HAMPTON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

SECTION: PUPILS

TITLE: BULLYING

ADOPTED: November 17, 2008

REVISED: August 13, 2012, March 14, 2016

249. BULLYING

1. Purpose

The Hampton Township School District recognizes that bullying and intimidation have a negative affect on school climate. Students who are bullied, intimidated or fearful of other students may not be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the school district. Bullying of a student by another student is strictly prohibited on school property, in school buildings, on school buses, and at school-sponsored events and/or activities whether occurring on or off campus. It is a violation of this policy for any HTSD staff member to tolerate bullying.

2. Definition

Bullying shall mean an intentional electronic, written, verbal or physical act, or a series of acts:

- 1. Directed at another student or students;
- 2. That is severe, persistent or pervasive; and
- 3. That has the effect of doing any of the following:
 - i. substantially interfering with a student's education;
 - ii. creating a threatening environment; or
 - iii. substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school

Bullying, as defined in this policy, includes cyber-bullying.

"Cyberbullying" as defined in this policy, includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student, teacher or employee of the district by sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or web site postings (including blogs). All forms of cyberbullying are unacceptable and, to the extent that such actions are disruptive of the educational process of the district, offenders shall be the subject of appropriate discipline, which may include legal and/or police proceedings.

Bullying includes but is not limited to:

- 1. Physically harming a student.
- 2. Damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property.
- 3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm.
- 4. Placing a student in emotional unrest by spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships or environment, engaging in social exclusion, extortion, intimidation, or ridicule.
- 5. Cyber-bullying: forms of verbal and psychological bullying may also occur on the Internet through e-mail, instant messaging, or personal profile web sites.

- 6. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities.
- 7. Creating verbal statements or written remarks that are taunting, malicious, threatening or sexual.

Bullying includes retaliation against another student for reporting bullying or for assisting or testifying in the investigation or the hearing. Students who engage in such retaliation will be subject to consequences as defined in the Code of Student Conduct.

SC 1303.1-A

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

School Setting shall mean in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop or at any activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school. :

Other Settings

The Board also prohibits acts of bullying that occur outside of the school setting if those acts are directed at another student or students and:

- 1. are severe, persistent and/or pervasive
- 2. have the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education
- 3. create a threatening environment
- 4. substantially disrupt the orderly operation of the school

3. Authority

The Board prohibits all forms of bullying by District students.

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying and therefore the Board encourages students who have been bullied to promptly report such incidents to the building principal or designee. It is the obligation of the HTSD professional and-support staff to report any incident of bullying to the building principal.

The Board directs that complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and appropriate action shall be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained, consistent with the District's legal and investigative obligations.

4. Delegation of Responsibility

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that this policy is appropriately reflected in administrative guidelines and any Code of Student conduct and that such codes are reviewed annually with students.

District administration shall annually provide the following information to PDE through the Safe School Report:

- 1. Board's Bullying Policy
- 2. Report of bullying incidents.
- 3. Information on the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention or education programs.

5. Guidelines

The Student Handbooks, which shall contain this policy, shall be disseminated annually to students.

This policy shall be accessible in every classroom. The policy shall be posted in a prominent location within each school building and on the District Website, if available.

Student and Parent/Guardian

The school district strongly encourages all students and parents/guardians who become aware of any act of bullying to immediately report that conduct to the teacher, guidance counselor, building principal, or other school authority figure.

Investigation Procedures

Each building principal or designee is authorized and directed to investigate reports of bullying brought to their attention by students, parents/guardians, school employees or bus drivers.

Education

The District may develop and implement bullying prevention and intervention programs. Such programs shall provide District staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in and reporting incidents of bullying.

Pol. 218, 233

Consequences/Discipline

Consequences for students who are found to have bullied others may include counseling, remediation, parent/guardian conference, loss of school privileges, detention, suspension, expulsion, or referral to law enforcement agency, in accordance with the District's disciplinary policies and Code of Conduct.

Interplay With Other School District Policies

Nothing in this policy shall prevent school employees from enforcing, or imposing discipline, or fulfilling their professional responsibilities under other school district policies or student disciplinary rules.

This policy shall not be interpreted as preventing a student or parent/guardian from filing a complaint under the school district's anti-harassment policy.