Anti-Discrimination, Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying Policy

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Overview

It is the policy of OFL-Ridgecrest to prohibit harassment, of any form, including, without limitation, sexual, physical, verbal, written, electronic, mental, emotional and visual harassment; intimidation, bullying, and cyber bullying. Whether direct or indirect, such actions can substantially harm and interfere with a student's education, threaten the overall educational environment, and substantially disrupt the operation of the school. Possible forums for social media bullying include but are not limited to: websites with free registration and ease of registration; websites offering peer-to-peer instant messaging; websites offering comment forums or sections; and websites offering image or video posting platforms.

OFL-Ridgecrest prohibits all forms of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying, including when based on the actual or perceived characteristics set forth in Penal Code section 422.55 including immigration status, as well as those identified in Education Code section 220 including, without limitation disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. Students who violate this policy may face detention, loss of computer privileges, suspension, or expulsion in accordance with the school's student disciplinary policy. When appropriate, school administration may refer student conduct to local law enforcement officials for potential prosecution.

This policy applies to prohibited statements and actions by students directed at other students or school employees and shall apply to actions taken on or immediately adjacent to school property, at any school-sponsored event, while using school-sponsored transportation, through the use of the school's internet system, and through the use of personal devices.

In situations in which electronic or cyber bullying originates from a non-school computer, but is brought to the attention of school officials, any disciplinary action shall be based upon whether the conduct is determined to be disruptive of the educational process so that it markedly interrupts or impedes the day-to-day operations of the school.

It is important to understand that jokes, stories, cartoons, nicknames, sending or posting inappropriate and/or hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or website postings, including blogs and comments that violate school, state, and federal law may be offensive to others and will not be tolerated.

Student Reporting Procedures

If you feel you have been a victim of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, or if you witness such an incident, inform your teacher, counselor, or school administrator immediately. Keeping quiet or ignoring the problem will not make it go away. You may also report harassment by calling the toll-free We Want to Know Hotline® 1-800-990-8384. Victims of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying are encouraged to provide a written statement providing as much detail as possible to assist school leadership with their incident investigation.

Staff Reporting Procedures

All staff should report any incident of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying to the Assistant Principal, Principal, and Human Resources- as soon as possible. If staff witness an act of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying, they will take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so. Staff who witness such an incident must also submit a written description of the incident using the school's internal incident reporting form after reporting it to the school administration team. Staff submitting incident reports should include as much detail as possible to assist school administration with the incident investigation.

Investigation and Student Discipline

Each complaint of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, or bullying will be promptly investigated by school leadership in accordance with other school policies, including student disciplinary policies. The Assistant Principal will investigate the complaint by collecting and reviewing all written statements and related evidence; will consult with other members of school leadership to determine appropriate action, if needed; and will notify parents/guardians of the incident and meet to discuss interventions, supports or other disciplinary measures as appropriate. The school prohibits retaliatory behavior against any complainant or participant in the complaint process.

Complaints may also be filed under the school's Uniform Complaint Procedures (UCP) Policy. The UCP Policy contains further information regarding the timeline to investigate and resolve complaints, and the appeal process.

Staff Training

The school provides staff development training in bullying prevention education, which includes but is not limited to resources provided and recommended by the California Department of Education in accordance with Education Code section 32283.5. Staff will be trained no less than once each school year.