

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Introduction .....2**

**What is Bullying .....2**

**Types of Bullying.....3**

**Warning Signs .....5**

**Risk Factors .....6**

**Effects of Bullying .....7**

**Universal Recommendations for the Prevention of Bullying of All Students .....8**

**Bullying and Harassment of Students with Disabilities .....11**

**Reporting an Incident of Bullying.....14**

**Staff Reporting Responsibility .....14**

**Administrative Investigation and Process Bullying Overview .....16**

**Things to Consider When Choosing Interventions Due to Bullying .....19**

**Appendix A: Incident and Investigation Forms .....21**

- a. Administrative Investigation Process Flow Chart**
- b. Bullying/Harassment Reporting Form**
- c. Bullying Incident Investigation Forms**
  - Offender Interview by Administrator**
  - Victim Interview by Administrator**
  - Administrator Findings and Summary Report**
- d. Stay Away Agreement**

## Introduction and Purpose

It is the policy of Zion Elementary School District 6, that all of its students and school employees have an educational setting that is safe, secure, and free from bullying, harassment, or discrimination of any kind. Bullying or Harassment on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited. Acts of bullying and/or harassment shall be dealt with under School Board Policy 7:180 Preventing Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment and 7:20, Harassment of Students Prohibited.

The purpose of this procedural manual is to provide school personnel and other interested parties with the current Anti-Bullying and Harassment policies as well as the related procedural guidelines and best practices.

## What is Bullying?

Public Act 98-0669

Any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, direct toward a student or students that has or can reasonably be predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by a school

Bullying components can be defined in the acronym **R.I.P.**

- a) **Repeated** – occurs more than once
- b) **Imbalance of Power**– when a student, adult, or group is older, larger, or perceived to be smarter and/or more popular than the other and unfairly takes advantage of the unlevel playing field
- c) **Purposeful** – deliberate goal or intent

## Types of Bullying

### 1. Bullying

According to the U.S. Department of Education and CDC (2004) bullying is defined as:

*Bullying is any unwanted aggressive behavior(s) by another your or group of youths who are not siblings or current dating partners that involves observed or perceived power imbalance and repeated multiple times or is highly likely to be repeated. Bullying may inflict harm or distress on the targets youth including physical, psychological, social or educational harm.*

Some forms of bullying may involve but are not limited to:

- repeated teasing
- social exclusion
- threat
- intimidation
- stalking
- physical violence
- theft
- sexual, religious, and racial harassment
- public humiliation
- destruction of property

### 2. Harassment

Harassment involves any threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing act or gesture; use of data or electronic communication; or written, verbal, or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee which places a student or school board employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; has the effect of substantially interfering with an individual's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits; or has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school or activity.

### 3. Bullying and Harassment combined

Bullying and harassment also encompasses:

- Retaliation against a student, group or school employee by another student, group or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment. Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation.

- Perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying or harassment by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student or school employee by:
  - Incitement or coercion;
  - Accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or electronic communication through a computer, computer system, computer network, or electronic devices within the scope of the district school system. For the purposes of this policy, within the scope of the district school system means, regardless of ownership, any computer, computer system, computer network, or electronic devices that is physically located on school property or at a school-related or school-sponsored program or activity;
  - Acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment.

#### 4. Cyberstalking

Effective January 1, 2015, Public Act 98-0801, added “cyber-bullying” to the general prohibition on bullying in schools and added the following language:

*Cyber-bullying is defined as 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 [105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b)].*

Examples of cyberbullying include:

- Three-way calling attacks
- Forwarding private email messages or digital photos only intended for select recipient(s)
- Sending inappropriate pictures – pornography and degrading or humiliating pictures of the victim which were taken when the victim was unaware
- Instant and text messaging – hateful or threatening messages, death threats, warning wars, text war/attacks, insulting remarks, racial slurs, gossip, rumor spreading, and exclusion tactics

- Stealing passwords and hacking into accounts – pretending to be the victim, online impersonation, changing victim’s profile, locking them out of accounts, sending viruses and spyware, signing victims up for junk emails and IM marketing lists
- Web logs or Blogs – damaging others’ reputation, invading privacy, and saying things to humiliate
- Facebook and Websites – creating specific websites to insult, posting rumors and harassing comments, making videos, devising social media profiles that embarrass, humiliate, or make fun of others
- Internet Rating Lists and Polling
- Interactive Gaming on portable devices – verbally abusing others, locking victims out of games, passing false rumors, and hacking into others accounts

### **Warning Signs Bullying is Occurring**

There are many warning signs that could indicate that someone is involved in bullying, either by bullying others or by being bullied. However, these warning signs may indicate other issues or problems, as well.

