

Bullying Prevention Policy and Procedures

Purpose: *Raíces del Saber creates an educational environment for all students, employees, volunteers, and families that is safe, free of bullying, harassment, and intimidation. Raíces holds Respect as one of its core values and as such puts forth this policy to define bullying/cyberbullying and to describe how the school will work to prevent it and address it in accordance with NMAC § 6.12.7, NMAC § 6.30.2.19, .*

Policy: Bullying behavior Raíces del Saber is prohibited, and such creates a policy to define it, program strategies to prevent it, procedures for reporting incidents and consequences for incidents. Bullying may result in disciplinary action and remediation. This policy will be disseminated to students, families, teachers and all staff at the school.

To address cyberbullying -

1. all licensed school employees will complete training on how to recognize signs of cyberbullying;
2. any licensed school employee who has information about or reasonable suspicion of cyberbullying shall report the matter immediately to the school principal;
3. when the principal receives a report of cyberbullying, s/he will take immediate steps to ensure prompt investigation of the report; and
4. the principal will take prompt disciplinary action in response to cyberbullying confirmed through investigation; disciplinary action taken pursuant to this subsection must be by the least restrictive means necessary to address a hostile environment on the school campus resulting from the confirmed cyberbullying and may include counseling, mediation and appropriate disciplinary action that is consistent with the legal rights of the involved students.

Raíces uses these Definitions -

"Bullying" means any repeated and pervasive written, verbal or electronic expression, physical act or gesture, or a pattern thereof, that is intended to cause distress upon one or more students in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop, or at school activities or sanctioned events. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, hazing, harassment, intimidation or menacing acts of a student which may, but need not be based on the student's race, color, sex, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation.

"Cyberbullying" means electronic communication that:

1. targets a specific student;
2. is published with the intention that the communication be seen by or disclosed to the targeted student;

3. is in fact seen by or disclosed to the targeted student; and
4. creates or is certain to create a hostile environment on the school campus that is so severe or pervasive as to substantially interfere with the targeted student's educational benefits, opportunities or performance.

"Harassment" means knowingly pursuing a pattern of conduct that is intended to annoy, alarm or terrorize another person.

"Disability Harassment" is defined as intimidation or abusive behavior toward a student based on disability that creates a hostile environment by interfering with or denying a student's participation in or receipt of benefits, services, or opportunities in the district. Harassment and Disability Harassment include but are not limited to:

1. Verbal acts, teasing, use of sarcasm, jokes;
2. Name-calling, belittling;
3. Nonverbal behavior such as graphic or written statements;
4. Conduct that is physically threatening, harmful, or humiliating; or
5. Inappropriate physical restraint by adults.

"Racial Harassment" consists of physical or verbal conduct relating to an individual's race when the conduct:

1. Has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive academic environment;
2. Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance; or
3. Otherwise adversely affects an individual's academic opportunities.

"Sexual Harassment" means any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other inappropriate verbal, written, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment may take place under any of the following circumstances:

1. When submission to such conduct is made, explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of obtaining an education; or
2. Submission to or rejection of that conduct or communication by an individual is used to factor in decisions affecting that individual's education; or
3. That conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's education, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment

"Hazing" means committing an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a risk of harm to a person, in order for that student to be initiated into or

affiliated with a student organization, or for any other purpose. Hazing includes but is not limited to:

1. Any type of physical brutality such as whipping, beating, striking, branding, shocking, or placing a harmful substance on the body.
2. Any type of physical activity such as sleep deprivation, exposure to weather, confinement in a restricted area, calisthenics or other activity that subject the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
3. Any activity involving the consumption of any alcoholic beverage, drug, tobacco product or any other food, liquid, or substance that subjects the student to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the mental or physical health or safety of the student.
4. Any activity that intimidates or threatens the student with ostracism, that subjects the student to extreme mental stress, embarrassment, shame, or humiliation, that adversely affects the mental health or dignity of the student or discourages the student from remaining in school.
5. Any activity that causes or requires the student to perform a task that involves a violation of state or federal law, or district policies.

