



# RIVER VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

660 West Daley Street

≈

Spring Green, Wisconsin 53588

≈

Phone: 608-588-2551

411.1

## **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.~~

~~*Complaints alleging sexual harassment occurring before August 1, 2024, are governed by policies 411.3 and 511.2. Complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of sex (including sex-based harassment) occurring after August 1, 2024, are governed by policy 411.5/511.3.*~~

- ~~• *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.~~

River Valley School District strives to provide a safe and positive learning environment for all students. Bullying toward a student, whether by another student, staff member, or third party, is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated.

This Policy applies to all the District's educational programs and activities, including at school, events or activities on District premises (including school grounds and any buildings owned or leased by the school district), school-sponsored events on or off school premises, and District-provided transportation (including transportation in vehicles owned or leased by the District).

### **Definition**

Bullying is deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions, intended to cause fear, intimidation, or harm. Bullying typically is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power. The behavior may be motivated by an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, such as, but not limited to: age; national origin; race; ethnicity; religion; gender; gender identity; sexual orientation; physical attributes; physical or mental ability or disability; and social, economic, or family status.

Bullying behavior can be:

1. Physical (e.g. assault, hitting or punching, kicking, theft, threatening behavior)
2. Verbal (e.g. threatening or intimidating language, teasing or name-calling, racist remarks)
3. Indirect (e.g. spreading cruel rumors, intimidation through gestures, social exclusion, and sending insulting messages or pictures by mobile phone or using the internet – also known as cyber bullying)

### **Procedure for Reporting/Retaliation**

All school staff members and school officials who observe or become aware of acts of bullying are required to report these acts to the building principal or the event/activity supervisor. Any other person, including a student who is either a victim of the bullying or is aware of the bullying or any other concerned individual is encouraged to report the conduct.

Reports of bullying may be made verbally or in writing. Use of the District's Student Bullying Report Form (Policy 411.1/411.2 Exhibit 3) is encouraged. Reports may be made confidentially.

### **Bullying Complaint Investigations**

All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be investigated promptly by the building principal or designee. The parents/guardians of the students involved will be informed of the complaint and related investigation.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the principal or designee will prepare a written determination regarding whether bullying occurred. The parents/guardians of the students involved will be notified of the determination.

If the investigation finds that bullying occurred, it will result in prompt and appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action. This may include student discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion from school and termination from employment.

If, during an investigation of a reported act of bullying in accordance with this policy, the principal determines that the reported misconduct may constitute harassment or discrimination based on a protected class in violation of Policy 411 – Student Nondiscrimination and Equal Education Opportunity or Policy 411.2 – Student Anti-Harassment, the principal will refer the complaint to a Compliance Officer listed in those policies. The Compliance Officer will determine the complaint procedures that will be followed for the complaint investigation.

There shall be no retaliation against individuals making such reports. Individuals engaging in retaliatory behavior will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined above.

### **Disclosure and Public Reporting**

The policy will be distributed annually to all students enrolled in the school district, their parents and/or guardians and employees. The school district will also provide a copy of the policy to any person who requests it.

CROSS REFERENCE: Policy 443 - Code of Classroom Conduct  
Policy 446.2 - Student Suspensions/Expulsions  
Policy 411 **Student Nondiscrimination and Equal Educational Opportunities**  
Policy 411.1/411.2 Exhibit 3) Student Bullying Report Form  
Policy 411.2 – Student **Anti**-Harassment  
Policy 743 - Acceptable Use of Networked Computers, Electronic Mail, and Internet Safety Policy  
District Handbooks (Students and Staff)  
Anti-Bullying Responsibilities Chart  
Policy 411.5/511.3 Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex (Title IX) in Education Programs or Activities and Related Grievance Process  
Policy 411.3 Title IX: Sexual Harassment Policy for Students and Other Applicable Individuals  
Policy 511.2 Title IX: Sexual Harassment Policy for Employees

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

APPROVED: July 11, 2024