

# Policy Guide



Policy No. 256

Section PUPILS

Title ANTI-BULLYING

Adopted NOVEMBER 15, 2007

Revised NOVEMBER 20, 2018;  
DECEMBER 15, 2015;  
DECEMBER 6, 2012

<b>POLICY NO. 256 ANTI-BULLYING</b>		
<b>Section 1</b>	<p><b><u>Purpose</u></b></p> <p>The Keystone Oaks School District recognizes that a student's ability to learn, and the District's ability to safely educate its students, is adversely affected by bullying. The School District seeks to avoid these adverse effects, maintain the safety of the school environment and provide opportunities to rehabilitate a student who has engaged in bullying.</p>	
<b>Section 2</b>	<p><b><u>Definitions</u></b></p> <p><b>Bullying</b> shall be defined as an intentional and unwelcome electronic (cyber), written, verbal, or physical act, or series of acts that has these characteristics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is directed at another student or group of students.</li> <li>2. It is severe, persistent or pervasive.</li> <li>3. It has the effect of:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Substantially interfering with a student's education.</li> <li>b. Substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.</li> <li>c. Creating a threatening environment.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	SC 1303.1

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>POLICY NO. 256 ANTI-BULLYING</b></p> <p>4. Occurs in a “school setting:” “School setting” shall mean in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, on contracted school vehicles, at a designated bus stop, or during any activity sponsored, supervised, or sanctioned by the school and/or District.</p> <p>The District reserves the right to investigate acts of bullying that occur outside the school setting if those acts meet the requirements of number 3 (above).</p> <p>Examples of bullying include, but are not limited to physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student; damaging, extorting or taking a student’s property; placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm; placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student’s education opportunities; or perpetuation of conduct by an individual or group, with the intent to demean, and/or dehumanize a student.</p> <p><b>Cyber harassment of a child</b> is a form of bullying. A person commits the crime of cyber harassment of a child if, with intent to harass, annoy or alarm, the person engages in a continuing course of conduct of making any of the following by electronic means directly to a child or by publication through an electronic social media service:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seriously disparaging statement or opinion about the child’s physical characteristics, sexuality, sexual activity or mental or physical health or condition.</li> <li>2. Threat to inflict harm.</li> </ol> <p>The law makes cyber harassment of a child a third-degree misdemeanor, punishable by a maximum of \$2,500 fine and/or one year in prison. For a juvenile charged with the crime, a diversionary program, which might include an educational program on cyber harassment, would be considered first. Successful completion could lead to the juvenile’s record being expunged.</p>	<p>SC 1303.1</p> <p>Title 18 Sec. 2709</p> <p>Title 18 Sec. 2709</p>
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<p><b>Section 3</b></p>	<p><b>POLICY NO. 256 ANTI-BULLYING</b></p>	
	<p><b>Course of Conduct</b> – A pattern of action composed of more than one act over a period of time, however short evidencing a continuity of conduct. The term includes lewd, lascivious, threatening or obscene words, language, drawing, caricatures or actions, either in person or anonymously.</p>	<p>Title 18 Sec. 2709</p>
	<p><b>Emotional distress</b> – A temporary or permanent state of mental anguish.</p>	<p>Title 18 Sec. 2709</p>
	<p><b>Seriously disparaging statement or opinion</b> – A statement or opinion which is intended to and under the circumstances is reasonably likely to cause substantial emotional distress to a child of the victim’s age and which produces some physical manifestation of the distress.</p>	<p>Title 18 Sec. 2709</p>
	<p><b><u>Delegation of Responsibility</u></b></p>	
	<p>Every student and employee shall take the responsibility of respecting the rights of others and creating a safe, caring, positive climate throughout the District.</p>	
	<p>The Superintendent or designee shall develop administrative regulations to implement this policy. In addition, the Administration will develop procedures for training all employees, including chaperones and sponsors on the Policy.</p>	
	<p>The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that this policy and administrative regulations are reviewed annually with students.</p>	
	<p>The Superintendent or designee, in cooperation with other appropriate administrators, shall review this policy every three (3) years at a minimum and recommend necessary revisions to the Board.</p>	
	<p>District administration shall annually provide the following information with the Safe School Report:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Board’s Bullying Policy</li> <li>2. Report of bullying incidents</li> </ol>	

