

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

The Buffalo Valley Public School Board of Education believes that the school's primary goal is to educate, not to discipline. However, education includes establishing norms of social behavior and assisting students in understanding and attaining those norms. Occasionally, corrective actions are necessary for the benefit of the individual and the school. The teacher in a public school has the same rights as a parent or guardian to control and discipline a child while the child is in attendance, in transit to or from the school, or participating in any authorized school function. Further, it is the policy of the district that students may be disciplined for any misconduct related to the programs or activities of the district. No teacher or administrator will administer formal discipline to his or her own child on behalf of the school except in cases of disruption in the classroom or common areas. Disciplinary matters concerning children of school employees will be handled by the appropriate principal or the superintendent or the superintendent's designee. The superintendent's child will be disciplined by someone other than the superintendent.

Each student shall be treated in a fair and equitable manner. Disciplinary action will be based on a careful assessment of the circumstances surrounding each infraction. The following are some examples of these circumstances:

- The seriousness of the offense;
- The effect of the offense on other students;
- Whether the offense is physically or mentally injurious to other people;
- Whether the incident is isolated or habitual behavior;
- The manifestation of a disability;
- Any other circumstances which may be appropriately considered.

Standards of behavior for all members of society are generally a matter of common sense. The following examples of behavior are not acceptable in society generally, and in a school environment particularly. The involvement of a student in the kind of behavior listed below will generally require remedial or corrective action. These examples are not intended to be exhaustive, and the exclusion or omission of unacceptable behavior is not an endorsement or acceptance of such behavior. When, in the judgment of a teacher or administrator, a student is involved or has been involved in unacceptable behavior, appropriate remedial or corrective action will be taken.

1. Unexcused lateness to school
2. Unexcused lateness to class
3. Cutting class
4. Leaving school without permission
5. Refusing detention/late room
6. Smoking
7. Truancy
8. Possessing or using alcoholic beverages or other mood-altering chemicals
9. Stealing
10. Forgery, fraud, or embezzlement
11. Assault, physical and/or verbal
12. Fighting
13. Possession of weapons or other items with the potential to cause harm
14. Distributing obscene literature
15. Destroying/defacing school property

STUDENT DISCIPLINE (Cont.)

16. Racial discrimination including racial slurs or other demeaning remarks concerning another person's race, ancestry, or country of origin and directed toward another student, an employee, or a visitor
17. Sexual harassment
18. Gang related activity or action
19. Cheating

In administering discipline, consideration will be given to alternative methods of punishment to ensure that the most effective discipline is administered in each case. In all disciplinary action, teachers and administrators will be mindful of the fact that they are dealing with individual personalities. The faculty may consider consultation with parents to determine the most effective disciplinary measure.

In considering alternatives of corrective actions, the faculty/administration of the school district will consider those listed below. However, the school is not limited to these alternative methods, nor does this list reflect an order or sequence of events to follow in disciplinary actions. The board of education will rely upon the judgment and discretion of the administrator to determine the appropriate remedial or corrective action in each instance.

1. Conference with student
2. Conference with parents
3. In-school suspension
4. Detention
5. Referral to counselor
6. Behavioral contract
7. Changing student's seat assignment or class assignment
8. Requiring a student to make financial restitution for damaged property
9. Requiring a student to clean or straighten items or facilities damaged by the student's behavior
10. Restriction of privileges
11. Involvement of local authorities
12. Referring student to appropriate social agency
13. Suspension
14. Other appropriate disciplinary action as required and as indicated by the circumstances which may include, but is not limited to, removal from eligibility to participate or attend extracurricular activities as well as removal from the privilege of attending or participating in the graduation ceremony, school dances, prom, prom activities, and/or class trips.

Parents, guardians, and students enrolled in this school district shall be notified at the beginning of each school year that this policy is in effect. A copy of this policy will be made available upon request to parents or guardians at any time during the school year.

