BULLYING AND OTHER AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR TOWARD STUDENTS

For purposes of this policy and regulation bullying and hazing are defined as follows:

“Bullying” is defined as any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e. internet, telephone or cell phone, personal digital assistant (PDA), or wireless hand held device) that, without regard to its subject matter or motivating animus, is intended or that a reasonable person who know is likely to harm one (1) or more students either directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

A. Substantially interfering with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one (1) or more students

B. Adversely affecting the ability of a student to participate in or benefit from the school district’s educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress

C. Having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student’s physical or mental health; and/or

D. Causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school

Bullying can be physical, verbal, psychological, or a combination of all three. Some examples of bullying are:

A. Physical – hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, pulling, taking and/or damaging personal belongings or extorting money, blocking or impeding student movement, unwelcome physical contact.

B. Verbal – taunting, malicious teasing, insulting, name-calling, making threats.

C. Psychological – spreading rumors, manipulating social relationships, coercion, or engaging in social exclusion/shunning, extortion, or intimidation. This may occur in a number of different ways, including but not limited to notes, emails social media postings, and graffiti.
“Harassment” includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written or physical nature, often on the basis of age, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability, but may also include sexual orientation, physical characteristics (e.g., height, weight, complexion), cultural background, socio-economic status, or geographic location (e.g., from rival school, different state, rural area, city, etc.).

“Intimidation/Menacing” includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to: place a person in fear of physical injury or offensive physical contact; to substantially damage or interfere with person’s property; or to intentionally interfere with or block a person’s movement without good reason.

“Staff” includes all school employees and board members.

“Third parties” include, but are not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors, service contractors, vendors, or others engaged in district business, and others not directly subject to school control at inter-district or intra-district athletic competitions or other school events.

HAZING

The act of “hazing” is a crime in the State of Michigan and will not be tolerated. “Hazing” means an intentional, knowing, or reckless act by a person acting alone or acting with others that is directed against an individual and that the person knew or should have known endangers the physical health or safety of the individual, and that is done for the purpose of pledging, being initiated into, affiliating with, participating in, holding office in, or maintaining membership in any organization. Hazing includes any of the following that is done for such a purpose:

A. Physical brutality, such as beating, striking, electronic shocking

B. Physical activity, such as exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, or exercise that subjects the other person to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the physical health or safety of the individual

C. Activity involving consumption of a good, liquid, alcoholic beverage, liquor, drug, or other substance that subjects the individual to an unreasonable risk of harm or that adversely affects the physical health or safety of the individual

D. Activity that induces, causes, or requires an individual to perform a duty or task that involves the commission of a crime or an act of hazing
Expectations

The Ingham Intermediate School District expects students to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment.

1. The school district prohibits the bullying of any students:
   a. During any educational program or activity conducted by Ingham Intermediate School District.
   b. During any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity or on an Ingham Intermediate School District sponsored bus.
   c. Through the use of any electronic device or data while on school grounds or on an Ingham Intermediate School District sponsored bus, computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network of the Ingham Intermediate School District. The physical location or time of access of a computer-related incident cannot be raised as a defense in any disciplinary action initiated under this section.
   d. Through threats using the above to be carried out on school grounds. This includes threats made outside of school hours, which are intended to be carried out during any school-related or school-sponsored program or activity, or on an Ingham Intermediate School District sponsored bus.
   e. While the District does not assume any liability for incidences that occur at a bus stop or en route to and from school, a student or witness may file a complaint following the same procedures for bullying against a student and the school will investigate and/or provide assistance and intervention as the principal/designee deems appropriate. The principal/designee shall log all reports and interventions.

2. All administrators, faculty, staff and students are expected to exhibit positive actions, such as polite behavior, assuming the best of others intentions, dealing directly and honestly with each other and acting responsibly in all school activities and interactions.

