

SECTION: PUPILS  
 TITLE: BULLYING/CYBER BULLYING  
 ADOPTED: December 10, 2008  
 REVISED:

# CALIFORNIA AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

249. BULLYING/CYBER BULLYING	
1. Purpose	<p>The California Area School District recognizes that bullying of students has a negative effect on the educational environment of its schools. Students who are bullied, intimidated or fearful of other student may not be able to take full advantage of the educational opportunities offered by the school district. Bullying can also escalate into more serious violence. Therefore, the school district strives to offer all students an educational environment free from bullying.</p>
2. Definition	<p><b>Bullying</b> shall mean unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at a student by another student(s) that has the intent and effect of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Physically harming a student.</li> <li>2. Damaging, extorting or taking a student’s personal property.</li> <li>3. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm.</li> <li>4. Placing a student in reasonable fear or damage to or loss of personal property.</li> <li>5. Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student’s educational opportunities.</li> </ol> <p><b>Cyber bullying</b> shall mean unwelcome written and/or audio and cell phone/camera information directed at a student by another student that has the intent and effect of (to create a nexus):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sending cruel, vicious and sometimes threatening messages.</li> <li>2. Creating web sites that have stories, cartoons, pictures and jokes ridiculing others.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Posting pictures of classmates online and asking students to rate them, with questions such as “Who is the biggest (derogatory term)?”</li> <li>4. Breaking in to an e-mail account and sending vicious or embarrassing material to others.</li> <li>5. Engaging someone in IM (instant messaging), tricking that person into revealing sensitive personal information, and forwarding that information to others.</li> <li>6. Taking a picture of a person on school property (i.e. in the locker room using a digital phone camera or other digital media technology) and sending that picture to others with the intent to humiliate, ridicule or harm.</li> </ol> <p>The term <b>bullying</b> shall not be interpreted to infringe upon a student’s right to engage in legally protected speech or conduct.</p>
<p>3. Authority</p>	<p>The school district will not tolerate known acts of bullying occurring on school district property, at school-sponsored activities scheduled on or off school grounds or during the time students necessarily spend traveling to and from school or school sponsored activities, including bus stops and routes of travel to and from the bus stops or to school property on school sponsored events.</p>
<p>4. Delegation of Responsibility</p>	<p>The district expects employees and bus drivers who observe or become aware of an act of bullying or extortion to take immediate, appropriate steps to intervene. If an employee or bus driver believes that his/her intervention has not resolved the matter, or if the bullying or extortion persists, s/he shall report the bullying or extortion to the school principal for further investigation. If proper reporting is not engaged in by the employee or bus driver in a position to observe the conduct, the district reserves the right to impose discipline on the employee or request the bus contractor to discipline their employee as deemed appropriate under the circumstances.</p>
<p>5. Guidelines</p>	<p><u>Student, Parent/Guardian, and Employee Reporting</u></p> <p>The school district strongly encourages all students and parents/guardians who become aware of an act of bullying to immediately report that conduct. Students may report acts of bullying to their teachers, building principal, or other school employees supervising school-sponsored activities. Parents/Guardians may contact the building principal to report acts of bullying. If teachers cannot reasonably remediate acts of bullying through their own intervention, they shall report the bullying to the building principal. Other school employees who observe acts of bullying shall report that conduct to the building principal or designee.</p>

Investigation Procedures

Each building principal or designee is authorized to investigate reports of bullying brought to their attention by students, parents/guardians or school employees or bus drivers. Any investigation of a report may include meetings with students, parents/guardians or employees, a review of student records, and other reasonable efforts to better understand the facts surrounding a reported incident.

Consequences/Discipline

Consequences for students who are found to have bullied others will be under the auspices of the principal only and may include counseling, a parent/guardian conference, detention, suspension, expulsion, a loss of school privileges and/or exclusion from school-sponsored activities.

Depending upon the severity of a particular situation, the building principal may also take appropriate steps to ensure student safety. Such steps may include the separating and supervising the students involved; providing employee support for students are needed; reporting incidents to law enforcement, if appropriate; and the implementation of a safety plan and/or a supervision plan with parents/guardians.

Interplay With Other School Policies

Nothing in this policy shall prevent school employees from enforcing, imposing discipline or fulfilling their professional responsibilities under other school district policies or student disciplinary rules.

This policy shall not be interpreted as preventing a student or parent/guardian from filing a complaint under the school district's anti-harassment policy.

Confidentiality

The California Area School District recognizes that both the complaining student and alleged bully/extorter have strong interest in maintaining the confidentiality of the allegations and related information. The privacy of the complaining student, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses will be respected as much as possible, consistent with legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and any discovery or disclosure obligations. As limited by FERPA protections, the principal or his/her designee may inform the complaining student/parents/guardians of the outcome of the investigation.