incidents of bullying.

The duties of the BPO shall be as follows:

- To receive, promptly review, and track reports of incidents of bullying;
- To establish and maintain the confidentiality of reports of incidents of bullying as appropriate;
- To establish a method for receiving anonymous reports of incidents of bullying;
- To publicize the procedures for reporting set forth in this policy to all students, parents/legal guardians of students, and school employees;
- To educate the school and community about bullying prevention measures; and
- To review, monitor, and suggest strategies for improvement of the school climate in order to facilitate prevention and intervention of bullying incidents in the school site and promote a school culture of intolerance of bullying behaviors;
- To report the number of documented and verified incidents of bullying to the district and/or the OSDE in accordance with the requirements of 70 O.S. §24-100.4(F) and accompanying regulations at 210:10-1-20; 7. To serve on the Safe School Committee and make recommendations for bullying prevention education, professional development, and/or policies and procedures pertaining to bullying prevention; and
- Any other duties deemed necessary by school administrators and/or the Safe School Committee to facilitate bullying prevention at the school site.

Students, parents, and staff shall be informed of the process for reporting incidents of bullying and encouraged to report all incidents of bullying. Incidents of bullying shall be reported on the "District Bullying Report Form" which shall be made available to students at all times during regular school hours, including in the main/front office of the school site, the office of the school counselor, the website of the school site, and any other location recommended by the Safe School Committee at each school site

If any person is aware of or sees a victim of bullying as defined in this Policy, such person must **immediately** report to **[Bullying Prevention Officer or principal of the building]** Reports may be made anonymously. However, no formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Reports shall be made immediately to a building administrator by any school employee who has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target or perpetrator of bullying. Any written documentation of the alleged incident(s) shall be provided to the Bullying Prevention Officer.

If the bullying involves electronic communication as defined in the Policy, a printed copy of the communication as well as any identifying information, such as an email or web address, shall be provided to the Bullying Prevention Officer.

Individuals who may report incidents of bullying - Incidents of bullying at each school site in this district may be reported by any student, parent, school employee, or member of the public. Any school employee who has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that an individual at the school is currently or has been the target of one or more incidents of bullying shall be required to report the information to the school's BPO. Failure by school employees to report incidents of bullying in accordance with the requirements of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Privacy and confidentiality - Reports of bullying shall be kept confidential to the extent necessary to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Family Education and Privacy Rights Act (FERPA) and to protect students who report incidents of bullying from retaliation.

Anonymous reporting - To ensure individuals may report incidents without fear of retribution or retaliation, every school site in this district shall provide at least one method of anonymous reporting of incidents of school bullying that protects the identity of the individual reporting the incident. However, an anonymous report shall not be the sole basis for formal disciplinary action in response to an incident of bullying.

Tracking reports - All reports of bullying shall be tracked using methods that will enable the BPO and administrators of each school site to identify emerging patterns of bullying over extended periods of time.

Notification to the parents or legal guardians - Parents and legal guardians of the alleged victim of bullying and the parents or legal guardians of the alleged perpetrator of the bullying must be notified within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt of the report of bullying and all parties must receive timely notification when an alleged incident is verified and shall be notified of the next steps in the process. If a student expresses suicidal thoughts or intentions or encourages another student to commit suicide, the parents or legal guardians of the student(s) shall be **notified immediately.**

Family Responsibilities - Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to;

- Report bullying when it occurs and complete a harassment/bullying incident report form;
- Take advantage of opportunities to talk to their children about bullying;
- Watch for symptoms that their child may be a victim of bullying and report those symptoms; and
- Cooperate fully with school personnel in identifying and resolving incidents.

IV. Investigating and Responding

The School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act at 70 O.S. § 24-100.4(A) requires each public school district board of education to adopt policies to address the investigation of reported incidents of bullying.

The following procedures must be used by any person for the processing and resolution of a reported incident of bullying or threatening behavior. The procedures are to be followed by the administration of the school district in an effort to determine the severity of the incident and the potential to result in future violence.

