



# RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

660 West Daley Street

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Spring Green, Wisconsin 53588

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Phone: 608-588-2551

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## **Bullying/Harassment**

River Valley School District strives to provide a safe, positive learning environment for all students. In order to maintain a school environment that encourages optimum human growth and development, it is the policy of the district to maintain and ensure a learning and working environment free of any form of bullying or harassment. All bullying behavior is prohibited whether it is the action of students or staff members.

Bullying/harassment is prohibited on all school property whether the property is owned, leased or used by the school district, during school-sponsored activities, on school buses and at bus stops or through the use of electronic, computer, cell phones, or messaging devices (cyber bullying).

Related conduct that occurs away from school that creates a threat to someone while attending school and/or conduct that is likely to cause a disturbance at school is subject to discipline, including possible law enforcement involvement. Also, such conduct may be subject to the activity/athletic code(s).

The district will not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form and will take all necessary and appropriate action to eliminate it, including, but not limited to: discipline, such as suspension or expulsion of the offenders. Furthermore, if needed, the district may pursue court action to prevent an individual from being on school property or in the presence of those people being harassed.

Knowingly filing a false bullying/harassment report against another student/staff member is prohibited.

### Definitions:

Bullying includes aggressive or hostile behavior that is intentional, involves an imbalance of power, and is typically repeated over time.

Harassment refers to physical, verbal or visual conduct that interferes with a student's schoolwork, ability to attend class or participate in extracurricular activities, or creates an intimidating hostile, or offensive school environment. It may consist of a single act or course of conduct, or be repeated over time.

Harassment also includes "hate speech" - the use of language, behavior or images/symbols that express prejudice against a particular group or groups on the basis of any protected characteristic(s). Examples are:

- Making statements that promote violence towards a racial or ethnic group;
- Drawing, displaying, or posting images or symbols of prejudice (e.g., confederate flag, swastikas)

Bullying/Harassment takes many forms: physical, verbal, social/emotional & cyber.

- *Physical:* involves harming a person's body or possessions, and includes, but is not limited to: hitting, kicking, punching, spitting, tripping, pushing, taking or breaking someone's things, and making mean or rude hand gestures.
- *Verbal:* involves harassing, teasing, intimidating, or threatening comments, which includes, but is not limited to: inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, threatening to cause harm, comments or other expressions which insult, degrade, or stereotype any person or group. The River Valley School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, disability, sexual orientation, class, creed, marital or parental status, pregnancy, age or other protected status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. The following people have been designated to handle inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies: Business Manager, 660 W. Daley, Street, Spring Green, WI 53588, 608-588-2551, and Pupil Services Director, 660 Varsity Blvd., Spring Green, WI 53588, 608-588-2554.
- *Social/Emotional:* involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships, and includes, but is not limited to: leaving someone out on purpose, telling someone not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors, and embarrassing someone in public.
- *Cyber:* involves misuses of technology, and includes, but is not limited to: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another student or staff member by way of any technological tool.

#### Delegation of Responsibility:

*Staff:* Each staff member shall be responsible to maintain an educational environment free of bullying/harassment. All staff members and contracted district employees are required to report bullying incidents that have been reported to them or that they have witnessed to an administrator. Failure to take action or to report the behavior is considered to be in violation of this policy and subject to disciplinary action.

*Students and Parents:* It is recommended that students and parents/guardians report bullying complaints to any staff member. Retaliation against a victim, reporter, or a witness is prohibited and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Forms for reporting bullying/harassment are available from the school counselors or from the building secretary. They are also available on the district website.

*Administration:* If the behavior is found to meet the definition of bullying the administration will take the necessary disciplinary actions. Taken into account will be the developmental and maturity levels of the students involved, the circumstances, the severity of the behavior and past incidences or continuing patterns of behavior. The building principal or his/her designee will inform the parents or guardians of the victim and also the parents or guardians of the accused. Complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when a complaint is verified.

This policy shall be distributed annually to all students enrolled in the district and their parents/guardians, and shall be provided to any person upon request. It is also available on the District website.

CROSS REFERENCE: Policy #443 - Code of Classroom Conduct  
Policy #446.2 - Student Suspensions/Expulsions  
Policy #411.2 – Student Harassment  
Policy #743 - Acceptable Use of Networked Computers, Electronic Mail,  
and Internet Safety Policy District Handbooks (Students and Staff)  
Anti-Bullying Responsibilities Chart

LEGAL REF.: Section 118.46 Wisconsin Statutes

APPROVED: September 9, 2010  
REVISED: September 11, 2014  
APPROVED: October 9, 2014  
REVISED: July 11, 2019  
APPROVED: August 8, 2019  
APPROVED: September 10, 2020  
REVISED: August 10, 2023  
APPROVED: September 14, 2023