Parents, guardians, and students residing in this school district are also advised by means of this policy statement and by the student handbook that students in this district shall have no reasonable expectation of privacy rights towards school officials, in school lockers, desks, or other school property. School personnel shall have access to school lockers, desks, and other school property at any time and no reason shall be necessary for such search. Student property may be searched with reasonable suspicion.

Teachers, parents, guardians, and students are invited and encouraged to participate in the formulation of disciplinary policies, rules, and regulations by suggesting to administrators appropriate means of discipline for specific infractions.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE (Cont.)

REFERENCE: 10 O.S. §7115
70 O.S. §6-114
70 O.S. §24-101.3

THIS POLICY REQUIRED BY LAW.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

It is the policy of the Buffalo Valley Public School Board of Education to administer corporal punishment only as a last resort after other reasonable corrective measures have been used without success. However, under no circumstances shall any child in DHS custody or any student on an individualized educational program (IEP) be administered corporal punishment.

At the beginning of the school year, parents and legal guardians will be provided the opportunity to allow the administration of corporal punishment to their child(ren). Failure to provide written authorization will not impact the student(s) and will result in alternative punishments being administered. Under no circumstances will the administration administer corporal punishment to a student where written consent was not provided.

Corporal punishment must be administered only in the presence of another professional, certificated staff member, preferably an administrator. Careful documentation of each occasion shall be made by the teacher or the administrator or both. Such documentation will identify the student and set forth the behavior necessitating the punishment, the person who administered the punishment, and the name of witnesses.

Under no circumstances shall other students or non-certificated personnel observe the administration of corporal punishment. The student shall be carefully advised of the nature of the rule infraction for which the punishment is being administered.

If a parent or legal guardian has requested that corporal punishment not be administered to the student, alternative discipline will be considered and may include suspension from school.

If an incident occurs and corporal punishment is imposed on a student with disabilities, the incident should be reported immediately to a school site administrator and documented using the statewide online IEP reporting system. A copy of the document shall be placed in the student's file and provided to the student's parent or guardian. For each incident, the student's parent or guardian shall be notified as soon as possible, and must be notified no later than the school day following the incident or within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident, whichever is first. An IEP meeting may be needed to review or implement a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) for the student.

REFERENCE: 10 O.S. §7115
70 O.S. §6-113.1
70 O.S. §6-114
70 O.S. §13-116
Accreditation Standard 210:15-13-9

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT CONSENT FORM

1. I authorize and give my consent for Buffalo Valley Public Schools officials to administer corporal punishment (paddle) to _____ (*name of student*) as outlined in board policy. This consent is valid for the _____ school year.

2. I do not consent to the administration of corporal punishment to _____ (*name of student*). This consent is valid for the _____ school year.

Parent or Guardian

Date: _____

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT REPORT FORM

Student's Name _____

School _____ Grade _____

Date _____

Reason for Disciplinary Action: _____

Action Taken: _____

Signature of Administrator_____
Signature of Witness

SUSPENSION OF STUDENTS

It is the policy of the Board of Education that the superintendent or designee may suspend a student for:

- Violations of policy or regulations
- Possession of an intoxicating beverage, (See policy FNCE)
- Possession of missing or stolen property if the property is reasonably suspected to have been taken from a student, a school employee, or the school during school activities
- Possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled dangerous substance while on or within two thousand (2,000) feet of public school property, or at a school event (Uniform Controlled Dangerous Substances Act) (See policies FNCE and FNCGA)
- Possession of a firearm shall result in out-of-school suspension of not less than one year (See policy FNCGA) This may be modified by the administration on a case by case basis.
- Any act which disrupts the academic atmosphere of the school, endangers or threatens fellow students, teachers, or officials or damages property
- Students in grades six through twelve found to have assaulted, attempted to cause physical bodily injury, or acted in a manner that could reasonably cause bodily injury to a school employee or person volunteering for a school shall be suspended for the remainder of the current semester and the next consecutive semester. The term of the suspension may be modified by the school district superintendent on a case-by-case basis.

