



Laurel Highlands School District

Bullying Prevention Policy

The goal of the Laurel Highlands School District is to prevent bullying. The Board of Education is committed to creating and maintaining a learning atmosphere which is respectful and supportive. Providing a safe school environment where all students and employees are treated with respect and dignity, and are free from bullying, intimidation and harassment is one of our highest priorities. This freedom is fundamental to our K-12 education program and is extended to everyone without exception.

Bullying is a violation of our school district core values and will not be tolerated. The Board of Education condemns all forms of bullying. No one –students or employees- should be fearful of being bullied or harassed. The actions of any one person or group of individuals which threaten the health and safety of students and/or staff must be addressed promptly. Early intervention, reinforcement of a consistent message and follow through from students, parents, staff and administration can ensure that everyone’s right to learn and work in a safe environment is respected.

The school setting provides an opportunity to teach children and emphasize among staff that cooperation and respect of others is a key district value. A program geared to prevention is designed to not only decrease incidents of bullying, but to help students build more supportive relationships with one another. Staff members need to be sensitive to the warning signs of bullying as well as to their absolute responsibility to become actively involved in the prevention of bullying before overt acts actually occur. The components of such an effort, based on the Olweus model, involve the following:

- Learning about and identifying the early warning signs and precursor behaviors that may lead to bullying.
- Gathering information about bullying at school directly from students.
- Establishing clear school wide and classroom rules about bullying.
- Training adults in the school to respond sensitively and consistently to bullying.
- Providing adequate adult supervision, particularly in less structured areas such as in the hallways, cafeteria and playground.
- Raising parental awareness and involvement in addressing problems.

The Superintendent with cooperation and support of the district wide Task Force on Bullying and Prevention Coordination Committees in each school should maintain and implement specific procedures on early identification of bullying and other preventive strategies as well as reporting, investigating, remedying and tracking allegations of bullying. All students, school district employees, vendors, and visitors (including parents) to district buildings, buses, athletic fields or locations off-school premises involving school-related activities (i.e., field trips) are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the words and spirit of this policy. We all share responsibility to ensure that bullying does not occur.