

POLICY

Queen Anne's County Public Schools

POLICY TITLE: Bullying Harassment Intimidation Policy	
ADOPTION/EFFECTIVE DATE: August 05, 2009	
POLICY/PROCEDURE MANUAL SUMMARY CATEGORY: Students Amendments:	

Reference: Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article §7-424
Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to prohibit bullying, harassment and intimidation in Queen Anne's County Public Schools.

B. Policy Statement

It is the policy of Queen Anne's County Public Schools to prohibit bullying, harassment and intimidation of any person on school property, at school sponsored functions or by the use of electronic technology at a public school. It is also the policy of Queen Anne's County Public Schools to prohibit reprisal or retaliation against individuals who report acts of bullying, harassment and intimidation or who are victims, witnesses, bystanders, or others with reliable information about an act of bullying, harassment and intimidation.

C. Rationale

Bullying, harassment and intimidation create a hostile educational environment for learning and cannot be tolerated.

D. Definition of Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation

- a. Queen Anne's County Public Schools defines bullying, harassment and intimidation as intentional conduct, including verbal, physical, or written conduct or an intentional electronic communication that is repeated over time, creates a hostile educational environment by Substantially interfering with a student's educational benefits, opportunities, or performance, or with a student's physical or

POLICY

Queen Anne's County Public Schools

Page 2 of 5

psychological well-being and is:

1. Motivated by an actual or a perceived personal characteristic including race, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, familial status, or physical or mental ability or disability; or ,
2. Threatening or seriously intimidating; and
3. Occurs on school property, at a school activity or event, or on a school bus; or,
4. 4.Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of a school

“Electronic communication” means a communication transmitted by means of an electronic device, including a telephone, cellular phone, computer, or pager. “

Any student committing acts of bullying, harassment and intimidation, or engaging in reprisal and retaliation, or any person found to have made false accusations will receive an appropriate consequence and/or intervention.

The Superintendent shall develop administrative regulations to implement the Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation Policy.

E. Implementation

1. Consequences

Consequences for persons committing acts of bullying, harassment and intimidation for persons engaged in reprisal or retaliation and for persons found have made false accusations will be consistently and fairly applied after an appropriate investigation has determined that such an offense occurred.

2. Prevention

All Queen Anne's County Schools will implement evidence-based anti-bullying programs as a part of a system of positive behavioral supports and school improvement efforts at all grade levels. Schools will collaborate with families and the community to inform parents about the prevalence, causes, and consequences of bullying/harassment and its central role as a public health hazard, and the means of preventing it.

POLICY

Queen Anne's County Public Schools

3. Interventions/Remediation

Intervention and remediation strategies can be applied to both the perpetrator and the victim. These strategies include recognition for positive behavior exhibited by the student who has previously exhibited bullying behavior, the bullied student who is implementing strategies to offset past problems, and the bystander who has taken an active role in addressing bullying behaviors.

4. Procedures for Reporting Acts of Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation

- a) If bullying or harassment occurs as per the definition of bullying, harassment and intimidation as set forth in this policy; it must be reported using the *Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Reporting Form*.
- b) If a student complains that he/she is currently the victim of bullying, harassment, or intimidation, the staff member will respond quickly and appropriately to investigate and intervene, as safety permits.
- c) If a student expresses a desire to discuss an incident of bullying, harassment or intimidation with a staff member, the staff member will make an effort to provide the student with a practical, safe, private, and age-appropriate way of doing so.
- d) Forms may be obtained in the school's main office, counselor's office, and other locations determined by the school. The forms may be submitted by a student, parent, close adult relative, or staff member to school administration. A student may request assistance from a staff member to complete the form if the student wishes.
- e) Each school will devise ways in which the reporting forms may be submitted to school administration.
- f) *Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Reporting Forms may also be obtained electronically from the school system's website or a school's website and may be submitted by a student, parent or guardian, close relative, or staff member to school administration.*
- g) *Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Report Forms will be included in the beginning of the year packets for students and their parents.*
- h) *Information obtained from the Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Report Forms shall be recorded for data collection, storage, and submission according to the requirements of Education Article &7-424, Annotated Code of Maryland.*
- i) Student Support Services shall provide summary information for individual schools and the school system obtained from the *Bullying, Harassment or Intimidation Report Forms to their schools.*

POLICY

Queen Anne's County Public Schools

Page 4 of 5

5. Procedures for the Prompt Investigation of Acts of Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation
 - a) All reports must be promptly and appropriately investigated by school administrators or the administrative designee, consistent with due process rights, using the *Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation Incident Investigation Form* within 2 school days after receipt of a reporting form or as timely as possible for school administration.
 - b) School administrators or the administrative designee will determine whether bullying, harassment and intimidation actually occurred by taking steps to verify who committed the act of bullying, harassment and intimidation and whether others played a role in perpetuating this act. Other related complaints, if any, will be reviewed in making this determination.
 - c) Neither victim nor witnesses should be promised confidentiality at the onset of an investigation. It cannot be predicted what will be discovered or if a hearing may result from the ultimate outcome of the investigation. Efforts should be made to increase the confidence and trust of the victim and any witnesses. They will be informed that any information discussed and recorded will be confined to “need to know” status.
 - d) School administrators or the administrative designee will immediately notify parents of the victim and offender of the incident.
 - e) School administrators or the administrative designee will apply consequences and/or remedial actions consistent with due process rights using the range of listed consequences as a guide. The offender will be informed that retaliation against a victim or bystander is strictly prohibited and that progressive consequences will occur if the activity continues.
 - f) The administrator/designee will create a written record of the bullying, harassment and intimidation incident and any disciplinary actions taken, as well as the statements of the victim, witnesses, and offender. Discussions with all parties should be documented as soon as possible

POLICY

Queen Anne's County Public Schools

Page 5 of 5

after the event. Any material records or evidence will not be discarded while a criminal investigation or prosecution resulting from the incident is ongoing.

- g) Follow up will occur within two weeks after the investigation to determine whether the bullying, harassment and intimidation has continued and whether additional consequences or follow-up is needed.
- h) The administrator/designee should be aware that some acts of bullying, harassment and intimidation could also be delinquent acts. If they are delinquent acts, they promptly shall be reported to the responsible law enforcement agency according to the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 13A.08.01.15.
- i) Each anti-bullying program is to have a biennial data collection component on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying which is used to guide local decision making related to surveillance, prevention, intervention, and professional development.

F. Administrative Regulations

The Superintendent shall develop administrative regulations to implement the Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation Policy.