#### **1. Being Bullied**

- Comes home with damaged or missing clothing or other’s belongings
- Reports losing items such as books, electronics, clothing, or jewelry
- Has unexplained injuries
- Complains frequently of headaches, stomachaches, or feeling sick
- Has trouble sleeping or has frequent bad dreams
- Has changes in eating habits
- Hurts themselves
- Is very hungry after school from not eating their lunch
- Runs away from home
- Loses interest in visiting or talking with friends
- Is afraid of going to school or other activities with peers
- Loses interest in school work or begins to do poorly in school
- Appears sad, moody, angry, anxious or depressed when they come home
- Talks about suicide
- Feels helpless
- Often feels like they are not good enough
- Blames themselves for their problems
- Suddenly has fewer friends
- Avoids certain places
- Acts differently than usual

#### **2. Bullying Others**

- Becomes violent with others
- Gets into physical or verbal fights with others
- Gets sent to the principal’s office or has detention a lot
- Has extra money or new belongings that cannot be explained
- Is quick to blame others

- Will not accept responsibility for their actions
- Has friends who bully others
- Needs to win or be the best at everything

### **Risk Factors**

There is no one single cause of bullying. Rather, individual, family, peer, school, and community factors can place someone at risk for being bullied or for bullying others. Even if a child has one or more of the risk factors, it does not mean that they will bully or become bullied.

#### **1. Who is At Risk for Being Bullied?**

Generally, children, teens and young adults who are bullied:

- Do not get along well with others
- Are less popular than others
- Have few to no friends
- Do not conform to gender norms
- Have low self-esteem
- Are depressed or anxious
- Those with disabilities

#### **2. Who is At Risk for Bullying Others?**

Some people who are at risk for bullying others are well-connected to their peers, have social power, and at least one of the following:

- Are overly concerned about their popularity
- Like to dominate or be in charge of others
- Others at risk for bullying others are more isolated from their peers and may have any of the following:
  - Are depressed or anxious
  - Have low self-esteem
  - Are less involved in school
  - Are easily pressured by peers
  - Do not identify with the emotions or feelings of others
  - Other risk factors for bullying others include the following:
    - Being aggressive
    - Have less parent involvement
    - Think badly of others
    - Are impulsive
    - Are hot-headed and easily frustrated
    - Have difficulty following rules
    - View violence in a positive way

### 3. Factors That Do Not Increase Risk?

- *Location.* There are no differences in rates of bullying for urban, suburban, or rural communities. Bullying happens everywhere.
- *School Size.* The overall percentage of students being bullied does not vary based on school size, although bullying does happen more often in larger schools.
- *Gender.* Boys and girls are just as likely to be involved in bullying. Forms of bullying may vary by gender; for instance, some research has found that girls are more likely to bully others socially.

## Effects of Bullying

Bullying has serious and lasting effects. While these effects may also be caused by other factors, research has found bullying has significant effects for those who are bullied, those who bully others, and those who witness bullying.

### 1. People Who are Bullied:

- Have higher risk of depression and anxiety that may persist into adulthood:
- Increased feelings of sadness and loneliness
- Changes in sleep and eating patterns
- Lose interest in activities
- Have increased thoughts about suicide that may persist into adulthood
- Are more likely to have health complaints
- Have decreased academic achievement (GPA and standardized test scores) and school participation
- Are more likely to miss, skip, or drop out of school
- Are more likely to retaliate through extremely violent measures

### 2. People Who Exhibit Bullying Behaviors:

- Have a higher risk of abusing alcohol and drugs in adolescence and as adults
- Are more likely to get into fights, vandalize property, and drop out of school
- Are more likely to engage in early sexual activity
- Are more likely to have criminal convictions and traffic citations as adults
- Are more likely to be abusive toward their romantic partners, spouses or children as adults

### 3. People Who Witness Repeated Incidents of Bullying:

- Have increased use of tobacco, alcohol or other drugs
- Have increased mental health problems, including depression and anxiety
- Are more likely to miss or skip school

## **Universal Recommendations for the Prevention of Bullying for All Students**

### **1. Student and Staff Surveys**

The first step any school should take is to understand the scope and magnitude of bullying on their campus. Since the behavior is largely concealed, research indicates that the most effective way to understand the levels of bullying is by conducting anonymous school climate surveys.

Staff members are also surveyed in order to gauge their perceptions of bullying and what's being done about it. Once a school site has surveyed a population large enough to provide a good sample, they are able to analyze the data and use it to develop next steps. Each school should create their own school-based Behavioral Leadership Team or Bullying Prevention Committee to discuss and analyze the results of the survey and how each element of the framework should be implemented.

### **2. Stakeholder/Student/Staff Training**

Training for students, parents, teachers, area/district staff, school administrators, student support staff, counseling staff, bus drivers, School Resource Officers, and school volunteers on identifying, preventing, and responding to bullying will be conducted.

At the beginning of each school year, the school principal/designee or appropriate area/district administrator shall provide awareness of this policy, as well as the process for reporting incidents, investigation, and appeal to students, school staff, parents, or other persons responsible for the welfare of a student. Awareness should be facilitated by appropriate references in the Code of Student Conduct and Discipline, employee handbooks, the district/school website, or through other reasonable means.

Informing faculty and staff of exactly what to look for, where to look for it, and how to properly intervene is crucial for the success of any bully prevention and intervention policy. Once data from the surveys has been collected and analyzed, it is imperative to disseminate this information to them. Staff training also leads to consistent identification and reporting of a problem as well as application of any classroom-level consequences and proactive interventions. If your staff and faculty are not on the same page, any steps taken as a school are doomed to fail.