Before a student is suspended out-of-school, the principal shall consider and apply, if appropriate, alternative in-school placement options that are not to be considered suspension, such as placement in an alternative school setting, reassignment to another classroom, or in-school detention. A student suspended out-of-school shall be placed in a supervised, structured environment in either a home-based schoolwork assignment setting or another appropriate setting in accordance with a plan prescribed by the school administration that provides education in accordance with the supporting regulations. Parents or guardians will be provided with a copy of the education plan and will bear the responsibility of monitoring the student's educational progress until the student is readmitted to school. Students suspended from school shall be ineligible to participate in extracurricular activities. Additionally, any student serving suspension during the time of graduation activities shall not be allowed to participate in or attend ceremonies or programs honoring graduates.

No school board member, administrator, or teacher may be held civilly liable for any action taken in good faith, which is authorized by law under the provisions of this policy.

The superintendent is directed to establish regulations, subject to board approval, which support this policy. Such regulations shall include provisions for appeal of suspension to a suspension appeals committee and/or the board of education. The superintendent may delegate authority for suspensions of students to building principals.

REFERENCE: 10 O.S. §7005-1.2
10 O.S. §7303-5.3
10 O.S. §7307-1.2
37 O.S. §163.2
70 O.S. §24-101.3, §24-102, §24-103, et seq.

THIS POLICY REQUIRED BY LAW.

SUSPENSION OF STUDENTS (REGULATION)

In accordance with the policy of the board of education, the following regulation shall govern the suspension of students from school.

The authority to suspend a student from a school in the school district is delegated to the respective building principals.

1. Any student may be suspended for:
 - Violations of policy or regulations
 - Possession of an intoxicating beverage, (See policy FNCE)
 - Possession of missing or stolen property if the property is reasonably suspected to have been taken from a student, a school employee, or the school during school activities
 - Possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled dangerous substance while on or within two thousand (2,000) feet of public school property, or at a school event (Uniform Controlled Dangerous Substances Act) (See policies FNCE and FNCGA)
 - Possession of a firearm shall result in out-of-school suspension of not less than one year (See policy FNCGA) This may be modified by the administration on a case by case basis.
 - Any act which disrupts the academic atmosphere of the school, endangers or threatens fellow students, teachers, or officials, or damages property
 - Students in grades six through twelve found to have assaulted, attempted to cause physical bodily injury, or acted in a manner that could reasonably cause bodily injury to a school employee or person volunteering for a school shall be suspended for the remainder of the current semester and the next consecutive semester. The term of the suspension may be modified by the school district superintendent on a case-by-case basis.
2. A full suspension shall not extend beyond the present semester and the succeeding semester except for violations of the Gun-Free Schools Act which provides suspensions for up to one calendar year ~~or longer~~. (See policy FNCGA.)
3. Except under circumstances that require the immediate removal of a student or students, the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) shall be informed before a student is released from school.
4. Any student who has been adjudicated as a delinquent and has been removed from a public or private school in this state or any other state for such an act, will not be enrolled in a regular classroom setting in the district but may be provided an alternative education solution until such time as that student no longer poses a threat to self, other students, or faculty.
5. Students suspended out-of-school who are on an individualized education plan ("IEP") pursuant to IDEA, P.L. No. 101-476 shall be provided the education and related services in accordance with the student's IEP.
6. A student who has been suspended for a violent offense that is directed towards a classroom teacher shall not be allowed to return to that teacher's classroom without the approval of that teacher.

SUSPENSION OF STUDENTS, REGULATION (Cont.)

Procedural Steps to Suspension

Before a student is suspended from school, the principal of that school shall consider and apply, if appropriate, alternative in-school placement options that are not to be considered suspensions. Such placements can include an alternative school setting, reassignment to another classroom, or in-school detention. If such alternate placement is rejected, written justification must be placed in the student's permanent record.

