



Book	Dodgeville School Board Policies
Section	400 Series: Students
Title	REPORTING and RESPONDING to BULLYING and HARASSMENT INVOLVING STUDENTS
Code	411.1 - Rule
Status	Active
Adopted	April 17, 2023

The attached document bundles four distinct, audience-focused rules/procedures for the implementation of a board policy that defines and prohibits student-related bullying and harassment:

- ***411.1-Rule 1 REPORTING BULLYING/HARASSMENT: Procedures for Students, Parents, and Other Non-Employees***
- ***411.1-Rule 2 REPORTING BULLYING/HARASSMENT: Expectations and Procedures for District Employees***
- ***411.1-Rule 3 RESPONDING TO REPORTS OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT INVOLVING STUDENTS***
- ***411.1-Rule 4 BOARD GUIDELINES FOR THE DISTRICT'S PROCEDURES, SERVICES, AND COMMUNICATIONS RELATED TO BULLYING AND HARASSMENT IN THE SCHOOLS***

Each of the four rules/procedures bundled in this file begins on a new page with its own title, and each rule/procedure has its own page-numbering.

WASB PRG 411.1 Sample Rule 1

[411.1 Rule.pdf \(237 KB\)](#)

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Any student who (1) is the target of any bullying or harassment; (2) who observes/witnesses any incident involving bullying or harassment; or (3) obtains knowledge of possible bullying or harassment that the student finds credible or upsetting, is strongly encouraged to report the incident(s) to Dodgeville School District staff using any of the procedures identified in this rule. Parents and guardians and others with relevant knowledge/information/concerns related to incidents involving students are similarly encouraged to report such concerns/incidents to the Dodgeville School District.

There are several different ways that students, parents and guardians, and others can report concerns related to bullying and/or harassment:

1. **At the Building/School Level:**

- a. Making an informal verbal or written report (e.g., via a parent email) to a teacher, activity supervisor (e.g. a head coach, a bus driver, etc.), student services staff member or building principal; or
- b. Completing a "Report of Bullying or Harassment" form and delivering the form to a teacher, student services staff member (e.g., a school counselor) or to the building principal.

2. **At the District Level:**

- a. Completing a "Report of Bullying or Harassment" form and delivering the form to the office of the District Administrator; or
- b. Pursuing a District-level complaint using the Dodgeville School District's student discrimination complaint procedures. When using these procedures, the complaint may be initially filed with the Dodgeville School District's designated Equal Educational Opportunities Compliance Officer.

A student or parent or guardian can choose the specific reporting method with which they are most comfortable. That is, any report/concern/incident(s) can be brought forward at the building level and/or at the District level. The specificity and clarity of the information (e.g., expressly identifying in connection with a verbal report that the issue concerns "bullying" and/or "harassment") is likely to be more important than the particular method that is used to make the initial point of contact. To help avoid misunderstandings, the Dodgeville School District strongly encourages students and parents and guardians to submit a written report using the Dodgeville School District's "Report of Bullying or Harassment" form any time they want to be sure that they are triggering the investigation and intervention steps outlined in related Dodgeville School District procedures.

Regardless of the reporting method that is used, the Dodgeville School District's primary concern in any situation that involves the bullying or harassment of a student is for the safety and well-being of the victim/target, and it is the Dodgeville School District's goal to provide an adequate and appropriate response. Employees are directed to use their professional judgment to appropriately scale the nature of the Dodgeville School District's response to the nature of the specific incident(s)/concern(s).

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REPORTING BULLYING/HARASSMENT: Expectations and Procedures for District Employees

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Expectations for Dodgeville School District Employees to Report Bullying or Harassment Involving Students

Any Dodgeville School District employee who, in connection with their duties, witnesses or obtains credible knowledge of any incident of bullying or harassment of a student is expected to make a timely (usually same day) written report of the incident to a direct supervisor or the Human Resource Generalist in any of the following circumstances:

1. The employee knows or suspects that a student has been, or is being, subjected to any severe or repeated act(s) of bullying or harassment and believes that the incident(s) have caused, or are likely to cause, physical, emotional, or mental harm to the target/victim;
2. Any time the incident involves conduct by a Dodgeville School District official, Dodgeville School District employee, or other adult toward a student victim/target;
3. The conduct in question would clearly constitute prohibited harassment based on a student's legally-protected status;
4. Any time a person who is verbally reporting an incident or concern involving potential bullying or harassment expressly states that he/she wants the incident/concern to be documented;
5. If the employee knows that the incident reflects a continuation or escalation of prior bullying or harassment that has already been reported and that the bully-aggressor has already been expressly directed to cease; and
6. Any time an employee with knowledge of possible bullying or harassment concludes that they have (a) reasonable cause to suspect that a student has been (or is currently) subject to abuse or neglect, or (b) reason to believe that a student has been threatened with abuse or neglect and that abuse or neglect will occur (**IMPORTANT: Such an incident also triggers a duty to report the information to appropriate external legal authorities under state law**).

