

Board Policy: Anti-bullying Policy and Procedures for Bullying Prevention

The Wonderful College Prep Academy – Lost Hills (“WCPA”) Board of Directors recognizes the harmful effects of bullying on student well-being, student learning, and school attendance and desires to provide a safe school environment that protects students from physical and emotional harm. No individual or group shall, through physical, written, verbal, visual, electronic, or other means, harass, sexually harass, threaten, intimidate, cyberbully, cause bodily injury to, or commit hate violence against any student or school personnel, or retaliate against them for filing a complaint or participating in the complaint resolution process.

Bullying Defined

Bullying is an aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power between individuals with the intent to cause emotional or physical harm. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or social/relational and may involve a single severe act or repetition or potential repetition of a deliberate act. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, any act described in Education Code 48900, subdivision (r).

Bullying is any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- Placing a reasonable student or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
- Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
- Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
- Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by WCPA.

"Reasonable student" means a student, including, but not limited to, an exceptional needs student who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with his or her exceptional needs.

"Cyberbullying" includes the electronic creation or transmission of harassing communications, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account or assuming that person's online identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

"Electronic Act" means the creation or transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

- A message, text, sound, video, or image.
- A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
- Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed under the definition of "bullying" above.
- Creating a credible impersonation of another actual student for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed under the definition of "bullying" above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a student for the purpose of bullying the student and such that another student would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the student was or is the student who was impersonated.
- Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed under the definition of "bullying" above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious student or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual student other than the student who created the false profile.
- An act of cyber sexual bullying.
- As used in this policy, "cyber sexual bullying" means the dissemination of, or the solicitation or incitement to disseminate, a photograph or other visual recording by a student to another student or to school personnel by means of an electronic act that has or can be reasonably predicted to have one or more of the effects described under the definition of "bullying" above. A photograph or other visual recording, as described above, shall include the depiction of a nude, semi-nude, or sexually explicit photograph or other visual recording of a minor where the minor is identifiable from the photograph, visual recording, or other electronic act.
- "Cyber sexual bullying" does not include a depiction, portrayal, or image that has any serious literary, artistic, educational, political, or scientific value or that involves athletic events or school-sanctioned activities.
- Notwithstanding the provisions above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.

Examples of the types of conduct that may constitute bullying and are prohibited by the WCPA include, but are not limited to:

1. **Physical bullying:** An act that inflicts harm upon a person's body or possessions, such as hitting, kicking, pinching, spitting, tripping, pushing, taking or breaking someone's possessions, or making cruel or rude hand gestures
2. **Verbal bullying:** An act that includes saying or writing hurtful things, such as teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, or threats to cause harm
3. **Social/relational bullying:** An act that harms a person's reputation or relationships, such as leaving a person out of an activity on purpose, influencing others not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors, or embarrassing someone in public
4. **Cyberbullying:** An act such as sending demeaning or hateful text messages or emails, spreading rumors by email or by posting on social networking sites, or posting or sharing embarrassing photos, videos, web site, or fake profiles

Measures to Prevent Bullying

The Superintendent or designee shall implement measures to prevent bullying, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. **School wide interventions.** Strategies include ensuring that WCPA establishes clear rules for student conduct and implements strategies to promote a positive, collaborative school climate, such as creating school-wide assemblies to address bullying.
2. **Classroom interventions.** Strategies including establishing classroom rules against bullying, holding regular class meetings, and scheduling meetings with parents.
3. **Individual student interventions.** This strategy includes providing information to students, through student handbooks, the school web site and social media, and other age-appropriate means, about school rules related to bullying, mechanisms available for reporting incidents or threats, and the consequences for engaging in bullying. This strategy also consists of having individual conversations with students identified as either a bully or a target and any of the following:
 - Taking immediate action when bullying is observed.
 - Responding in a timely manner to all reports of bullying.
 - Providing protection for students who are being bullied.
 - Establishing support groups for both the targeted student(s) and the bully.

