



WILLOW SPRINGS SCHOOL  
**WOLVERINES**

8345 Archer Avenue  
Willow Springs, IL 60480  
(708) 839-6828

## **Bullying, Intimidation, & Harassment - Prevention & Response**

### ***Statement of Intent***

The Willow Springs School District 108 is committed to providing a safe, caring, and supportive learning environment for all students. This commitment includes a consistent and firm approach to any incidents of bullying, intimidation, and harassment among our students. Any and all forms of bullying are unacceptable within the Willow Springs 108 community.

Willow Springs School District 108 commits to addressing the issue of bullying through the use of social/emotional supports, social work services, and restorative measures for all students and throughout our school community.

### ***What is Bullying?***

Bullying behavior in schools can cause harm to students' social and emotional well-being and be a significant barrier to learning. Bullying can be defined as a "physical, verbal or psychological attack or intimidation that is intended to cause fear, distress, or harm the victim" (Farrington and Ttofi, 2010). There is a perceived psychological or physical imbalance of power and oftentimes, incidents between the same students occur repeatedly. Bullying can occur during or after school hours. While most reported bullying happens in the school building, a significant percentage also happens in places like on the playground or the bus. It can also happen traveling to or from school, in the youth's neighborhood, or on the internet. Bullying is contrary to state law in the state of Illinois.

### ***Why is our response important?***

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.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, military status, unfavorable discharge status from the military service, 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:

1. During any school-sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school-sponsored or school-sanctioned events or activities.
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 school district or school if the bullying causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school.

Bullying includes cyber-bullying and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications 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 the school.

Cyberbullying means bullying through the use of 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 communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying 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 or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a 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.

Examples of prohibited conduct include name-calling, using derogatory slurs, stalking, sexual violence, causing psychological harm, threatening or causing physical harm, threatened or actual destruction of property, or wearing or possessing items depicting or implying hatred or prejudice of one of the characteristics stated above.

Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the building principal, non discrimination coordinator, district complaint manager or any staff member with whom the student is comfortable speaking. All school staff members are available for help with a bully or to make a report about bullying. Anyone, including staff members and parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying is encouraged to report it to the district complaint manager or any staff member. Anonymous reports are also accepted by phone call or in writing.

#### ***Reporting Procedure & Response***

- Any incidents of bullying should be reported as quickly as possible to any staff member. If further follow up is necessary, the administration should be contacted.
- Bullying incidents will be recorded by staff and reported to the administration.
- If an incident is considered to be serious, the parents/guardians of all involved students will be notified in a timely manner, and offered an opportunity to meet with school administration.
- A thorough investigation will take place and all privacy rights consistent with federal and state law will be followed.
- District 108 will make all reasonable efforts to complete investigations within ten (10) school days after the report was received.
- Details of all incidents will be evaluated and if necessary, the administration will contact local police to report and for consultation.

- At the conclusion of an investigation that establishes an incident of bullying, student(s) will receive appropriate consequences for their involvement.
- All reported incidents will be documented and will include staff follow up monitoring to ensure no repeated situations occur.

**Non Discrimination Coordinator:** Meghan Litko                    - mlitko@willowspringsschool.org  
**District Complaint Managers:** Alexandra Oreluk               - aoreluk@willowspringsschool.org  
Steve Bahn     - sbahn@willowspringsschool.org

A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying is prohibited. A student’s act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.

A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the school’s investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as bullying for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.