

Eminence Anti-Bullying Procedure

The Eminence Independent School District is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students, employees, and volunteers, free from harassment, intimidation, or bullying. "Harassment, intimidation, or bullying" means any repeated inappropriate behavior whether by word, verbal (including oral and written language) or non-verbal, by physical action, directly or indirectly applied, by one or more persons against another person which undermines the individual's person's right to personal dignity. Cyberbullying means bullying by use of any electronic communication device through means including, but not limited to, email, instant messaging, text messages, blogs, mobile phones, online games, and websites.

Types of behavior deemed to be inappropriate:

- Humiliation, including name-calling, reference to academic ability, etc.
- Intimidation, including aggressive use of body language
- Verbal abuse, anonymous or otherwise
- Physical abuse or threatened abuse
- Aggressive or obscene language
- Offensive joke, whether spoken or by email, text messaging, etc.
- Spreading hurtful or demeaning material even if the material was created by another person (e.g., forwarding offensive emails or text messages)
- Victimization, including very personal remarks
- Exclusion and isolation
- Intrusion through interfering with personal possessions or locker
- Threats, including demands for money
- An attack by rumor, gossip, innuendo, or ridicule on any individual's reputation
- Physically damages a student's property
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education
- Treating someone different based on a differentiating characteristic, such as disability, physical appearance, gender, race, socioeconomic status, etc.

Statement on Bullying:

- Every person in Eminence Middle and High School is entitled to respect and to be free of any type of bullying.
- Eminence Schools will work proactively, as far as it can, to ensure that bullying does not take place.

- Reporting incidents of bullying is responsible behavior.
- A record will be kept of all reported incidents of bullying.
- The matter will be dealt with seriously.
- Eminence has a program of support for both the bully and the bullied.
- Appropriate action will be taken to ensure that it does not continue.

Procedures for Noting and Reporting Incidents of Bullying:

- Students should discuss any incident of bullying with a teacher or another trusted adult within the school system. This is responsible behavior rather than “telling tales.”
- Parents/guardians should contact the school regarding incidents of bullying behavior which they might suspect or that have come to their attention through their children or other parents.

Incidents of bullying behavior, no matter how trivial, will be dealt with in the following manner:

- Appropriate personnel will interview all of the students involved in a bullying incident
 - The alleged victim and alleged perpetrators of the incident will be spoken to and encouraged to solve the problem.
 - The alleged victim and perpetrators will be invited to write down any relevant details using a “Bully Report Form.” Written statements from all parties involved in the incident will be attached to the Report Form.
 - All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and with due regard to the rights of all pupils involved.
 - Records will be kept of all incidents and of all the procedures that were followed.
- If the behavior continues, the parents/guardians of the victims and bullies will be informed.
- If there is a serious incident, such as repeated verbal assault or coercion, the matter will be reported to the Principal and parents, and the appropriate discipline will be applied.
- If the incident is considered to be more serious, such as inappropriate misbehavior or physical assault, the Principal will be notified immediately along with the Superintendent and the police.

- Offenders and victims of bullying may be referred to counseling with the school counselor.
- Counseling, corrective discipline, and/or referral to law enforcement will be used to change the behavior of the perpetrator and remediate the impact on the victim. This includes appropriate intervention(s), restoration of a positive climate, and support for victims and others impacted by the violation. False reports or retaliation for harassment, intimidation, or bullying also constitutes violations of the policy.
- Sanctions may include:
 - A contract of good behavior
 - Community service
 - Withdrawal of privileges
 - Suspension
 - Expulsion
- In order to appeal a decision, a parent/student may request a review by writing to the Principal.

Process for Filing a Complaint

Informal Complaint Process: Anyone may use informal procedures to report and resolve complaints of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. Informal reports may be made to any staff member. Staff shall also inform the assistant principal or guidance counselor when they receive complaints of harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

Informal remedies include an opportunity for the complainant(s) to explain to the alleged perpetrator that the conduct is unwelcome, disruptive, or inappropriate either in writing or face-to-face.

Formal Complaint Process: Anyone can initiate a formal complaint of harassment, intimidation, or bullying, even if the informal complaint process is being utilized. Complainant(s) should not be promised confidentiality at the onset of an investigation. The following process shall be followed:

- All informal and formal complaints shall be in writing. School administrators will take every incident seriously.
- If the complainant does not want to file a formal complaint, the administration may still draft a formal complaint to have on record.
- The administration will investigate all formal, written complaints.
- Following the investigation, a full report shall be written.

- The administration will respond to the complaint within a reasonable timeline stating:
 - That the district intends to take corrective action, or
 - The district does not have adequate evidence to conclude that bullying, harassment, or intimidation occurred.
- An appeal can be filed with the principal or superintendent.

The scope of this policy covers conduct that occurs on the school campus, at school-sponsored activities or events (regardless of location), on school-provided transportation, or through school-owned technology, or that otherwise creates a significant disruption to the school environment.