



Information for MECAC: Anti-Bullying & Anti-Harassment

10/24/2013

Q: What ASD policies address bullying and harassment?

A: All students and employees of the Anchorage School District have a right to pursue their education or occupation with dignity in a safe environment. Neither discrimination nor harassment of employees, students or volunteers is permitted in the district. This policy applies with regard to district facilities, premises, vehicles, computers, and electronics located on school property; and non-school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved, or school-related activity. The following Anchorage School Board policies and division handbooks specifically address bullying and harassment and can be found on the district's website at

<http://www.boarddocs.com/ak/asdk12/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=8Y9PVN662123#>

114: Nondiscrimination & Harassment

114.2: Inappropriate Behavior

114.3: Sexual Harassment

Statement of Rights and Responsibilities (ASD Policy Appendix A)

Elementary, Middle and High School Student Handbooks, found on the district's website at

<http://www.asdk12.org/forms/>

Q: How does the district define harassment and bullying?

A: The Anchorage School District's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities (Appendix A) defines harassment as a single act or course of conduct directed toward an individual or group of people that serves no legitimate purpose other than to annoy, intimidate, frighten, alarm, torment, or abuse that person or group.

Bullying is a form of harassment and is defined as any repeated behavior that ridicules, harasses, intimidates, or threatens students, staff or community members, or otherwise undermines a respectful, safe, and effective school environment.

Examples of such prohibited behaviors include:

1. Making demeaning remarks directly or indirectly, such as name-calling, racial slurs or "jokes"; or
2. Physically threatening or harming an individual; or
3. Displaying demeaning visual or written materials; or
4. Defacing, damaging, or destroying property or materials; or
5. Performing any other act that is clearly harassing in nature

Q: How does the district define cyberbullying and cyber-harassment?

A: The Anchorage School District's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities (Appendix A) defines cyberbullying as an act that involves insults, threats, and humiliation using mobile, wireless, or Internet-related technology in a way that hurts another child. Cyber-harassment is when an adult is involved as the abuser or victim.



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Cyberbullying encompasses any of the already prohibited actions – such as bullying, discrimination, or harassment – accomplished through electronic means. “Electronic means” include, but are not limited to, information and communication technologies such as e-mail, voice mail, cell phone and pager text messages, instant messaging (IM), personal Web sites, Weblogs, and online personal polling Web sites. Examples of cyberbullying and cyber harassment include:

1. Posting slurs or rumors or other disparaging remarks about a student or staff member on any website or blog;
2. Sending e-mail or instant messages that are harassing or threatening;
3. Taking and sending an unauthorized and unwanted photograph of a student or staff member.

The district will discipline a student the district determines has engaged in cyberbullying that takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation or at any official school bus stop, through the use of the district Internet system or on any district equipment, or at any time off-campus if the cyberbullying causes or threatens to cause a substantial and material disruption at school or interference with a student’s education or security.

Q: What is Social Emotional Learning (SEL)?

A: Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is the process through which we learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, avoid negative behaviors and support life and employability skills.

Q: How does Social Emotional Learning (SEL) address bullying and harassment?

A: SEL is a process through which students enhance their ability to integrate thinking, feeling and behaving in order to achieve important life tasks. Within the school setting, SEL is accomplished through a layered approach of skills lessons, infusion into the curricula and classroom practices, and an environment of safety, respect, and caring which models SEL values. These include:

1. **Self-Awareness:** Knowing what we are feeling in the moment: having a realistic assessment of our own abilities and a well-grounded sense of self-confidence.
2. **Self-Management:** Handling our emotions so they facilitate rather than interfere with the task at hand; being conscientious and delaying gratification to pursue goals, and persevering in the face of setbacks and frustrations.
3. **Social Awareness:** Understanding what others are feeling, being able to take see from another’s perspective and appreciating and interacting positively with diverse groups.
4. **Social Management:** Handling emotions in relationships effectively, establishing, and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships based on cooperation, resistance to inappropriate social pressure, negotiating solutions to conflict and seeking help when needed.



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Q: How does the district assess and monitor the incidence of bullying in the schools?

A: The district uses a variety of tools and strategies to monitor and collect school climate and safety data from students, staff, and parents. Each report of harassment/bullying is immediately investigated and throughout the school year students and parents receive education and communication about respectful behavior and how to report harassment/bullying. In addition, the following surveys are distributed and analyzed annually, and can be found on our Assessment and Evaluation Department webpage at www.asdk12.org/ae/ :

- Student Climate and Connectedness Survey
- Strength of Our Youth Survey
- Youth Risk Behavior Survey

Q: What are some of the anti-bullying programs being used at the elementary, middle and high school levels?

A: ASD schools use a variety of anti-bullying resources. Some of them are:

- Integrated Social & Emotional Learning Skills K-12
- Cyberbullying Lessons K-12
- The Great Body Shop K-6
- Sunburst Bully Kit K-6
- Aggressors, Victims, and Bystanders (Middle schools)
- High School Initiatives: Rachel's Challenge, Change of Heart, Be the Change and Freshman Houses

Additional resources and information can be found in the elementary, middle school and high school student Handbooks and on the district's website at

http://www.asdk12.org/MiddleLink/AVB/bully_topics/character.asp

Q: What do I do if my child is being bullied at school?

A: If you know or suspect your child is being bullied and the school has not communicated with you about the situation, you should contact the principal and/or your child's teacher(s) right away. Keep in mind that your primary goal should be to get the school's cooperation to get the bullying to stop.

Q: What happens when an incident of bullying is reported?

A: Any student, staff or community member who believes that he or she has been the subject of harassment and/or discriminatory behavior should report the incident immediately to the principal or department supervisor. Complaints regarding harassment/discriminatory behavior will be investigated immediately.

Any student, staff or community member who violates ASD harassment/discriminatory policy is subject to appropriate disciplinary action.



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Q: If my child is bullied, will I get to know what action was taken against the bully?

A: No; federal law under the Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects against the sharing of confidential student records. Information about discipline or other details about any student will not be shared. However, the principal can assure you that your concerns were taken seriously, investigated and appropriate actions taken.

Q: What can parents do to prevent bullying?

A: Parents play a key role in preventing and responding to bullying. If you know or suspect that your child is involved in bullying, you can help by:

1. Being informed about bullying and its impact to learning and to the learning environment
2. Keeping an open dialogue with your child(ren)
3. Reporting incidents of bullying immediately to the principal
4. Paying attention to how your student is feeling about school and school activities
5. Monitoring your child's access to text messages and other social media networks

Q: What do I do if my child is the bully (aggressor)?

A: It is never easy when parents are told that their child has bullied or harassed others. Even so, here are a few things to remember:

1. Identify the inappropriate behavior
2. Do not feel as if you have failed as a parent
3. Work with the school to address and respond to the inappropriate behavior
4. Help your child understand the impact of his/her behavior
5. Help your child understand and accept the consequences for his/her behavior

For more information on this Q & A document, contact Margo Bellamy at bellamy_margo@asdk12.org.

For more information about the district's SEL strategies, contact Melanie Sutton at sutton_melanie@asdk12.org.