### **3. School-wide Curriculum and Policies**

The norms, actions, beliefs, and values among our students are diverse and without a concerted effort by our schools, this range will include many anti-social behaviors. All of our schools are required to implement skills programming to promote social and academic success for students called Second Step to help with establishing a climate of caring and respect per the District's Anti-Bullying and Harassment policies. School-wide prevention programs that deal with explicit social-emotional skill development can also function as the basis for addressing bullying or any other behavioral issues with a school's student population. School discipline policies should focus on desired student outcomes rather than punishments for breaking rules. However, there must be consistent and fair consequences when students do not meet behavioral expectations.



#### **4. Classroom-Level Prevention**

Classroom teachers play a central role in the way that bullying policies and programs are presented and delivered to students. Curricula should include definitions of bullying, identification of the levels of bullying and harassment, discussions of how bullying affects everyone, ways students can help others, where and how to report bullying, and assertiveness training. Depending on the age or grade level, teachers may provide students with opportunities to problem solve and strategize specific ways bullying can be addressed in school. Any bully prevention curriculum should also emphasize to students the difference between tattling and bully reporting. Many of the school-wide prevention programs may be implemented at the classroom level.

#### **5. Student Empowerment**

In order for any change in climate to be enacted, students must be able to feel that they can make a difference. Not only should all students be taught what to do in response to bullying (as both bystanders and potential victims), but schools should seek to establish programs which actively recruit those with the most social clout to assist in reporting and intervening in social situations.

#### **6. Awareness**

Administrators should post student expectations related to bullying in common areas and teachers should also have them prominently displayed in each classroom. Additionally, students may have an opportunity to custom design posters to be displayed throughout common areas and classrooms. Additional awareness campaigns can be conducted through contests or public service announcements (PSAs) on your morning news.

#### **7. Parent Involvement**

Parent awareness and involvement is perhaps the key element in long-term change in attitude, behavior, and ultimately the climate of students in school. Parents should be provided with opportunities and encouraged to participate in prevention efforts with their children in meaningful and relevant ways that address the academic, social, and health needs of children. These opportunities may be posted on the schools' website, discussed during open house meetings, discussed at School Advisory Committee (SAC) meetings, and written in parent/school newsletters, etc.

Parents should also be made aware of the survey results for your school through School Advisory Committee meetings or newsletters and their input for the formation of any local programs should be welcome. Parents and guardians are made aware of any bullying situations which may involve their child through phone calls, conferences, or the Parent Notification form. Parents of both students who bully and students who are victims should be offered strategies to be employed at home.

## **8. Administrative Tools**

The Zion Elementary School District has developed several forms to aid in the identification, investigation, record keeping, and notification of bullying incidents. Schools must utilize these forms for consistency in reporting throughout the district. All forms are downloadable from the District Forms Management link on the district website.

## **Bullying and Harassment of Students with Disabilities**

The laws enforced by the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) do not utilize the term “bullying” and instead prohibit unlawful harassment. Although the possible bases for actions constituting “bullying” are much broader than the bases constituting harassment under the federal laws enforced by OCR, because the alleged complaint of “bullying” actions taken against a student because of disability, the distinction between “bullying” and harassment is immaterial.

OCR has defined Disability Harassment under Section 504 and Title II as intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on disability that creates a hostile environment by interfering with or denying a student’s participation in or receipt of program benefits, services, or opportunities in the district’s program.

### **1. Research Studies**

- Studies have shown that students with a disability, whether it is visible or non-visible, are subject to increased bullying that is often directed at the disability.
- These students are also at more risk for bullying directed at factors other than their disability.
- Disabled students themselves are more likely to perpetuate bullying behavior in response to being bullied.

### **2. Determining Disability Allegations**

To make a determination regarding the student’s disability allegation, OCR considers the following:

- Whether a student was harassed based upon disability;
- Whether the harassing conduct was sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to create a hostile environment, or limit the student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the district’s educational program;
- Whether the district has actual or constructive notice of the harassment; and
- Whether the district failed to take prompt and/or effective action to end the harassment, prevent it from recurring, and, as appropriate, remedy the effects of the harassment on the student.

### **3. Responding to incidents of misconduct**

OCR noted that when responding to incidents of misconduct, schools should keep in mind the following:

- The label used to describe an incident (e.g., bullying, hazing, teasing) does not determine how a school is obligated to respond. Rather, the nature of the conduct itself must be assessed for civil rights implications.
- When the behavior implicates the civil rights laws, school administrators should look beyond simply disciplining the perpetrators, as it is often insufficient even though likely a necessary step. The unique effects of discriminatory harassment may demand a different response than would other types of bullying.

#### 4. Prevention and Elimination

If the behavior is determined to be harassment based upon a student's disability, the school must take prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to end the harassment, eliminate any hostile environment and its effects, and prevent the harassment from recurring. A school is responsible for addressing harassment incidents about which it is knows or reasonably should have known (can apply in absence of any written complaint).

OCR offers several suggestions to both prevent and eliminate harassment:

- Creating a campus environment that is aware of disability concerns and sensitive to disability harassment; weaving these issues into the curriculum or programs outside the classroom.
- Encouraging parents, students, employees, and community members to discuss disability harassment and to report it when they become aware of it.
- Widely publicizing anti-harassment statements and procedures for handling discrimination complaints, because this information makes students and employees aware of what constitutes harassment, that such conduct is prohibited, that the institution will not tolerate such behavior, and that effective action, including disciplinary action, where appropriate, will be taken.
- Providing appropriate, up-to-date, and timely training for staff and students to recognize and handle potential harassment.
- Counseling both person(s) who have been harmed by harassment and person(s) who have been responsible for the harassment of others.
- Implementing monitoring programs to follow up on resolved issues of disability harassment.
- Regularly assessing and, as appropriate, modifying existing disability harassment policies and procedures for addressing the issue, to ensure effectiveness.