1. Probation. A student may be placed on probation with or without additional disciplinary action. If probation is elected by the principal as a suitable alternative to suspension, both the student and the parent(s) shall be notified of the probation and the reasons therefor.
2. In-school placement. In-school placement is an alternative to out-of-school suspension. In-school placement will be imposed by the student's principal, and the student will be placed in a supervised, structured environment. This placement will not be considered suspension and may include an alternative school setting, reassignment to another classroom, or in-school detention.
3. Out-of-school suspension.
 - A. Both the student and the parent(s) shall be notified of the suspension, the grounds therefor, and the right to appeal the suspension. A student suspended out-of-school will be placed in a supervised, structured environment in either a home-based schoolwork assignment setting or another appropriate setting.
 - B. If a student is suspended out-of-school for five (5) days or less, the district may provide an education plan. If a student is suspended for more than five (5) days and is found guilty of acts as described above, the school administration shall provide the student with an education plan designed for the eventual reintegration of the student into school which provides for the core units in which the student is enrolled. The minimum core units shall consist of English, mathematics, science, social studies, and art. The plan shall set out the procedure for education and shall address academic credit for work satisfactorily completed. A copy of the plan shall be provided to the student's parents or guardian, and the parents or guardian shall be responsible for the provision of a supervised, structured environment in which the parent or guardian shall place the student and bear responsibility for monitoring the student's educational progress until the student is readmitted to school.

Appellate Procedures

Suspension Appeals Committee

A suspension appeals committee is hereby established which will consist of 3 administrators or teachers or a combination thereof. The members of the committee shall be appointed by the superintendent and may include the superintendent. However, any member of the committee who initiated a suspension in a case shall be excused from the committee during any appeal of that particular case.

SUSPENSION OF STUDENTS, REGULATION (Cont.)Appellate Procedures

1. Any student who has been suspended for ten (10) days or less under the steps listed above, or the student's parent(s), may appeal the suspension to the suspension appeals committee. The following procedures shall govern the appellate process:
 - A. The student, or the student's parent(s), shall notify the superintendent within ten (10) days following the suspension or the notice of the intent to suspend of their intent to appeal the suspension.
 - B. Upon receiving notice of a student's intent to appeal, the superintendent shall advise the suspension appeals committee. The suspension appeals committee shall hear the appeal within ten (10) days from the date the notice of intent is filed with the superintendent. The superintendent, at his/her discretion, may permit the suspended student to attend classes pending the outcome of the appeal.
 - C. During the hearing of the appeal before the suspension appeals committee, the student or the student's parent(s) shall have the right to provide evidence as to why the suspension, or the duration thereof, is inappropriate. The student shall not have the right to be represented by legal counsel, unless the school district is represented by legal counsel.
 - D. The suspension appeals committee shall determine the guilt or innocence of the student, and the reasonableness of the term of the suspension. The suspension appeals committee may uphold, overrule, or modify the suspension. The student and the student's parent(s) shall be notified within five (5) days of the decision.
 - E. Decisions of the suspension appeals committee may be appealed to the board of education. The decision of the board of education shall be final.
2. Any student who has been suspended for greater than ten (10) days under the steps listed above, or the student's parent(s), may request a review of the suspension with the administration. If the administration does not withdraw the suspension, the student shall have the right to appeal the decision to the board of education. The following procedures shall govern the appellate process:
 - A. The student, or the student's parent(s), shall notify the superintendent within ten (10) days following the suspension or the notice of the intent to suspend of their intent to appeal the suspension.
 - B. Upon receiving notice of a student's intent to appeal, the superintendent shall advise the board of education. The board of education may conduct the hearing or may appoint a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The board of education or hearing officer shall hear the appeal within ten (10) days from the date the notice of intent is filed with the superintendent. The superintendent, at his/her discretion, may permit the suspended student to attend classes pending the outcome of the appeal.

SUSPENSION OF STUDENTS, REGULATION (Cont.)

