

PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING, DATING VIOLENCE, AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Harassment, intimidation, bullying, dating violence and sexual violence are prohibited in the Tiverton Public Schools. [R.I.G.L. 16-21-26, 16-21-30] The prevention of bullying , dating violence and sexual violence is part of the District’s Plan [R.I.G.L. 16-7.1-2 (e) and school safety plan [R.I.G.L. 16-21-24]. Bullying, dating violence, and sexual violence will not be tolerated in the Tiverton Public Schools.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Raise school-wide awareness about bullying, dating violence and sexual violence;
- Provide direction in responding to incidents; and
- Prevent new incidents of bullying, dating violence, and sexual violence.

DEFINITIONS

At School means in a classroom, on or immediately adjacent to school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, at an official school bus stop, or at any school sponsored activity or event whether or not it is on school grounds.

Bullying occurs when a student intentionally assaults, batters, threatens, harasses, stalks, menaces, intimidates, extorts, humiliates, or taunts another student. Bullying also occurs when a student or a group of students organize a campaign of shunning against another student or when a student or a group of students maliciously spread rumors about another student.

Dating Violence: A pattern of behavior where one person uses threats of, or actually uses, physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse to control his or her dating partner.

Sexual Assault includes behaviors that are attempted or perpetrated against a victim’s will or when a victim cannot consent because of age, disability, or the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. Sexual assault may involve actual or threatened physical force, use of weapons, coercion, intimidation, or pressure and may include:

- Intentional touching of someone in ways that are unwanted,
- Voyeurism,
- Exposure to exhibitionism,
- Undesired exposure to pornography, or
- Public display of images that are taken in a private context or when the victim is unaware.

REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

The principal in each school shall establish and prominently publicize to all students, staff, volunteers and parents how to report bullying and how such reports will be acted on. A report may be filed by the victim of bullying , dating violence or sexual violence; witnesses/bystanders to such actions; or anyone who has information that these actions have occurred.

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INVESTIGATION

The principal or designee shall develop procedures and guidelines for the investigation of bullying, dating violence and sexual violence reports. If the allegation is found to be credible, appropriate disciplinary sanctions, subject to due process procedures, shall be imposed.

DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

Disciplinary sanctions for bullying, dating violence, or sexual violence may include loss of privilege to participate in extra-curricular activities including athletics and school social events; loss of school bus transportation; and depending on the extent of involvement in the prohibited activity may lead to other disciplinary action up to and including suspension from school. Each school's student handbook contains a list of disciplinary actions that can be taken.

VICTIMS' RIGHTS AND PROTECTION

The Tiverton School Department is committed to creating a campus environment that promotes timely and fair adjudication of bullying, dating violence and sexual violence cases. Each building principal shall establish guidelines to protect the rights and privacy of the victim(s) as well as due process rights of the alleged perpetrator.

PREVENTION

The principal of each school shall ensure that students and staff are instructed on how to identify prevent, and report bullying, dating violence, and sexual violence. The principal shall also ensure that the school health program and counseling services include the appropriate social skills training to help students avoid isolation and help them interact in a healthy manner.

School staff shall model correct and courteous behavior to each other, to students, to parents and to visitors. Abusive or humiliating language or demeanor shall not be accepted. The staff shall ensure that each student is known by a teacher that the student can turn to if abuse develops. To the extent possible, the influence of cliques and other exclusive student groupings shall be diminished by the creation of inclusive activities in which all students are encouraged to participate.

Adopted : 7-14-09