- Applying school rules, policies, and appropriate consequence, which may include suspension or recommended expulsion in particular circumstances.
 - Teaching parents/guardians to understand bullying and the consequences.
 - Partnering with law enforcement and mental health agencies.
 - Promote a caring and supportive school culture.
4. **Encouraging notification.** Encouraging students to notify school staff when they are being bullied or when they suspect that another student is being bullied, and providing means by which students may report threats or incidents confidentially and anonymously.
 5. **Assessment of Bullying.** Conducting an assessment of bullying incidents and, if necessary, increasing supervision and security in areas where bullying most often occurs, such as playgrounds, hallways, restrooms, and cafeterias.
 6. **Immediate Intervention.** Annually notifying WCPA employees that, pursuant to Education Code 234.1, any school staff who witnesses an act of bullying against a student has a responsibility to immediately intervene to stop the incident when it is safe to do so.

Staff Training

The Superintendent or designee shall provide training to school staff to raise their awareness about the legal obligation to prevent discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying of district students. Such training shall be designed to provide staff with the skills to:

1. Discuss the diversity of the student body and school community, including their varying immigration experiences
2. Discuss bullying prevention strategies with students, and teach students to recognize the behavior and characteristics of bullying perpetrators and victims
3. Identify the signs of bullying or harassing behavior
4. Take immediate corrective action when bullying is observed
5. Report incidents to the appropriate authorities, including law enforcement in instances of criminal behavior

Information and Resources

The Superintendent or designee shall post on WCPA's web site, in a prominent location and in a manner that is easily accessible to students and parents/guardians, information on bullying and harassment prevention.

Student Instruction

As appropriate, the WCPA shall provide students with instruction, in the classroom or other educational settings, that promotes social-emotional learning, effective communication and conflict resolution skills, character development, respect for cultural and individual differences, self-esteem development, assertiveness skills, and appropriate online behavior.

WCPA shall also educate students about the negative impact of bullying, discrimination, intimidation, and harassment based on actual or perceived immigration status, religious beliefs and customs, or any other individual bias or prejudice.

Students should be taught the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, how to advocate for themselves, how to help another student who is being bullied, and when to seek assistance from a trusted adult. As role models for students, staff shall be expected to demonstrate effective problem-solving and anger management skills.

To discourage cyberbullying, teachers may advise students to be cautious about sharing passwords, personal data, or private photos online and to consider the consequences of making negative comments about others online.

Reporting and Filing of Complaints

Any student, parent/guardian, or other individual who believes that a student has been subjected to bullying or who has witnessed bullying may report the incident to a teacher, the principal, the Compliance Officer, or any other available school employee.

When a report of bullying is submitted, the student or parent/guardian should be informed of their right to file a formal written complaint in accordance with WCPA's Uniform Complaint Procedures. The student who is the alleged victim of the bullying shall be given an opportunity to describe the incident, identify witnesses who may have relevant information, and provide other evidence of bullying.

Within one business day of receiving such a report, a staff member shall notify the principal, Superintendent and/or Compliance Officer of the report, whether or not a uniform complaint is filed. In addition, any school employee who observes an incident of bullying involving a student shall, within one business day, should report such observation to the principal, Superintendent and/or Compliance Officer, whether or not the alleged victim files a complaint.

When the circumstances involve cyberbullying, individuals with information about the activity shall be encouraged to save and print any electronic or digital messages that they

feel constitute cyberbullying and to notify a teacher, the principal, or other employee so that the matter may be investigated. When a student uses a social networking site or service to bully or harass another student, the Superintendent or designee may file a request with the networking site or service to suspend the privileges of the student and to have the material removed.

Discipline/Corrective Actions

Corrective actions for a student who commits an act of bullying of any type may include counseling, behavioral intervention and education, and, if the behavior is severe or pervasive as defined in Education Code 48900, may include suspension or expulsion in accordance with WCPA policies.

When appropriate, based on the severity or pervasiveness of the bullying, the Superintendent or designee shall notify the parents/guardians of victims and perpetrators and may contact law enforcement.

Support Services

The Superintendent, principal, or principal's designee may refer a victim, witness, perpetrator, or other student affected by an act of bullying to a school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, child welfare attendance personnel, school nurse, or other school support service personnel for counseling.

If any student involved in bullying exhibits warning signs of suicidal thought or intention or of intent to harm another person, the Superintendent or designee shall, as appropriate, implement WCPA intervention protocols which may include, but are not limited to, referral to the Student Health Center for mental health services, to other health professionals, and/or law enforcement.