

PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING

The Washington School for the Deaf (WSD) is committed to a safe, civil, and respectful learning environment free from harassment, intimidation or bullying for all students, staff, volunteers, parents and visitors. This environment stresses the prevention of harassment, intimidation or bullying by integrating prevention and intervention education and training for all staff.

Harassment, intimidation or bullying means any intentional written or electronic media message, verbal, or physical act, including, but not limited to, one shown to be motivated by any characteristic of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, gender identity, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability or “other distinguishing characteristics”, when such conduct or communication:

- Has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work or school environment; or
- Physically harms a student or damages the student's property; or
- Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening education environment; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

“Other distinguishing characteristics” can include, but are not limited to, physical appearance, clothing or other apparel, and socioeconomic status. Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms, including: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendoes, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats, hazing or other written, verbal or physical action. “Intentional acts” refers to the individual's choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s).

This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical or political views, provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the work or school environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment, intimidation or bullying may still be prohibited by other policies or building, classroom or departmental rules.

The goal of this policy includes appropriate investigation, intervention, restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the violation. Administration will take prompt, equitable and remedial action within its authority on reports, complaints and grievances alleging harassment, intimidation or bullying that come to the attention of school personnel, either formally or informally.

Depending upon the frequency and severity of the conduct, appropriate responses to violations of this policy may include interventions such as counseling, corrective action, discipline and/or referral to law enforcement to remediate the impact on the victim and the climate, and to change the behavior of the perpetrator. Other school visitors who engage in this conduct will have their access to school property and activities restricted, and their actions will be reported to the proper authorities, as appropriate.

Coercion, retaliation, discrimination or reprisals taken against persons filing complaints or persons acting as witnesses to complaints shall result in appropriate disciplinary action or sanctions according to policy or other applicable laws or regulations.

False reports of harassment, intimidation or bullying also constitute violations of this policy. Persons who knowingly file false allegations or report or corroborate false allegations shall also be subject to appropriate disciplinary action or sanctions according to policy or other applicable laws or regulations.

In accordance with applicable laws and regulations, staff, students, parents, volunteers and other interested parties will be informed of this policy and other applicable policies, laws, rules and regulations pertaining to the filing of complaints. Employees at the WSD will be provided appropriate information on the recognition and prevention of harassment, intimidation and bullying and their rights and responsibilities under this policy.

Legal References: RCW 28A.300.285
Title VII, §703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended

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