

**REVISED GUIDELINE VOL. 25, NO. 2**

**BULLYING**

The following procedures shall be used for reporting, investigating and resolving complaints of bullying.

**Complaint Procedures**

Building principals and assistant principals and the ~~Superintendent~~Executive Director have responsibility for conducting investigations concerning claims of bullying. The investigator(s) shall be a neutral party having had no involvement in the complaint presented.

Any student, employee or third party who has knowledge of conduct in violation of Policy 5517.01 or feels s/he has been a victim of bullying in violation of Policy 5517.01 ~~[shall] [is encouraged to]~~ immediately report his/her concerns.

All complaints will be ~~promptly~~investigated promptly in accordance with the following ~~procedures~~procedure:

Step I Any complaints, allegations or rumors of bullying shall be presented to the building principal or assistant principal or the ~~Superintendent~~Executive Director. Students ~~may~~also may report their concerns to teachers or counselors who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate administrator or Board official. Complaints against the building principal shall be filed with the ~~Superintendent~~Executive Director. Complaints against the ~~Superintendent~~Executive Director shall be filed with the Board President. ~~Information may be initially presented anonymously.~~ Complaints submitted anonymously also shall be investigated. All such information will be reduced to writing and will include the specific nature of the offense and corresponding dates. If the person filing the complaint is an adult, s/he must sign the charge affirming its veracity. If the person filing the complaint is a minor, s/he may either sign the charge or affirm its veracity before two (2) administrators.

Step II The administrator/Board official receiving the complaint shall promptly investigate. Parents will be notified of the nature of any complaint involving their ~~student~~child. The administrator/Board official will arrange such meetings as may be necessary with all concerned parties within five (5) work days after receipt of the information or complaint. The parties will have an opportunity to submit evidence and a list of witnesses. All findings related to the complaint will be reduced to writing. The administrator/Board official conducting the investigation shall notify the complainant and parents ~~as appropriate, (in writing), in writing~~ when the investigation is concluded and ~~a decision regarding disciplinary action, as warranted~~if warranted, or other remedial action is ~~determined~~decided.

A copy of the notification letter or the date and details of notification to the complainant, together with any other documentation related to the incident, including disciplinary action or other remedial action taken or recommended, shall be forwarded to the ~~Superintendent~~Executive Director.

Step III If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision at Step II, s/he may submit a written appeal to the ~~Superintendent~~Executive Director or designee. Such appeal must be filed within ten (10) work days after receipt of the Step II decision. The ~~Superintendent~~Executive Director or designee will arrange such meetings with the complainant and other affected parties as deemed necessary to review and discuss the appeal. The ~~Superintendent~~Executive Director or designee shall provide a written decision to the complainant's appeal within ten (10) work days of the appeal being filed.

Step IV If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision at Step III, a written appeal may be filed with the Board. Such appeal must be filed within ten (10) work days after receipt of the Step III decision. The Board shall, within twenty (20) work days, conduct a hearing at which time the complainant shall be given an opportunity to present the complaint. The Board shall provide a written decision to the complainant within ten (10) work days following completion of the hearing.

The administrator/Board official who investigates the complaint will be responsible for working with the school counselors and other community resources to provide information and/or follow-up services to support the targeted student and to educate the student engaging in bullying behavior on the effects of bullying and the prevention of bullying. In addition, the school administrator and school counselors will be responsible for determining if the bullying behavior is a violation of law required to be reported to law enforcement under Indiana law based upon their reasonable belief. Such determination should be made as soon as possible and once this determination is made, the report should be made immediately to law enforcement

Documentation related to the incident, other than any discipline imposed or other remedial action taken, will be maintained in a file separate from the student's education records or the employee's personnel file.

#### Retaliation/False Charges

Retaliation against any person who reports, is thought to have reported, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry related to a complaint of bullying is prohibited. Such retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy and independent of whether a complaint is substantiated.

False charges ~~shall~~ also **shall** be regarded as a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action or other appropriate sanctions. Suspected retaliation should be reported in the same manner as bullying.