

## **Bullying Policy - Central Institute for the Deaf**

The mission of Central Institute for the Deaf (CID) is to teach children who are deaf and hard of hearing to listen, talk, read, and succeed. The voice of every child, family, employee and professional is heard and respected at CID. We value fairness, tradition, diversity, manners and the needs of individuals.

To achieve our mission, we must ensure that the students, families, employees and professionals are provided with a safe and healthy environment.

CID will not tolerate bullying of any kind and expects staff and students to immediately report any incidents of bullying to the principal or department coordinator. If a staff member or student is witness to any act of bullying, steps to intervene should be taken when it is safe to do so. All complaints of bullying will be documented and promptly investigated. This applies to incidents on school grounds as well as during school sponsored activities.

Staff members should:

- Foster in our students' self-esteem, self-respect, and respect of others
- Lead by example and demonstrate high standards of personal and social behavior
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible signs of bullying and deal with any observed instances of bullying promptly and effectively
- Record and maintain a record of all bullying incidents
- Address the issue with the students involved, their parents, and staff members and give appropriate consequences in alignment with CID's conduct policy

CID shall annually notify students, parents/guardians, school employees, substitutes and volunteers about this policy and the school's prohibition against bullying. A copy of this policy shall be included in handbooks and posted on the school's website. The policy will be reviewed biannually in August as part of the policy development and revision process for CID. Any revisions or updates will be accompanied with a revised date included in the reference portion of the policy. If no revisions are deemed necessary, the date of the last review with no changes will be included in the reference portion of the policy.

### **Definitions**

Bullying is an unwanted aggressive behavior that involves a real or perceived power imbalance, causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort for someone. There are many forms of bullying, such as but not limited to harassment, threats, intimidation, physical violence, taunting, sexual harassment, sexual violence, public humiliation and destruction of property.

*Bullying* – In accordance with state law, bullying is defined as intimidation, unwanted aggressive behavior, or harassment that is repetitive or is substantially likely to be repeated and causes a reasonable student to fear for his or her physical safety or property; causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health; that substantially interferes with the educational performance, opportunities or benefits of any student without exception; or that substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school. Bullying includes, but is not limited to: physical actions, including violence, gestures, theft, or property

damage; oral, written, or electronic communication, including name-calling, put-downs, extortion, or threats; or threats of reprisal or retaliation for reporting such acts.

*Cyberbullying* – A form of bullying committed by transmission of a communication including, but not limited to, a message, text, sound or image by means of an electronic device including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone or other wireless communication device, computer or pager. The school has jurisdiction over cyberbullying that uses the school’s technology resources or that originates on school property, at a school activity or on school transportation. Even when cyberbullying does not involve school property, activities or technology resources, the school will impose consequences and discipline for those who engage in cyberbullying if there is a sufficient nexus to the educational environment, the behavior materially and substantially disrupts the educational environment, the communication involves a threat as defined by law, or the school is otherwise allowed by law to address the behavior.

### **Reporting Bullying**

CID employees, substitutes or volunteers are expected to intervene to prevent student bullying, appropriately discipline the perpetrator, assist the victim and report the incident to the principal/coordinator for further investigation and action. Any school employee, substitute or volunteer who witnesses or has firsthand knowledge of bullying of a student must report the incident to the principal/coordinator as soon as possible, but no later than two school days after the incident.

Students who have been subjected to bullying, or who have witnessed or have knowledge of bullying, are encouraged to promptly report such incidents to a school employee. Any school employee receiving such a report shall promptly transmit the report to the principal/coordinator. Anonymous reports are also accepted.

Principal/ECC Coordinator: Lynda Berkowitz, 314.977.0120, [lberkowitz@cid.edu](mailto:lberkowitz@cid.edu)

Primary Coordinator: Amy Hudson, 314.977.0155, [ahudson@cid.edu](mailto:ahudson@cid.edu)

The Principal or Coordinator shall promptly inform parent(s)/guardians(s) of all students involved in an alleged incident of bullying and discuss, as appropriate, the availability of school counseling services, other interventions, and restorative measures.

### **Investigation**

Within two school days of receiving a report of bullying, a CID administrator will initiate an investigation of the incident. The investigation shall be completed within ten school days of the date the report of bullying was received unless good cause exists to extend the investigation. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator (principal/coordinator) will decide whether bullying or harassment occurred and, if so, whether additional discipline is warranted in accordance with the school’s student conduct code. The investigator will generate a written report of the investigation and findings. The principal/coordinator will document the report in the files of the victim and the alleged or actual perpetrator of bullying. All reports will be kept confidential in accordance with state and federal law.

If the incident involved allegations of illegal discrimination or harassment, the principal/coordinator’s decision may be appealed in accordance with school policy. Appeals for student discipline can be brought forth to the principal/coordinator.

The principal or other appropriate school staff will work with victims and their families to access resources and services to help them deal with any negative effects that resulted from the incident.

### **Bullying Interventions:**

CID will take a proactive approach to bullying within the school by providing education and information about bullying and this policy to the community every year. Interventions that can be taken to address bullying, which may include, but are not limited to restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, and outside services. School officials or other appropriate CID staff are encouraged to work with students who may be victims of bullying about how to overcome the negative effects of bullying including, but not limited to:

1. Focusing on the student's own self-worth.
2. Teaching the student to defend himself or herself assertively and effectively without violence.
3. Helping the student develop social skills.
4. Assisting the student in developing self-confidence and a sense of control in one's life.

### **Consequences for falsely accusing others for bullying:**

Students or staff who make false accusations will be disciplined and receive consequences and appropriate remedial actions according to the school's conduct code.