- C. During the hearing of the appeal before the board of education or hearing officer, the student or the student's parent(s) shall have the right to provide evidence as to why the suspension, or the duration thereof, is inappropriate. The student shall not have the right to be represented by legal counsel, unless the school district is represented by legal counsel.
- D. The board of education or hearing officer shall determine the guilt or innocence of the student, and the reasonableness of the term of the suspension. The board of education or hearing officer may uphold, overrule, or modify the suspension. The student and the student's parent(s) shall be notified within five (5) days of the decision. The decision of the board of education or hearing officer shall be final.

NOTE: 70 O.S. §24-101.3 (E) states that a student who has been suspended from a public or private school in the state of Oklahoma or another state for a violent act or an act showing deliberate or reckless disregard for the health or safety of faculty or other students shall not be entitled to enroll in a public school of this state, and no public school shall be required to enroll such student, until the terms of the suspension have been met or the time of suspension has expired.

THIS POLICY REQUIRED BY LAW.

BULLYING

It is the policy of this school district that bullying of students by other students, personnel, or the public will not be tolerated. Students are expected to be civil, polite, and fully engaged in the learning process. Students who act inappropriately are not fully engaged in the learning process. This policy is in effect while the students are on school grounds, in school vehicles, at designated bus stops, at school-sponsored activities, or at school-sanctioned events, and while away from school grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management, and welfare of the school district. Bullying of students 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 harassment, intimidation, or bullying at school. The school district is not required to provide educational services in the regular school setting to any student who has been removed from a public school or private school in Oklahoma or another state by administrative or judicial process for an act of using electronic communication with the intent to terrify, intimidate or harass, or threaten to inflict injury or physical harm to faculty or students.

As used in the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act, "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 reasonably perceived as being done with the 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 educational mission or the education of any student. Such behavior is specifically prohibited.

In administering discipline, consideration will be given to alternative methods of punishment to insure that the most effective discipline is administered in each case. In all disciplinary action, teachers and administrators will be mindful of the fact that they are dealing with individual personalities. The faculty may consider consultation with parents to determine the most effective disciplinary measure.

In considering alternatives of corrective actions, the faculty/administration of the school district will consider those listed below. However, the school is not limited to these alternative methods, nor does this list reflect an order or sequence of events to follow in disciplinary actions. The board of education will rely upon the judgment and discretion of the administrator to determine the appropriate remedial or corrective action in each instance.

1. Conference with student
2. Conference with parents
3. In-school suspension
4. Detention
5. Referral to counselor
6. Behavioral contract
7. Changing student's seat assignment or class assignment
8. Requiring a student to make financial restitution for damaged property
9. Requiring a student to clean or straighten items or facilities damaged by the student's behavior
10. Restriction of privileges
11. Involvement of local authorities
12. Referring student to appropriate social agency or to a delinquency prevention and diversion program administrated by the office of Juvenile Affairs
13. Suspension
14. Performing Campus-site services for the school district
15. Other appropriate disciplinary action as required and as indicated by the circumstances which may include, but is not limited to, removal from eligibility to participate or attend extracurricular activities as well as removal from the privilege of attending or participating in the graduation ceremony, school dances, prom, prom activities, and/or class trips.

HARASSMENT (Cont.)

Harassment set forth above may include, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Verbal, physical, or written harassment or abuse;
2. Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
3. Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, etc.;
4. Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student;
5. Unwelcome physical contact.

The superintendent shall develop procedures providing for:

1. Prompt investigation of allegations of harassment;
2. The expeditious correction of the conditions causing such harassment;
3. Establishment of adequate measures to provide confidentiality in the complaint process;
4. Initiation of appropriate corrective actions;
5. Identification and enactment of methods to prevent reoccurrence of the harassment; and
6. A process where the provisions of this policy are disseminated in writing annually to all staff and students.

A copy of this policy will be furnished to each student and teacher in this school district.

**REFERENCE: 21 O.S. §850.0
70 O.S. §24-100.2**

THIS POLICY REQUIRED BY LAW.