Other suggestions include:

- Enhanced monitoring or supervision of the student to watch for future concerns
- Re-explaining the reporting process to the student and the staff and encouraging the student and staff to promptly report future incidents
- Disability-related behavior or peer problems should be addressed through the IEP process to determine whether conduct was related to disability. The IEP team or 504 committee should be discussing behavioral interventions or strategies that consider positive behavior supports and interventions (e.g. coping skills, self-advocacy, etc.)
- Help the student to identify a "safety plan" when appropriate

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) suggests the following evidence-based practices:

- Teach appropriate behaviors and how to respond
- Provide active adult supervision
- Train and provide ongoing support for staff and students
- Develop and implement clear policies to address bullying
- Monitor and track bullying behaviors
- Notify parents when bullying occurs
- Address ongoing concerns
- Sustain bullying prevention efforts over time

## 5. Denial of FAPE

- States and school districts have a responsibility under Section 504, Title II, and IDEA, which is enforced by OSERS, to ensure that a free and appropriate education (FAPE) is made available to eligible students with disabilities. Disability harassment may result in a denial of FAPE under these statutes.
- Parents may initiate administrative due process procedures to address a denial of FAPE. Individual and organizations also may file complaints with OCR, alleging a denial of FAPE that results from disability harassment.

## 6. Placement

- In selecting a student's least restrictive environment, the placement team must consider any potential harmful effect on the student or on the quality of services the student needs. However, the existence of a safety concern alone will not make a district's proposed placement inappropriate.
- IDEA does not require a district to provide the best placement, but merely one that is appropriate.

## 7. Reevaluation

- Incidents of bullying or harassment, or even negative attention from classmates, might indicate the need for a reevaluation or reassessment to determine whether the student requires additional services and supports.
- Example: *Whenever the evaluation of the IEP team indicates that the child has a disability that affects social skills development or that the child is vulnerable to bullying, harassment or teasing because of the child's disability, the IEP shall address the skills and proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment or teasing.*

## **Reporting an incident of Bullying**

1. Student victims of bullying or a friend can report instances of bullying to any staff member (certified or noncertified), student teacher, substitute teacher, or administrator within their school.
2. Staff members will report suspected incidences of bullying to an administrator within 24 hours of the issue being brought to their attention.
3. Student victims of bullying or a friend can also report instances of bullying anonymously by leaving a note in the mailbox of the Principal, Assistant Principal, or any other building staff member.
4. Parents of victims of bullying may report an incident using the Bullying incident Form found on the district website or in hard copy at the school building. Forms should be provided directly to the Principal or Assistant Principal on behalf of the student.
5. Voice mail messages can anonymously be left for any of the above named individuals.

## **Staff Reporting Responsibility**

In order to effectively curb or eliminate bullying from any school campus, it is imperative that every adult knows how to properly intervene with both bullies and victims in a variety of capacities. Whether it is on-the-spot interventions, conducting interviews, administering consequences, or dealing with the potential impact on victims, we all have a role to play.

Take all reports seriously, whether it is the victim or a witness to the action. All reports of bullying must be investigated. If a victim is coming to a staff member, he or she is placing trust in the staff member to take action and handle the situation with effectiveness and due discretion. It is also important to know the warning signs of victimization as many children are either too scared or embarrassed to report this behavior to an adult.

When bullying is reported by a parent, make sure they are first connected with the proper administrator or School Resource Officer. All reports should be taken seriously and every concern the parent has related to their child and any bullying behavior should be thoroughly examined. Just as with any report, ensure a timely investigation and report back to the parent as soon as the facts have been gathered.

Prevention is the key:

- a. Know the dynamics of the students supervised and realize in advance who the potential bullies and victims could be.
- b. Know where the “hot spots” are in the classroom or school and do not allow students to be unsupervised in these places.
- c. Remember, a large percentage of bullying takes place right in the classroom, so be vigilant in observations.

When suspected bullying is reported to or seen by a staff member, the following three-step script from Recognize, Respond, Report: Preventing and Addressing Bullying of Students with Special Needs by Lori Ernsperger should be utilized:

1. Stop the incident
  - a. Stay calm and interrupt the observed student behavior in a firm voice tone. Appear self-assured and stabilize the immediate environment.
  - b. Communicate effectively with nonverbal behavior but do not demonstrate overt threatening behaviors such as finger pointing or disrupting personal space.
  - c. Make eye contact with the bully and victim.
  - d. Address any immediate safety needs if physical bullying has occurred and remove students who are in danger.
2. Talk to the Students
  - a. Identify and label the behavior in a direct, neutral voice tone.
  - b. Cite the school rules, code of behavior, and policies violated. Remind students of the written school policies and expectations. For example, "You called her clothes ugly, and that is against the school code of conduct and considered bullying at this school".
  - c. Calmly address the bully but do not criticize or argue the facts. Attempt to deflect any further discussion. Do not drift from the original observed behavior by discussing other incidents. Do not demand an apology, as a student may be agitated and this may escalate the incident.
  - d. Avoid accusations and other statements that can inflame the situation. For example, "What do you think you are doing?"; "Are you causing problems again?"; "Did you call her ugly?"
  - e. Keep the response neutral, on topic, and short. This is not the time to explore the details of what occurred or interview witnesses, as an investigation and follow-up may occur at a future time.
  - f. Teachers are role models for bystanders and the victim on how to respond to a bullying incident with respect; brevity; and neutral, non-threatening body language.
3. Walk away
  - a. Direct students to their next destination, which may be the classroom or administrative offices, depending on the severity of the offense.
  - b. Do not touch students when guiding them to exit the scene.
  - c. Ensure the victim is safe and, if necessary, escorted to their destination. Do not completely walk away from the incident or area where the bullying occurred, as continued adult supervision is necessary, but walk away from the one-to-one confrontation with the bully.
  - d. File a written report of bullying and turn it into the building administration within 24 hours for investigation and further necessary action for both the victim and bully.

## **Administrative Investigation**

The principal or assistant principal is responsible for conducting a prompt investigation upon receiving a report of bullying or retaliation. The nature and duration of an investigation will depend on the circumstances, including the type, severity and frequency of the alleged conduct. The goal is to obtain an accurate and complete account of all incidents and circumstances deemed relevant to the allegations in the complaint. The investigation will generally include personal interviews with the complainant, the target/victim(s) of the complaint and others who witnessed or may have potentially relevant knowledge about the alleged incident giving rise to the complaint. Confidentiality as well as FERPA guidelines will be followed. Review of documents, videos, voice mails, emails, websites, text messages, instant messages, and other items deemed relevant may also be included.

If upon investigation it is determined that bullying has occurred, the building administrator will take appropriate action. Such action may include, but is not limited to

- Warning
- Parent conference
- Restorative Practices/ Restitution
- Before, during or after-school detention
- Classroom change
- Participation in a social-emotional skill building group
- Community service in lieu of suspension (Not appropriate for all Level III Offenses -consult with the District Office)
- Referral to the problem solving team
- Referral to School social worker or outside community service
- In-School Suspension
- Out-of-school suspension from school or bus
- Assignment to an alternative education program
- Expulsion Recommendation

### **Investigative Process**

Receipt of a bullying report or completion of a Zion ESD 6 Bullying Complaint Form will initiate an investigation of the alleged incident of bullying. Completion of a Zion ESD 6 Bullying Complaint Form or impending investigation shall not be construed as confirmation of bullying. Any student, staff or parent who, in good faith, will not be subject to disciplinary action if an incident is unfounded.

1. The anti-bullying investigation shall be conducted by the principal or assistant principal.
2. The Anti-bullying investigation shall include interviews and documentation in the order specified below and will include the use of the following forms:

#### **Required Forms**

- a. Bullying Incident Investigation Form: Victim Interview by Administrator
- b. Bullying Incident Investigation Form: Offender by Administrator
- c. Bullying Incident Investigation Form: Bullying Incident Statement



- d. Bullying/Harassment Student Safety Plan (Pre-Investigation) \*\*\*
- e. Bullying Incident Investigation Form: Administrator Findings & Summary

**Other Recommended Forms**—as needed

- a. Bullying/Harassment Student Safety Plan –founded incident
- b. Stay Away Agreement

**Reporting Process**

Step 1:	<p>Student completes the Student Bullying Report Form and turns into a trusted adult. <i>If the student is unable or refuses to write the statement, a trusted adult needs to assist the student in completing the form.</i></p> <p>The student or other trusted adult should turn the form into the building principal or assistant principal.</p>	
Step 2:	<p>Upon receipt or notice of a report of a possible bullying incident, the principal or assistant principal will investigate fully to determine appropriate actions. The administrator will interview the victim(s), offender(s) and witness(es).</p>	
	<u>Individual</u>	<u>Completes</u>
	Victim	Bullying Incident Investigation Form: Victim Interview by Administrator
	Offender	Bullying Incident Investigation Form: Offender Interview by Administrator
	Witness(es) or Bystander(s)	Bullying Incident Investigation Form: Bullying Incident Statement
	<p><b><u>Other considerations:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Complete Bullying/ Harassment Student Safety Plan (Pre-Investigation)</li> <li>b. Offer counseling to all parties</li> <li>c. Increased supervision as needed for alleged victim</li> <li>d. Increased supervision as needed for alleged offender</li> <li>e. Complete Stay Away agreement between parties</li> <li>f. Refer to Bullying Chart (Teas School safety center)</li> </ul>	
Step 3:	<p>The administrator will analyze all other information and/or documents, videos, voice mails, emails, websites, text messages, instant messages, and other items deemed relevant to the allegations to determine appropriate actions.</p>	
Step 4:	<p><b><u>NOTIFICATION</u></b></p> <p>The administrator shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Notify parents/ Guardians of the offender and of the victim of the incident within 24 hours of the report</li> <li>b. Notify or consult with the Director of Student Services (student involvement) and/or Human Resources (staff involvement) if evidence in the investigation shows possible criminal harassment or offenses</li> </ul>	

