



Bullying, Harassment or Discrimination

What difference does it make?

Board Policies 4510 (Student Bullying), 4620 (Student Non-Discrimination), 8012 (Employee/Visitor Non-Discrimination) & 8013 (Workplace Bullying) prohibit student bullying, workplace bullying and harassment or discrimination. Any employee or student who abuses another employee or student through any bullying, harassing and/or discriminatory conduct or communication violates these policies whether such conduct occurs on school grounds, at school events or on the school bus. The conduct may include in-person contact, written communication, or via any form of electronic transmission or communication. Depending on the incident, violators of the policy may face school discipline, including suspension or expulsion.

Bullying

Workplace bullying is the repeated, unreasonable actions of an individual (or group) directed toward a peer, co-worker or employee that is intended to intimidate and creates a risk to the health or safety of the target. (Source: 8013)

Bullying against a student(s) is the intentional action by an individual or group of individuals to inflict physical, emotional or mental harm or suffering on another individual or group of individuals when there is an imbalance of real or perceived power. Bullying behavior creates an objectively hostile or offensive environment. Such an environment may cause, or be likely to cause, negative and harmful conditions. (Source: 4510)

Harassment

Harassment is unwanted, deliberate or repeated unsolicited comments (oral or written), gestures, graphic material, physical contacts, verbal/nonverbal or physical conduct directed to an individual because of the student's membership in a protected class. Harassment occurs when a hostile environment is created by the offending behavior.

Discrimination

Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favorably than others because of their membership in a protected class.

The term "Protected Class" refers to a group of people defined by the law who share common characteristics and are protected from discrimination and harassment by federal, state and/or local laws.

District Policy recognizes protected classes defined under federal, state and/or local laws including, but not limited to, age, color, disability, gender expression, gender identity, homelessness, marital status, national origin/ancestry, race, religion/creed, sex, sexual orientation, and/or retaliation as defined in the policies. (Source: 4620, 8012)

What is the difference?

Bullying and harassment involve behavior that intimidates, threatens, offends or humiliates others.

Bullying is linked specifically to the actions of the aggressor. While actions which are considered bullying may also be harassment, harassment and discrimination arise when the actions against a person are influenced by that person's protected class.

How do I decide if I am being bullied or discriminated against?

Speak with someone. Contact any teacher, Student Services staff, administrator or the Title IX Investigator (contact information below).

Now what?

Bullying: Bullying incidents are usually investigated under the direction of a school administrator located in the school where the incident(s) occurred.

Harassment/Discrimination: The Title IX Investigator will assist you in resolving the situation informally. If this is not possible, a formal investigation will occur, generally led by the Title IX Investigator.

Eric M. Kestin
Title IX Investigator / Affirmative Action Officer

Doyle Administration Building
545 West Dayton Street, Room 100F
Madison, WI 53703-1995

Telephone: 608/663-1530
E-mail: emkestin@madison.k12.wi.us

For more information:
<https://legal.madison.k12.wi.us/equal-opportunity-office>