

Mosaic Early Childhood Bullying Prevention Policy

Bullying is a major distraction from learning. Victims, perpetrators, and witnesses of bullying can suffer significant emotional, mental, and physical health consequences when this type of anti-social behavior occurs. The negative consequences of bullying not only affect the well-being of the students directly involved but also diminishes the spirit and learning atmosphere of the entire school. Mosaic is committed to protecting its students, employees, and applicants for admission from bullying and harassment, for any reason and of any type. The administration believes that all students and employees are entitled to a safe, equitable, and harassment-free school experience. Mosaic will strive to maintain an educational environment free of bullying. Mosaic sets forth the following policy for the identification, reporting, and handling of bullying for the overall goal of the protection of the students and their ability to learn and live in a safe environment.

Definitions

Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more perpetrators of a verbal, written, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that has an effect of:

causing emotional or physical harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property or property in the victim's responsibility or;

placing the victim in reasonable fear of harm to one's self or damage to his or her property or property for which he or she is responsible or;

substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance or;

substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school;

and, is a form of negative behavior which is characterized by:

aggressive behavior that is intentional and may be physical, verbal, or nonverbal and;

a power imbalance exists between the perpetrator and the victim and the behavior is repetitive or severe enough as to cause the victim distress.

Bullying shall include but not be limited to:

Unwanted teasing,
Name calling,
Threatening,
Intimidating,
Stalking,
Cyberstalking,
Cyberbullying,
Physical violence,
Theft,
Public humiliation,
Destruction of personal or school property,
Social exclusion,
and Rumors or spreading falsehoods

Bullycide is the act or an instance of killing oneself intentionally as a result of bullying.

Bystander is an individual that witnesses the act of bullying.

Conflict is behavior motivated by negative intent and takes place between students of relative equal power.

Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photoelectronic system, or photooptical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. "Cyber-bullying" includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this Section. "Cyber-bullying" also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more

persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying in this section.

Harassment is any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal, or physical conduct directed against a student that places the student in reasonable fear of harm for their person or property. Harassment does not have to include intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, or involve repeated incidents. When harassment involves race, color, national origin, sex, or disability it violates civil law rights.

Hostile environment is the environment where an individual feels at risk of their personal safety.

Imbalance of power can be because of physical size or strength, social power or popularity, abilities or talent, or numbers

Perpetrator is the individual who conducts the bullying act or the "bully".

School grounds or property are the areas under the control or shared control of the school. This may include school buildings, playgrounds, vehicles, sport or meeting places, and school sponsored event areas

Victim is the target or recipient of the bullying action.

Expectations:

Bullying is contrary to State law and prohibited by Mosaic. In addition, retaliation against a person for reporting bullying or who has cooperated in an investigation of a bullying complaint is prohibited and will not be tolerated by MOSAIC.

Bullying is prohibited on school property and vehicles, at school-sponsored or school related activities, functions, or programs or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by the school.

Bullying is also prohibited at any location, activity, function or program that is not school related if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and

substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying is also prohibited through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the district, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation of bullying, or who is a witness to or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment in connection with filing a complaint or assisting with an investigation under this policy. Consequences and remedial actions according to the Behavioral Interventions Guidelines (BIG) will be imposed upon any person who engages in reprisal or retaliation.

Training and Education

MOSAIC will endeavor to provide age appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the curriculum.

Bullying prevention and intervention plan:

MOSAIC will develop and update a bullying prevention and intervention plan in consultation with no less than the following: administration, professional support personnel, health specialist, students, parents, and guardians. The bullying prevention and intervention plan will be reviewed and updated biennially or more frequently as needed.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan will:

include descriptions of and statements prohibiting bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation;

establish clear procedures for students, staff, parents, guardians, and other to report bullying or retaliation;

include a provision that reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously, provided that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report;

establish clear procedures for promptly responding to and investigating reports of bullying or retaliation;

identify the range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying or retaliation provided, however, that disciplinary actions shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior;

establish clear procedures for restoring a sense of safety for a victim and assessing that student's needs for protection;

establish strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying;

establish procedures consistent with state and federal law for promptly notifying the parents or guardians of a victim and a perpetrator, provided that the parents or guardians of a victim shall also be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying; and provided further that said procedures must provide for immediate notification to the local law enforcement agency where criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator;

include a provision that a student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action; and

include a strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for perpetrators and victims and for appropriate family members of said students.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan will afford all students the same protection regardless of their status under the law.

Professional Development: The bullying prevention and intervention plan will include ongoing professional development to build skills of all members

of school staff, including but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, food service providers, bus drivers, athletic coaches, residential care workers, paraprofessionals, and related services personnel to prevent, identify and respond to bullying. The content of such professional development will include, but not be limited to:

- developmentally* appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents;
- developmentally* appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- information* regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among the perpetrator, the victim, and any witnesses to the bullying;
- research-based findings* on bullying;
- information* on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying; and
- internet safety* issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan will include provisions for educating parents and guardians about the bullying prevention curriculum of MOSAIC how they can reinforce said curriculum at home, how they can support MOSAIC's prevention and intervention plan, the dynamics of bullying, and online safety and cyber-bullying.