Step 5:	<p><b><u>CONCLUDING THE INVESTIGATION</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. After the full investigation is completed, decide if a bullying label applies to incident.</li> <li>b. Absent extenuating circumstances, the investigation should be completed within ten (10) District business days from the date of the report; however, the investigating administrator shall take additional time if necessary to complete a thorough investigation.</li> <li>c. If the investigation reveals the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying or another type of prohibited conduct, the District may take disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or other corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct.</li> <li>d. The administrator will document the findings using the <b>Bullying Incident Investigation Form: Administrator Findings and Summary Report</b></li> </ul>
Step 6:	At the conclusion of the investigation the administrator shall complete, if necessary, the <b>Bullying/ Harassment Student Safety Plan</b> .
Step 7: ****	<p><b><u>FOLLOW UP ACTION</u></b></p> <p>In staying consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, school districts should include procedures for promptly informing parents or guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying and discussing, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions and restorative measures.</p> <p>A school may consider transferring the student who engaged in bullying to another classroom at the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred, or to another school. In order to recommend for a transfer to another campus, the administrator must first consult with the Director of Student Services in regards to enrollment numbers and then the parent of the student who engaged in bullying.</p>
Step 8:	<p><b><u>APPEAL</u></b></p> <p>A parent or student who is dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation may appeal to the Director of Student Services. Do we have an obligation to share parent rights about formal complaints to police or OCR?***</p>
Step 9:	<p><b><u>MONITOR</u></b></p> <p>The administrator and staff, as outlined in the Student Safety Plan, must monitor and follow up with the students to ensure that no additional acts of bullying or retaliation have occurred.</p> <p>Note: ALL building staff are responsible for the safety of students involved in the investigation report.</p>

*Adapted from Volusia County Schools*

## Things to Consider When Choosing Interventions Due to Bullying

Appropriate and effective consequences can be applied at both the classroom and administrative levels to curb bullying behaviors. Interventions resulting from office referrals, reports, or other more serious infractions should specifically target the underlying motivation or reward for the bully and seek to assist the victim in any way necessary.

1. *Understand the motives for the bully's behavior.* While bullying can be acquired through poor modeling at home or in peer group situations, it normally will be done to satisfy a desire or need on the part of the bully. Some of these motives include:
  - Attention, recognition, prestige, or acceptance in a peer group. (Creating a climate that does not tolerate bullying removes the social power of bullies.)
  - Access to an activity or item. Some students use bullying as an excuse to get what they want (e.g., extortion, intimidation).
  - Strong needs for power and dominance; bullies seem to enjoy being “in control” and subduing, hurting, or humiliating others.
  - A lack of understanding of social, cultural, psychological, or physical differences and norms.
2. *Identify interventions and supports on campus that can provide the victim, bully and bystander with the opportunity to learn and safely practice new skills.*
3. *Monitor the progress of students who have been found to bully.* Watch them closely and let them know they are being watched. Make sure they are aware of future consequences. It may be appropriate to build in rewards for short-term progress or durations of time with no reported bullying.
4. *Assure the victim of their safety and connect them with the school counselor or school intervention team.* Even if it is the first time a student has been bullied, the trained eye of these professionals may be needed to discern any lingering effects of the bullying. The link between victimization and suicide ideation or retaliations, such as school shootings, is profound and it is better to err on the side of caution. Student Services Team members should also be able to help students with tips and advice for dealing with bullies, as well as how to prevent future victimization. It may also be advisable to initiate positive contacts with peers through clubs, student organizations, or creating a buddy system.
5. *When considering moving or separating students,* make sure the student who bullies is always considered for removal first. When dealing with groups of students who bully, if it is not possible to separate all members of a particular group, then try to ascertain who the primary bully is and isolate them from the rest.
6. *Avoid interventions that do not work or have unexpected or negative consequences.* Intervening in bullying does not necessarily mean immediately turning to traditional

forms of discipline. Discipline should be considered as one part of a holistic approach to addressing bullying. It should be used in conjunction with other educational and restorative strategies. Each intervention should clearly label bullying as unacceptable, build awareness, and help students develop the skills, empathy, and insights they need to find alternatives to bullying. Interventions should also assist to restore positive relationships between the students involved in bullying and improve the school climate. Requests to apologize, self-esteem-building, asking why, pleading, and expressions of frustration are unlikely to help and may make things worse. This type of intervention will not likely produce results and could even be harmful. According to StopBullying.gov, research has shown that the following are strategies that do not work or have unexpected negative consequences.

