

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

WHAT PARENTS AND GUARDIANS NEED TO KNOW

➤ LET'S DEFINE WHAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT.

WHAT IS BULLYING? Every conflict isn't bullying. Bullying is severe, pervasive or persistent behavior that substantially interferes with a student's education or the school environment. Bullying is a person repeatedly abusing their power against another person.

WHAT IS HARASSMENT? Harassment is unwelcome verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct relating to an individual's gender, age, race, color, sexual orientation, gender identity expression, national origin, religion, disability, English language proficiency, socioeconomic status or political beliefs.

➤ WHAT SHOULD PARENTS AND GUARDIANS DO?

TELL YOUR KIDS that bullying and harassment are prohibited. It's wrong, they shouldn't do it, and if it happens to them, they should tell you and their teacher.

EXAMPLES are the best way to show kids what we mean. For example, mocking or threatening to hurt someone because of their race, or their native language, or their sexual orientation is not ok – it's harassment! Threatening someone over the internet is cyberbullying!

➤ IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR CHILD IS BEING BULLIED OR HARASSED, you should:

REPORT the situation to your child's teacher and/or school administrator. Ask your child: who is involved, what did they do, when and where did it happen. Complete the District's Bullying and Harassment Reporting and Investigation Form (available at the school and on the District's website, click [here](#)) and give it to the teacher or principal. If you need interpretation services to make the report, ask the school. If there is no response, call the District's bullying hotline (215) 400-SAFE.

OFFER your child positive strategies, such as asking the teacher for help, requesting a meeting with a counselor, and avoiding the bully.

What **DOESN'T** work? Encouraging your child to fight back. Encouraging your child to ignore it. Approaching the child who is bullying.

➤ WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT?

The school must conduct an investigation to find out if the conflict is bullying, harassment or other some conduct that must be addressed. You should be informed of the outcome of the investigation, and what steps the school will take next. However, federal privacy laws prohibit the sharing of information related to another student's discipline or interventions.

➤ QUESTIONS?

Talk to your child's teacher and principal. Attend parent meetings throughout the year to discuss these issues. Call or email the District Compliance Officer for Bullying and Harassment: Diane Bernoff Sher, Esquire at 215-400-5610, dbsher@philasd.org.