

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

5143

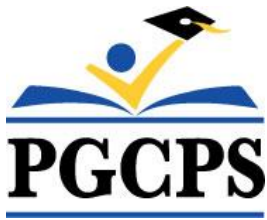
Procedure No.

BULLYING, HARASSMENT, OR INTIMIDATION

October 12, 2020

Date

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- I. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this procedure is to maintain a safe school environment that is conducive to learning and to ensure that school administrators and staff take measures to promote the prevention of bullying, harassment, and intimidation as well as prohibit reprisal or retaliation against individuals who report these acts.
- II. **INFORMATION:** In accordance with the provisions of Section 7-424.1 of the Education Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland, the Maryland State Board of Education developed and adopted a model policy to address bullying, harassment, and intimidation. All local school systems were required to establish a policy prohibiting bullying, harassment, or intimidation based on the model policy by July 1, 2009. This procedure focuses on student to student bullying, harassment, or intimidation. Allegations of students being bullied by an employee are to be addressed under Administrative Procedure 4170, Discrimination and Harassment.
- III. **BOARD POLICY:** It is the intent of Prince George’s County Public Schools to maintain safe environments that are conducive to learning. The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that school administrators take measures to promote the prevention of bullying, harassment, or intimidation in the learning environment and inform parents of these efforts. (Board Policy 5143)
- IV. **DEFINITIONS:**
- A. “Bullying, harassment, or intimidation (BHI)” are:
- anti-social behaviors that are conducted with the intent to cause harm and are characterized by an imbalance of power;
 - intentional conduct, including verbal, non-verbal, physical, or written conduct, or an intentional electronic communication, that creates a hostile educational environment by substantially interfering with a student’s educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student’s physical or psychological well-being;
 - motivated by an actual or a perceived personal characteristic including race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socio-economic status, familial status, or physical or mental ability or disability;
 - threatening or seriously intimidating; and



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

5143

Procedure No.

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- occurring on school property, at a school activity or event, or on a school bus; or, substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school.

- B. "Electronic communication" means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager.
- C. "Retaliation" is an act of reprisal or getting back at a person for an act he/she has committed.

V. **PROCEDURES:**

A. Reporting of Allegations

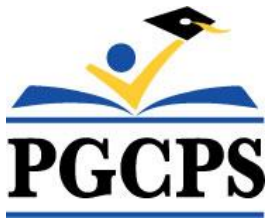
All reports are to be submitted digitally via the Online Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Reporting Application. Reports must be promptly and appropriately investigated by school administrators/designee, consistent with due process rights, using the *Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Incident School Investigation Form* within two (2) school days after receipt of a report. Submission of a report may be made via a web link enter stopbullying.pgcps.org into any internet browser, or visit the Apple App Store or Android Google Play Store using the search terms "PGCPS iStopbullying" to download to your mobile device.

B. Investigation of Alleged Incidents

All allegations of BHI must be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the local school. The investigation must be documented using the Investigation Form and the Investigation Notes Form and include all notes or communication logs related to the specific incident.

The following actions are to take place in order to allow the school administration/designee to determine the appropriate course of action to address the behavior. School administrators/designee will determine whether bullying, harassment, or intimidation occurred by taking the following steps:

1. Meet individually with the victim, the accused and any witnesses to gather information regarding the allegation.



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

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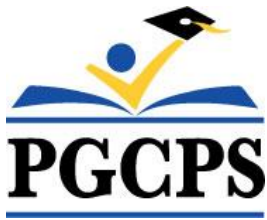
Procedure No.

