

# **Imagine Great Western Academy**

## **Anti-Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment Policy**

### **INTRODUCTION**

It is the policy of Imagine Great Western Academy that any form of Bullying behavior, whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school, at School sponsored events, or online via the Web, is expressly forbidden.

- A. Students who have been determined to have engaged in prohibited behaviors are subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension or expulsion from school. The district's schools commitment to addressing such prohibited behaviors, however, involves a multifaceted approach, which includes education and the promotion of a school atmosphere in which Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying will not be tolerated by students, faculty, or school personnel.
- B. It is imperative that Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying be identified only when the specific elements of the definition are met because the designation of such prohibited incidents carry special statutory obligations. However, misconduct by one student against another student, whether or not appropriately defined, will result in appropriate disciplinary consequences for the perpetrator.

### **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

- A. "Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying" means any intentional written, verbal, graphic, or physical act that a student or group of students exhibits toward another person more than once and the behavior either:
  - 1. Causes mental or physical harm to the other student; or
  - 2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student.
- B. "Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying" also means electronically transmitted acts i.e., internet, cell phone, personal digital assistance (PDA), or wireless hand-held device that a student has exhibited toward another particular student more than once and the behavior both:
  - 1. Causes mental or physical harm to the other student/school personnel; and/or
  - 2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the other student/school personnel.

- C. In evaluating whether conduct constitutes Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying, special attention should be paid to the words chosen or the actions taken, whether such conduct occurred in front of others or was communicated to others, how the perpetrator interacted with the victim and whether the victim's reaction was reasonable or foreseeable under the circumstances, and the perpetrator's motivation, either admitted or appropriately inferred.
- D. A School-Sponsored Event shall mean any activity conducted on or off school property (including school busses and other school-related vehicles) that is sponsored, recognized or organized by the School or on behalf of the School.

## **TYPES OF CONDUCT**

- A. Harassment, Intimidation or Bullying can include many different behaviors including overt intent to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate another student or school personnel. Examples of conduct that could constitute prohibited behaviors include, but are not limited to:
  - 1. Physical violence and/or attacks;
  - 2. Threats, taunts, and intimidation through words and/or gestures;
  - 3. Extortion, damage, or stealing of money and/or possessions;
  - 4. Exclusion from the peer group or spreading rumors; and
  - 5. Repetitive and hostile behavior with the intent to harm others through the use of information and communication technologies and other Web-based/online sites (also known as "cyber bullying"), such as the following:
    - (a) Posting slurs on Web sites where students congregate or on Web logs (personal online journals or diaries);
    - (b) Sending abusive or threatening instant messages or email;
    - (c) Using camera phones to take embarrassing photographs of students and posting them online or sending them to third parties; and,
    - (d) Using Web sites to circulate gossip and rumors to other students; and
    - (e) Excluding others from an online group by falsely reporting for inappropriate language to Internet service providers.

## **COMPLAINTS**

### **A. Formal Written Complaints**

- 1. Students and/or their parents or guardians may file reports regarding suspected Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying. Such written reports shall be reasonably specific including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged

conduct, the target of suspect Harassment, Intimidation, and/or Bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Such reports may be filed with any school staff member or administrator, and they shall be promptly forwarded to the building principal for review and action in accordance with Section 5.

### **B. Verbal Complaints**

1. Students, parents or guardians, and school personnel may make verbal complaints of conduct that they consider to be Harassment, Intimidation, and/or Bullying by verbal report to a teacher, school administrator, or other school personnel. Such informal verbal complaints shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of Harassment, Intimidation, and/or Bullying, including person(s) involved, number of times and places of the alleged conduct, the target of the prohibited behavior(s), and the names of any potential student or staff witness. A school staff member or administrator who receives a verbal complaint shall promptly document the complaint in writing, including the above information. This written report by the school staff member and/or administrator shall be promptly forwarded to the building principal for review and action in accordance with Section 5.

### **C. Anonymous Protection of Person Filing Complaints**

1. Individuals who make informal complaints as set forth above may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the school staff member(s) and administrator(s) who receive the complaint. The anonymous complaints shall be reviewed and reasonable action will be taken to address the situation, to the extent such action may be taken that (1) Does not disclose the source of the complaint, and (2) Is consistent with the due process rights of the student(s) alleged to have committed acts of Harassment, Intimidation, and/or Bullying.

