

Bullying and Harassment Defined

Bullying means systematically and chronically, inflicting physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students or school employees. It is further defined as a pattern of unwanted and repeated written, verbal, or physical behavior, including any threatening, insulting, dehumanizing gesture by an adult or student, that is severe or pervasive enough to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment; cause discomfort or humiliations; or unreasonably interfere with the individual's school performance or participation that includes a noted power differential.

Bullying may involve, but is not limited to:

1. Teasing
2. Social exclusion
3. Threats
4. Intimidation
5. Stalking
6. Physical violence
7. Theft
8. Sexual, religious, or racial harassment
9. Public humiliation
10. Destruction of Property
11. Cyberstalking
12. Cyberbullying

Harassment means any threatening, insulting or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that:

1. Places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property.
2. Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, opportunities, or benefits
3. Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school

Bullying and Harassment also encompasses:

1. Retaliation against a student or school employee by another student or school employee for asserting or alleging an act of bullying or harassment. Reporting an act of bullying or harassment that is not made in good faith is considered retaliation.
2. Perpetuation of conduct listed in the definition of bullying and harassment by an individual or group with intent to demean, dehumanize, embarrass or cause emotional or physical harm to a student or school employee by:
 - a. Incitement or coercion
 - b. Accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, computer network, electronic or wireless devices on or off school grounds to bully or harass that jeopardizes student or school employee safety or disrupts the learning environment within the scope of the district school system.
 - c. Acting in a manner that has an effect substantially similar to the effect of bullying or harassment.

Cyberstalking is defined in s. 784.048(1)(d), F.S., means to engage in a course of conduct to communicate, or to cause to be communicated, words, images, or language by or through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication, directed at a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person and serving no legitimate purpose.

Cyberbullying is defined as the willful and repeated harassment and intimidation of an individual through the use of electronic mail or electronic communication with the intent to coerce, intimidate, harass, or cause substantial emotional distress to a person.

To view MDCPS Bullying and Harassment policy ([click here](#))