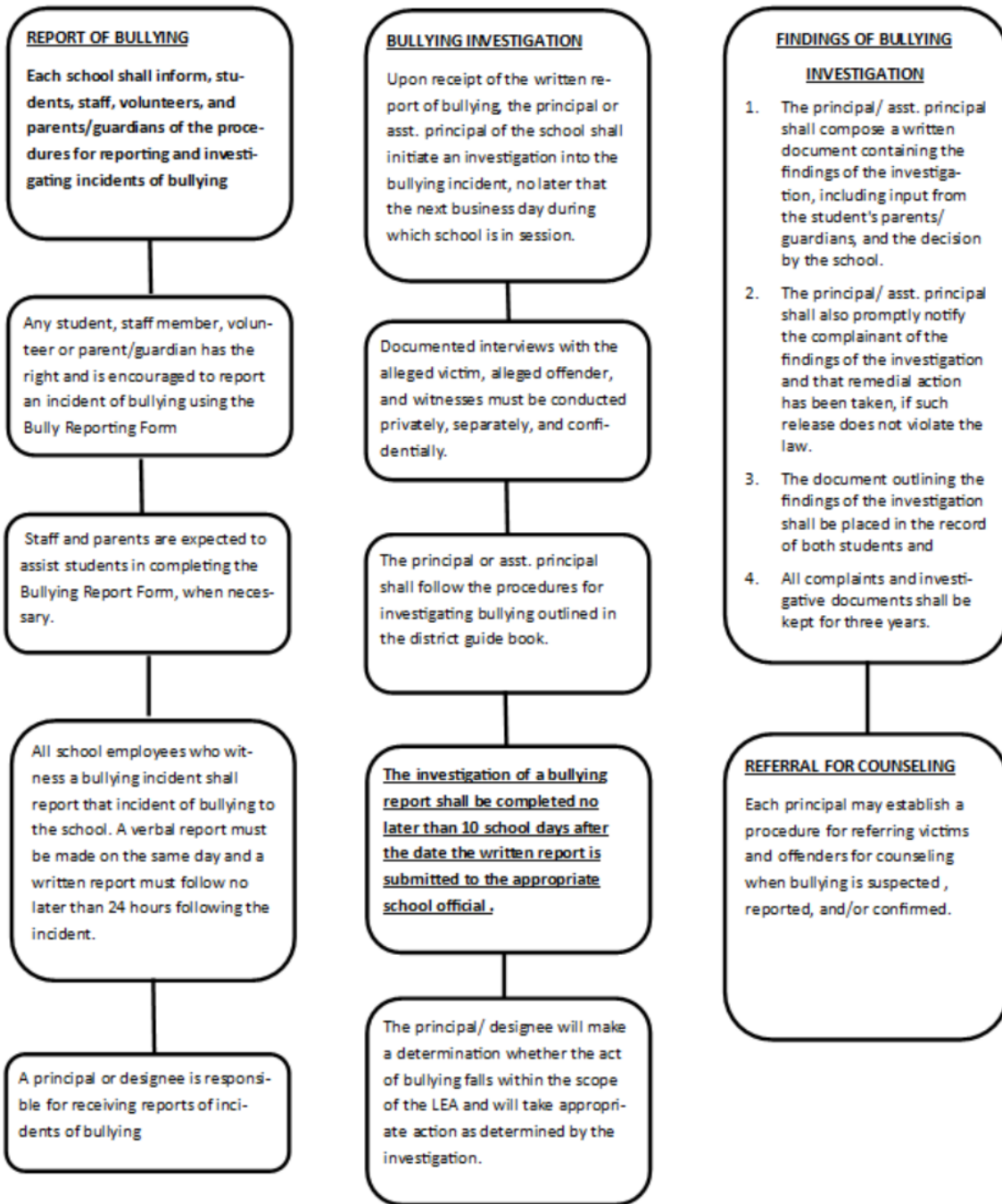
- **Zero tolerance or “three strikes and you’re out” policies:** These policies have the potential to exclude large numbers of students from school, discourage reporting of bullying, and deprive students who bully from the good role models they so need.
- **Conflict resolution and peer mediation:** Bullying is not a conflict between two people of equal power with equal blame for the situation. Also, facing those who have bullied them may further upset students who have been bullied.
- **Group treatment for students who bully:** Group members tend to reinforce bullying behavior in each other.
- **Simple, short-term solutions:** Focusing on bullying in a piecemeal way (e.g., in-service training, school assembly, lessons taught by individual teachers) will do much less to prevent bullying than a school-wide initiative.

# Appendix A

## Required Incident and Investigation Forms



## Principal/ Asst. Principal Responsibilities Flow Chart



# Bullying or Harassment Reporting Form

*An adult may be required to assist a student with the completion of this form.*



**Directions:** Bullying and harassment are serious and will not be tolerated. This is a form to report alleged bullying and harassment that occurred on school property; at a school sponsored event; or on a school bus in the current school year. If you are a student victim, the parent/guardian of a student victim, or a school staff member and wish to report an incident of alleged bullying and harassment, complete this form and return it to the Principal or Assistant Principal at the student's school. This form can be submitted anonymous. Contact the school for additional information or assistance at any time.

**Bullying and harassment means intentional, unwanted and repeated verbal, physical or written (including electronic) conduct that creates a hostile environment, and substantially interferes with educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student's employee's physical or psychological well-being and is motivated by an actual or perceived personal characteristic, such as race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or disability, or s threatening or seriously intimidating.**





