



Bullying Prevention and Intervention Law

Mansfield Public Schools
Staff Training
2016-2017

Please read and review

Contact an administrator if you have questions
or need further information on how this law
pertains to your employment requirements

Definition: Bullying

- Bullying is defined as repeated use by one or more students or STAFF of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.
- **CHAPTER 92 AN ACT RELATIVE TO BULLYING IN SCHOOLS.** (see **Senate, No. 2404**)

Definition: Cyber-bullying

- “Cyber-bullying”, bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. (Chapter 92 sec. 5 Mass. DESE)

Our State and School Rules Prohibit Bullying

- Bullying shall be prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Bullying and Students on IEP's

- Whenever the evaluation of the Individualized Education Program team indicates that the child has a disability that affects social skills development or that the child is vulnerable to bullying, harassment or teasing because of the child's disability, the Individualized Education Program shall address the skills and proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment or teasing.

How do I know if an incident is bullying, harassment or discrimination?

- You do not have to decide alone. Get the guidance department and administration involved. If you have witnessed an incident that causes you concern, you can ask each student privately if this is a repeated behavior and let both students know you are required to report incidences to the administration.
- The administration will investigate and determine how to best resolve individual cases.

Go with your instinct. Intervene- ask and approach- Report what you observed to an administrator or guidance counselor

- When in doubt-report! Especially if it looks like there is an imbalance of power or you see obvious verbal or physical harm to one or both parties involved. Immediately state that you do not like what you have observed and that it is unacceptable. Follow up with a verbal message or written note or email to an administrator or guidance counselor that states your concerns about a situation.
- Appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents can be found in the [Direct From the Field: A Guide to Bullying Prevention](#), Mass. Dept. of Public Health. This 123-page publication has been provided to every school districts in Massachusetts. It also contains a list of bullying prevention and intervention resources that are made available to our schools. This is located in the main office at your school or online.

Keep in Mind

- The complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among a aggressor, victim and witnesses to the bullying.
- Guidance is trained to handle the many social and emotional learning needs of our students.
- With all of us working together (as adults in the building), we can help direct and/or facilitate the processes by which children acquire the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to recognize and manage their emotions, demonstrate caring and concern for others, establish positive relationships, make responsible decisions and constructively handle challenging social situations.

Reminders and access to information is available

- Our Bullying Prevention Plan is noted on each schools' web site and on the district pages.
- The internet safety contracts are explicit on cyber-bullying.
- The plan is included in the school/district handbooks.
- Thank you for incorporating literature on anti-bullying in your lesson plans when applicable.

Notes

- Be aware that staff have been added to the bullying definition as possible aggressors.
- The information on these training slides were compiled from sources from the [MA DESE](#) and other legal sources and materials for the [Mansfield Public Schools](#)

Signature Page

To document that you have read and understand the material provided in this Bullying Prevention Training please use the signature page that will be found in your school mailbox.

Please sign the form as acknowledgement of completing this training presentation, and provide a copy of the signature page to your school office by Friday, September 30, 2016. Thank you.