

Board Policy

Bullying/Cyberbullying

The Board is committed to providing a safe and productive environment within its facilities, on school buses, and at Eastern Suffolk BOCES-sponsored events and/or activities. Therefore, it shall be the policy of ESBOCES to maintain an environment in which bullying and cyberbullying in any form are not tolerated.

Bullying

Bullying is strictly prohibited on ESBOCES property, in ESBOCES facilities, on school buses, and at ESBOCES-sponsored events and/or activities, whether occurring on or off ESBOCES premises.

For purposes of this policy, the term "bullying" is defined as "a variety of negative acts involving real or perceived imbalance of power, with a more powerful individual or group attacking those who are, or are perceived to be, less powerful." Bullying can take three forms:

1. physical (including, but not limited to, hitting, kicking, spitting, pushing, and taking personal belongings);
2. verbal (including, but not limited to, taunting, malicious teasing, name calling, extorting, and making threats, whether orally or in writing); and
3. psychological (including, but not limited to, spreading rumors; manipulating social relationships; and engaging in social exclusion, extortion, or intimidation).

Bullying against any individual is strictly prohibited. This includes bullying of employees against students; students against employees; employees against other employees; and bullying by or against any parents, persons in parental relation, volunteers, visitors, or vendors who may be on ESBOCES property or at ESBOCES-sponsored events and/or activities.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is strictly prohibited. As with other forms of bullying, cyberbullying is an attempt to display power and control over someone perceived as weaker. Cyberbullying may occur both on and off ESBOCES premises and may involve use of the ESBOCES Internet system or use of personal digital devices (including, but not limited to, cell phones, digital cameras, and personal computers) to engage in bullying.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, extorting, or terrorizing another student or employee by way of any technological tool (including, but not limited to, sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or Web site postings, including, but not limited to, blogs, chat rooms, and social networks such as Facebook and MySpace).

Cyberbullying has the effect of:

1. physically, emotionally, or mentally harming an individual;
2. placing an individual in reasonable fear of physical, emotional or mental harm;
3. placing an individual in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property;
and
4. creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with the mission of ESBOCES.

An administrative regulation has been developed to implement the reporting of allegations of bullying/cyberbullying, prevention and intervention techniques, sanctions for violations of this policy and its administrative regulation, and prohibition of retaliatory behavior.

References:

- Civil Service Law §75-b
- Board Policy 2410 – Code of Conduct
- Board Policy 6100 – Dignity for All Students Act
- Board Policy 6560 – Discrimination/Harassment Prohibition (Students)
- Administrative Regulation 2410R.1 – Code of Conduct
- Administrative Regulation 6518R.1 – Bullying/Cyberbullying
- Administrative Regulation 6560R.1 – Discrimination/Harassment Prohibition (Students)

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