

Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation
Bylaws & Policies

5517.01 – BULLYING

Bullying is prohibited by the School Corporation. Students who commit any acts of bullying are subject to discipline including but not limited to suspension, expulsion, arrest, and/or prosecution.

(a) Definition:

“Bullying” is defined as overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically); physical acts committed; aggression; or any other behaviors committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the targeted student, creating for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:

- (1) places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or property;
- (2) has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student’s physical or mental health;
- (3) has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student’s academic performance; or
- (4) has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the school.

(b) The term may not be interpreted to impose burden or sanction on, or included in the definition of the term, the following:

- (1) participating in a religious event;
- (2) acting in an emergency involving the protection of a person or property from an imminent threat of serious bodily injury or substantial danger;
- (3) participating in an activity consisting of the exercise of a student's freedom of speech rights;
- (4) participating in an activity conducted by a nonprofit or governmental entity that provides recreation, education, training, or other care under the supervision of one (1) or more adults;
- (5) participating in an activity undertaken at the prior written direction of the student's parent; or
- (6) engaging in interstate or international travel from a location outside Indiana to another location outside Indiana.

Applicability:

The School Corporation prohibits bullying in all forms. This policy may be applied regardless of the physical location in which the bullying behavior occurred, whenever the individual committing the bullying behavior and any of the intended targets of the bullying behavior are students attending a school within the School Corporation and disciplinary action is reasonably necessary to avoid substantial interference with school discipline or prevent an unreasonable threat to the rights of others to a safe and peaceful learning environment. The School Corporation prohibits bullying through the use of data or computer software that is accessed through any computer, computer system, or computer network.

Education:

The School Corporation will provide training and/or instruction on anti-bullying prevention and policy to all students and staff, in accordance with Indiana law.

Reporting:

Anyone who believes that a student has possibly been or is the victim of bullying is to immediately report the situation to an appropriate staff member such as a teacher, school counselor, or administrator. All staff who observe or receive a report of suspected bullying shall notify a school administrator in charge of receiving reports of suspected bullying within one (1) school day. Any person who makes a report of bullying and requests to remain anonymous will not be personally identified as the reporter or complainant to extent permitted by law. The School Corporation will act appropriately to discipline individuals who receive a report of bullying and fail to initiate or conduct an investigation of a bullying incident and for persons who falsely report an incident of bullying. The School Corporation will act appropriately to discipline individuals who make false reports of bullying.

Investigation:

Once a report of suspected bullying is received by the school administrator, an expedited investigation shall follow. The investigation should be facilitated by the school administrator or designee. The investigation will be promptly initiated by the school administrator or designee and will generally be completed, including all notifications required by law within ten (10) school days.

Intervention/Responses:

If a report of suspected bullying is substantiated through an investigation, the school shall take appropriate intervention and responses as consistent with policy and procedure. The School Corporation will take prompt and effective steps reasonably calculated to stop the bullying, remedy the bullying, and prevent the bullying from recurring. Interventions and responses include, but are not limited to:

- restorative practices
- school counseling
- bullying education
- disciplinary action

If the act of bullying rises to the level of a criminal offense, the matter will be referred to law enforcement. The school shall inform the parents/guardian of all students involved in alleged incidents, and, as appropriate, may discuss the availability of counseling and other intervention services.

Parental Involvement:

Parents/guardians are encouraged to be involved in the process of minimizing bullying. Parents/guardians should report suspected acts of bullying to an appropriate school official. In addition, parents/guardians of students suspected of bullying will be notified. Conversely, parents/guardians of students suspected of being the target of acts of bullying will also be notified. Parent/guardian notifications will occur in an expedited manner after the school administrator receives the report of alleged bullying.

I.C. 20-20-8-8
I.C. 20-30-5-5.5
I.C. 20-33-8-0.2
I.C. 20-33-8-13.5
I.C. 20-34-6-1