### **Retaliation:**

Bullying retaliation will not be tolerated at CID. Students who participate in bullying or who retaliate against anyone who reports bullying will be disciplined in accordance with the school's conduct code. We will have ongoing conversations with the parents as well as the student and sessions with the school counselor will be scheduled as well.

### **Incidents outside of school:**

Even in situations where the school does not have jurisdiction to discipline a student for bullying, such as when the acts take place off campus and there is an insufficient nexus to the school, the principal/coordinator will take appropriate actions to assist student victims. Such actions may include, but are not limited to, contacting the parents/guardians of the victim and the alleged perpetrators, communicating that this behavior is not allowed on school grounds or at school activities, notifying the appropriate staff to assist the victim, and taking additional action when appropriate, such as notifying law enforcement or social media companies of inappropriate online activity.

- Conversations with students reminding them of the policies and rules of bullying and reminding that those rules still apply when not on campus
- Speak with parents to ensure positive reinforcement and kindness
- CID will work together with students and parents to maintain a safe and healthy environment at all times

## Evaluation

The policy will be reviewed biannually in August as part of the policy development and revision process for CID. Data will be collected to monitor occurrences of bullying, location of occurrences, types of bullying, interventions and their outcomes. The data will be used to inform the evaluation and revision process in order to determine potential changes to the policy.

## Policy Publication

The school shall annually notify students, parents/guardians, school employees, substitutes and volunteers about this policy and the school's prohibition against bullying. A copy of this policy shall be included in handbooks and posted on the school's website at <https://cid.edu/families-and-children/cid-parents>

## State of Missouri Bullying Law:

CID recognizes that bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of the school

### 160.775. Anti-bullying policy required — definition — content, requirements. —

1. Every district shall adopt an anti-bullying policy by September 1, 2007.
2. **"Bullying"** means intimidation, unwanted aggressive behavior, or harassment that is repetitive or is substantially likely to be repeated and causes a reasonable student to fear for his or her physical safety or property; substantially interferes with the educational performance, opportunities, or benefits of any student without exception; or substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school. Bullying may consist of physical actions, including gestures, or oral, cyberbullying, electronic, or written communication, and any threat of retaliation for reporting of such acts. Bullying of students is prohibited on school property, at any school function, or on a school bus. **"Cyberbullying"** means bullying as defined in this subsection through the transmission of a communication including, but not limited to, a message, text, sound, or image by means of an electronic device including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager.
3. Each district's anti-bullying policy shall be founded on the assumption that all students need a safe learning environment. Policies shall treat all students equally and shall not contain specific lists of protected classes of students who are to receive special treatment. Policies may include age-appropriate differences for schools based on the grade levels at the school. Each such policy shall contain a statement of the consequences of bullying.
4. Each district's anti-bullying policy shall be included in the student handbook and shall require, at a minimum, the following components:
  - (1) A statement prohibiting bullying, defined no less inclusively than in subsection 2 of this section;
  - (2) A statement requiring district employees to report any instance of bullying of which the employee has firsthand knowledge. The policy shall require a district employee who witnesses an incident of bullying to report the incident to the district's designated individual at the school within two school days of the employee witnessing the incident;
  - (3) A procedure for reporting an act of bullying. The policy shall also include a statement requiring that the district designate an individual at each school in the district to receive reports of incidents of bullying. Such individual shall be a district employee who is teacher level staff or above;
  - (4) A procedure for prompt investigation of reports of violations and complaints, identifying one or more employees responsible for the investigation including, at a minimum, the following requirements:

(a) Within two school days of a report of an incident of bullying being received, the school principal, or his or her designee, shall initiate an investigation of the incident;

(b) The school principal may appoint other school staff to assist with the investigation; and

(c) The investigation shall be completed within ten school days from the date of the written report unless good cause exists to extend the investigation;

(5) A statement that prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying and the consequence and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation;

(6) A statement of how the policy is to be publicized; and

(7) A process for discussing the district's anti-bullying policy with students and training school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in the requirements of the policy, including, at a minimum, the following statements:

(a) The school district shall provide information and appropriate training to the school district staff who have significant contact with students regarding the policy;

(b) The school district shall give annual notice of the policy to students, parents or guardians, and staff;

(c) The school district shall provide education and information to students regarding bullying, including information regarding the school district policy prohibiting bullying, the harmful effects of bullying, and other applicable initiatives to address bullying, including student peer-to-peer initiatives to provide accountability and policy enforcement for those found to have engaged in bullying, reprisal, or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying;

(d) The administration of the school district shall instruct its school counselors, school social workers, licensed social workers, mental health professionals, and school psychologists to educate students who are victims of bullying on techniques for students to overcome bullying's negative effects. Such techniques shall include, but not be limited to, cultivating the student's self-worth and self-esteem; teaching the student to defend himself or herself assertively and effectively; helping the student develop social skills; or encouraging the student to develop an internal locus of control. The provisions of this paragraph shall not be construed to contradict or limit any other provision of this section; and

(e) The administration of the school district shall implement programs and other initiatives to address bullying, to respond to such conduct in a manner that does not stigmatize the victim, and to make resources or referrals available to victims of bullying.

5. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, any school district shall have jurisdiction to prohibit cyberbullying that originates on a school's campus or at a district activity if the electronic communication was made using the school's technological resources, if there is a sufficient nexus to the educational environment, or if the electronic communication was made on the school's campus or at a district activity using the student's own personal technological resources. The school district may discipline any student for such cyberbullying to the greatest extent allowed by law.

6. Each district shall review its anti-bullying policy and revise it as needed. The district's school board shall receive input from school personnel, students, and administrators when reviewing and revising the policy.

***(L. 2006 S.B. 894, A.L. 2010 H.B. 1543, A.L. 2016 H.B. 1583)***