

Hope Charter Leadership Academy

Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Policy

Hope Elementary prohibits harassment, sexual harassment and bullying behavior at all levels as it is unacceptable behavior that must be addressed immediately. The Hope Board places a priority on providing every student a safe and orderly learning environment. Parents who believe that their child has been bullied or harassed should contact the principal for help. Any student who believes he or she has been bullied or harassed should immediately report the behavior to his or her teacher. The principal or designee shall promptly and thoroughly investigate all complaints of harassing and bullying behavior. Students are expected to comply with the behavior standards established by Board Policy and the Student Code of Conduct. Violations of this policy shall be considered misconduct and result in disciplinary action up to and including long-term suspension or expulsion.

Definition of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Behavior

Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act such as offensively touching another person's private parts or forcing or attempting to force another to engage in a sexual act against his or her will or any threatening communication that takes place on school property, at any school sponsored function, on a school bus, or that causes a substantial disruption to school operations and/or interferes with the rights of other students and that:

- Places students in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property; or
- Creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits. A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Harassing and bullying behavior includes, but is not limited to, acts reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

Reporting Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Behavior

1. Any student who believes he or she has been bullied or harassed should report such behavior immediately to a teacher, staff member, volunteer or the principal.
2. A staff member who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior shall report the incident to the principal.

3. A student or volunteer who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior should report the incident to a teacher, staff member or the principal.
4. A student, staff member or volunteer who reports bullying or harassing behavior may do so orally or in written form, providing as much information as possible. A student, staff member or volunteer may also report anonymously if they choose. However, formal disciplinary action may not be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.
5. Any staff member who receives a report of bullying or harassing behavior will forward the report to the principal who will ensure that a prompt investigation is completed.
6. There will be no reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying or harassment. Such reprisal or retaliation by a student is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and will result in disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.
7. Bullying or harassing behavior is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and will result in disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct.

Investigation of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Reports

1. All complaints of harassing or bullying behavior made by students shall be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the principal or designee. If the alleged bully is a staff member or employee, the principal will report the violation to the Board Chair and Chair of Personnel.
2. If the individual required to investigate a complaint is the alleged bully or harasser, the investigation shall be conducted by the Board Chair and the Chair of the Personnel Committee or their designee.
3. In any case of alleged bullying or harassment, Hope shall notify any other appropriate person or entity if required by law or Board Policy.

Disciplinary Action

The actions taken in response to evidence of harassing or bullying behavior should be reasonably calculated to end any harassment or bullying, eliminate a hostile environment, if one has been created, and to prevent harassment from happening again. Violations of this policy shall be considered misconduct and will result in disciplinary action up to and including long-term suspension or expulsion as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. Nothing in this policy precludes the school from taking disciplinary action against a student where the evidence does not establish harassment or bullying but the conduct otherwise fails to satisfy Hope's high expectations for appropriate conduct and the establishment of a safe and orderly learning environment.

Approved Jan 25, 2018