

HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION, AND BULLYING

ISOK (the “School”) does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status or age in its employment, programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups.

Harassment, intimidation, and bullying include but are not limited to verbal or physical contact, epithets, slurs, gestures, or graffiti, even in jest, that are targeted toward an individual because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, marital status, veteran status, disability or genetic information. Individuals bring different levels of sensitivity to interaction. What may seem harmless, trivial, or "all in good fun" to one person may be extremely offensive to the person to whom the comments or actions are directed. Harassment, intimidation, and bullying constitute unethical and unacceptable conduct that will not be tolerated at any level. All persons are strictly prohibited from engaging in any form of harassment of any employee, student, or applicant for employment. Anyone engaging in any form of harassment is subject to disciplinary action in accordance with ISOK policy. Harassment also may constitute discrimination. Violation of this policy by an employee may result in disciplinary action, including a recommendation for employment termination. Students violating this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action at the school level by the principal or designee. When allegations of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, are filed, a thorough investigation will be conducted by ISOK. The investigation will include interviews with all relevant persons. Such persons include, but are not limited to, the complainant, the accused, student(s) and other potential witnesses. Employees and students are assured the privacy of the complainant and the persons accused of harassment will be protected to the extent possible.

Anti-Retaliation

The School prohibits retaliation, intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination against any individual for opposing or complaining about discrimination, or for participating in the School’s discrimination complaint process or making a complaint, testifying, assisting, appealing or participating in any other discrimination complaint, proceeding or hearing.

ISOK BULLYING POLICY

STUDENT BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

PURPOSE: To address student bullying behavior effectively through a multi-faceted approach that includes education and the promotion of a positive atmosphere.

The School expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior by students at school as well as active or passive support for acts of bullying, including bullying behavior outside of the regular school day if it causes a substantial and material disruption at school or an interference with rights of students and personnel to be secure. This includes but is not limited to bullying through electronic communication, whether or not such communication originated at school or with school equipment, if the communication is directed at students or school personnel and concerns bullying at school, in any form. The School Leader or his/her designee will develop a regulation to support and provide specific procedures for implementation of this policy. Students who engage in bullying behavior shall be subject to school discipline, up to and including suspension out of school in accordance with the policies, rules and regulations of ISOK's Board of Education.

Student and Staff Education and Training

The School is committed to providing appropriate and relevant training annually to students and staff regarding preventing, identifying, responding to and reporting incidents of bullying. ISOK takes proactive measures to ensure all parents, students and staff are aware of the bullying policy, bullying prevention initiatives and the consequences of bullying. Annual written notice of the bullying policy will be provided to parents, guardians, staff, volunteers, and students, with age-appropriate language for students. A full copy of this policy will be posted on the School's website and included in all School handbooks. Parents, guardians, and volunteers will be notified of the availability of this policy through the School's annual written notice of the availability of the School's anti-bullying policy.

Students and staff will be periodically reminded throughout the year of the availability of this policy, the School's commitment to preventing bullying, and help available for those affected by bullying. Anti-bullying programs will be incorporated into the District's other violence prevention efforts.

All staff will receive annual training regarding preventing, identifying, reporting, and managing bullying. The School's bullying coordinator and individuals designated as investigators will receive additional training regarding appropriate consequences and remedial action for bullies, helping targets of bullies, and the School's strategy for counseling and referral for those affected by bullying. Counselors will hold Class Connect sessions as designed and developed by the State Department of Education for students and parents in preventing, identifying, responding to and reporting incidents of bullying. Counseling groups may also be formed based on student need. The School's bullying coordinator and individuals designated as school site investigators will receive additional training regarding appropriate consequences and remedial action for bullies, helping targets of bullies, and the School's strategy for counseling and referral for those affected by bullying. The School Leader is responsible for enforcement of the bullying policy.

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Students will receive annual education regarding behavioral expectations, understanding bullying and its negative effects, disciplinary consequences for infractions, reporting methods, and consequences for those who knowingly make false reports. Any person who knowingly makes false accusations against another person will be appropriately disciplined pursuant to School policy. Any accusations confirmed to be false will be removed from the falsely-accused student's file. Parents and guardians may participate in a parent education component.

Student Reporting

Students are encouraged to inform school personnel if they are the target of or a witness to bullying. To make a report, students should notify a teacher, counselor, principal, or other trusted school personnel. The employee will give the student an official report form, and will help the student complete the form, if needed.

