

BULLYING AND CYBERBULLYING

Complaint Procedure

1. It is the express policy of the Westfield Public Schools to encourage targets of bullying or harassment to promptly report such claims. Timely reporting of complaints facilitates the investigation and resolution of such complaints.
2. As soon as a student or staff member feels that he or she has been subjected to bullying or harassment, he/she should make a written complaint to the principal, or his/her designee. The student or staff member will be provided a copy of this Policy and Regulation and made aware of his or her rights when he/she files the complaint.
3. The complaint should state the:
 - a. Name of the complainant,
 - b. Date of the complaint,
 - c. Date(s) of the alleged harassment/bullying,
 - d. Name(s) of the harasser(s) or bully(s),
 - e. Location where such harassment/bullying occurred,
 - f. Names of any witness(es) to the harassment/bullying, and
 - g. Detailed statement of the circumstances constituting the alleged harassment/bullying.

Students who have a complaint of bullying or harassment or who wish to learn more about the subject may contact either one of the following persons:

- Human Resources Director
1029 North Road
Westfield, MA 01085
(413) 572-6550

- Administrator of Special Education & Student Support Services
1029 North Road
Westfield, MA 01085
(413) 572-6556

Student complaints of bullying or harassment should be filed in the following manner:

LEVEL ONE: Report the alleged charge immediately to the principal of the building or designee or, if the principal is the subject of the alleged charge, to the Superintendent or his/her designee. If the Superintendent is the subject of the alleged charge the complaint should be filed with the Title IX Coordinator, the Administrator of Student Services

All complaints will be reduced to writing following an informal discussion of the allegation in order for the matter to proceed further. The principal or designee (or Superintendent) will investigate and will try to render a decision regarding the complaint and any action or recommended action to be taken within ten (10) calendar days. The building principal or designee shall make a written report summarizing the results of the investigation and proposed disposition of the matter. Consistent with state and federal law and as deemed appropriate by the Title IX Coordinator or designee, the findings of the investigation shall be shared with persons involved in the investigation.

LEVEL TWO: If the student wishes to carry the complaint beyond the decision reached at Level One, he/she may, within five (5) days of the decision, file his/her complaint with the Superintendent. The Superintendent or designee will evaluate the evidence and will try to render

his/her decision within (10) days after receiving the appeal. If after a thorough investigation, there is reasonable cause to believe that bullying or harassment has occurred, the school district shall take appropriate corrective action in an effort to ensure that the harassment/discrimination ceases and will not recur.

Confidentiality

Investigations of bullying or harassment complaints shall be conducted in such a manner as to disclose information only to those with a need to know or those who may have information pertinent to the investigation. The Westfield Public Schools shall endeavor to keep such information as confidential as it can without compromising the thoroughness of the investigation. No retaliation for filing a complaint or cooperating with an investigation. No employee or student shall be retaliated or discriminated against in any way for making a complaint of bullying or harassment or for cooperating in the investigation of such a complaint.

Discipline

Any student who violates the Westfield Public Schools Bullying and Harassment Policy will be subject to disciplinary action that may range from detention, suspension from schools, up to and including expulsion from Westfield Public Schools. In appropriate circumstances, the Administration may also refer the matter to law enforcement officials for possible prosecution.

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

The school district will develop a bullying prevention and intervention plan in accordance with the provisions of the law. The principal is responsible for the implementation of the plan.

Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010

Adopted: May 21, 2001

Revised: June 28, 2004

Revised: July 7, 2010

Revised: March 7, 2011

Revised: December 17, 2012