All staff, in collaboration with parents, students and community members will incorporate system methods for student recognition through positive reinforcement for good conduct, self-discipline, good citizenship, and academic success.

Notice

Illinois School for the Visually Impaired will provide to the students and their parents or guardians annual notice at the beginning of the school year, in an accessible format, notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention policy.

Illinois School for the Visually Impaired will provide to all staff annual notice of the bullying prevention and intervention policy.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be included in the MOSAIC student, parent and employee handbooks.

Implementation

The MOSAIC Superintendent will be responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying and intervention plan at the school.

Reporting

The principals or residential supervisors are responsible for receiving oral or written complaints alleging violation of this policy.

School staff, including but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, food service providers, bus drivers, athletic coaches, residential care workers, paraprofessionals, and contracted services personnel will immediately, but no later than the end of the regular work day, report any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school official identified in the bullying prevention and intervention plan as responsible for receiving such reports or both. Failure to report may subject the staff member to disciplinary action.

Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to bullying or retaliation, or who has witnessed or learned about the bullying or retaliation, has the right to file a complaint with the MOSAIC. This may be done in writing or orally by informing the administration as soon as possible. If the individual does not wish to discuss the issue with the principal or supervisor, or if the principal or supervisor does not address the problem in an effective manner, the individual should inform the superintendent's designee.

Illinois School for the Visually Impaired urges all individuals in the school to bring any concerns of bullying or retaliation to the attention of school personnel so that they can resolve the issue.

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously; provided, however, that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report. An anonymous bullying incident report can

be made by student, staff, parent or guardian by calling Mosaic Administration at (847) 696-6830 or email to admin@mosaicearlychildhood.com.

All reasonable efforts will be made to maintain confidentiality and protect privacy of all parties, but proper enforcement of this policy may require disclosure of any or all information received.

Investigation

Upon receipt of a report there shall be a prompt investigation by the school superintendent, or the superintendent's designee.

In general, the complaint should be investigated as soon as practicable. All reasonable effort will be made to complete the investigation within 10 day after the date the report of the incident of bullying was received. Complaints involving violence should be investigated immediately. The nature and duration of the investigation will depend on the circumstances of the complaint, including the type, severity and frequency of the alleged bullying and whether the perpetrator is a student or an adult. If the alleged perpetrator is a district employee, the principal may request assistance in the investigation from an appropriate outside agency.

The complaint should be investigated in a fair and expeditious manner, in a way that maintains confidentiality to the extent practicable. The complaint will be investigated by personnel with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention.

The investigation should generally include interviews of the victim, the alleged perpetrator, witnesses, individuals whom any of the foregoing identified as having knowledge of potential relevance to the allegations, and anyone else whom the investigator believes may have such knowledge. To the extent practicable, the investigator may take notes during interviews, or soon thereafter, for the purpose of maintaining accurate records.

The investigation may also include a review of any documents, including in electronic format or otherwise, photographs, voice mails, e-mails, telephone records, or other items that may be relevant to the allegations of bullying or retaliation and to which the investigator has access.

To the extent practicable, the investigator may create and maintain a confidential investigative file. The file may include any materials relevant to the investigation, including but not limited to interview notes, relevant documents, photographs, voice mails, e-mails, telephone records, or other items pertaining to the allegations or the investigation into them.

MOSAIC will act in accordance with federal and state laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing parents and guardians of the students who are parties of the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the superintendent or designee to discuss the investigation, the findings, of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.

Resolution

If the principal, supervisor, or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will:

- immediately notify the local law enforcement agency if s/he believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator;

- take appropriate disciplinary action consistent with district policy and the Code of Conduct; and take whatever other appropriate action to end the bullying;

- notify the parents or guardians of the perpetrator and the perpetrator; and

- notify the victim and the parents or guardians of the victim, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation (the victim, parent or guardian is not precluded from seeking redress under any other available law, either civil or criminal); and

- if suitable, provide information concerning counseling or referral to appropriate services for perpetrators and victims and for appropriate family members of said students.

If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, if MOSAIC is first informed of the bullying or retaliation, MOSAIC will notify the appropriate administrator of the other district or school so that appropriate action may be taken.

A student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action consistent with the BIG.

This policy should not be interpreted as to prevent a victim or accused from seeking redress under any other available law, either civil or criminal.

Policy Review

MOSAIC Administration will review and evaluate this policy every two years. This policy will be promoted and implemented throughout MOSAIC.

The policy review will include a policy evaluation process to assess the implementation, outcomes and effectiveness of the policy that includes, but is not limited to, factor such as the frequency of victimization; student, staff, and family observations of safety at the school; identification of areas of the school where bullying occurs; the types of bullying that occurs and bystander observation and intervention.

The information from the policy evaluation will be made available on the MOSAIC website.

The policy will be provided to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year and as revisions are made.