Students may make an anonymous report of bullying, and such report will be investigated as thoroughly as possible. However, it is often difficult to fully investigate claims which are made anonymously and disciplinary action cannot be taken against an alleged bully solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Staff Reporting

Staff members will encourage students to report bullying. All employees are required to report acts of bullying to the school principal or his/her designee on an official report form. Any staff member who witnesses, hears about, or has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a student is a target of bullying is required to submit a report.

Bullying Investigators

The School will have a designated individual to investigate bullying reports. These individuals will be identified in the School's student and staff handbooks, on the School's website, and in the bullying prevention education provided annually to students and staff. The School's anti-bullying program is coordinated by the School's Safe School Coordinator.

Investigating Bullying Reports

For any alleged incidents of bullying reported to school officials, the designated school official will investigate the alleged incident(s) and determine (i) whether the bullying conduct occurred, (ii) the severity of the incident(s), and (iii) the potential for future violence.

In conducting an investigation, the designated official may interview relevant students and staff and review any documentation of the alleged incident(s). School officials may also work with outside professionals, such as local law enforcement, as deemed appropriate by the investigating official. In the event the investigator believes a criminal act may have been committed or there is a likelihood of violence, the investigator will immediately call local law enforcement and the superintendent or his/her designee.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the designated employee will document the steps taken to review the matter, the conclusions reached and any additional action taken, if applicable. Further, the investigator will notify the School's bullying coordinator (if not the same person) that an investigation has occurred and the results of the investigation.

The following outlines the procedure for the investigation of harassment, intimidation, bullying or threatening behavior reported to school officials for the purpose of determining the severity of the incidents and their potential to result in future violence:

Any school employee that has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of bullying shall immediately report it to the principal or a designee of the principal;

If the accused is a student of the school, the principal or designee will investigate the accusation and if the accusation is proven true, the school discipline policy will apply. The parent or guardian of both the victim and the perpetrator of documented and verified bullying will be notified with a phone call from the school counselor or school principal within 24 hours of the completion of verification and documentation process. If the parents cannot be reached by phone, a kmail and email will be sent requesting a phone conference.

Upon completion of an investigation, the school will refer a person who commits an act of bullying to a delinquency prevention and diversion program administered by the Office of Juvenile Affairs (OJA). The school may recommend that available community mental health care or substance abuse options be provided to a student, if appropriate. The school may provide a student with information about the types of support services available to the student bully, target, and any other students affected by the prohibited behavior. These resources will be provided to any individual who requests such assistance or will be provided if a school official believes the resource might be of assistance to the student/family. No school employee is expected to evaluate the appropriateness or the quality of the resource provided, nor is any employee required to provide an exhaustive list of resources available. All school employees will act in good faith.

The school may request the disclosure of information concerning students who have received substance abuse or mental health care (pursuant to the previous paragraph) if that information indicates an explicit threat to the safety of students or school personnel, provided the disclosure of the information does not violate the requirements and provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, OKLA. STAT. tit. 12 § 1376, OKLA. STAT. tit. 59 §1376 of the Oklahoma Statutes, or any other state or federal laws regarding the disclosure of confidential information. The school may request the disclosure of information when it is believed that the student may have posed a danger to him/herself and having such information will allow school officials to determine if it is safe for the student to return to the regular classroom or if alternative education arrangements are needed.

The principal, Head of School or designee will report to law enforcement all documented and verified acts of bullying which may constitute criminal activity or reasonably have the potential to endanger school safety.

The principal, Head of School or designee will refer the student who commits an act of bullying to a delinquency and diversion program administered by the Office of Juvenile Affairs.

If the accused is NOT a student of the school, the school office will help the victim and their family contact local authorities and/or the resident school district.

ISOK reports the number of incidents of bullying to the State Department of Education on an annual basis.

Parental Notification

The assigned investigator will notify the parent or legal guardian of a target within two (2) school days that a bullying report has been received. Within two (2) school days of the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator will provide the parents of a target with the results of the investigation and any community resources deemed appropriate to the situation.

If the report of bullying is substantiated, within two (2) school days of the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator will contact the parents of the bully to discuss disciplinary action and any community resources deemed appropriate to the situation.