# Bullying or Harassment Reporting Form

Describe what happened/ what is happening?		
When did it happen?	<input type="checkbox"/> Before School <input type="checkbox"/> During School <input type="checkbox"/> After School <input type="checkbox"/> Unsure/ Other: _____	Date: _____  Time: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> AM <input type="checkbox"/> PM
Where did it happen?	<input type="checkbox"/> On the school playground <input type="checkbox"/> On the school bus <input type="checkbox"/> In class _____ <input type="checkbox"/> At a school event _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Online <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ _____
Who was the person bullying? (If you don't know his/her name, please describe them and provide any known information)		
Who was the victim of the bullying? (If you don't know his/her name, please describe them and provide any known information)		
Did anyone else witness the bullying? (if yes, please list) <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> UNSURE		
Were you or others physically hurt? (please explain) <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> UNSURE		
Was there damage to anyone's personal property? (if yes, please explain) <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> UNSURE		
Have you or the victim missed any school or made any changes to your daily routine as a result of the incident? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> UNSURE		
Have you told anyone about the bullying? (if yes, who?) <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
Have you previously filed a bullying report using this form? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		
<u>Optional fields</u>		
Name of person completing form:	Are you a _____ student _____ Parent _____ Staff Member _____ Other	Grade/Homeroom

Form received by _____	Date: _____
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# Bullying Incident Investigation Form: Offender Interview by Administrator



Date:	Offender Name:	
Grade:	Homeroom:	School:
<b><u>Narrative Description of Incident</u></b> (by administrator)		
<b><u>Action</u></b>		<b><u>Date</u></b>
Parent/Guardian Notified of Incident		
Parent/Guardian Notified of Corrective Action(s)		
Signing below indicates the parent/guardian of a student has been informed of a bullying incident report, has been made aware of the school's response to the situation, and has been given clear instructions regarding steps to be taken should the bullying behavior persist.		

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Administrators Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# Bullying Incident Investigation Form: Victim Interview by Administrator



Date:	Offender Name:	
Grade:	Homeroom:	School:
<b><u>Narrative Description of Incident</u></b> (by administrator)		
<b><u>Action</u></b>		<b><u>Date</u></b>
Parent/Guardian Notified of Incident		
Parent/Guardian Notified of Corrective Action(s)		
Signing below indicates the parent/guardian of a student has been informed of a bullying incident report, has been made aware of the school's response to the situation, and has been given clear instructions regarding steps to be taken should the bullying behavior persist.		

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Administrators Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# Bullying Incident Investigation Form: Bystander Interview by Administrator



Date:	Offender Name:	
Grade:	Homeroom:	School:
<b><u>Narrative Description of Incident</u></b> (by administrator)		
<b><u>Action</u></b>	<b><u>Date</u></b>	
Parent/Guardian Notified of Incident		
Parent/Guardian Notified of Corrective Action(s)		
Signing below indicates the parent/guardian of a student has been informed of a bullying incident report, has been made aware of the school's response to the situation, and has been given clear instructions regarding steps to be taken should the bullying behavior persist.		

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Administrators Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# Bullying Incident Investigation Form: Administrator Findings and Summary Report



Person(s) who conducted Investigation:			
<b>INCIDENT DETAILS</b>			
Date of incident(s):			
Student(s) affected:			
Student(s) initiating bullying:			
Witness(es):			
<b>DOCUMENTATION</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Bullying Incident Form <input type="checkbox"/> Written statement by alleged victim (s) <input type="checkbox"/> Written statement by alleged offender(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Written statement by witness(es) /bystander(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Written statement of staff witness (if applicable)		<input type="checkbox"/> Physical evidence (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Medical information (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of police report (if applicable)	
<b>INVESTIGATION ACTION TAKEN</b>			
<input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed alleged student victim (s) <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed alleged offender (s) <input type="checkbox"/> Interviewed witness(es)/ bystander(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed school surveillance tape		<input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed bus surveillance tape <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed student records <input type="checkbox"/> Reviewed prior history between parties <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ _____	
<b>FINDINGS</b>			
_____	The complaint is SUSTAINED. The incident fits the definition as defined in the Zion ESD 6 Policy. Action plan attached.		
_____	The complaint was NOT SUSTAINED. There was not enough verifiable proof that Bullying was taking place.		
_____	UNFOUNDED. The complaint was discovered to have not merit or the complaining party has informed the administrator that the allegations were false and untrue.		
<b>PARENT NOTIFICATION</b>			
<u>Offender (s) Name</u>	<u>Who notified</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Means</u>
<u>Victim (s) Name</u>	<u>Who notified</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Means</u>
<u>Bystander(s) Name</u>	<u>Who notified</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Means</u>

Administrator completing form: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Stay Away Agreement



This agreement is designed to increase safety for students who have been the victim bullying. It is administered in a conference with the alleged perpetrator and his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

Name of Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of the incident: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Assessment: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Description of behaviors involved in the incident:</b>     
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In order to protect the rights and safety of all members of our school community, you are required to stay away from \_\_\_\_\_ (name(s) of victim) at all times during the school day and at any school-sponsored event.

This means that you may not approach, talk to, sit by, or have any contact with the student(s) named above at school or on school property, school buses, school bus stops, or at school-related events.

**In addition, the following actions are effective immediately (mark N/A if not applicable):**

Arrival/Departure Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Entrance: \_\_\_\_\_

Bus/Parking #:

Current Schedule /New Schedule (print and attach)

Lunch:

Locker:

Extracurricular Activities:

Other disciplinary actions:

Violations of this agreement and/or acts of retaliation directly or indirectly toward the victim or the victim's friends or family members will be taken seriously and will result in further school disciplinary or legal actions, Your compliance will be monitored by \_\_\_\_\_ (name and staff title).

Agreement is valid from \_\_\_\_\_ (date) to \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_