The procedure for investigating reported incidents of bullying or threatening behavior is as follows:

Initiation of Investigation - Within three (3) school days of receipt of a report of an incident of bullying, the school principal or Bullying Prevention Officer shall initiate an investigation of the reported incident. All interviews with individuals involved in the incidents, their parent(s)/legal guardian(s), and/or witnesses shall be documented. A student's parent/legal guardian or attorney shall be permitted to be present at the interview of a student upon request of the student or the student's parent/legal guardian.

I. Upon receipt of an incident report and supporting evidence, the **Bullying Prevention Officer or a designated administrator** shall contact the Superintendent and begin an investigation to determine the severity of the incident and the potential for future violence.

Please note that it is best practice to avoid interviewing the alleged victim/perpetrator together or having them wait together or near each other before/during/after the interview process. Having them together in any capacity could further add to the misuse or abuse of power by the alleged perpetrator and add to the incident.

All investigations shall be documented on a form that includes, at a minimum, the following information:

- The date that the report of the incident was received by the BPO;
- The date investigation of the report was initiated;
- The name and title of the individual(s) assigned to conduct the investigation;
- Identification of all individuals involved in the incident
- Identification of all individuals who witnessed the incident
- A summary of the details of the alleged incident;
- A list of documentation available to investigate the incident; (e.g., a written statement of a student victim, a written statement of student witnesses, medical information, incident forms, and police reports);
- A summary of action taken to investigate the incident (e.g., interviews with alleged victim, offender, perpetrator, and/or witnesses; review of incident reports; review of the history of prior student behaviors; review of evidence;
- A determination of whether sufficient evidence exists to verify the occurrence of the alleged conduct;
- Identification of follow-up actions taken with the victim(s) and offender(s);
- Identification of consequences implemented for the offender(s)
- Identification of remediation implemented to address harm to the victim(s);
- Date and method of notification of parents/legal guardians of victim(s) and offender(s) of completion and findings of the investigation.

II. If it is determined that the school district's discipline code has been violated, an administrator shall follow district policies regarding the discipline of the student.

III. All verified acts of bullying which may constitute criminal activity or reasonably have the potential to endanger school safety may be reported to local law enforcement.

IV. Upon completion of the investigation, an administrator or superintendent may recommend that available community mental health care or other counseling options be provided to the student, if appropriate. This may include information about the types of support services available to the student bully, victim, and any other students affected by the prohibited behavior. If such a recommendation is made, the administration shall request disclosure of any information that indicates an explicit threat to the safety of students or school personnel provided the disclosure of information does not violate the provisions or requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996, Section 2503 of Title 12 of the Oklahoma Statutes, Section 1376 of Title 59 of Oklahoma Statutes, or any other state or federal laws relating to the disclosure of confidential information.

V. Upon completion of an investigation, timely notification shall be provided to the parents/guardians of a victim of documented and verified bullying. The information should be provided within **[#]** days of the conclusion of the investigation.

VI. Upon completion of an investigation, timely notification shall be provided to the perpetrator of the documented and verified bullying. This information should be provided within **[#]** days of the conclusion of the investigation.

Note: No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of a report.

The Superintendent shall be responsible for enforcing this policy. A building administrator should notify the superintendent within twenty-four (24) hours of any report of bullying. Upon completion of an investigation, a building administrator should notify the superintendent of the findings of the investigation and provide documentation showing that timely notification was provided to the parents of the victim and the parents of the perpetrator.

V. Safeguards and Supports

In conjunction with its disciplinary and investigatory measures, **[District name]** shall work to provide appropriate safeguards and multi-tiered support for students and staff involved in bullying situations. Such safeguards and support shall include, but are not limited to;

- Consequences and remedial action for a person who commits an act of bullying
- Consequences and remedial action for a student found to have falsely accused another as a means of retaliation, reprisal, or as a means of bullying
- A strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and other protection for students, targets, perpetrators, and witnesses and family members affected by bullying
    - Referral to community mental health Community out-of-school programs
    - Educational programs - to assist with the identification of bullying behaviors,
    - reporting procedures, and the consequences for violation of school rules and policies

