

POLICY TITLE: BULLYING, CYBERBULLYING, HARASSMENT OR INTIMIDATION OF STUDENTS		
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE: June 8, 2009	MOST RECENTLY AMENDED: December 19, 2011	MOST RECENTLY REAFFIRMED:
POLICY/PROCEDURE MANUAL SUMMARY CATEGORY: EQUITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION		

I. Purpose

The purposes of this policy are as follows:

1. To set forth the Board's prohibition of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation of students in the school environment, any reprisal or any retaliation against individuals who report acts of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation or victims, witnesses, or bystanders of same;
2. To provide definitions of specified terms;
3. To set forth consequences and remedial actions for offenders;
4. To establish strategies and approaches for prevention of bullying, harassment or intimidation
5. To direct the Superintendent to establish reporting and investigation procedures.

II. Definitions

A. **Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation** means

1. Intentional conduct including verbal, physical or written conduct, or an intentional electronic communication that:
 - a. Creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance, or with the student's physical or psychological wellbeing and is:
 - 1) Motivated by an actual or perceived personal characteristic including race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion,

ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, familial status, physical or mental ability or disability; or

- 2) Threatening or seriously intimidating; and
 - a) Occurs on school property, at a school activity or event, or on a school bus; or
 - b) Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school.

- B. **Cyberbullying** means an electronic communication which constitutes bullying, harassment or intimidation.
- C. **Electronic communication** means a communication including, but not limited to any form of writing, photograph, audio/video recording, social media message, transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer, tablet, or internet connected device.
- D. **Student** means a person registered in Harford County Public Schools (HCPS) and who is receiving educational services.
- E. **Reprisal or retaliation** means unlawful acts or acts which violate Board or school policy which are taken against an individual specifically because he/she reported acts of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation.

III. Statement of Policy

- A. Prohibition
 1. Bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation of any student are prohibited.
 2. Reprisal and retaliation against individuals who report acts of bullying, harassment or intimidation are prohibited.
- B. Consequences and Remedial Actions
 1. Consequences and remedial actions shall be imposed upon persons who violate this policy either by engaging in bullying, harassment or intimidation; who have engaged in reprisal or retaliation; persons who

have found to have made false allegations that this policy has been violated.

2. Such consequences and remedial actions may include, but are not limited to, the following which shall be consistently and fairly applied after appropriate investigation has determined that such an offense has occurred.

- a. Time out;
- b. Loss of a privilege;
- c. Verbal reprimand;
- d. Notification of a parent;
- e. Detention;
- f. Parent/student conference;
- g. Reassignment of seats in class, cafeteria or bus;
- h. Reassignment of classes;
- i. Reassignment to another mode of transportation or to another school;
- j. Direct supervision
- k. Completion of a letter of acknowledgement of action with apology to the victim, but only after review of staff and not in the case of sexual harassment, intimidation, or a court order prohibiting contact between the victim and the student who has committed the offense;
- l. Restitution or restoration;
- m. Counseling/Education;
- n. Behavioral contract;
- o. Behavioral assessment;
- p. Referral to the school Student Services team;
- q. Referral to a community agency;
- r. Cooperation and participation in a behavioral management program developed in consultation with a mental health professional;
- s. Satisfactory completion of community service;
- t. In-school suspension;
- u. Out-of-school suspension;
- v. Extended suspension;
- w. Referral to law enforcement;
- x. Expulsion.

C. Dissemination of Information

The Superintendent shall disseminate information about the types of support services available to the student offender, victim and any bystanders, and disseminate information regarding the availability and use of the bullying, harassment or intimidation form utilized by HCPS. Such information shall include contact information for the following type of agencies: public or private mental health services; faith-based services; youth development

organizations; Department of Juvenile Services; Department of Social Services; and law enforcement agencies.

D. Prevention

The Superintendent shall ensure that systemwide efforts are taken to provide education and training with regard to bullying, cyberbullying, harassment and intimidation including:

1. Annual professional development for administrators and all staff to increase awareness of the prevalence, causes and consequences of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment and intimidation and to increase the use of evidence-based strategy for preventing bullying.
2. School-wide evidence-based anti-bullying programs implemented as a part of a system of positive behavioral supports and school improvement efforts at all grade levels.
3. School climate improvement efforts in order to promote student involvement in the anti-bullying efforts, peer support, mutual respect and a culture which encourages students to report incidents of bullying to adults.
4. Collaboration with families in the community to inform parents about the prevalence, causes and consequences of bullying/cyberbullying including its central role as a public health hazard and the means of preventing it.
5. Biennial school building specific data collection on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying/cyberbullying which is used to guide local decision making related to surveillance, prevention, intervention and professional development.
6. Professional development for school staff on how to respond appropriately to students who bully/cyberbully, are bullied and are bystanders who report bullying.
7. Education, counseling for students who exhibit bullying behaviors including teaching replacement behaviors, development of empathy, tolerance and sensitivity to diversity.
8. Remedial measures designed to correct or prevent bullying behavior and to protect bullying victims.
9. Support counseling for the victim which shall include protection from retaliation and further episodes of bullying/cyberbullying.
10. A continuum of interventions developed to prevent bullying/cyberbullying by addressing the social, emotional, behavioral and academic needs of students who bully in order to prevent further incidents.

11. Utilizing community health and mental health resources for those students who are unable to stop bullying behaviors, notwithstanding school interventions and for those students involved in bullying/cyberbullying behaviors as perpetrators or victims whose mental or physical health, safety or academic performance has been impacted.

E. Procedures

The Superintendent shall establish procedures for:

1. Reporting acts of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation;
2. The prompt investigation of acts of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment or intimidation.

F. The Maryland State Department of Education is familiar with the reporting and investigation procedures of the Harford County Public Schools. Individuals with questions may contact the following MSDE staff:

Charles Buckler
Director of Student Services and Alternative Programs Branch
410-767-0311
(or current Director of Student Services and Alternative Programs Branch)

Dominic M. Romano
School Safety Specialist
410-767-0301
(or current School Safety Specialist)

Board Approval Acknowledged By:

Barbara P. Canavan, Superintendent
Board of Education of Harford County

Policy Action Dates							
ACTION		DATE		ACTION		DATE	
Adopted		June 8, 2009					
Amended		July 12, 2010					
Amended		December 19, 2011					

Responsibility for Policy Maintenance & References	
LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER NAME: Patrick P. Spicer, Esquire	JOB POSITION OF LAST EDITOR/DRAFTER: General Counsel
PERSON RESPONSIBLE: Patrick P. Spicer, Esquire	JOB POSITION OF PERSON RESPONSIBLE: General Counsel
DESIGNEE NAME:	JOB POSITION OF DESIGNEE:
POLICY NUMBER PRIOR TO NOVEMBER 1, 2005:	

LEGAL REFERENCES¹

Section 7-424 and 7-424.1 of the Education Article of the Maryland Annotated Code.

¹ All references are to specific federal or Maryland statutes or regulations. References are provided for convenience and informational purposes only and are not to be considered as exhaustive or as precluding Harford County Public Schools from relying upon any other statutes or regulations in support of a policy.