PROHIBITING BULLYING (INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES)

The following procedures will be used by any person for the filing, processing, and resolution of a reported incident of harassment, intimidation, bullying, or threatening behavior. The procedures are to be followed by the administration of the school district in an effort to determine the severity of the incident and the potential to result in future violence.

Definitions

1. “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 reasonably perceived as being done with the 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 educational mission or the education of any student.

“Electronic communication” means the communication of any written, verbal, ~~or~~ 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 communication device, or a computer.

“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.

Procedures

The procedure for investigating reported incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying or threatening behavior, is as follows:

1. The matter should immediately be reported to the building principal. If the bullying involved an electronic communication, a printed copy of the communication as well as any identifying information such as email address or web address shall be provided to the building principal. As much detailed information as possible should be provided to the building principal in written form to allow for a thorough investigation of the matter.
2. Upon receipt of a written report, the building principal shall contact the superintendent and begin an investigation to determine the severity of the incident and the potential for future violence.
3. If, during the course of the investigation, it appears that a crime may have been committed the building principal and/or superintendent shall notify local law enforcement and request that the alleged victim also contact law enforcement to report the matter for potential criminal investigation.
4. If it is determined that the school district's discipline code has been violated, the building principal shall follow district policies regarding the discipline of the student. The building principal shall make a determination as to whether the conduct is actually occurring.

PROHIBITING BULLYING, INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES (Cont.)

5. Upon completion of the investigation, the principal or superintendent may recommend that available community mental health care substance abuse or other counseling options be provided to the student, if appropriate. This may include information about the types of support services available to the student bully, victim, and any other students affected by the prohibited behavior. If such a recommendation is made, the administration shall request disclosure of any information that indicates an explicit threat to the safety of students or school personnel provided the disclosure of information does not violate the provisions or requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, Section 2503 of Title 12 of the Oklahoma Statutes, Section 1376 of Title 59 of Oklahoma Statutes, or any other state or federal laws relating to the disclosure of confidential information.
6. Upon completion of an investigation, timely notification shall be provided to the parents or guardians of a victim of documented and verified bullying. This information should be provided within 10 days of the conclusion of the investigation.
7. Upon completion of an investigation, timely notification shall be provided to the perpetrator of the documented and verified bullying. This information should be provided within 10 days of the conclusion of the investigation.

Reports may be made anonymously. However, no formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Reports shall be made immediately to the building principal by any school employee that has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of bullying.

The Superintendent shall be responsible for enforcing this policy. The building principal should notify the superintendent within twenty-four (24) hours of any report of bullying. Upon completion of an investigation, the building principal should notify the superintendent of the findings of the investigation. Documentation should also be provided to the superintendent to establish that timely notification was provided to the parents of the victim and the parents of the perpetrator.

PROHIBITING BULLYING (REGULATION)

The Buffalo Valley Public Schools' student conduct code prohibits bullying. This regulation further explains the negative effects of that behavior and seeks to promote strategies for prevention.

Statement of Board Purpose in Adopting Policy

The board of education recognizes that bullying of students causes serious educational and personal problems, both for the student-victim and the initiator of the bullying. The board observes that this conduct:

