Board Policy JCDAG: Bullying Status: ADOPTED

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Bullying

The Board of Education believes that all students can learn better in a safe school environment. Behavior that infringes on the safety of students will not be tolerated. Bullying, as the term is defined in Georgia law, of a student by another student is strictly prohibited in the Bibb County School District (District). Such prohibition shall be included in the Student Code of Conduct for all schools within the school system. Students are expected to review and follow the requirements set forth in the Student Code of Conduct.

Bullying is defined as follows:

An act that is:

1. Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury on another person, when accompanied by an apparent present ability to do so;

2. Any intentional display of force such as would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm; or

3. Any intentional written, verbal or physical act, which a reasonable person would perceive as being intended to threaten, harass, or intimidate, that:

    a. Causes another person substantial physical harm within the meaning of O.C.G.A. § ~~Code Section~~ 16-5-23.1 or visible bodily harm as such term is defined in O.C.G.A. § ~~Code Section~~ 16-5-23.1;

    b. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education or otherwise substantially infringing upon the rights of a student;

    c. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or

    d. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

The term applies to acts which occur on school property, on school vehicles, at designated school bus stops, or at school related functions or activities or by use of data or software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, computer network, or other electronic technology of a local school system. The term also applies to acts of cyberbullying which occur through the use of electronic communication, whether or not electronic act originated on school property or with school equipment, if the electronic communication (1) is directed specifically at students or school personnel, (2) is maliciously intended for the purpose of threatening the safety of those specified or substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school, and (3) creates a reasonable fear of harm to the students' or school personnel's person or property or has a high likelihood of succeeding in that purpose.

Electronic communication includes, but is not limited to, any transfer of signs signals, writings, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system.

The District further prohibits hazing, which includes bullying and intimidation in association with rituals to join an extracurricular activity or group, or to raise a student's rank or status within the organization or group.

Procedures may be developed at each school encouraging a teacher or other school employee, student, parent, guardian, or other person who has control or charge of a student, either anonymously or in the person's name, at the person's option, to report or otherwise provide information on bullying activity. Any teacher or other school employee who, in the exercise of his or her personal judgment and discretion, believes he or she has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that someone is a target of bullying is encouraged to immediately report it to the school principal. Any report will be appropriately investigate by the administration based on the nature of the complaint in a timely manner to determine whether bullying has occurred, whether there are other procedures related to illegal

harassment or discrimination that should be implemented and what other steps should be taken. Any report of retaliation for reporting bullying, harassment, or hazing will also be investigated and addressed as called for in this policy and in accordance with school procedures.

Any student who threatens death or serious injury to individuals in the District may be temporarily assigned to home pending investigation.

Acts of bullying shall be punished by a range of consequences through the progressive discipline process, as stated in the Student Code of Conduct. However, upon a finding by the disciplinary hearing officer, panel or tribunal that a student in grades 6-12 has committed the offense of bullying for the third time in a school year, the student shall be assigned to an alternative school.

Upon a finding by a school administrator that a student has committed an act of bullying or is a victim of bullying, the administrator or designee shall notify the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of the student by ~~the~~ telephone call or through written notice, which may be done electronically. The notification shall, as appropriate under the circumstances, include referrals to resources and services, both for students who have committed bullying offenses or are targets or suspected victims of bullying.

Students and parents will be notified of the prohibition against bullying and the penalties for violating the prohibition by posting information at each school and by including such information in the student/parent handbooks.