

	<b>MURFREESBORO CITY SCHOOL BOARD POLICY</b>		
	Descriptor Term:	Descriptor Number:	Date Adopted:
	BULLYING	STU 53	1/06
	Revision Adopted:		4/06

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behavior, is conduct that disrupts a student’s ability to learn and a school’s ability to educate its students in a safe environment. Because students learn by example, school administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers shall demonstrate appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect and refuse to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying, and encourage others to do so as well. Students shall be provided a safe and civil environment in which to learn and achieve high academic standards. It shall be a violation of this policy for any student, school employee, volunteer, or any other person to harass, intimidate, or bully a student.

Pursuant to this policy, harassment, intimidation or bullying means any act that substantially interferes with a student’s educational benefits, or with any opportunity or performance that takes place on school grounds, at any school-sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, or at any official school bus stop and that has the effect of: (1) physically harming a student or damaging a student’s property; (2) knowingly placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or any act causing damage to the student’s property; (3) creating a hostile educational environment, or (4) conduct aimed at defining a student in the sexual manner or conduct impugning the character of a student based on allegations of sexual promiscuity.

Murfreesboro City Schools students are expected to:

1. Demonstrate appropriate behavior.
2. Treat others with civility and respect.
3. Refuse to tolerate harassment, intimidation or bullying and encourage others to do so as well.

A student who commits an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying shall be subject to the consequences and remedial actions as listed in Board Policy STU 23 “Discipline Procedures.”

The level of remedial action as identified in Board Policy STU 23 “Discipline Procedures” will depend on the severity of the act, the age of the offender, the facts of the particular situation, and prior violation of this policy.

The Murfreesboro City School System hereby establishes the following procedure for reporting an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

Filing a Complaint

Alleged victims of harassment, intimidation or bullying or their parents/guardians shall report such incidents immediately to a teacher, guidance counselor or school principal or any adult employed by the school system. Such reports may be made anonymously by the student by

letting a teacher, principal, guidance counselor or adult employed in the building know of the situation. However, nothing in this policy shall be construed to permit formal disciplinary action solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

### Investigation

Within twenty-four hours of receiving the student's complaint, the Student Complaint Manager appointed by the principal of the school shall promptly investigate a report of an act of bullying, harassment or intimidation. Such investigation shall include an interview of the alleged offender, the complainant, and/or the alleged victim and any possible witnesses. A written report summarizing the investigation shall be provided to the principal within fifteen (15) school days of the filing of the initial complaint.

Within five (5) days of receipt of the report, the principal shall issue a written response setting forth the consequences and any appropriate remedial action for the person found to have committed an act of bullying, harassment or intimidation if the complaint is substantiated.

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports any act of bullying, harassment or intimidation is strictly prohibited under this policy. Anyone who refuses to cooperate or gives false information during the course of an investigation may be subject to disciplinary action. The willful filing of a false report will itself be considered harassment and will be treated as such. A school employee, student, or volunteer shall not engage in reprisal or retaliation against a victim of, witness to, or person with reliable information about an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying. A school employee, student, or volunteer who witnesses or has reliable information that a student has been subjected to an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying is encouraged to report the act to the principal of the school. Pursuant to T.C.A. 49-6-1018(c), a school employee who promptly reports an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying to the principal in compliance with this policy is immune from a cause of action for damages arising from any failure to remedy the reported act.

A student disciplined for violation of this policy may appeal the decision as set forth in accordance with Board Policy STU 23 "Discipline Procedures." An employee disciplined for violation of this policy may appeal the decision by contacting the Human Resource Department for Murfreesboro City Schools. This policy shall be published in the parent/student handbook distributed annually to every student.

Principals are responsible for insuring this policy is implemented and are responsible for educating and training the respective staff and students as to the definition and recognition of harassment, intimidation and/or bullying.

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### Legal References:

T.C.A. 49-6-1014 through 1018  
T.C.A. 49-6-1016 (b)(12 & 13)