<p><b>Section 3</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>POLICY NO. 256 ANTI-BULLYING</b></p> <p>3. Information on the development and implementation of any bullying prevention, intervention or education programs.</p> <p>The Administration is directed to evaluate the need, if any, for District-wide or building-level evidence-based bullying prevention programs, and to report its findings to the Board of School Directors with appropriate recommendations.</p> <p>The Administration is directed to continue to assess, and to make recommendations to the Board of School Directors, for any appropriate changes to existing intervention programs and practices in place to address the needs of students who are bullied, and the issues relating to students who engage in bullying.</p> <p><b><u>Guidelines</u></b></p> <p>It shall be a violation of District Policy for any student or adult to engage in, encourage and/or condone, or communicate, any form of bullying. It shall also be a violation of Policy for any employee, approved volunteer or chaperone of the School District to encourage and/or condone, through action or lack of action, any form of bullying. This prohibition shall apply to all acts of bullying that occur on school district property, at school district functions (whether on school property or not), and/or on school district provided transportation. In addition, cyber harassment is a criminal offense under PA Act 26 of 2015 and may be deemed to have been committed at the place where the child who is the subject of the communication resides.</p> <p>School District employees are required to report alleged violations of this Policy to the Building Principal or the Superintendent in accordance with the procedures set forth herein.</p> <p><b><u>Dissemination of Policy</u></b></p> <p>This Anti-bullying Policy will be disseminated annually to all school staff, students, and parents. It will be distributed each year to all students with a copy of the Code of Student Conduct or will be incorporated into the Handbook. Building</p>	<p>Pol. 103, 104</p>
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administrators will develop a procedure for discussing the Policy with students in individual buildings. The Policy will also be posted on the District web page and published at a minimum of once each year in a District publication and be made available in every classroom. Information on the Anti-bullying Policy will also be incorporated in training programs for all new school employees, as well as being referenced in the staff handbooks.

General Procedures Relating to Complaint

Each student shall be advised that the fact that he/she alleges bullying by another student or who reports an incident of bullying will not reflect upon the student's status. Any retaliation based upon a student's good faith initiation of a complaint, participation in the investigation of a complaint, or provision of information relating to a bullying complaint is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. If any student believes he or she is being retaliated against for filing a complaint under this policy, or the student's parent believes that his/her child is being retaliated against for filing a complaint under this policy, he or she shall report the retaliations in the same manner as indicated below.

The Principal of the building to which the alleged victim is assigned will investigate all complaints, PROVIDED HOWEVER, that if the complaint alleges that the perpetrator of the bullying is an Administrator or Supervisor employed by the School District and it is alleged that the Administrator or Supervisor encouraged, condoned, or turned a blind eye to the bullying of the alleged student-victim, the Superintendent or his designee shall investigate the complaint.

Investigation Procedure

1. Separate interviews of the Complainant and the alleged perpetrator will be conducted and all information will be documented in written form on Form A. Each of the involved individuals will be asked to sign an Acknowledgment of the statements provided during the interview. At the time of the interview, a copy of this Policy will be provided to the individuals involved and

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the Policy and complaint procedure will be reviewed with each individual.

2. During the interviews each individual will be given the opportunity to state his/her side of the incident, to identify any witnesses to corroborate his/her statements, and to provide input as to the possible resolution of the situation. Each student may have his or her parent or guardian present during the interview and parental involvement in this process will be encouraged.

If the Building Principal/Superintendent determines that measures are required during the period of investigation to alleviate the potential bullying, such a separation of the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator or close monitoring of the alleged perpetrator, such measures shall be taken until the investigation is completed.

3. A fact-finding investigation will be conducted and a written record of the fact-finding investigation including witness interviews, findings of the investigation and recommended action shall be set forth on Form B.
4. The results of the fact-finding investigation, including any recommended action will be shared with the Complainant and with the Accused.
5. If the Building Principal has conducted the investigation, he/she shall report his/her findings to the Superintendent. The Superintendent may consult with the Solicitor or special counsel as appropriate, in instances where disciplinary action is contemplated.
6. If the investigation results in a finding that a student has engaged in bullying in violation of this Policy, the Building Principal shall determine the appropriate discipline to be imposed, which may include, but not be limited to, suspension from school, or a recommendation to the Superintendent that the student be expelled from school following a hearing before the Board. In determining the level of discipline to be imposed, the Building Principal shall consider:

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- a. The prior disciplinary record of the student-perpetrator.
- b. The relative ages and maturity levels of the students.
- c. The nature and frequency of the inappropriate conduct by the student-perpetrator toward the student-victim.
- d. The degree of harm experienced by the student-victim.
- e. The extent, if any, to which the student-perpetrator encouraged or involved other students in the bullying of the student-victim.
- f. Any other circumstances or factors deemed relevant on this issue.

References:

School Code – 24 P.S. Sec. 1301.1

Board Policy – 103, 104, 218, 848

Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) – Sec. 2709