

Kensington Elementary School



Anti-Bullying Plan

2021-2022

Prohibited Behavior

Kensington Elementary School believes that all employees and students should be free of unlawful discrimination, including harassment and bullying, as a part of a safe, orderly and inviting working and learning environment. It commits itself to non-discrimination in all its educational and employment activities. We, along with The Board of Education, expressly prohibit unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying however motivated, directed toward any person or group, including, but not limited to acts reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, a physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

We also prohibit retaliation against an employee, student, or witness who has exercised any rights made available through state or federal law, including prohibiting retaliation for reporting violations of this policy. Any violation of this policy is considered serious and school officials shall promptly take appropriate action to address the violation.

Students, school system employees, volunteers, and visitors are expected to behave in a civil and respectful manner. The Board expressly prohibits unlawful discrimination, harassment, and bullying by students, employees, Board members, volunteers, or visitors. "Visitors" include parents, other family members and individuals from the community, as well as vendors, contractors, and other persons doing business with or performing services for the school system.

Students are expected to comply with the behavior standards established by Board policy, the Code of Student Conduct, and school and classroom rules. Employees are expected to comply with Board policy, school system regulations, and school rules. Volunteers and visitors on school property also are expected to comply with Board policy, school system regulations and established school rules and procedures.

This policy applies to behavior that takes place: (1) in any school building or on any school premises before, during or after school hours; (2) on any bus or other vehicle as part of any school activity; (3) at any bus stop; (4) during any school-sponsored activity or extracurricular activity; (5) at any time or place when the individual is subject to the authority of school personnel; or (6) at any time or place when the behavior has a direct and immediate effect on maintaining order and discipline in the schools.

Harassment

Isolated statements, actions or digital communication that can alarm, disturb, harm, or interfere with the orderly operation of the school will not be tolerated. This could include comments which are motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

Bullying

Under North Carolina Law, bullying is “any *pattern* of gestures or written, electronic, or verbal communications, or any physical act or any threatening communication, that takes place on school property”, as defined above, “reasonably perceived as being motivated by any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics”. Bullying may include, but is not limited to, cyber-bullying, verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, extortion of money or possessions, implied or stated threats and may be directed at the same or different individuals. This rule includes hate-motivated behavior (including injuring or intimidating due to the victim’s race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity, physical appearance, sexual orientation or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability).

Reporting

Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against, harassed, or bullied in violation of this policy by any student, employee, or other person under the supervision and control of the school system, or any third person who knows or suspects conduct that may constitute discrimination, harassment, or bullying, should inform a school official designated to receive such complaints, as described in policy 3-7b Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Procedure for Employees.

Any employee who has witnessed, or who has reliable information that another person may have been subjected to discrimination, harassment, or bullying in violation of this policy must report such conduct. Employees who observe an incident of harassment or bullying are expected to intervene to stop the conduct in situations in which they have supervisory control over the perpetrator and it is safe to do so. If an employee knows of an incident involving discrimination, harassment, or bullying and the employee fails to report the conduct or take proper action or knowingly provides false information in regard to the incident, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal.

We prohibit reprisal or retaliation against any person for (a) reporting or intending to report violations of this policy, (b) supporting someone for reporting or intending to report a violation of this policy, or (c) participating in the investigation of reported violations of this policy.

After consideration of the nature and circumstances of reprisal or retaliation and in accordance with applicable federal, state, or local laws, policies, and regulations, the principal or designee shall determine the consequences and remedial action for a person found to have engaged in reprisal or retaliation.

A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the school's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions. Discipline will be assessed on a case-by-case basis could range up to expulsion depending on the severity of the offense.

Discipline

Students will be disciplined in accordance with the Code of Student Conduct. Based on the nature and severity of the offense and the circumstances surrounding the incident, the student will be subject to appropriate consequences and remedial actions ranging from positive behavioral interventions up to, and including, expulsion. In addition, the violation may also be reported to law enforcement, as appropriate.

Incidents of misbehavior that do not rise to the level of discriminatory harassment or bullying may violate acceptable standards of student behavior, including, but not limited to, the expectation that students will demonstrate civility and integrity in their actions and interactions with others. The consequences for such behavior will be consistent with applicable Board policy and the Code of Student Conduct. This policy will not be construed to allow school officials to punish student expression or speech based on undifferentiated fear or apprehension of a disturbance or out of a desire to avoid the discomfort and unpleasantness that may accompany an unpopular viewpoint.

Employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, dismissal. In addition, the violation may also be reported to law enforcement, as appropriate. Nothing in this policy will preclude the school system from taking disciplinary action against an employee when the evidence does not establish unlawful discrimination, harassment, or bullying, but the conduct otherwise violates Board policy or expected standards of employee behavior.

Volunteers and visitors who violate this policy will be directed to leave school property and/or reported to law enforcement, as appropriate. A third party under the supervision and control of the school system will be subject to termination of contracts/agreements, restricted from school property, and/or subject to other consequences, as appropriate.

School administrators shall consider whether the misconduct warrants more than just a response at the individual level. Given the nature and severity of the misconduct, administrators may determine that a classroom, school-wide, or school system-wide response is necessary. Such classroom, school-wide, or school system-wide responses may include additional staff training, harassment and bullying prevention programs, and other measures deemed appropriate by the Superintendent to address the behavior. The actions taken must be reasonably calculated to end the behavior, eliminate a hostile environment and its effects if one has been created, and prevent recurrence of the behavior.

Investigations

All complaints shall be investigated beginning within 48 hours of receiving the complaint, and shall be completed in a timely manner.