## **SCHOOL PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **A. Teachers and Other School Staff**

1. Teachers and other school staff, who witness acts of Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying, as defined above, shall promptly notify the building principal and/or his/her designee of the event observed, and shall promptly file a written, incident report concerning the events witnessed. Teachers and other school staff who receive student or parent reports of suspected Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying shall promptly notify the building principal and/or his/her designee of such report(s). If the report is a formal, written complaint, such complaint shall be forwarded promptly (no later than the next school day) to the building principal or his/her designee. If the report is a verbal informal complaint that is received by a teacher or

other professional employee, he or she shall prepare a written report of the informal verbal complaint which shall be promptly forwarded (no later than the next school day) to the building principal or his/her designee.

2. In addition to addressing both written and verbal complaints, school personnel are encouraged to address the issue of Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying in other interactions with students. School personnel may find opportunities to educate students about Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying and help eliminate such prohibited behaviors through class discussions, counseling, and reinforcement of socially appropriate behavior. School personnel should intervene promptly whenever they observe student conduct that has the purpose or effect of ridiculing, humiliating, or intimidating another student/school personnel, even if such conduct does not meet the formal definition of "Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying."

## **B. Administrator Responsibilities**

### **1. Investigation**

- (a) The principal and/or his/her designee shall be promptly notified of any formal written or verbal complaint of suspected Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying. Under the direction of the building principal or his/her designee, all such complaints shall be investigated promptly. A written report of the investigation shall be prepared when the investigation is complete. Such report shall include findings of fact, a determination of whether acts of Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying where verified, and, when prohibited acts are verified, a recommendation for intervention, including disciplinary action shall be included in the report. Where appropriate, written witness statements shall be attached to the report.
- (b) Notwithstanding the foregoing, when a student making a verbal complaint has requested anonymity, the investigation of such complaint shall be limited as is appropriate in view of the anonymity of the complaint. Such limitation of investigation may include restriction action to a simple review of the complaint (with or without discussing it with the alleged perpetrator), subject to receipt of further information and/or the withdrawal by the complaining student of the condition that his/her report be anonymous.

### **2. Remedial Actions**

- (a) Verified acts of Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying shall result in an intervention by the building School Leader(s) or his/her designee that is intended to ensure that the prohibition against Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying behavior is enforced, with the goal that any such prohibited behavior will cease.

(b) Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in seriousness and impact on the targeted individual and other students. Accordingly, there is no one prescribed response to verified acts of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of “Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying,” as defined above will generally warrant disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such prohibited behaviors whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action (detention, in and out-of-school suspension; or expulsion) is a matter for the professional discretion of the building School Leader(s).

## **REPORTING OBLIGATIONS**

### **A. Report to the Parent or Guardian of the Perpetrator**

1. If after investigation, acts of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying by a specific student are verified, the building School Leader(s) or his/her designee shall notify in writing the parent or guardian of the perpetrator of that finding. If disciplinary consequences are imposed against such student, a description of such discipline shall be included in such notification.

### **B. Reports to the victim and his/her parent of guardian**

1. If after investigation, acts of bullying against a specific student are verified, the building principal or his/her designee shall notify the parent of guardian of the victim of such finding. In providing such notification, care must be taken to respect the statutory privacy rights of the perpetrator of such Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying.

### **C. List of verified acts of Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying**

1. A requirement that the districts School Administrators semiannually provide the president of the district School Board a written summary of all reported incidents and post the summary on the district Web site, if one exists. The list shall be limited to the number of verified acts of Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying, whether in the classroom, on school property, to and from school, or at school-sponsored events.
2. This policy shall not be interpreted to prohibit a reasonable and civil exchange of opinions or debate that is conducted at appropriate times and places and is protected by State or Federal Law such as the nondiscrimination, suspension, and expulsion/due process, violent and aggressive behavior, hazing, discipline/punishment, sexual harassment, peer sexual harassment and equal educational opportunity acts.

## **POLICE AND CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES**

- A. Allegations of criminal misconduct will be reported to law enforcement, and suspected child abuse must be reported to Child Protective Services, per required timelines. The school must also investigate for the purpose of determining whether there has been a violation of the School Policy or Procedure, even if law enforcement or CPS is also investigating. All school personnel must cooperate with investigations by outside agencies.