

219 BULLYING/CYBERBULLYING

Purpose:

The TCCS Board of Trustees is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for Tidioute Community Charter School students. The Board recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to more serious violence. Therefore, the board prohibits any form of bullying by all Tidioute Community Charter School students.

Definitions:

Bullying means an intentional electronic, written, verbal, non-verbal, or physical act or series of acts directed at another student or students, which occurs in a school setting, or that is brought into a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive and has the effect of doing any of the following:

- Substantial interference with a student's education.
- Creation of a threatening environment
- Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying is characterized by the following three (3) criteria:

1. It is intentional or deliberate aggressive behavior or harm doing, and
2. It is carried out repeatedly over time, and
3. It occurs within an interpersonal relationship where there is an imbalance of power (e.g. one person is physically larger, stronger, mentally quicker or socially more powerful).

Prohibited Behaviors:

Bullying takes many forms and can include a variety of prohibited behaviors. As defined in this policy, bullying refers to direct or indirect action, which may include, but is not limited to:

1. Physical – touching, hitting, kicking, pushing, shoving, and getting another person to hurt someone.
2. Verbal – name-calling, teasing, taunting, gossiping, and spreading rumors.
3. Nonverbal – threatening, intimidation, obscene gestures, isolation, exclusion, or stalking.
4. Electronic – cyber bullying (bullying that occurs by use of electronic or communication devices through communication devices through means of social networking, e-mail, instant messaging, text messages, tweets, blogs, photo and video sharing, chat rooms, bash boards, or websites).

Prohibited Conduct also includes:

1. Perpetuating bullying or harassing conduct by spreading hurtful or demeaning material, even if the material was created by another person (e.g., forwarding offensive e-mails, tweets, images, or text messages).

Scope:

The school setting includes in the school, on school grounds, in school vehicles, at a designated bus stop, in transit to and from school or at any off-site activity sponsored, supervised or sanctioned by the school. The school setting also includes school-owned or personally owned electronic devices that are used or brought into the educational setting.

Reporting:

The Board requires students who have been bullied or witnessed bullying to promptly report such incidents.

A student or third-party witness who believes an individual has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy shall immediately report the incident to an administrator or school employee.

A school employee who witnesses, suspects, or is notified that a student has been subject to conduct that constitutes a violation of this policy shall immediately report the incident to building administrator.

Investigation:

Upon receiving a complaint of bullying, the building principle or designee shall immediately conduct the investigation.

The investigation may consist of individual interviews with the complaint, the accused, and others with knowledge relative to the incident. The investigator may also evaluate any other information and materials relevant to the investigation.

investigation of the incident is pending or has been concluded.

Communication:

The student handbook, which shall contain this policy, shall be disseminated annually to students.

This policy shall be accessible in every classroom. The policy shall be posted in a prominent location within the school building, and on the school's website.

Training and Prevention:

The school may develop and implement bullying prevention and intervention programs. Such programs shall provide staff and students with appropriate training for effectively responding to, intervening in, and reporting of bullying.

Consequences:

A student who violates this policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the code of student conduct. The consequences may vary depending on the seriousness and pervasiveness of the bullying and may include:

- Counseling with the school
- Parental Conference
- Loss of school privilege
- Transfer to another classroom
- Loss of school bus privileges
- Exclusion from school-sponsored activities
- Detention
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Referral to law enforcement officials