1. Has been shown by national and state studies to have a substantial adverse effect upon school district operations, the safety of students and faculty, and the educational system at large.
2. Substantially disrupts school operations by interfering with the district's mission to instruct students in an atmosphere free from fear, is disruptive of school efforts to encourage students to remain in school until graduation, and is just as disruptive of the district's efforts to prepare students for productive lives in the community as they become adults.
3. Substantially disrupts healthy student behavior and thereby academic achievement. Research indicates that healthy student behavior results in increased student academic achievement. Improvement in student behavior through the prevention or minimization of intimidation, harassment, and bullying towards student-victims simultaneously supports the district's primary and substantial interest in operating schools that foster and promote academic achievement.
4. Substantially interferes with school compliance with federal law that seeks to maximize the mainstreaming of students with disabilities and hinders compliance with Individual Educational Programs containing objectives to increase the socialization of students with disabilities. Targets of bullying are often students with known physical or mental disabilities who, as a result, are perceived by bullies as easy targets for bullying actions.
5. Substantially interferes with the district's mission to advance the social skills and social and emotional well-being of students. Targets of intimidation, harassment, and bullying are often "passive-target" students who already are lacking in social skills because they tend to be extremely sensitive, shy, display insecurity, anxiety and/or distress; may have experienced a traumatic event; may try to use gifts, toys, money, or class assignments or performance bribes to protect themselves from intimidation, harassment, or bullying; are often small for their age and feel vulnerable to bullying acts; and/or may resort to carrying weapons to school for self-protection. Passive-target victims who have been harassed and demeaned by the behavior of bullies often respond by striving to obtain power over others by becoming bullies themselves, and are specifically prone to develop into students who eventually inflict serious physical harm on other students, or, in an effort to gain power over their life or situation, commit suicide.
6. Substantially disrupts school operations by increasing violent acts committed against fellow students. Violence, in this context, is frequently accompanied by criminal acts.
7. Substantially disrupts school operations by interfering with the reasonable expectations of other students that they can feel secure at school and not be subjected to frightening acts or be the victim of mistreatment resulting from bullying behavior.

PROHIBITING BULLYING, REGULATION (Cont.)

Bullying often involves expressive gestures, speech, physical acts that are sexually suggestive, lewd, vulgar, profane, or offensive to the education or social mission of this school district, and at times involves the commission of criminal acts. This behavior interferes with the curriculum by disrupting the presentation of instruction and also disrupts and interferes with the student-victim's or bystander's ability to concentrate, retain instruction, and study or to operate free from the effects of bullying. This results in a reluctance or resistance to attend school.

Definition of Terms

1. Statutory definition of harassment, intimidation, and bullying:

70 O.S. §24-100.3(c) of the School Safety and Bullying Prevention Act defines the terms "bullying," as including, but not limited to a 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 reasonably perceived as being done with the 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 educational mission or the education of any student that a reasonable person should recognize will:

- A. Harm another student;
- B. Damage another student's property;
- C. Place another student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or damage to the student's property; or
- D. Insult or demean any student or group of students in such a way as to disrupt or interfere with the school's educational mission or the education of any student.

2. The "Reasonable Person" Standard

In determining what a "reasonable person" should recognize as an act placing a student in "reasonable" fear of harm, staff will determine "reasonableness" not only from the point of view of a mature adult, but also from the point of view of an immature child of the age of the intended victim along with, but not limited to, consideration of special emotional, physical, or mental needs of the particular child; personality or physical characteristics, or history that might cause the child to be particularly sensitive to efforts by a bully to humiliate, embarrass, or lower the self esteem of the victim; and the discipline history, personality of, and physical characteristics of the individual alleged to have engaged in the prohibited behavior.

3. General Display of Bullying Acts

Bullying, for purposes of this section of the regulation, includes harassment and intimidation, and vice versa. 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.

PROHIBITING BULLYING, REGULATION (Cont.)

- A. Physical Bullying includes 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.
- B. Emotional Bullying includes 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 statement, 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.
- C. Social Bullying includes 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 results 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.
- D. Sexual Bullying includes 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 _____ Public Schools.

Procedures Applicable to the Understanding of and Prevention of Bullying of Students
1. Student and Staff Education and Training

All staff will be provided with a copy of the district's policy on prevention of bullying of students. All students will be provided a summary of the policy and notice that a copy of the entire policy is available on request. Buffalo Valley Public Schools is committed to providing appropriate and relevant training to staff

PROHIBITING BULLYING, REGULATION (Cont.)

regarding identification of behavior constituting bullying of students and the prevention and management of such conduct.

Students, like staff members, shall participate in an annual education program that sets out expectations for student behavior and emphasizes an understanding of bullying of students, the district's prohibition of such conduct, and the reasons why the conduct is destructive, unacceptable, and will lead to discipline. Students shall also be informed of the consequences of bullying conduct toward their peers.

