



## GREENWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT



### **BULLYING POLICY**

The Greenwood Public Schools does not condone and will not tolerate bullying or harassing behavior. Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits. A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior. Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct, in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, renders the offending person's presence in the classroom a disruption to the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a whole.

The Greenwood Public Schools will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no student or school employee is subjected to bullying or harassing behavior by other school employees or students. Likewise, the District will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no person engages in any act of reprisal or retaliation against a victim, witness or a person with reliable information about an act of bullying or harassing behavior. The District encourages anyone who has witnessed or has reliable information that a student or school employee has been subject to any act of bullying or harassing behavior to report the incident to the appropriate school official.

The School Board directs the superintendent or designee to design and implement procedures for reporting, investigating, and addressing bullying and harassing behaviors. The procedures should be appropriately placed in District personnel policy handbooks, school handbooks that include discipline policies and procedures, and any other policy or procedure that deals with student or employee behavior. The discipline policies and procedures must recognize the fundamental right of every student to take "reasonable actions" as may be necessary to defend himself or herself from an attack by another student who has evidenced menacing or threatening behavior through bullying or harassing. Furthermore, the Greenwood Public Schools defines "reasonable action" as promptly reporting the behavior to a teacher, principal, counselor, or other school employee when subjected to bullying or harassing behavior.

**Ref: SB 2015; Miss. Code Ann. § 37-7-301(e)**

# **BULLYING OR HARASSING BEHAVIOR AND STUDENT COMPLAINTS**

Students and employees in the Greenwood Public School District are protected from bullying or harassing behavior by other students or employees. It is the intent of the Board and the administration to maintain an environment free from bullying and harassing behavior. This complaint procedure provides a process for filing, processing, and resolving complaints of such conduct. Adherence to these procedures is mandatory. The failure of any person to follow these procedures will constitute a waiver of the right to pursue a complaint at any level, including review by the Board.

## **I. Definitions**

Bullying or harassing behavior is any pattern of gestures or written, electronic or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, or any act reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic that (a) places a student or school employee in actual and reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, or (b) creates or is certain to create a hostile environment by substantially interfering with or impairing a student's educational performance, opportunities or benefits.

A "hostile environment" means that the victim subjectively views the conduct as bullying or harassing behavior and the conduct is objectively severe or pervasive enough that a reasonable person would agree that it is bullying or harassing behavior.

Bullying or harassing behavior will not be condoned or tolerated when it takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, or on a school bus, or when it takes place off school property when such conduct, in the determination of the school superintendent or principal, renders the offending person's presence in the classroom a disruption to the educational environment of the school or a detriment to the best interest and welfare of the pupils and teacher of such class as a whole.

## **II. Procedures for Processing a Complaint**

Any student, school employee or volunteer who feels he/she has been a victim of bullying or harassing behavior, or has witnessed, or who has reliable information that a student, school employee or volunteer has been subject to bullying or harassing behavior shall report such conduct to a teacher, principal, counselor or other school official. The report shall be made promptly but no later than five (5) calendar days after the alleged act or acts occurred. The school official shall complete a "Bullying/Harassing Behavior" complaint form which shall include the name of the reporting person, the specific nature and date of the misconduct, the name of the victim of the misconduct, the names of any witnesses and any other information that would assist in the investigation of the complaint. The report shall be given promptly to the principal or superintendent who shall institute an immediate investigation. Complaints against the principal shall be made to the superintendent and complaints against the superintendent shall be made to the Board Chairman.

The complaint shall be investigated promptly. Parents will be notified of the nature of any complaint involving their student. The District official will arrange such meetings as may be necessary with all concerned parties within five (5) working days after initial receipt of the

complaint by the District. The parties will have an opportunity to submit evidence and a list of witnesses. All findings related to the complaint will be reduced to writing. The District official conducting the investigation shall notify the victim and parents as appropriate when the investigation is completed and a decision regarding disciplinary action, as warranted, is determined.

