

Policy Provisions

Arizona Virtual Academy and Insight Academy of Arizona are committed to a safe educational environment for all students, employees, parents/legal guardians, volunteers and community members that is free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. “Harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any intentionally written message or image — including those that are electronically transmitted — verbal, or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation including gender expression or identity, mental or physical disability or other distinguishing characteristics, when an act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student’s property;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education;
- Is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Behaviors/Expressions Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms including, but not limited to, slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendoes, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, hazing, threats or other written, oral, physical or electronically transmitted messages or images.

Arizona state laws that cover bullying

[Arizona Revised Statutes §15-341.37. General powers and duties; immunity; delegation](#)

Reporting

Any student who believes he or she has been the target of unresolved, severe, or persistent harassment, intimidation or bullying, or any other person in the school community who observes or receives notice that a student has or may have been the target of unresolved, severe, or persistent harassment, intimidation or bullying may report incidents verbally or in writing to any staff member. Additionally, any student may anonymously report bullying through this link: <https://form.jotform.com/201287163418050>.

If a staff member receives notice of bullying from a student or family, she/he will provide written notice, through email, to the Head of School within 24 hours. The Head of School will review the provided information and determine if further investigation is necessary.

All reports of harassment, intimidation or bullying will be maintained by the Head of School for 6 years in the schools SharePoint > Admin site. After 6 years they will be shredded/destroyed.

False Reporting

Any student who falsely reports instances of harassment, intimidation or bullying may be subject to disciplinary action.

Provision for communication to students

Every year, Arizona Virtual Academy and Insight Academy of Arizona will provide students and families a copy of this policy. All reported incidents of bullying will be investigated by school administrators and staff.

Investigation of alleged bullying

The investigation will include, at a minimum:

- a. An interview with the complainant;
- b. An interview with the alleged aggressor;
- c. A review of any previous complaints involving either the complainant or the alleged aggressor; and
- d. Interviews with the other students or staff members who may have knowledge of the alleged incident.

The principal or designee may determine that other steps must be taken before the investigation is complete.

The investigation will be completed as soon as practicable but generally no later than five (5) school days from the initial complaint or report. If more time is needed to complete an investigation, the school will provide the parent/guardian and/or the student with weekly updates.

No later than two (2) school days after the investigation has been completed and submitted to the Head of School, the principal or designee will respond in writing or in person to the parent/guardian of the complainant and the alleged aggressor stating:

- a. The results of the investigation;
- b. Whether the allegations were found to be factual;
- c. Whether there was a violation of policy; and
- d. The process for the complainant to file an appeal if the complainant disagrees with the results.

Because of the legal requirement regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or designee may not be able to report specific information to the targeted student's parent/guardian about any disciplinary action taken unless it involves a directive that the targeted student must be aware of in order to report violations.

Consequences for students who are found guilty of bullying, or for falsely accusing another of bullying, will be disciplined in one of the following ways, as determined by the Head of School: Staff/student conference, referral to administration, parent notification, parent/guardian meeting, suspension, referral to law enforcement, or recommendation for expulsion.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities have too often had their education needlessly interrupted by inappropriate out-of-school suspensions, expulsions, referrals to alternative schools, and referrals to law enforcement. This is especially concerning when the behavior resulting in the punitive response was a manifestation of the student's disability.

Staff is charged with eliminating the over-punishment of students with disabilities, along with ensuring that any disciplinary consequences are in accordance with students' individualized education programs (IEPs), behavior intervention plans (if applicable), and 504 plans (if applicable). A manifestation determination hearing will be held prior to the issuance of consequences for suspension and expulsion.