



Anti-Bullying Policy

A safe and civil environment is needed for students to learn and attain high academic standards and to promote healthy human relationships. An act of bullying, by either an individual or group of people in the KIPP community, is expressly prohibited on KIPP property or at school-related functions. This policy applies not only to individuals who directly engage in an act of bullying but also to individuals who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another individual's act of bullying.

KIPP is committed to valuing the strength and beauty represented within the diversity of our rich Texas neighborhoods and communities. This includes a commitment to protecting our students, employees, and applicants from bullying, harassment, or discrimination for any reason and of any type. KIPP believes that all students and employees are entitled to a safe, equitable, and harassment-free school experience. Bullying, harassment, or discrimination will not be tolerated and shall be just cause for disciplinary action.

KIPP believes that standards for student behavior must be set cooperatively through interaction among the students, parents, guardians, staff, and community partners of KIPP, producing an atmosphere that encourages students to grow in self-control, self-awareness, and self advocacy. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for our entire Team and Family and the vast cultures and communities that are present within KIPP schools as well as for the community property on the part of students, staff, and community members.

The standards of this policy constitute a specific, focused, coordinated, integrated, culturally responsive system of supports for all students, staff, families and community agencies that will improve relations within each school. It is designed to ensure that every school has staff that have been trained and are supported in their school's efforts to provide awareness, intervention training, and instructional strategies on prevention, including violence prevention, to each staff, parent, and student to direct follow-up when incidents are reported and/or occur.

Definitions

"Bullying" is defined in Section 37.0832 of the Education Code as a single significant act or pattern of acts by one or more students directed at another student that exploits an imbalance of power and involves engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that: (1) has the effect or will have the effect of physically harming a student, damaging a student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or of damage to the student's property; (2) is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive enough that the action or threat creates an intimidating, threatening, or abusive educational environment for a student; (3) materially and substantially disrupts the educational process or the orderly operation of a classroom or school; or (4) infringes on the rights of the

victim at school; and (5) includes cyberbullying.

Bullying may involve, but is not limited to:

- Verbal: Hurtful name-calling, teasing, gossiping, making threats, making rude noises, using racial and ethnic slurs (even when used collegially), or spreading hurtful rumors.
- Nonverbal: Posturing, making gang signs, leering, staring, stalking, destroying property, using graffiti or graphic images, or exhibiting inappropriate and/or threatening gestures or actions.
- Physical: Hitting, punching, pushing, shoving, poking, kicking, tripping, strangling, hair pulling, fighting, beating, biting, spitting or destroying property.
- Emotional or Psychological: Rejecting, terrorizing, extorting, defaming, intimidating, humiliating, blackmailing, manipulating friendships, isolating, ostracizing, using peer pressure, or rating or ranking personal characteristics.

Cyberbullying is defined by Section 37.0832 of the Education Code as bullying that is done through the use of any electronic communication device, including through the use of a cellular or other type of telephone, a computer, a camera, electronic mail, instant messaging, text messaging, a social media application, an Internet website, or any other Internet-based communication tool.

Cyberstalking means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at or about a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose, if the conduct occurs at school or if such off-campus conduct results in a substantial disruption of school activities.

Digital Impersonation is the creation of any web page, chat room, message board, virtual classroom, or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person; the knowing impersonation of another person; the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages. This also includes the distribution of communications to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons while using a false identity, this also includes using another person's account information online or sharing their personal information online.

Harassment includes, but is not limited to oral, written, psychological, physical (both climate and contact), and other demonstrative actions with regard to race, creed, ethnic origin, religious preference, gender, disability, or sexual orientation that is unwelcome.

Bullying, Cyberbullying and/or Harassment also encompass:

- Retaliation:
 - Against a student by another student for asserting or alleging an act of bullying, harassment, or discrimination.
 - Also includes reporting a baseless act of bullying, harassment, or discrimination that is not made in good faith.
- Pattern of conduct listed in the definition of bullying, harassment, and/or discrimination by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass, or cause emotional or physical harm to a student by:
 - Incitement or coercion;

- Accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of KIPP; or
- Acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying, harassment, or discrimination.

Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment and Discrimination (hereinafter referred to as bullying for the purpose of this policy) also encompass, but is not limited to, unwanted harm towards a student in regard to their real or gender identity or expression, race, color, religion, political beliefs, linguistic preference, natural origin, age, disability (physical, mental, or educational), socio-economic background, or ancestry.

“Accused” is defined as any KIPP student, employee, volunteer, contractor, or other person in the school or outside the school at school-sponsored events, on school buses, and at training facilities or training programs sponsored by KIPP who is reported to have committed an act of bullying, whether formally or informally, verbally or in writing.

“Complainant” is defined as any KIPP student, employee, volunteer, contractor, or other person who formally or informally makes a report of bullying, verbally or in writing.

“Victim” is defined as any KIPP student, employee, volunteer, contractor, or other person inside the school or outside the school at a school-sponsored event, on school buses, and at training facilities or training programs sponsored by KIPP, who is reported to have been the target of an act of bullying during the school day or during any educational program or activity.

If a student believes that he or she has experienced bullying or witnesses the bullying of another student, the student or parent should notify a teacher, school counselor, principal, or another district employee as soon as possible or file a complaint utilizing electronic reporting. Any student (and/or the parent/guardian on the complainant’s behalf if the complainant is a minor) who believes they are a victim of bullying or witnesses the bullying of another student is strongly encouraged to fill out a Bullying Incident Report in the front office of their school or to submit a report electronically, see ***Electronic Reporting***.

Complaints should be filed as soon as possible after the alleged incident so that the allegation may be appropriately investigated.

The administration will investigate any allegations of bullying and related misconduct. The school will also provide notice to the parent of the alleged victim and the parent of the student alleged to have engaged in bullying. If an investigation determines that bullying occurred, the administration will take appropriate disciplinary action and may, in certain circumstances, notify law enforcement. Disciplinary or other action may be taken even if the conduct did not rise to the level of bullying. Available counseling options will be provided to the affected individuals, including any student who witnessed the bullying, reported bullying or has been accused of bullying.

Any retaliation against a student who reports an incident of bullying is prohibited. Bullying complaints must be reported in good faith and any knowingly false allegations are prohibited and subject to disciplinary action.

Upon recommendation of the administration, a student found to have engaged in bullying may be transferred to another classroom at the campus. In consultation with the student’s parent or

guardian, the school may transfer the student to another campus. The parent or guardian of a student who has been determined to be a victim of bullying may request that the student be transferred to another classroom or campus.

- **Behavioral Threat Assessment (BTA)/Safe and Supportive Schools Program**

KIPP Texas will also establish a "threat assessment and safe and supportive school team" to serve at each campus and will adopt policies and procedures for the teams. The team is responsible for developing and implementing the safe and supportive school program, as well as conducting threat assessments. These will include assessing and reporting individuals who make threats of violence or exhibit harmful, threatening, or violent behavior; gathering and analyzing data to determine the level of risk and appropriate intervention (including referring a student for mental health assessment and implementing an escalation procedure, if appropriate based on the team's assessment); providing guidance to students and school employees on recognizing harmful, threatening, or violent behavior that may pose a threat to the community, school, or individual; and supporting implementation of the multi hazard emergency operations plan per TEC 37.115(f)(3).

Electronic Reporting of Safety or Security Concerns

The safety and security of our KIPPsters continues to be a top priority for KIPP Texas. To that end, KTX provides access to the PurpleSENSE referral system, the Student Assistance Form (SAF). The system is available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. PurpleSENSE's web-based reporting option is available in English and Spanish. PurpleSENSE enables students to anonymously report student bullying, behavioral, and/or campus safety concerns. Users of the system have the option to remain anonymous or to reveal their identity when submitting a report.

The link to submit a Student Assistance Form is kipptexassaf.com or by using this QR code.