If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the District official, he/she may submit a written appeal to the superintendent. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the results of the initial decision. The superintendent will arrange such meetings with the victim and other affected parties as deemed necessary to discuss the appeal. The superintendent shall provide a written decision to the victim's appeal within ten (10) working days.

If the victim is not satisfied with the decision of the superintendent, a written appeal may be filed with the Board. Such appeal shall be filed within ten (10) working days after receipt of the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall, within twenty (20) working days, allow the victim and parents as appropriate to appear before the Board to present reasons for dissatisfaction with the decision of the superintendent. The Board shall provide a written decision within ten (10) working days following the victim's appearance before the Board.



**GREENWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BULLYING/HARASSING BEHAVIOR COMPLAINT**

Date of Incident Being Reported: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Victim: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Any Other Pertinent Information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Names of Witnesses: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Person Completing This Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Submit completed **Hardcopy** and/or **Electronic copy** of form to the Principal or Superintendent within five (5) days after the alleged incident. An electronic copy of the form can be emailed to the school's principal or the Superintendent at email address below.

Bankston Elementary- [kirbylove@greenwood.k12.ms.us](mailto:kirbylove@greenwood.k12.ms.us)

Davis Elementary- [likishacoleman@greenwood.k12.ms.us](mailto:likishacoleman@greenwood.k12.ms.us)

Threadgill Primary- [dawnstamps@greenwood.k12.ms.us](mailto:dawnstamps@greenwood.k12.ms.us)

Threadgill Elementary- [lacharobie@greenwood.k12.ms.us](mailto:lacharobie@greenwood.k12.ms.us)

Greenwood Middle- [michaeljohnson@greenwood.k12.ms.us](mailto:michaeljohnson@greenwood.k12.ms.us)

Greenwood High- [kennethpulley@greenwood.k12.ms.us](mailto:kennethpulley@greenwood.k12.ms.us)

Superintendent- [jenniferwilson@greenwood.k12.ms.us](mailto:jenniferwilson@greenwood.k12.ms.us)



## Cyberbullying: What you need to know

### What is Cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying occurs when one child or teen uses the Internet, cellphone or other type of social media to harass, embarrass or taunt another child or teen. Often, children use cyberbullying to get revenge on someone, or boost their self-esteem by putting others down. Others do it because they think it's funny or because they are bored. Some examples of cyberbullying include:

- Setting up a profile pretending to be someone else or hacking into someone's social networking profile.
- Posting photos of someone online without his or her permission.
- Harassing someone through text messages, instant messages, or in a chat room.
- Sending embarrassing photos or messages by e-mail or on a cell phone, or sharing messages with people other than the intended recipient.
- Writing harmful information or lies on a personal blog or web site.
- Sending a virus to someone's computer.

### Understanding the law

Mississippi cyberstalking laws make it a felony to use electronic mail or electronic communication to:

- Threaten bodily harm to a person, or harm to his or her family or property,
- Communicate repeatedly in order to threaten terrify, or harass a person,
- Make false statements concerning death, injury, illness, criminal conduct, or indecent conduct.

The laws also prohibit knowingly allowing anyone else to use your computer or other device to threaten, harass, or make false statements. A conviction can lead to a maximum fine of \$5,000 and up to two years in prison. (Miss. Code Ann. § 97-45-15).

Mississippi recently passed a statute which includes cyberbullying. The definition of "bullying" now includes events involving electronic communication, such as harassing emails or threatening messages online. S.B. No. 2015 (2010). Under the new law, bullying occurs when a victim reasonably perceives that he or she has been threatened or harassed. It does not matter whether the bully intended to threaten or harass the victim. Although cyberbullying usually occurs while students are surfing the net at home, it often translates into problems at school, creating an uncomfortable learning environment. The new law allows schools to discipline cyberbullying that occurs at school or at a school sponsored function and requires students and teachers with knowledge of bullying to report it to a school official.

However, it is ultimately a parent's responsibility to detect cyberbullying at home. Visit [www.fearstopshere.com/](http://www.fearstopshere.com/) for more information and resources on bullying and cyberbullying.