

## Bullying Addendum

### O'Donnell ISD

District Policy defines Bullying in FNI of the policy manual. The policy is summarized below.

Bullying occurs when a student or group of students engages in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the District and that:

1. Has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; or
2. Is sufficiently severe, persistent, and pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student.

This conduct is considered bullying if it:

1. Exploits an imbalance of power between the student perpetrator and the student victim through written or verbal expression or physical conduct; and
2. Interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school.

To help clarify bullying and the consequences of it this addendum has been developed for the 2012 – 2013 school year.

Bullying of a student may include hazing, threats, taunting, teasing, confinement, assault, demands for money, and destruction of property, theft of valued possessions, name calling, rumor spreading, or ostracism.

#### Retaliation

Retaliation for reports is strictly prohibited. Examples of retaliation include making threats, rumor spreading, ostracism, and assault, destruction of property, unjustified punishments, or unwarranted grade reductions. Retaliation does not include petty slights or annoyances.

#### False Claim

A student who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a District investigation regarding bullying shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

#### Reporting

To obtain assistance and intervention, any student who believes that he or she has experienced bullying or believes that another student has experienced bullying should immediately report the alleged acts to a teacher, counselor, principal, or other District employee.

Any District employee who suspects or receives notice that a student or group of students has or may have experienced bullying shall immediately notify the principal or designee.

Reporting may be made orally or in writing to the principal.

The principal or designee shall determine whether the allegations in the report, if proven, would constitute prohibited conduct as defined by policy FFH.

The principal or designee shall conduct an appropriate investigation based on the allegations in the report. The principal or designee shall promptly take interim action calculated to prevent bullying during the course of an investigation, if appropriate.

#### Notice to Parents

If an incident of bullying is confirmed, the principal or designee shall promptly notify the parents of the victim and of the student who engaged in bullying.

If the results of an investigation indicate that bullying occurred, the District shall promptly respond by taking appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the District's Student Code of Conduct and may take corrective action reasonably calculated to address the conduct.

#### **What does this mean?**

##### *Clarifying the Conduct*

Bullying involves physical conduct that occurs at school, a school function, or a school vehicle. Written, verbal and electronic expression created and accessed at school is a form of bullying. Physical conduct and written, verbal and electronic expression that does not occur at school, school functions or in school vehicles is not school – related bullying.

##### *Defining Bullying*

Bullying involves the exploiting of another through an imbalance of power. This power control can include physical control, social control and emotional control. Exploitation involves intentional conduct. The bully is gaining something – physically, socially or emotionally – from their conduct as they try to control another.

The conduct, or control of power, must 1) interfere with another student's education; or 2) substantially disrupt the operation of the school, to be defined as bullying.

##### *Interfering with a Student's Education*

Interfering includes causing physical harm, i.e.: bruising cuts and emotional anxiety; damage to property; reasonable fear; and/or the creation of an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment for the target student due to behavior that is severe, persistent and pervasive. To clarify, when a student voluntarily forgoes a school activity for fear of, or in response to, perceived bullying, we have evidence of an "intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment.

Bullying is INTENTIONAL. The bully INTENDS to EXPLOIT his or her POWER. It can be physical, verbal, written and electronic but it must be conducted or accessed on school grounds. It seriously disrupts school operations, or has a specific effect on the target student.

## **What is O'Donnell ISD doing?**

### *Communication*

This addendum will be posted on the website with parent handbook. At parent request, the addendum will be sent to parent with the handbook.

Students will be trained using this addendum at the beginning of school.

Students will attend a bullying prevention seminar in the fall of the 2012-2013 school year.

Teachers and Staff will be trained using this addendum at the beginning of the school.

The counselor and principal will work together to communicate with students and parents on an ongoing as needed basis.

### *Facilitation of Policy*

Teachers and staff will report any instances of bullying to the campus principal. Instances include student, parent and teacher/staff reports. The principal will investigate and report on the bullying reporting form.

After investigation, confirmed bullying instances will be reported to all parents. Names will not be released. Discipline measures will be taken on the bully as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct. Retaliation WILL not be tolerated and stiffer penalties will be incurred if retaliation takes place. False reporting will also result in disciplinary action as outlined by the Student Code of Conduct.

Periodic follow – ups will take place. These follow – ups will involve the principal and/or counselor.

### *Other Things to Know*

Preventing bullying is EVERYONE'S responsibility.

Parents, teacher and other staff members must be good role models.

Kids should be involved and become part of the solution, supporting each other and caring for each other. RESPECT is the cornerstone to preventing bullying.