Dodgeville School District employees may, in connection with their duties, witness or obtain credible knowledge of other incidents involving inappropriate conduct by or that is directed toward one or more students that may, or may not, also constitute bullying or harassment. For example, not all incidents of interpersonal conflict, teasing, name-calling, etc. amount to bullying or harassment. Provided that the employee is not required to report the matter pursuant to the paragraph immediately above, the Dodgeville School District expects the employee to exercise reasonable judgment to determine (1) how to intervene to stop and address the inappropriate behavior; and (2) whether the incident should be further reported/documented.

In making such discretionary reporting decisions, an employee is expected to consider factors such as: (1) the extent to which the inappropriate behavior has stopped; (2) whether the incident appears to have been a relatively minor and isolated incident versus a

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severe or repeated behavior; and (3) the extent to which the victim/target, even if initially upset in the moment, does not appear to be substantially affected by the incident going forward.

Employees are expected to:

1. Make efforts to be reasonably consistent in making such reporting decisions;
2. Follow any supervisory guidance that they may receive; and
3. Seek assistance from the appropriate building principal or from student services personnel whenever they encounter a concern with bullying or harassment where (a) the employee is unsure how to fully assess or otherwise handle the situation; or (b) the employee believes that his/her standard behavior management techniques and practices are inadequate to appropriately respond to the situation/concern.

SPECIAL PROVISION APPLICABLE TO HOURLY EMPLOYEES: Hourly employees who are not assigned responsibility for regularly managing student conduct or for determining how the Dodgeville School District will respond to incidents of bullying or harassment should, as a default, contact their supervisor or the relevant building principal any time they have significant concerns about the bullying or harassment of any student(s). This paragraph does not mean that hourly staff should refrain from attempting to stop harmful behavior in any incident that is presently taking place.

Reporting Procedures:

A Dodgeville School District employee that is making a written report of bullying or harassment under this rule is expected to submit the report to a direct supervisor or the Human Resource Generalist. The employee may use the Dodgeville School District's building-level "Report of Bullying or Harassment" form. The employee should make an effort to confirm that the administrator received the report.

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RESPONDING TO REPORTS OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT INVOLVING STUDENTS

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I. RESPONDING TO AND INVESTIGATING REPORTS OF POSSIBLE BULLYING OR HARASSMENT INVOLVING STUDENTS

A. General Expectations and Priority Actions

Whenever the Dodgeville School District receives any report or complaint regarding alleged bullying or harassment of a student (whether written or verbal), or where any employee is otherwise addressing an incident, concern, or allegation that the employee understands to be related to possible bullying or harassment of a student, the highest-priority response measures are the following:

1. Intervening to attempt to stop harmful or inappropriate behavior in any incident that is presently taking place;
2. Taking steps to address concerns regarding any imminent threats or imminent harm; and
3. Identifying a teacher, administrator, or other licensed staff member who will make a personal contact with the student who has been clearly identified as a possible victim/target of bullying or harassment.

The Dodgeville School District's further expectation is that employees will process written reports and formal complaints according to established procedures, and, more generally, appropriately scale the Dodgeville School District's response to any report or complaint in a manner that reflects the known nature and severity of the specific incident(s)/concern(s). The Dodgeville School District's response to any situation involving bullying or harassment should be adjusted any time the Dodgeville School District determines that an initial response or attempted resolution has been ineffective.

B. Investigating a Written Report of Bullying or Harassment

The following procedures shall be used to process any clearly identified written report of possible bullying or harassment of a student that is received by the Dodgeville School District, including most reports submitted using the Dodgeville School District's "Report of Bullying or Harassment" form, but not including any report or complaint that is being separately processed under the Dodgeville School District's formal student discrimination complaint procedure. Where any written report of bullying or harassment specifies that the alleged conduct is based, in whole or in part, on a student's legally-protected status or classification (race, sex, sexual orientation, disability, etc.), the Dodgeville School District reserves the right to divert the report for separate processing as a complaint under the Dodgeville School District's student discrimination complaint procedures.

