



Board of Directors Business Meeting
Agenda Action Item

Item Title

FIRST READING OF REVISED POLICY 3207 - PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING

Department

Legal

Board Meeting Date

June 12, 2025

Background

In April and May of 2025, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) issued initial determinations related its statewide Civil Rights Audit, which included recommended changes to certain District policies and regulations to bring them up to date with recent law changes. Based on OSPI’s initial determination, one of the District’s policies, Policy 3210 – Nondiscrimination of Students, requires an update and is currently going through the review process. The District’s Civil Rights Coordinator and Legal Department reviewed other related policies, including Policy 3207 to bring forth additional recommended policy updates to improve clarity and consistency across the related policies.

Current Consideration

The proposed changes to Policy 3207 clarify that Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying under District policy and under State law (RCW 28A.600.477) govern conduct targeted at students. Conduct targeted at adults are governed by other policies, including Safety and Civility policies.

Fiscal Implication

None.

Recommendation

The General Counsel on behalf of the Civil Rights Coordinator recommends the Board of Directors review the draft of revised Policy 3207 and provide feedback before a second reading.

Strategic Benchmark

Health and Safety

Approved By

General Counsel, Malik Gbenro

PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING

Purpose

The ~~B~~board of ~~D~~irectors is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for every student, ~~staff member, parent/legal guardian, family member and guest,~~ free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. A safe and civil educational environment prohibits harassment, intimidation or bullying by integrating training, prevention and intervention into schools and support sites through a coalition of students, staff members, parents/legal guardians, families and the community.

Harassment, intimidation or bullying means any intentional electronic, written, verbal, auditory or physical act, including, but not limited to one shown to be motivated by any characteristic of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, mental or physical disability or other distinguishing characteristics such as, but not limited to, physical appearance, clothing or other apparel, socioeconomic status, marital status or weight, when the intentional electronic, written, verbal, auditory or physical act:

- Physically harms a student; or
- damages the student's property; or
- has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education; or
- is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Nothing in this section requires the affected student to actually possess a characteristic that is a basis for the harassment, intimidation or bullying.

“Intentional act” refers to the individual's decision to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s).

Behavior/Expressions

Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms including, but not limited to: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendoes, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, hazing or other written, verbal, auditory, physically or electronically transmitted messages or images.

This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the educational environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment, intimidation or bullying may still be prohibited by other district policies or building, classroom or program rules.

The goals of this policy are to foster a safe and civil educational environment through training, prevention and intervention strategies and to support targeted student(s), victims and/or others impacted by the violation. The district will intervene promptly and equitably within its authority

on reports, complaints and grievances alleging harassment, intimidation or bullying that come to the district's attention, either formally or informally.

Education

Comprehensive education of students and staff shall be implemented to support the district's responsibility to create and maintain a safe, civil, respectful and inclusive educational environment.

Prevention

The ~~district-District~~ will provide students and staff with strategies aimed at preventing harassment, intimidation and bullying. In its efforts to educate students and staff, the ~~district-District~~ will seek partnerships with families, law enforcement and other community agencies.

Intervention

Interventions are designed to remediate the impact on the targeted student(s), victims and/or others affected by the violation, to change the behavior of the aggressor(s) and to restore a positive educational environment.

The ~~district-District~~ will consider the frequency of incidents, developmental age of the student(s) and severity of the conduct when determining intervention strategies.

Interventions will range from counseling, providing direction to change behavior, discipline, to law enforcement referrals.

Students, ~~staff or other school visitors~~ who engage in harassment, intimidation or bullying will receive appropriate discipline, sanctions or other appropriate interventions.

False reports or retaliation for harassment, intimidation or bullying also constitute violations of this policy. Coercion, discrimination or reprisals taken against persons filing complaints or persons acting as witnesses to complaints shall result in appropriate disciplinary action or sanctions according to ~~district-District~~ policy or other applicable laws or regulations. Persons who knowingly file false allegations or report or corroborate false allegations shall also be subject to appropriate disciplinary action or sanctions according to ~~district-District~~ policy or other applicable laws or regulations.

In accordance with applicable laws and regulations, students, parents/legal guardians, families, staff and other interested parties shall be informed of this policy and the accompanying regulation pertaining to the filing of complaints. The policy shall be posted in each ~~district-District~~ building and information regarding it will be provided in student, staff and parent/legal guardian handbooks. ~~District-District~~ staff will be provided with appropriate information on the recognition and prevention of harassment, intimidation and bullying including electronically transmitted messages or images and their rights and responsibilities under this policy.

Compliance Officer

The superintendent will appoint a compliance officer as the primary ~~district~~-District contact to receive copies of all formal and informal complaints and ensure policy implementation. The name and contact information for the compliance officer will be communicated throughout the district.

The superintendent is authorized to direct the implementation of regulations addressing the elements of this policy.

Annually, for the first three years after adoption of this policy, the superintendent or designee shall convene an ad hoc committee composed of representatives of certificated and classified staff, students, community members and parents/legal guardians to review the use and efficacy of this policy and regulation. The superintendent’s designated compliance officer will be included in the committee. The superintendent shall make an annual report to the board reviewing the use and efficacy of this policy and related regulations. This report will include recommendations for changes to the policy and regulation, if applicable.

Cross-references:

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| <u>Policy 1600</u> | <u>Anti-Racism</u> |
| Policy 3200 | Student Rights and Responsibilities |
| Policy 3205 | Safety & Civility in Schools |
| Policy 3210 | Nondiscrimination |
| Policy 3240 | Student Conduct |
| Policy 3241 | Classroom Management, Corrective Action or Punishment |
| Policy 5265 | Nondiscrimination |
| Policy 5266 | Sexual Harassment |

Legal Reference: RCW 28A.300.285 Harassment, intimidation, and bullying prevention policies

Management Resources: *Policy News*, April 2008 Cyberbullying Policy Required

Adoption Date: 1/13/2005;
Revised Date: 6/23/2011, xx/xx/2025