Reporting Bullying to the Oklahoma State Department of Education

To assist the OSDE with compliance efforts pursuant to the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act, 70 OKLA. STAT. § 24-100.2 et seq., the **[District]** must implement a strategy for publicizing and distributing this policy and all accompanying forms. The district must also implement procedures for the reporting and investigation of incidents of school bullying. Publication and distribution shall comply with the provisions of 70 O.S. § 24-100.4 and 210:10-1-20, and shall, at a minimum, meet all of the following requirements:

- Annual written notice of this bullying policy shall be provided to parents, guardians, staff, volunteers, and students at each school. Notice of the policy shall be posted at various locations within each school site including, but not limited to, school cafeterias, bulletin boards, and administration offices. The written notice provided to students shall be written in age-appropriate language to ensure comprehension by younger students and provided with accommodations as necessary to ensure accessibility to students with disabilities.

- A copy of this policy shall be posted on the **[District Name]** website. In addition, each school site that has its own separate website shall post a copy of this policy and all accompanying forms and procedures on its website.

- Each school site shall include a copy of this policy in its student and employee handbooks.

- District Bullying Incident Coordinator
  - [Name] [Email]
  - [Phone Number]
  -

Any school community member is encouraged to report bullying incidents to the State Department of Education upon following the district's chain of command; generally, Principal > Superintendent > School Board.

USDE Office for Civil Rights

Educational institutions have a responsibility to protect every student's right to learn in a safe environment free from unlawful discrimination and to prevent unjust deprivations of that right. The Office for Civil Rights enforces several Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance from the Department of Education.

- Discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin is prohibited by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Discrimination on the basis of sex is prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.
- Discrimination against persons with disabilities is prohibited by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.
- Discrimination on the basis of age is prohibited by Age Discrimination Act of 1975.

Visit https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html to learn more about fili discriminaiton complaint with USDE's Office of Civil Right

Policy Encouragement

This model policy is provided to school districts in accordance with the provisions of the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act at 70 O.S. § 24-100.5(C)(1). Local school districts and school boards are encouraged to use this policy as a model or develop their own policies that comply with the requirements of 70 O.S. § 24-100.4 and accompanying regulations at 210:10-1-20.

This model policy contains the content that the OSDE believes best meets the intent of the law and best practices. However, the district should consult with its own legal counsel to determine the appropriate language that meets local circumstances and needs. Districts have the discretion to determine the specifics of their bullying prevention policies and supports.

Relevant Documents and Resources

- Oklahoma School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act
- Policy Rubric
- Sample Reporting Form
- Sample Interview Form
- Sample Bullying Harassment Investigation Form
- School Climate Best Practices
- Multi-tiered System of Supports for Bullying Prevention
- OSDE Bullying Prevention Training Request Form
- Suicide Prevention

BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY MODEL

Bullying Policy Rubric

A guide for assessing the content and impact of the Bullying Policy. This rubric uses a rating system across five policy categories. The goal is to help districts foster and maintain a positive and safe learning environment and avoid confusing school climate goals with policy tasks. To develop this rubric, the Student Support team conducted a deep review of the previous Model Policy utilizing the Checklist for Analyzing Discipline Policies and Procedures for Equity (CADPPE). This review was also supplemented by input from Bullying Incident Reports.

Components	1 Fails to Meet Standards	2 Below Standard	3 Meets Standard	4 Exemplary Standards
Definition and Scope	Definition and purpose are unstated	Definition and purpose are stated but unclear	Definition and purpose are stated clearly	Definition and scope are clear and easily understood
Prevention and Intervention	No prevention and intervention strategies	Provides basic prevention strategies (i.e. “zero tolerance”)	Provides some prevention and intervention strategies	Provides multi-tiered prevention and intervention strategies
Reporting and Documenting	No information on how to report an incident or to whom	Readers cannot effectively report or document bullying by reading the policy	Provides information on reporting and documentation bullying	Contains a detailed grievance process including a chain of command and anonymous reporting
Investigating and Responding	No information on how reports are investigated and responses to expect	No specific information on the procedures of investigation and response	Provides steps to investigation and response	Includes and addressees (3) equitable and restorative practices
Safeguards and Supports	No mention of support or resources for supporting students after incident	Mentions support or resources for students involved in bullying but does not include specifics	Some support or resources for students involved in bullying activities	Provides specific supporting resources for students involved in bullying activities