1. **Initial Screening.** Under the direction of a school administrator, each written "Report of Bullying or Harassment" will initially be screened by a licensed staff member to determine whether the report involves conduct that, if substantiated, could be a violation of the Dodgeville School District's anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy. This step will normally involve making an initial contact with

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the individual who submitted the report, as well as with each student who is an alleged target/victim.

- a. If the Dodgeville School District, with the approval of a school administrator, determines that the report involves conduct that would not be a violation of the Dodgeville School District's anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy, the issue may be diverted from these procedures for some other appropriate resolution. The individual filing the report and each known target/victim and their parent or guardian will be notified of such a decision, and they may, within 10 days of being notified, request reconsideration of the decision.
 - b. If the initial screening suggests that bullying or harassment may have occurred (or may be occurring), an administrator or designee will continue to process the report under these procedures.
 - (1) From this point forward, and regardless of who initially submitted the report, the Dodgeville School District's primary point of contact regarding the report will be with each student who is an alleged target/victim and the student's parent or guardian.
 - (2) Nothing in the remainder of these procedures prevents an administrator, a target/victim, and the student's parent or guardian from mutually agreeing, at any time, to a resolution of a report of bullying or harassment that is satisfactory to all parties, even though it departs from these procedures. Such an alternative resolution shall be documented in the Dodgeville School District's records. However, no administrator shall approve a resolution that they determine (a) does not adequately address the matter, or (b) may jeopardize any person's safety.
2. **Post-Screening Investigation.** When any report of bullying or harassment is investigated beyond the initial screening stage, the investigation shall be conducted by an administrator or by a licensed staff member acting under the direction of an administrator, unless the District Administrator engages an independent outside party to conduct the investigation.
- a. The investigation shall be conducted by a person who the Dodgeville School District determines is not identified as a person who is allegedly responsible for, or who was directly involved in, the underlying issue or incident.
 - b. The investigator shall ensure that the person who filed the report and any student who has been identified as an alleged victim/target has had an opportunity to present relevant information or other evidence.
 - c. Prior to making and issuing any determination that a report of bullying or harassment has been substantiated, the investigator shall (unless the student is unavailable to the Dodgeville School District) provide any accused bully/aggressor who has been identified with an opportunity to respond to the allegations and to present relevant information or other evidence.
 - d. Nothing in these procedures prevents the Dodgeville School District from implementing interim responsive measures (e.g., pending completion of an investigation) that are intended to address any person's safety and well-being, prevent continuation or escalation of a conflict, or prevent disruption to a student's education or within any school environment.

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3. **Administrative Determination.** Following the completion of the investigation described in Step 2, the person who conducted the investigation (if someone other than the building principal or District Administrator) shall consult with a building principal or the District Administrator, and the administration will determine whether any bullying, harassment, or other violation of Dodgeville School District policies or school rules has been substantiated.
 - a. The Dodgeville School District will notify each student (and their parent or guardian) who was identified as an alleged target/victim of the extent to which the Dodgeville School District determined that the student has (or has not) been subjected to bullying or harassment in violation of Board policy.
 - b. The Dodgeville School District will notify each student (and their parent or guardian) who was identified as an alleged bully/aggressor of the extent to which the Dodgeville School District determined (if at all) that the student engaged in bullying, harassment, or other conduct prohibited by Board policy or school rules. The appropriate entries documenting any violation(s) will be made in the student's behavioral records.
4. **Request for Reconsideration of the Administrative Determination.** Any student, or any parent or guardian of the student, who is an alleged target/victim or an alleged bully/aggressor and who disagrees with the administration's decision in the matter may, within [10] calendar days of being notified of the administration's decision, file a written request for reconsideration with the office of the District Administrator. Unless additional time is needed to conduct further investigation or to evaluate new information, the District Administrator shall normally respond to the request for reconsideration within [10] calendar days.
5. **Optional Appeal to the School Board.** Any student, or any parent or guardian of the student, who is an alleged target/victim or an alleged bully/aggressor and who disagrees with the District Administrator's resolution upon reconsideration may treat the District Administrator's decision as the Dodgeville School District's final decision or submit an appeal to the School Board. Any appeal to the Board shall be filed in care of the School Board Clerk at the Office of the District Administrator within [10] calendar days of receipt of the District Administrator's decision, and the request shall state the reasons the decision is being appealed. The Board will provide a response to the appeal, which may or may not involve a meeting with the relevant parties and/or further investigation.
6. **Appeal to DPI in Limited Cases.** Where any written "Report of Bullying or Harassment" investigated under these procedures specifies that the alleged conduct is based, in whole or in part, on a student's legally-protected classification (e.g., race, sex, sexual orientation, disability, etc.), the complaining party may appeal any negative final decision of the District to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Accordingly, in such cases, notice of a negative determination issued to the complainant by the District Administrator upon reconsideration or (if applicable) by the Board shall include notice to the complainant that the Dodgeville School District's determination may be appealed