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October 12, 2020

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2. Notify all parties involved in the incident that retaliation against a victim, witness or bystander is strictly prohibited.
3. Document findings and all notes taken during the student interviews, parent contacts, and information gathered from other witnesses on the *Investigation Notes Form* and attach the notes to the BHI Incident School Investigation Form.
4. Indicate findings on the Incident School Investigation Form to include whether or not the allegation was substantiated as bullying or not substantiated as bullying. If the incident is not substantiated the reason must be noted on the form.
5. Notify the parents of the victim and offender of the outcome of the investigation once the investigation has been completed. The notification must respect the confidentiality of the victim and the offender. Therefore, specific information related to disciplinary consequences will not be provided.
6. Notify the Investigative Counselor or School Security Officer immediately if the bullying, harassment, or intimidation creates imminent danger or qualifies as a delinquent act.
7. Log the incident into SchoolMax indicating the actions taken to investigate the allegations and the outcome (refer to the online [SchoolMax Discipline Training Guide; PGCPS log-in is required](#)).
8. Submit a copy of the completed *Reporting, Investigation and Notes Forms and Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation report* to the Department of Student Services (student.services@pgcps.org) within five (5) school days.
9. Copies of the forms MUST be maintained in the principal's confidential file for 5 years. These forms are not to be filed in the student's cumulative folder or limited access folder.



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

5143

Procedure No.

BULLYING, HARASSMENT, OR INTIMIDATION

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C. Parental Notification

The school administrator/designee will immediately notify parent/guardian of the victim and the parents of the offender of the incident.

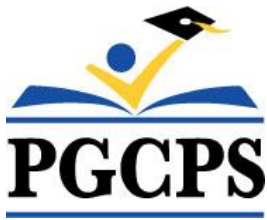
1. The parent/guardian of the victim will be informed of the specific steps that the school will take to intervene, interrupt and monitor the behaviors.
2. The parent/guardian of the offender will be informed of the specific steps that the school will take to intervene, interrupt, and monitor the behaviors as well as the proposed consequences as stipulated in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.
3. The parent/guardian of the victim may be invited to participate in the development of an intervention plan for their child.
4. The parent/guardian of the offender may be invited to participate in the development of an intervention plan for their child.
5. Each parent/guardian will be provided with a copy of the intervention plan developed for their child.

D. Follow-up actions by the principal/designee:

1. Separate conferences for the victim and offender will occur within ten (10) school days after the investigation to ensure that the bullying, harassment, or intimidation has ceased, and to determine whether there is a need for additional intervention. Individual conferences may occur as part of the counseling intervention.
2. A second conference will be held with the victim four (4) weeks after the initial conference to ensure that the bullying, harassment, or intimidation has ceased.

E. Central support for parents and school administrators

1. In instances where the bullying, harassment or intimidation incident is unresolved, and/or parent/guardians are not satisfied with the investigation, support may be requested by the school or parent/guardian from the Department



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

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5143

Procedure No.

October 12, 2020

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of Student Services.

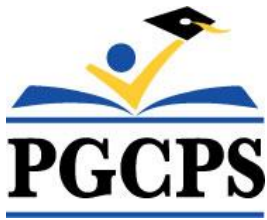
2. Support may be inclusive of, but not limited to, the following:
 - Independent review of the bullying, harassment, or intimidation report, investigation and notes;
 - Interview of parties involved in data collection and disposition;
 - Review of disciplinary action as deemed appropriate, under the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook related to the incident(s);
 - Consultation with the parent/guardian and school-based personnel on alternative strategies and supports; and
 - Consultation with other involved offices regarding findings and recommended actions.

The Department of Student Services will work with the school to ensure that the incident is investigated and that the resolution is appropriate. The Department of Student Services may amend the findings and recommendations of the school pursuant to review.

F. Prevention

All schools will implement procedures to prevent and reduce acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation.

1. Each school-based administrator will provide annual in-service training to all staff on procedures to prevent, identify, investigate and report allegations of bullying, harassment, or intimidation.
2. Schools will inform students and parents that bullying, harassment, or intimidation will not be condoned.
3. Parents will be informed about the availability of the Online Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation Reporting Application through appropriate school communication (i.e., school web site, parent newsletters, student handbook, etc.).



