

Williamsport Area School District



Policy No.249: Bullying

Adopted July 7, 2009 **Revised April 2, 2019**

The Williamsport Area School District recognizes that bullying of students has a negative effect on the educational environment and overall climate of its schools. 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 can also escalate into more serious violence. Therefore, the school district strives to offer all students an educational environment free from bullying.

Definition

Bullying shall mean unwelcome, intentional, verbal, written, electronic, or physical conduct directed at a student by another student or students, or by an adult, that has the intent and effect of:

1. Physically harming a student.
2. Damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal or academic property.
3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm.
4. Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal or academic property.
5. Systematically and intentionally excluding a student from activities with peers.
6. Spreading false information about a student or attempting to influence others to exclude a student from an activity.
7. Otherwise creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities, or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school, whether or not the act of bullying occurs at school.

Bullying is occurring when there exists an imbalance of physical, psychological, or social power between the aggressor and the victim, favoring the aggressor. Bullying is most often a series of aggressive acts as described above. Bullying as defined in this policy includes cyber bullying.

Student, Parent/Guardian and Employee Reporting

The school district expects students and parents/guardians who become aware of any act of bullying to immediately report that conduct. Students may report acts of bullying to their teachers, building principal or other school employees supervising school-sponsored activities. Students should be encouraged not to stand by as third parties and tolerate bullying by others. Parents/Guardians may contact the building principal to report acts of bullying.

Discipline

Acts of bullying will be remediated by methods consistent with a research-based bullying prevention instruction/intervention program chosen by the district, with the intention to eliminate bullying and promote prosocial behavior. Should bullying behavior by an individual be persistent, disciplinary action may be taken by staff or administration as described in the policy on Student Discipline.