



Morton School District Bullying Policy

Bullying is NOT acceptable and is strictly prohibited. Bullying conduct that is covered by this policy is conduct that occurs on school property or at school sponsored activities or events; while students are being transported or walking to or from school or school sponsored activities or events; while students are waiting at school bus stops, or when the conduct otherwise would substantially impede the educational environment, regardless of where the conduct occurs. This includes through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the School District or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of the school. Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, military status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited. The Illinois legislature defines "Bullying" which includes cyber-bullying as meaning: "Any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following: Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property; Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health; Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school." 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7(b) Students shall not engage in any type of bullying activity on or about school grounds, on school buses, off school grounds at any school activity, or off school grounds in which it could affect another student's ability to successfully participate in the educational setting, including, but not limited to: Physical acts, such as inappropriate, unwanted, uninvited, or injurious physical contact with another; stalking; sexual assault; and destruction or damage to property of another; Written and electronic communication of any type that incorporates language or depictions that would constitute bullying, using any medium (including, but not limited to, cell phones, computers, websites, electronic networks, instant messages, text messages and emails)*; Verbal threats made to another, blackmail, or demands for protection money; Non-verbal threats or intimidation such as aggressive or menacing gestures; Direct or indirect, relationally aggressive behavior such as social isolation, rumor spreading, or damaging someone's reputation; Blocking access to school property or facilities; Stealing, hiding or otherwise

defacing books, backpacks or other personal possessions; Repeated or pervasive taunting, name-calling, belittling, mocking putdowns, or demeaning humor relating to a student's race, color, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, religion, disability, or other personal characteristics, whether or not the student actually possesses them, that could reasonably be expected to result in the disruption of school activities or that results in a hostile educational environment for the student. 19 Any of the above conduct which occurs off school grounds when such conduct creates, or reasonably can be expected to create, a substantial disruption in the school setting and/or at school sponsored activities and events. *Cyber-bullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, or similar communications. Cyber-bullying include the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of the posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects listed in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person of the posting of material on any electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects listed in the definition of bullying. Bullying or bullying type behaviors will be treated as gross misconduct, however, in most cases, first occasions will involve a conference between the student or students involved, one or more of the deans, and the school resource officer. Parents will be notified and the school officials will determine the appropriate consequences. Subsequent bullying will result in progressively more severe consequences, which can lead to detention, suspension, and expulsion. Any student who is a bystander to any bullying conduct and who fails to take any action to discourage the bullying conduct also may be subject to appropriate discipline. A bystander to bullying is defined as a witness to bullying conduct who may be considered to be aiding or abetting the bully. This aiding and abetting includes, but may not be limited to, standing idly by or otherwise actively encouraging the bullying. No student shall be retaliated against for reporting bullying conduct. Any student who is determined to intentionally have falsely accused another of bullying shall be subject to appropriate discipline.

WHAT A STUDENT SHOULD DO: Demand that unwanted action, behavior, or words cease immediately and/or inform faculty/staff member of unwanted action, behaviors, and/or words. Appropriate action will immediately be taken. A student who wishes to report an incident of bullying or harassment can do so to a staff member or the Morton Police Department School Resource Officer. This can be done in person, by a phone call, via e-mail, or by completing the online bullying report for MHS and MJHS. Elementary students should speak with their classroom teachers or school administration to report an incident of bullying.