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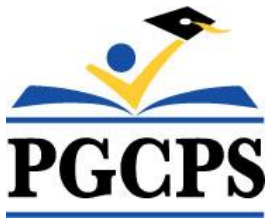
October 12, 2020

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4. Schools will inform students about the availability and use of the Online Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation Reporting Application and its use during orientation sessions during the first week of school.
5. A link to the Online Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation Reporting Application will be available on the Prince George’s County Public Schools website.
6. Schools are required to conduct developmentally appropriate prevention activities such as:
 - a. Holding regular classroom meetings with students to discuss safety concerns.
 - b. Clarifying and reinforcing classroom rules against bullying, harassment, or intimidation.
 - c. Conducting classroom lessons on sensitivity and tolerance.
 - d. Forming an Anti-Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Committee to assess the nature and prevalence of bullying at the school.
 - e. Celebrating the annual national anti-bullying week.
 - f. Conducting grade level focus groups or a school-wide survey to identify problem areas in the building and the level of bullying, harassment, or intimidation within the school.
 - g. Developing and implementing a school-wide bullying, harassment and intimidation prevention plan. A copy of this plan is due annually to the Department of Student Services.

G. Interventions

Schools must provide intervention and support to victims and offenders to address acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation. These interventions may include, but are not limited to, the following actions:



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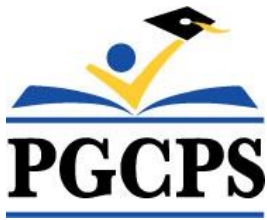
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1. Parent/student conferences.
2. Counseling with the professional school counselor, school psychologist, pupil personnel worker, professional school nurse and other appropriate professional staff.
3. Behavioral contracts.
4. Positive behavioral supports, such as functional behavioral assessments and behavioral intervention plans, etc.
5. Support counseling for the victim.
6. Support counseling for the offender.
7. Support counseling for bystanders.
8. Increased adult supervision during unstructured times (i.e. classroom changes, lunch, recess, etc.).
9. Social skills training, including role playing and behavioral rehearsal.
10. Schedule adjustment.
11. Development of a plan of support for the victim and offender.

The response/intervention must be documented in SchoolMax.

H. Consequences

Consequences and support strategies for students committing acts of bullying, harassment, or intimidation; engaged in reprisal or retaliation; or reporting false accusations shall be consistently and fairly applied after appropriate investigation has determined that such an offense has occurred. A range of consequences is contained in the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

5143

**BULLYING, HARASSMENT,
OR INTIMIDATION**

Procedure No.
October 12, 2020
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VI. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE:

- A. School administrators are responsible for thoroughly investigating and documenting all allegations of BHI reported to the school.
- B. The Department of Student Services shall maintain copies of completed *Reporting, Investigation and Notes Forms and Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation reports* for at least five years.
- C. School administrators shall maintain records of annual in-service training to all school-based staff on procedures to prevent, identify, investigate and report allegations of bullying, harassment, or intimidation for at least five years.

VII. RELATED PROCEDURES:

Administrative Procedure 0700, Information Technology Services Acceptable Usage Guidelines;
Administrative Procedure 4170, Discrimination and Harassment; and
Administrative Procedure 10101, Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.

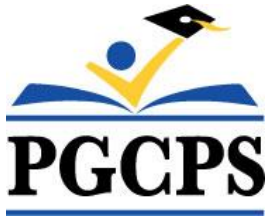
VIII. MAINTENANCE AND UPDATE OF THESE PROCEDURES: These procedures originate with the Division of Student Services. Regular updating of these procedures will be accomplished, as needed.

IX. CANCELLATIONS AND SUPERSEDURES: This Administrative Procedure cancels and supersedes Administrative Procedure 5143, dated October 27, 2017.

X. EFFECTIVE DATE: October 12, 2020

Attachments:

1. Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Incident School Investigation Form
2. Investigation Notes Form
3. Procedure Flow Chart



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

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Procedure No.

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Distribution: Lists 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11 and 12