3. Student rights shall be explained as outlined in this policy and in Student Code of Conduct.

4. Proper prevention and intervention steps shall be taken based on the level of severity of infraction, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, this policy and appropriate employee contracts.
Reporting

1. At each school, the principal/designee is responsible for receiving oral or written complaints alleging violations of this policy. Complaints about administrators shall be taken to the Director of Human Resources.

2. All district faculty and staff are required to report, in writing, any allegations of bullying or violations of this policy to the principal/designee or appropriate district administrator. Failure to report will result in action(s) or discipline, consistent with the collective bargaining agreement provision.

3. Any other members of the school community who have credible information that an act of bullying has taken place may file a report of bullying, whether a victim or witness.

4. Any student (and/or parent on that complainant’s behalf if the complainant is a minor) who believes he/she is a victim of bullying (or any individual, including any student who has knowledge of any incident(s) involving bullying of students) is strongly encouraged to report the incident(s) in writing to the appropriate school official. Complaints should be filed as soon as possible after the alleged incident, but must be filed within ninety (90) school days after the alleged incident (i.e. within 90 school days of the last act of alleged bullying). Failure on the part of the complainant to initiate and/or follow up on the complaint within this period may result in the complaint being deemed abandoned.

5. The principal of each school in the district shall establish, and prominently publicize to students, staff, volunteers, and parents, how a report of bullying may be filed and how this report will be acted upon.

6. A school district employee, school volunteer, contractor, student, parent or other persons who promptly reports in good faith an act of bullying to the appropriate school official, and who makes this report in compliance with the procedures set forth in this policy, is immune from a cause of action for damages arising out of the reporting itself or any failure to remedy the reported incident. Submission of a good faith complaint or report of bullying will not affect the complainant or reporter’s further employment, grades, learning or working environment, or work assignment within the Ingham Intermediate School District.

7. Administrators/principal/designee(s) shall document in writing all complaints regarding bullying to ensure that problems are appropriately addressed in a timely manner whether the report is made verbally or in writing. All verified incidents of bullying and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals will be kept with the Director of Human Resources and reported annually to the Board of Education.
8. Parents or legal guardians of a victim of bullying will be notified by phone, email or letter promptly after administrators become aware of the incident.

9. Parents or legal guardians of the perpetrator of an act or alleged act of bullying will be notified by phone, email or letter promptly after administrators become aware of the incident.

Bullying Complaints and Resolution

1. The prompt investigation will be undertaken immediately after an act of bullying of a student is reported.

2. The principal/designee shall document all complaints in writing to ensure that problems are addressed in a timely manner. Although this policy encourages students to use the formal written complaints process, school officials should investigate all student complaints and reports of bullying, whether or not the complaint is in writing.

3. If the complaint is about the principal or district’s staff member’s direct supervisor, then the Director of Human Resources or appropriate district administrator shall be asked to address the complaint.

4. Informal Resolution – The administrator, along with the complainant and the accused/student /employee, may agree to informally resolve the complaint. The incident and the resolution must be documented in writing.
   - If a mutual resolution has not been achieved, a formal written appeal must be filed within five (5) workdays after the informal meeting and submitted to the principal or appropriate district supervisor

5. Formal Resolution – The complainant/student or parent(s), may utilize the Ingham Intermediate School District Bullying Complaint Report Form.

6. The resolution, all interviews and the interventions that take place and the corresponding dates shall be documented in writing.

Consequences

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a student who commits any act of bullying or hazing may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, in the case of a student or disciplined up to and including termination in the case of an employee as set forth in the Student Code of
Conduct, Employee Handbook, Collective Bargaining Agreement and this policy and regulation. Consequences and remedial measures shall vary depending on the nature of the incident and shall be designed to correct the behavior and prevent another occurrence of the behavior.

Training and Notice

Training for students on identifying, preventing and responding to bullying will be conducted. At the beginning of each school year, the school principal/designee and/or district administrator shall provide awareness of this policy, as well as, process for reporting incidents, investigation and appeal to students, staff member and other persons responsible for the welfare of a pupil through appropriate references in the Student Code of Conduct, Employee Handbook, employee contracts, the school website, and/or through other reasonable means.