School Discipline Policy for Cyber bullying:

If a student is found guilty of Cyber bullying or if a student is found to have falsely accused another as a means of retaliation, reprisal or as a means of bullying, the following consequences may be applied based on the severity of the infraction:

First Offense or Minor Infraction: The student will receive a verbal warning. The student and parent will meet via phone with the school counselor and/or school advisor to learn about Cyber bullying.

Second Offense or Severe Infraction: Repeated offenses or severe infractions will require a meeting with the student, parent, counselor and/or advisor and school administrator. A record of incident will also be placed on student file.

Third Offense: Expulsion from ISOK.

Parental Responsibilities

All parents/guardians will be informed in writing of the School's program to stop bullying and will be given a copy of this policy upon request. An administrative response to a reported act of bullying may involve certain actions to be taken by parents. Parents will be informed of the program and the means for students to report bullying acts toward them or other students. They will also be told that to help prevent bullying at school they should encourage their child/children to:

- Report bullying when it occurs;
- Take advantage of opportunities to talk to their children about bullying;
- Inform the school immediately if they think their child is being bullied or is bullying other students;
- Watch for symptoms that their child may be a target of bullying and report those symptoms; and
- Cooperate fully with school personnel in identifying and resolving incidents.

Monitoring and Compliance

In order to assist the State Department of Education with compliance efforts pursuant to the *School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act*, 70 OKLA. STAT. § 24-100.2 *et seq.*, the School will identify a bullying coordinator who will serve as the School contact responsible for providing information to the State Board of Education. The bullying coordinator shall maintain updated contact information on file with the State Department of Education and the School will notify the State Department of Education within fifteen (15) days of the appointment of a new bullying coordinator.

A copy of this policy will be submitted to the State Department of Education in December of each school year as part of the School's Annual Performance Report.

The School recognizes that there are many motivations behind the act of bullying, one of which may be for a discriminatory purpose. If the bullying behavior constitutes discriminatory harassment, intimidation or bullying (i.e., it is targeted toward an individual because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, marital status, veteran status, disability or genetic information), the misconduct is prohibited regarding Discriminatory Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying and is subject to protection. Retaliation is expressly prohibited against any person who participates in reporting, investigating or addressing any incident of bullying behavior.

As the terms are used in the School's policy, the following definitions apply:

DEFINITIONS:

- A. "Bullying" means any pattern of harassment, intimidation, threatening behavior, physical acts, verbal or electronic communication directed toward a student or group of students that results in or is reasonable perceived as being done with intent to cause negative educational or physical results for the targeted individual or group and is communicated in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's education mission or the education of any student.

Effects of bullying include, but are not limited to:

- Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student.
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm.
- Placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property.
- Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities.

According to experts in the field, bullying in general is the exploitation of a less powerful person by an individual taking unfair advantage of that person, which is repeated over time, and which inflicts a negative effect on the victim. The seriousness of a bullying act depends on the harm inflicted upon the victim and the frequency of the offensive acts. Power may be but is not limited to physical strength, social skill, verbal ability, or other characteristics. Bullying acts by students have been described in several different categories:

"Cyber bullying" occurs when a minor is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed, or otherwise targeted by another minor using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, or mobile phones. Whether it be in school related programs, like academic online discussions, Blackboard Collaborate sessions, or non-school related technologies like emails, MySpace, Facebook or Twitter. Bullying is not tolerated in any form at ISOK.

Cyber bullying includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Assuming a false identity online to trick others.
- Spreading lies and rumors about victims.
- Tricking people into revealing personal information.
- Sending or forwarding improper text messages.
- Posting pictures of victims without their consent.

How to Prevent and Stop Cyber bullying:

- Never share personal information with anyone (even if they are your best friend). Remember, anything posted online can be available to be viewed by millions of people.

- Be careful who you interact with online (block any messages from people you don't know).
- Do not pass along Cyber bullying messages.
- Tell friends to stop Cyber bullying.
- To learn more about Cyber bullying visit the following websites:
 - [http://www.ncpc.org/Cyber bullying](http://www.ncpc.org/Cyber_bullying)
 - <http://www.safeyouth.org/scripts/topics/bullying.asp>
 - <http://www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide/pguidee.htm>

“Physical Bullying” may include harm or threatened harm to another’s body or property, including but not limited to, what would reasonably be foreseen as a serious expression of intent to inflict physical harm or property damage through verbal or written speech or gestures directed at the student-victim, when considering the factual circumstances in which the threat was made and the reaction of the intended victim. Common acts include tripping, hitting, pushing, pinching, pulling hair, kicking, biting, starting fights, daring others to fight, stealing or destroying property, extortion, assaults with a weapon, other violent acts, and homicide.

