

Lewis Center for Educational Research

BP 5131.2: STUDENTS BULLYING

Adopted: February 10, 2020

Revised:

The Lewis Center for Educational Research (“LCER”) Board of Directors (“Board”) recognizes the harmful effects of bullying on student learning and school attendance and desires to provide a safe school environment that protects students from physical and emotional harm. LCER employees shall establish student safety as a high priority and shall not tolerate bullying of any student.

Bullying is defined as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act. Bullying includes one or more acts committed by a student or group of students that may constitute harassment, sexual harassment, hate violence, or creates an intimidating, threatening and/or hostile educational environment, directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- Placing a reasonable student or students in fear of harm to that student’s or those students’ person or property
- Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health
- Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantial interference with his or her academic performance
- Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by LCER

Cyberbullying includes the electronic creation or transmission of harassing communications, direct threats, or other harmful texts, sounds, or images on the Internet, social media, or other technologies using a telephone, computer, or any wireless communication device, as defined in Education Code 48900. Cyberbullying also includes breaking into another person's electronic account and assuming that person's identity in order to damage that person's reputation.

Strategies for addressing bullying in LCER schools shall be developed with involvement of key stakeholders, including students, parents/guardians, and staff, and may be incorporated into the comprehensive safety plan, the local control and accountability plan, and other applicable LCER and school plans.

As appropriate, the President/CEO or designee may collaborate with law enforcement, courts, social services, mental health services, other agencies, and community organizations in the development and implementation of joint strategies to promote safety in schools and the community and to provide services for alleged victims and perpetrators of bullying.

Bullying Prevention:

To the extent possible, LCER schools shall focus on the prevention of bullying by establishing clear rules for student conduct and implementing strategies to promote a positive, collaborative

school climate. Students shall be informed, through student handbooks and other appropriate means, of LCER and school rules related to bullying, mechanisms available for reporting incidents or threats, and the consequences for engaging in bullying.

As appropriate, the LCER shall provide students with instruction, in the classroom or other educational settings, that promotes social-emotional learning, effective communication and conflict resolution skills, character/values education, respect for cultural and individual differences, self-esteem development, assertiveness skills, and appropriate online behavior.

Such instruction shall also educate students about the negative impact of bullying, discrimination, intimidation, and harassment based on actual or perceived immigration status, religious beliefs and customs, or any other individual bias or prejudice.

The President/CEO or designee shall provide training to teachers and other school staff to raise their awareness about the legal obligation of the LCER and its employees to prevent discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying of LCER students. Such training shall be designed to provide staff with the skills to:

- Discuss the diversity of the student body and school community, including their varying immigration experiences
- Discuss bullying prevention strategies with students, and teach students to recognize the behavior and characteristics of bullying perpetrators and victims
- Identify the signs of bullying or harassing behavior
- Take immediate corrective action when bullying is observed
- Report incidents to the appropriate authorities, including law enforcement in instances of criminal behavior

Based on an assessment of bullying incidents at school, the President/CEO or designee may increase supervision and security in areas where bullying most often occurs, such as classrooms, playgrounds, hallways, restrooms, and cafeterias.

Intervention:

Students are encouraged to notify school staff when they are being bullied or suspect that another student is being victimized. In addition, the President/CEO or designee shall develop means for students to report threats or incidents confidentially and anonymously.

School staff who witness an act of bullying shall immediately intervene to stop the incident when it is safe to do so.

When appropriate based on the severity or pervasiveness of the bullying, the President/CEO or designee shall notify the parents/guardians of victims and perpetrators and may contact law enforcement.

The President/CEO or designee, principal, or principal's designee may refer a victim, witness, perpetrator, or other student affected by an act of bullying to a school counselor, school psychologist, social worker, child welfare attendance personnel, school nurse, or other school

support service personnel for case management, counseling, and/or participation in a restorative justice program as appropriate. (Education Code 48900.9)

Reporting and Filing of Complaints:

Any student, parent/guardian, or other individual who believes that a student has been subjected to bullying or who has witnessed bullying may report the incident to a teacher, the principal, a compliance officer, or any other available school employee. Within one business day of receiving such a report, a staff member shall notify the principal of the report, whether or not a complaint is filed. In addition, any school employee who observes an incident of bullying involving a student shall, within one business day, report his/her observation to the principal or a LCER compliance officer, whether or not the alleged victim files a complaint.

Within one business day of receiving a report of bullying, the principal shall notify the LCER compliance officer identified in AR 1312.3 - Uniform Complaint Procedures to determine the course of investigation.

When the circumstances involve cyberbullying, individuals with information about the activity shall be encouraged to save and print any electronic or digital messages that they feel constitute cyberbullying and to notify a teacher, the principal, or other employee so that the matter may be investigated. When a student uses a social networking site or service to bully or harass another student, the President/CEO or designee may file a request with the networking site or service to suspend the privileges of the student and to have the material removed.

When a report of bullying is submitted, the principal or a LCER compliance officer shall inform the student or parent/guardian of the right to file a formal written complaint. The student who is the alleged victim of the bullying shall be given an opportunity to describe the incident, identify witnesses who may have relevant information, and provide other evidence of bullying.

Investigation and Resolution of Complaints:

Any complaint of bullying against a student who is of a protected characteristic, actual or perceived, as defined in the LCER's Uniform Complaint Procedures specified in AR 1312.3, shall be investigated and, if determined to be discriminatory, resolved in accordance with law and the LCER's Uniform Complaint Procedures specified in AR 1312.3.

If, during the investigation, it is determined that a complaint is about nondiscriminatory bullying, the principal or designee shall inform the complainant and shall take all necessary actions to resolve the complaint.

Discipline:

Corrective actions for a student who commits an act of bullying of any type may include counseling, behavioral intervention and education, and, if the behavior is severe or pervasive as defined in Education Code 48900, may include suspension or expulsion in accordance with LCER policies and regulations.