

## Harassment and/or Bullying (including Cyberbullying)

No student will harass, intimidate, and/or bully another. School personnel are required to report any harassment or bullying to the Supervisor of Student Discipline.

Conduct constituting harassment may take different forms, including but not limited to the following inappropriate behaviors:

### Sexual Harassment:

A. **Verbal:** The making of written or verbal innuendoes, suggestive comments, jokes of a sexual nature, sexual propositions, or threats to or by a fellow student, staff member, or other persons associated with the district, or by third parties.

B. **Non-Verbal:** Causing the placement of sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment, or the making of sexually suggestive or insulting gestures, sounds, leering, whistling, and the like to or by a fellow student, staff member, or other persons associated with the district, or by third parties.

C. **Physical Contact:** Threatening or causing unwanted touching, contact, or attempts at same, including patting, pinching, brushing the body, or coerced sexual activity to or by a fellow student, staff member, or other person associated with the district, or by third parties.

### Race, Color, National Origin, and Disability Harassment:

A. **Verbal:** Written or verbal innuendoes, slurs, comments, jokes, insults, threats, or disparaging remarks concerning a person's race, color, national origin, sex/gender, disability, religious beliefs, etc., to or by a fellow student, staff member, or other persons associated with the district, or by third parties.

B. **Non-Verbal:** Placing objects, pictures, or graphic commentaries in the school environment or making insulting or threatening gestures to or by a fellow student, staff member, or persons associated with the district, or by third parties.

C. **Physical:** Any intimidating or disparaging action such as hitting, hissing, cussing, spitting, hazing, and bullying to or by a fellow student, staff member, or other persons associated with the district, or by third parties.

Any student who believes that he/she is the victim of any of the above actions or has observed such actions taken by another student, staff member, or other persons associated with the district, or by third parties should promptly take the following steps:

A. If the alleged harasser is a student, staff member, third party, or another person associated with the district, other than the Supervisor of Student Discipline, the affected students or their parents/guardians should, as soon as possible after the incident, contact the Supervisor of Student Discipline.

B. If the alleged harasser is the Supervisor of Student Discipline, the affected student or his/her parents/guardians should, as soon as possible after the incident, contact the district's Compliance Officer, Mr. Russell McKenzie, in the Main Office.

C. The student or parents/guardians may make contact either by a written report, by telephone, or personal visit. During the contact, the reporting student should provide the name of the person(s) who he/she believes to be responsible for the harassment and the nature of the harassing incident(s).

### OR

The student or parents/guardians may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education. Complaints may be sent to: U.S. Department of Education, Team Leader, Office for Civil Rights, 600 Superior Avenue East, Suite 750 Bank One Center, Cleveland, Ohio 44104-2611.

Each report received by the district's Compliance Officer shall be investigated in a timely and confidential manner. While a charge is under investigation, no information is to be released to anyone who is not involved with the investigation, except as required by law or is in the contact of a legal administrative proceeding. No one involved is to discuss the subject outside of the investigation.

The purpose of this provision is to:

- A. protect the confidentiality of the student who files a complaint;
- B. encourage the reporting of any incident of sexual, racial, or other forms of harassment;
- C. protect the reputation of any party wrongfully charged with harassment.

Investigation of a complaint will normally include conferring with the parties involved (if under 18 years of age, may include parents), and any named or apparent witnesses. All students and others involved are to be protected from coercion, intimidation, retaliation, or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation. Parents and/or guardians of the student who is the victim of harassment will be notified upon the filing of a report.

Maplewood recognizes that determining whether a particular action or incident is harassment, or conversely is a reflection of an action without a discriminatory or intimidating intent or effect, must be based on all of the facts in the matter. Given the nature of harassing behavior, the district recognizes that false accusations can have serious effects on innocent individuals. Therefore, all students are expected to act responsibly, honestly, and with the utmost candor whenever they present harassment allegations or charges against school employees, other students, or third parties.

Performing any act or coercing another, including the victim, to perform any act of initiation into any class, team, or organization that causes or creates a substantial risk of causing mental or physical harm will not be tolerated. Permission, consent, or assumption of risk by an individual subjected to hazing shall not lessen the prohibitions contained in this rule.

All incidents of hazing must be reported immediately to any of the following individuals: the building director or other administrator, teacher, student club advisor/supervisor/and/or superintendent. Students who engage in hazing may also be liable for civil and criminal penalties. Discipline for harassment may include a student conference, a parent and student conference, detention, assignment to the Alternative Learning Center, out-of-school suspension, or a recommendation for expulsion.