“Emotional bullying” may include the intentional infliction of harm to another’s self-esteem, including but not limited to insulting or profane remarks, insulting or profane gestures, or harassing and frightening statements, when such events are considered in light of the surrounding facts, the history of the students involved, and age, maturity, and special characteristics of the students.

“Social bullying” may include harm to another’s group acceptance, including but not limited to, harm resulting from intentionally gossiping about another student or intentionally spreading negative rumors about another student that result in the victim being excluded from a school activity or student group; the intentional planning and/or implementation of acts or statements that inflict public humiliation upon a student; the intentional undermining of current relationships of the victim-student through the spreading of untrue gossip or rumors designed to humiliate or embarrass the student; the use of gossip, rumors or humiliating acts designed to deprive the student of awards, recognition or involvement in school activities; the false or malicious spreading of an untrue statement or statements about another student that exposes the victim to contempt or ridicule or deprives the victim of the confidence and respect of student peers; or the making of false statements to others that the student has committed a crime, or has an infectious, contagious, or loathsome disease, or similar egregious representations.

“Sexual bullying” may include harm to another resulting from, but not limited to, making unwelcome sexual comments, about the student, making vulgar, profane, or lewd comments or drawings or graffiti about the victim; directing vulgar, profane, or lewd gestures toward the victim; committing physical acts of a sexual nature at school, including the fondling or touching of private parts of the victim’s

body; participation in the gossiping or spreading of false rumors about the student's sexual life; written or verbal statements directed at the victim that would reasonably be interpreted as a serious threat to force the victim to commit sexual acts or to sexually assault the victim when considering the factual circumstances in which the threat was made and the reaction of the intended victim; off-campus dating violence by a student that adversely affects the victim's school performance or behavior, attendance, participation in school functions or extracurricular activities, or makes the victim fearful at school of the assaulting bully; or the commission of sexual assault, rape, or homicide. Such conduct may also constitute sexual harassment — also prohibited by the School.

- B. "Threatening behavior" means any pattern of behavior or isolated action, whether or not it is directed at another person, that a reasonable person would believe indicates potential for future harm to students, school personnel or school property.
- C. "Electronic communication" means the communication of any written, verbal, pictorial information or video content by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, a mobile or cellular telephone or other wireless telecommunication device or a computer. Electronic communications include, but are not limited to, communications made through weblogs and social media forums. Bullying by electronic communication is prohibited whether or not such communication originated at school, or with school equipment, if the communication is specifically directed at students or school personnel and concerns bullying at school.
- D. The term "at school" means on school property or with school equipment, and at school-sponsored activities or at school-sanctioned events.
- E. In determining what a "reasonable person" should recognize as bullying, staff will consider the point of view of the intended target, including any characteristics unique to the intended target. Staff may also consider the disciplinary history and physical characteristics of the alleged bully.
- F. "Good faith" is a state of mind consisting in honesty in belief or purpose or faithfulness to one's duty or obligation.
- G. The term "discriminatory harassment, intimidation and bullying" is defined by the School pursuant to Policy pertaining to harassment, intimidation, and bullying targeted toward an individual because of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, marital status, veteran status, disability or genetic information.

School Discipline Policy for bullying:

If a student is found guilty of bullying, or if a student is found to have falsely accused another as a means of retaliation, reprisal or as a means of bullying, the following consequences may be applied based on the severity of the infraction.

First Offense or Minor Infraction: The student will receive a verbal warning and the student and parent will meet via phone with the school counselor and/or school advisor to learn about bullying.

Second Offense or Severe Infraction: Repeated offenses or severe infractions will require a meeting with the student, parent, counselor and/or advisor and school administrator. A record of incident will also be placed on student file.

Third Offense: Expulsion from ISOK.

ISOK takes proactive measures to ensure all parents, students and staff are aware of the bullying policy, bullying prevention initiatives and the consequences of bullying. Annual written notice of the bullying policy will be provided to parents, guardians, staff, volunteers, and students, with age-appropriate language for students. The bullying policy will be posted at various locations at the school site and online including the physical office, course announcements within the online school platform, and on the ISOK website. The bullying policy will also be included in all student and employee handbooks.