B. Buffalo Valley Public Schools' Safe School Committee

The safe school committee has the responsibility of studying and making recommendations regarding unsafe conditions, strategies for students to avoid harm at school, student victimization, crime prevention, school violence, and other issues that interfere with or adversely affect the maintenance of safe schools.

With respect to student harassment, intimidation, and bullying, the safe school committee shall consider and make recommendations regarding professional staff development needs of faculty and other staff related to methods to decrease student harassment, intimidation, and bullying and understanding and identifying bullying behaviors. In addition, the committee shall make recommendations regarding: identification of methods to encourage the involvement of the community and students in addressing conduct involving bullying; methods to enhance relationships between students and school staff in order to strengthen communication; and fashioning of problem-solving teams that include counselors and/or school psychologists.

In accomplishing its objectives, the committee shall review traditional and accepted harassment, intimidation, and bullying prevention programs utilized by other states, state agencies, or school districts. (See also policy BDFC.)

Student Reporting

Students are encouraged to inform school personnel if they are the victim of or a witness to acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

Staff Reporting

An important duty of the staff is to report acts or behavior that the employee witnesses that appears to constitute harassing, intimidating, or bullying. Employees, whether certified or noncertified, shall encourage students who tell them about acts that may constitute intimidation, harassment, or bullying to complete a report form. For young students, staff members given that information will need to provide direct assistance to the student.

Staff members who witness such events are to complete reports and to submit them to the employee designated by the superintendent to receive them. Staff members who hear of incidents that may, in the staff member's judgment, constitute harassment, intimidation, or bullying, are to report all relevant information to the superintendent or his/her designee.

PROHIBITING BULLYING, REGULATION (Cont.)Parental Responsibilities

Parents/guardians will be informed in writing of the district's program to stop bullying. An administrative response to 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 children to:

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

Discipline of Students

In administering discipline, consideration will be given to alternative methods of punishment to ensure that the most effective discipline is administered in each case. In all disciplinary action, teachers and administrators will be mindful of the fact that they are dealing with individual personalities. The faculty may consider consultation with parents to determine the most effective disciplinary measure.

In considering alternatives of corrective actions, the faculty/administration of the school district will consider those listed below. However, the school is not limited to these alternative methods, nor does this list reflect an order or sequence of events to follow in disciplinary actions. The board of education will rely upon the judgment and discretion of the administrator to determine the appropriate remedial or corrective action in each instance.

1. Conference with student
2. Conference with parents
3. In-school suspension
4. Detention
5. Referral to counselor
6. Behavioral contract
7. Changing student's seat assignment or class assignment
8. Requiring a student to make financial restitution for damaged property
9. Requiring a student to clean or straighten items or facilities damaged by the student's behavior
10. Restriction of privileges
11. Involvement of local authorities
12. Referring student to appropriate social agency
13. Suspension
14. Other appropriate disciplinary action as required and as indicated by the circumstances which may include, but is not limited to, removal from eligibility to participate or attend extracurricular activities as well as removal

PROHIBITING BULLYING, REGULATION (Cont.)

from the privilege of attending or participating in the graduation ceremony, school dances, prom, prom activities, and/or class trips.

The above consequences will be imposed for any person who commits an act of bullying as well as any person found to have falsely accused another as a means of retaliation, reprisal, or as a means of bullying. Strategies will be created to provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and other protection for students, both targets and perpetrators, and family members affected by bullying, as necessary.

Publication of Policy

Annual written notice of this policy will be provided to parents, guardians, staff, volunteers, and students with age-appropriate language for students. Notice of the policy will be posted at various locations within each school site, including but not limited to, cafeterias, school bulletin boards, and administrative offices. The policy will be posted on the school district's website at (*school's website*) and at each school site that has an Internet website. The policy will be included in all student and staff handbooks.