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to the State Superintendent in writing within 30 days using the procedures identified in [Chapter PI 1](#) of the Wisconsin Administrative Code.

II. DISTRICT INTERVENTIONS FOLLOWING REPORTS AND SUBSTANTIATED INCIDENTS OF BULLYING OR HARASSMENT INVOLVING STUDENTS

A. Supporting a Student Who Expresses Concerns or Fears Related to Bullying or Harassment

In some situations, an investigation may be unable to substantiate a particular incident, unable to identify any or all students who may have been involved in a particular incident, or result in a finding that away-from-school conduct cannot be investigated as a District matter. However, a substantiated incident is not a pre-requisite to providing supportive interventions on behalf of a student who expresses concerns or fears related to bullying or harassment. Any time the Dodgeville School District is working with a student and/or their parent or guardian surrounding concerns with bullying or harassment, staff may explore the extent to which on-going monitoring, counseling, or other supportive measures may be useful and appropriate.

B. Supporting a Student Victim Following a Substantiated Incident of Bullying or Harassment

Following any substantiated incident of bullying or harassment involving a student victim, the District Administrator shall specify in writing for the student and their parent or guardian the victim-focused interventions that the Dodgeville School District intends to implement. Examples of possible interventions and responses include:

- Establishing clear points of contact if the student, or the student's parent or guardian, has ongoing or new concerns, if any issues concerning retaliation arise, etc.;
- Establishing date(s) by which a designated staff member will initiate follow-up contact with the student and/or the parent or guardian;
- Involving/notifying additional school staff;
- Monitoring particular situations/settings;
- Providing student services (e.g., counseling);
- Establishing and implementing specific safety plans.

C. Accountability for Students Who Have Engaged in Bullying or Harassment

If the Dodgeville School District issues a determination under these procedures that a student has engaged in conduct that constitutes bullying or harassment in violation of Board policy, the District Administrator shall specify in writing for the student and their parent or guardian (1) any school-related consequences that the Dodgeville School District is imposing on the student; and/or (2) any other interventions that the Dodgeville School District intends to implement to promote positive changes in

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the student's interpersonal skills, communication skills, socio-emotional development (e.g. his/her capacity to demonstrate empathy for others) and/or general behavior moving forward.

Examples of possible school-related consequences include: loss or suspension of privileges, detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and expulsion from school.

Examples of other possible interventions include:

- Holding meetings involving the student and their parent or guardian which cover issues such as ensuring that the student understands (a) the consequences and impact of their past behavior; (b) how the Dodgeville School District defines bullying and harassment; (c) the possible consequences for future violations of the Dodgeville School District's behavioral expectations; and (d) that any type of retaliation related to the incident is prohibited and would be a serious offense;
- Establishing date(s) by which a designated staff member will initiate follow-up contact with the student and/or the parent or guardian;
- Providing student services (e.g., counseling);
- Interventions intended to identify/address potential underlying causes of the behavior and teach new skills;
- Referring the student's parent or guardian to available community services, non-District counseling, etc.

Nothing in these procedures prevents Dodgeville School District staff from involving or referring a matter to law enforcement where a student's conduct may have violated one or more laws or where safety interests indicate that such involvement is appropriate.

