

## PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING

The Tahoma School District No. 409 is committed to a safe and civil educational environment for all students, employees, volunteers and patrons, that is free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. “Harassment, intimidation or bullying” means any intentional written message or image, including those that are electronically transmitted, verbal, or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, or mental or physical disability, or other distinguishing characteristics, when an act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student’s property; or
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s education; or
- Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school.

Nothing in this section requires the affected student to actually possess a characteristic that is a basis for the harassment, intimidation or bullying.

“Other distinguishing characteristics” can include but are not limited to: physical appearance, clothing or other apparel, socioeconomic status

“Intentional acts” refers to the individual’s choice to engage in the act rather than the ultimate impact of the action(s).

**Note: Students may also be guilty of harassment, intimidation or bullying if they actively engage, promote, propagate and / or support HIB.**

### **Behaviors/Expressions**

Harassment, intimidation or bullying can take many forms including: slurs, rumors, jokes, innuendoes, demeaning comments, drawings, cartoons, pranks, gestures, physical attacks, threats or other written, oral, physical or electronically transmitted messages or images.

This policy is not intended to prohibit expression of religious, philosophical, or political views provided that the expression does not substantially disrupt the educational environment. Many behaviors that do not rise to the level of harassment, intimidation or bullying may still be prohibited by other district policies or building, classroom, or program rules.

### **Training**

This policy is a component of the district’s responsibility to create and maintain a safe, civil, respectful and inclusive learning community and is to be implemented in conjunc-

tion with communication of the policy and procedures to parents, students, employees, and volunteers.

### **Prevention**

The district will provide students with strategies aimed at preventing harassment, intimidation and bullying including training for those who may not be directly bullying but actively engaging, promoting, propagating or supporting HIB – also known as bystanders. In its efforts to train students, the district will seek partnerships with families, law enforcement and other community agencies.

### **Interventions**

Interventions are designed to remediate the impact on the targeted student(s) and others impacted by the violation, to change the behavior of the perpetrator, and to restore a positive school climate.

The district will consider the frequency of incidents, developmental age of the student, and severity of the conduct in determining intervention strategies. Interventions will range from counseling, correcting behavior and discipline, to law enforcement referrals.

### **Retaliation/False Allegations**

Retaliation is prohibited and will result in appropriate discipline. It is a violation of this policy to threaten or harm someone for reporting harassment, intimidation, or bullying.

It is also a violation of district policy to knowingly report false allegations of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Students or employees will not be disciplined for making a report in good faith. However, persons found to knowingly report or corroborate false allegations will be subject to appropriate discipline.

### **Search and Seizure Related to Reasonable Suspicion of Violation of HIB Policy**

Schools reserve the right to limit use of electronic devices (personal and district-issued), especially when these devices are used to harass, intimidate or bully others, disrupt the learning environment, cheat, or provide unauthorized access to the district network. The Tahoma School District reserves the right to inspect the content on personal electronic devices used at school or school events if school personnel determine there may be cause to suspect that such devices are not being used in accordance with districts rules or policies.

See Electronic Resources Student User Agreement (Tahoma Acceptable Use Policy) for additional responsibilities.

### **Compliance Officer**

The superintendent will appoint a compliance officer as the primary district contact to receive copies of all HIB Incident Reporting Forms and ensure policy implementation. The name and contact information for the compliance officer will be communicated throughout the district.

The superintendent is authorized to direct the implementation of procedures addressing the elements of this policy.

