

Anti-Bullying Policy 5.9

Dear Families,

At its July 22 regular School Board meeting, the School Board of Broward County passed a policy prohibiting bullying of any student or employee. At our school, we believe that bullying of any kind, by any person, is unacceptable. All students should be free from worries about being bullied. Students who bully others must be taught other, appropriate ways of interacting with peers. As a result, our school will focus some of our prevention efforts on anti-bullying. All students and staff at our school will learn universal rules and expectations about bullying as well as different skills and tools they can use to prevent or respond to bullying. As you know, bullying can take different forms, such as physical or verbal, and it can harm victims' social relationships with their peers. Bullying can also be indirect; for example, bullying can occur through gossip, spreading falsehoods and cyber-bullying. Bullying is hurtful to anyone who is the target of such behavior as well as to anyone who witnesses bullying.

We define bullying as:

“Bullying means systemically and chronically inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or employees. It is further defined as: unwanted purposeful written, verbal, nonverbal, or physical behavior, including but not limited to any threatening, insulting or dehumanizing gestures, by an adult or student, that has the potential to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment or cause long term damage, cause discomfort or humiliation; or reasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation is carried out repeatedly and is often characterized by an imbalance of power.”

Bullying is a purposeful action that is intended to injure, involves physical (e.g. hitting, pushing, shoving, kicking, etc.) and/or mental components (e.g. verbal humiliation, hurtful, threatening behaviors, gossip, exclusion) and ALWAYS an imbalance of power. That is a lot of information, but to keep it simple, we can help determine if a behavior is bullying by using this acronym. Bullying is:

R – Repeated

I – Imbalance of Power

P – Purposeful

Our anti-bullying goals this year are to create a positive school setting, increase awareness about bullying among all educators, staff, and students; enforce school anti-bullying rules; provide enhanced supervision in bully-prone locations; and teach students skills to deal with bullying, problem solving, and making friends.