Communication:

The prohibition against bullying shall be approved by the Raíces board and incorporated into the student/parent, and staff handbooks. Staff will receive awareness training on the Anti-Bullying Policy at the beginning of each school year. This will include a review the procedures as well as clarification on their responsibilities regarding bullying behavior. Bullying and harassment will be addressed during professional development on building a positive school culture and student discipline/restorative justice plans throughout the year. The school discipline policy and procedures will align with this policy.

Prevention: Using a Restorative Justice approach to student behavior

Raíces will use a restorative practice process to build community to respond to challenging student behavior. This includes using dialogue, self-examination, coming to understand, and making things right. Raíces will use restorative circles in the classroom to teach students to apply multiple approaches to problem solving and to use mindful meditation for self-examination rather than immediately using a punishment approach to address student misbehavior. This approach will help nurture students and encourage academic, personal and community success.

Our goals for student behavior using this approach will be as follows:

- Students will learn to value and regularly use proactive, positive ways to build and maintain a peaceful classroom community.
- Students will develop and enhance positive and supportive connections with peers.
- Students will develop an understanding of the principles and vocabulary of restorative justice.
- Students will learn how to participate in circle dialogues, using specific guidelines.
- Students will learn to use and respect a talking piece, which allows each person to have a voice, a time to talk while others listen respectfully.
- Students will learn how to use restorative questions to support conflict resolution and other types of communication.
- Students will learn to identify who is affected by misbehaviors, and how.
- Students will contribute to developing appropriate ideas for how to make things right when harms have occurred.
- Students will learn how and when to ask for a restorative circle.
- Students will learn to communicate how they are affected by given situations using affective statements and restorative questions.

Prevention: Anti-Bullying included in Health Education Curriculum

Health Education coursework at the school will align with content standards with benchmarks and performance standards as set forth in 6.30.2.19 NMAC and will therefore address bullying behavior. The Raíces Health curriculum recognizes the importance of bully prevention skills in all grade levels and will implement a comprehensive health education curriculum that helps students attain knowledge and skills of good citizenship and respect. Critical skills include anticipating consequences of choices, making informed decisions, communicating effectively, resolving conflicts, and developing cultural competency.

Interventions: Reporting Intimidation, Harassment, or Bullying Behavior

1. Teachers and staff at Raíces will continually monitor student behavior, utilize restorative discipline practices to foster a bullying-free environment and act immediately to address isolated acts of unacceptable behavior.
2. When repeated and pervasive acts are observed by a teacher or if a student describes being a victim of harassment, intimidation, bullying, or hazing (as defined in this policy that may constitute harassment, intimidation, bullying, or hazing toward a student), the concern should be immediately reported.
3. The report may be made to any staff member. The staff member will assist the student in reporting to the Principal or designee.
4. Teachers and other school staff who witness acts of bullying or receive student reports of bullying are required to promptly notify designated staff.