D. Enhancing School Climate and Building All Students' Awareness and Skills

The Dodgeville School District's goals include creating a culture in which bullying and harassment are not tolerated, in which students are supported and encouraged to report concerns with possible harassment or bullying, and in which students build skills that enable them to assist peers who are harassed or bullied. Accordingly, anti-bullying and anti-harassment efforts have an on-going instructional component for all students, which will not necessarily be associated with any particular incident. However, it is also possible that certain incidents or observed patterns of conduct may cause the Dodgeville School District to implement a group-based, class-wide, or school-wide intervention measure that is intended to enhance student awareness, communicate particular concerns, identify and promote desired behaviors, and/or to improve the class or school climate. However, the Dodgeville School District will give due consideration to the privacy interests of, and potential negative consequences for, any individual students whenever such interventions are considered.

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The Board believes that bullying and harassment are complex school and community issues that have harmful consequences, first and foremost, for those individuals who are the victims of the behavior; but bullying and harassment also have negative consequences for those who engage in the behavior, for the overall school environment, and for the broader community. Accordingly, the Board directs the administration to ensure that the Dodgeville School District's schools are taking active steps, directed toward both students and staff, surrounding bullying and harassment awareness, prevention, and intervention/response.

The administration shall ensure that bullying and harassment are addressed:

1. Within the Dodgeville School District's personal development and health education curriculum;
2. As an element of technology/Internet safety instruction;
3. As an element of developing and monitoring the overall climate of Dodgeville School District schools and programs;
4. By providing staff development resources related to harassment and bullying and communicating to Dodgeville School District employees about their responsibilities related to awareness, prevention, and intervention;
5. By enforcing the Board's expectations that employees and other adults who are present in the school environment will model appropriate behaviors, including not only the expectation that such adults will avoid engaging in bullying or harassment of students and others, but also the expectation that such adults will model the responsive behaviors that students are encouraged to use when they observe or intervene in response to negative conduct by others;
6. Through the provision and use of interventions and supports for students;
7. By establishing and communicating expectations for student conduct that address negative behaviors that, even if not rising to the level of bullying or harassment, are inappropriate for the school environment and that may be a precursor to bullying or harassment; and
8. By establishing and implementing procedures under which incidents and concerns involving bullying and harassment can be reported and addressed in an appropriate manner.

While there are often challenges associated with appropriately identifying, assessing, and responding to incidents of bullying and harassment, the Dodgeville School District's procedures, services, and communications related to bullying and harassment shall take the following positions of the Board into consideration:

1. The Board expects the Dodgeville School District's response to any incident or course of conduct that involves bullying or harassment to exhibit a degree of proportionality to the totality of the known circumstances. No single, pre-defined response is appropriate for all circumstances. Similarly, if Dodgeville School District employees conclude that an initial response to an incident or pattern of bullying or harassment has been ineffective, and they know that the behaviors have continued or that the behaviors have escalated,

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then a proportional response would include changing the Dodgeville District's approach to intervention.

2. Because these behaviors and their effects differ substantially from one situation to the next, the Dodgeville School District can be more effective in its efforts when the students and parents and guardians affected by a serious situation (a) clearly identify the severity and totality of the circumstances of the situation to a teacher or administrator; and (b) participate in an ongoing partnership with Dodgeville School District employees to monitor, communicate about, and make adjustments to the response(s) that have been implemented to date.
3. Bullying and harassment involve many overlapping behaviors, and conduct that may be properly labeled as bullying and/or harassment may also violate a state law, another Dodgeville School District policy, school rules, or other established behavioral expectations for students or employees. Assigning a particular label to a negative behavior is generally less important than identifying the behavior as inappropriate and taking action to address the behavior. However, where any written complaint or written report of bullying or harassment specifies that the alleged conduct is based, in whole or in part, on a student's legally-protected classification, the Dodgeville School District shall treat its final determination as appealable to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Information/Notice

1. Students and parents and guardians shall be informed annually of relevant portions of the Dodgeville School District's anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy and the related complaint/reporting procedures through the Student Handbook.
2. The Dodgeville School District will also provide a copy of the anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy and the related complaint/reporting procedures to any person who requests it.
3. A reference to the Dodgeville School District's anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy and the related procedures shall also be included in the Dodgeville School District's Employee Handbook.

Annual Report

The Dodgeville School District's Equal Educational Opportunities Compliance Officer shall keep data on the number and types of student-related incidents of bullying and harassment that are the subject of a written report/complaint. The Compliance Officer shall create an end-of-year annual summary report of such incidents (not including any personally-identifiable student information) to assist with the Dodgeville School District's evaluation of its efforts to address bullying and harassment in the schools.

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