



Board Policy and Administrative Procedure: Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment

No. BP
725

Board Revised Policy Approval Date:	Board Revised Policy Effective Date:	Board Policy Revision History: 7/24/17; 11/23/20, 7/19/21, 9/27/21, 3/6/25, 11/25/25
Board Chair Signature: <i>Kent King-Robles</i>		Date: <i>11/25/2025</i>
Regulatory Reference: Illinois State Board of Education, Under 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7		
Applies to: All Employees having contact with students at Hammitt Schools		
<p>Board Policy Statement: Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender-related identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, physical or mental disability, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual or potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited in each of the following situations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. During any school sponsored education program or activity2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles.3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.4. Through the transmission of information from a computer that is accessed at a non-school-related location, activity, function, or program or from the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the agency or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the education process or orderly operation of a school. <p>Note: This paragraph (item #4) applies only when a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred; it does not require staff members to monitor any non-school related activity, function, or program.</p>		
Bullying is contrary to State law and the policy of Hammitt Schools is consistent with subsection (a-5) of 105 ILCS 5/7-23.7. This is not intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the United State Constitution under Section 3 of Article 1 of the Illinois Constitution.		
<p>Definition of Bullying:</p> <p>Bullying is contrary to Illinois state law and the policy of all our serving school districts. Note that bullying may take various forms, including without limitation one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual</p>		



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violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Definitions from Section 27-23.7 of the *School Code* (105ILCS 5/27-23.7)

Bullying includes *cyber-bullying* and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communication made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property;
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance; or
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Definition of Cyber-bullying: Bullying using technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communication, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation of impersonation creates and of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Overview: Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important school goals. This policy and procedure address these goals.

This policy and procedure were based on engagement with a range of school stakeholders, including students and parents/guardians (a sample were involved in its development).

This policy will be posted where other policies, rules or standards of conduct are posted in the school as well as on The Baby Fold's website (www.thebabyfold.org). It will be included in the



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school handbooks. It will be distributed annually to parents, guardians, students and school personnel, including new employees when hired.

All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools	<p>1. <u>Approaches to Bullying</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Will address bullying using a variety of approaches including positive, trauma-informed behavioral programming, logical and natural consequences, counseling and crisis intervention techniques, and process discussions involving elements of restorative justice. b. Will align with other policies of The Baby Fold including but not limited to Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, Retaliation and Sexual Misconduct (BP407), Prohibited Discipline Practices (BP718) and Client Rights (BP701).
All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools	<p>2. <u>Identification and Address of Concerning Behaviors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Will focus on identifying and addressing the “gateway” behaviors that lead to bullying (e.g., micro-aggressions that precede bullying) as well as bullying behavior itself, since research indicates that it is critical to address these behaviors to successfully prevent more obvious bullying behaviors.
All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Will recognize that students engaging in bullying behaviors typically do this due to their own emotional distress (often caused by prior traumas) and attempt to address these issues as well in a supportive fashion as part of the restorative process.
All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Understand that restorative measures mean a continuum of school based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that: (i) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community, (ii) contribute to maintaining school safety, (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, communities, and (vi) reduce the likelihood of future



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	disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school.
All Employees having contact with students attending Hammitt Schools	<p>3. <u>Stakeholder Engagement</u></p> <p>a. Understand that Hammitt School values the input and contribution that families provide to the educational program for students. If students or families feel that their concerns are not being addressed, then they are to report their concerns to the Director of Academic Services.</p>
Designated Hammitt Schools Administrators	<p>The designated administrators to receive reports of bullying for their respective buildings:</p> <p>b. Stephanie Jeanblanc, Hammitt School on Oglesby Principal, sjeanblanc@thebabyfold.org, 309.557.1076 are the Hammitt Schools administrators designated to receive reports of bullying for their respective buildings</p> <p>c. Joe McQueen, Hammitt School on Willow Principal, jmcqueen@thebabyfold.org, 309-451-7244</p> <p>d. Note that incidents of bullying may be reported anonymously to these administrators (e.g., in hard copy format).</p>
Designated Hammitt Schools Administrators	<p>e. If follow-up is needed, the designated Hammitt Schools administrator will – in a manner consistent with federal and state laws and rules governing student privacy rights – inform the parents or guardians of all students involved in the alleged incident of bullying within 24 hours after the school's administration is made aware of the students' involvement in the incident. The school shall make diligent efforts to notify a parent or legal guardian, utilizing all contact information the school has available or that can be reasonably obtained by the school within the 24-hour period.</p> <p>f. The school will increase student accountability if the incident of bullying is based on religion, race, ethnicity, or any other category that is in the Illinois Human Rights Act.</p> <p>g. All individual instances of bullying, as well as all threats, suggestions, or instances of self-harm determined to be the</p>