5. Reports should be done in writing using the **Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, or Hazing Complaint Form**.
6. The principal or designee is required to accept and investigate all reports of intimidation, harassment or bullying.
7. The principal or designee will notify the parent or guardian of a student who commits a verified act of intimidation, harassment, or bullying of the response of the school staff and consequences that may result from further acts of bullying.
8. Retaliation against an individual who either orally reports or files a written complaint regarding harassment, intimidation, bullying, or hazing or who participates in or cooperates with an investigation is prohibited.
9. The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and the accused, shall be preserved consistent with applicable laws.
10. If harassment or bullying continues, the perpetrator will be immediately suspended and removed from the school, pending a long-term hearing.
11. To the extent permitted under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), school staff is required to notify the parent or guardian of a student who is a target of bullying of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying. Investigating Intimidation, Harassment, or Bullying Behavior.
12. The Principal or their designee will appropriately and promptly investigate all reports of harassment, intimidation, bullying, or hazing. In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes bullying, the totality of the circumstances, the nature of the conduct, the student's history, and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred will be investigated.
 - (a) The Principal will make every effort to inform the parents/guardians of the victim and the accused of any report of harassment, intimidation, bullying, or hazing prior to the investigation taking place.
 - (b) The investigation shall consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the individual(s) against whom the complaint was filed, and others who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. The investigation may also consist of other methods or documents deemed relevant by the investigator.
 - (c) The school may take immediate steps to protect the complainant, students, teachers, administrators, or other school personnel pending the completion of an investigation.
 - (d) The investigation shall be completed as soon as possible. The investigator shall make a written report upon completion of the investigation. The report shall include a determination of whether the allegations have been substantiated as factual and whether they appear to be violations of this policy.

Consequences for Bullying:

Raíces believes that the best discipline for aggressive behavior is designed to (1) support students in taking responsibility for their actions, (2) develop empathy, and (3) teach alternative ways to achieve goals and solve problems that motivated the aggressive behavior. Staff members who interact with students shall apply best practices designed to prevent discipline problems and encourage students' abilities to develop self-discipline and make better choices in the future. While Raíces will make every effort to educate and support students to prevent bullying, in the event that bullying occurs, the school will respond. Raíces will consider the number of previous incidents, the nature of the act and the context in which the alleged act occurred. Consequences can range from positive behavioral interventions to suspension and expulsion and shall include consideration of compliance with state and federal IDEA requirements. Raíces del Saber shall include parents/guardians in the remediation of severe and/or escalating behavior.

1. Verified acts of bullying shall result in intervention by the Principal or his/her designee that is intended to ensure that the prohibition against bullying behavior is enforced.
2. Bullying behavior can take many forms and can vary dramatically in how serious it is, and what impact it has on the targeted individual and other students. Accordingly, there is no one response to bullying. While conduct that rises to the level of "bullying" as defined above will generally warrant disciplinary action against the perpetrator of such bullying, whether and to what extent to impose disciplinary action (detention, in and out-of-school suspension, or expulsion) is a matter for the professional discretion of the Principal. When determining the consequences, the Principal will take into consideration:
 - (a) Age, development, and maturity levels of the parties involved
 - (b) Degree of harm (physical and/or emotional distress)
 - (c) Surrounding circumstances
 - (d) Nature and severity of the behavior(s)
 - (e) Incidences of past or continuing pattern(s) of behavior
 - (f) Relationship between the parties involved
 - (g) Context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred
3. The Principal will ensure both the appropriate consequences and remedial responses to a student or staff member who commits one or more acts of bullying or harassment.

Examples of Consequences:

- (h) Admonishment
- (i) Participation in a guided reflection process designed to teach alternative behavior

- (j) Temporary removal from the classroom
- (k) Loss of privileges
- (l) Classroom or administrative detention
- (m) Referral to disciplinarian
- (n) In-school suspension
- (o) Out-of-school suspension
- (p) Legal action
- (q) Expulsion or termination

Examples of Remedial Measures:

- (a) Framing the aggressive behavior as a failed attempt to solve a real problem or reach a goal. Assist the misbehaving student to find a better way to solve the problem
- (b) Restitution and restoration
- (c) Transformative conferencing/restorative justice practices
- (d) Supervised peer support group
- (e) Corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experience
- (f) Supportive discipline to increase accountability for the bullying offense
- (g) Supportive interventions, including participation of an Intervention
- (h) Behavioral assessment or evaluation, including, but not limited to, a referral to a Student Assistance Team (SAT), as appropriate
- (i) Behavioral management plan, with benchmarks that are closely monitored
- (j) Involvement of school disciplinarian
- (k) Student counseling
- (l) Parent conferences
- (m) Student treatment
- (n) Student therapy