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	<p>result of bullying will be reported to the parents or legal guardians of those involved under the guidelines consistent with Federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights.</p> <p>h. Interventions available that may be used to address bullying include, as appropriate, the availability of social work or counseling services, restorative measures, social emotional skill building, and/or connection to community-based services.</p>
Designated Hammitt Schools Administrators	<p>i. This policy is posted on The Baby Fold's publicly accessible website under each school, and is included in the student handbook, posted with other policies, rules, and standards of conduct. The policy is distributed annually to parents, guardians, students, and other school personnel, including new employees when hired.</p>
Designated Hammitt Schools Administrators	<p>5. <u>Investigation and Addressing Reports of Bullying:</u></p> <p>a. The designated administrator will investigate any bullying incidents that need follow-up promptly, making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within ten (10) school days after the date the report of the incident of bullying was received, and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the investigation about the reported bullying incident.</p>
Designated Hammitt Schools Administrators	<p>b. The designated administrator will involve appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.</p>
Designated Hammitt Schools Administrators	<p>c. As part of the investigation, the designated administrator will investigate whether a reported act of bullying is within the permissible scope of the school's jurisdiction.</p>
Designated Hammitt Schools Administrators	<p>j. The designated administrator will ensure the investigation is consistent with Federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights.</p>



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Designated Hammitt Schools Administrators	k. The designated administrator will provide parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation information about the investigation and an opportunity to meet with the school administrator or designee to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.
Designated Hammitt Schools Administrators	l. As appropriate, the victim of a bullying incident will be provided with information regarding services that are available within the district and community, such as counseling, support services, and other programs.
Designated Hammitt Schools Administrators	m. All individual instances of bullying, as well as all threats, suggestions, or instances of self-harm determined to be the result of bullying will be reported to the parents or legal guardians of those involved under the guidelines
Designated Hammitt Schools Administrators	n. Following the investigation of the incident, the building administrator will document on the Incident Report the findings of the investigation.
Designated Hammitt Schools Administrators	o. A verified allegation of bullying is a complaint that if investigated would meet the definition of "bullying" found in Section 27-23.7(b) of the School Code. This means that schools and districts need to capture this data regardless of the outcome to determine if an act of bullying occurred.
Designated Hammitt Schools Administrators	p. Beginning the 2024-2025 school year, ISBE requires that all schools submit data regarding verified reports of bullying, as well as data required for reported allegations of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation as required by the Racism-Free Schools Law. The reporting period for each year is August 1-July 31. ISBE has provided an Excel spreadsheet to complete and submit by August 15 th of each year. Each building administrator will be responsible for tracking this data and reporting it to the Director of Academic Services for the ISBE report.



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	*Starting with the 2025-2026 school year, data will be collected via an electronic reporting system through IWAS that ISBE is being designed.
Designated Hammitt Schools Administrators Vice President of Human Resources	q. Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation will be determined by the Director of Academic Services, in consultation with Human Resources.
Director of Academic Services Vice President of Human Resources	6. <u>Addressing False Reports</u> a. If a determination is made that a person has falsely accused another of bullying as a means of retaliation or as a means of bullying, the Director of Academic Services – in consultation with Human Resources – will determine consequences and appropriate remedial actions.
Director of Academic Services	7. <u>Policy Evaluation</u> a. On an annual basis, will convene a policy evaluation committee to assess the outcomes and effectiveness of the policy that includes, but is not limited to, factors such as: 1) The frequency of victimization 2) Student, staff and family observations of safety at school. 3) Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs. 4) The types of bullying that are common or occurring. 5) Bystander intervention or participation. 6) The information developed as part of the evaluation process will be posted on The Baby Fold's website, www.thebabyfold.org/about/accreditation-licensure-reports .
Committee Members Director of Academic Services	b. This committee will also evaluate how well the bullying policy aligns with other policies and will address any discrepancies that are discovered.
Form Reference:	Agency Incident Report form