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3 **STUDENTS**

4  
5 Hazing/Harassment/Intimidation/Bullying

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7 The Great Falls Public School District is committed to providing a safe, productive and positive  
8 learning environment. A safe and accepting school environment is conducive to, and necessary  
9 for optimal academic achievement. Like other disruptive behaviors, bullying, harassment,  
10 intimidation and hazing negatively impact the learning environment. Bullying, harassment,  
11 intimidating and hazing behaviors will not be tolerated. Students, staff and third parties are  
12 strictly prohibited from bullying, harassment, intimidation, hazing, or retaliation for reporting  
13 such action.

14  
15 Definitions

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17 With the above parameters, the following definitions apply:

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19 “Bullying” means any harassment, intimidation, hazing, or threatening, insulting, or demeaning  
20 gesture or physical contact, including any intentional written, verbal, or electronic  
21 communication (“cyberbullying”) or threat directed against a student that is persistent, severe, or  
22 repeated, and that substantially interferes with a student’s educational benefits, opportunities, or  
23 performance, that takes place on or immediately adjacent to school grounds, at any school-  
24 sponsored activity, on school-provided transportation, at any official school bus stop, or  
25 anywhere conduct may reasonably be considered to be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a  
26 student or staff member or an interference with school purposes or an educational function, and  
27 that has the effect of:

- 28
- 29 • Physically harming a student or damaging a student’s property;
  - 30 • Knowingly placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm to the student or damage  
31 to the student’s property;
  - 32 • Creating a hostile educational environment; or
  - 33 • Substantially and materially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

34 “Harassment” includes, but is not limited to, any act which subjects an individual or group to  
35 unwanted, abusive behavior of a nonverbal, verbal, written (electronic or otherwise), or physical  
36 nature, on the basis of any protected class as defined under federal and/or Montana state law.

37 “Hazing” means an act against a student or coercing a student into behavior that creates risk of  
38 mental or physical harm to a person in order for the student to be initiated into, or affiliated with  
39 a student activity, team, club, or organization, or for any other purpose.

40  
41 “Intimidation” includes, but is not limited to, any threat or act intended to tamper with,  
42 substantially damage, or interfere with another person or their property, cause substantial  
43 inconvenience, subject another to offensive physical contact, or inflict serious physical injury.

1 “Electronic Communication” is defined in 45-8-213, MCA, and includes any communication by  
2 any electronic device including but not limited to text messaging, email, or use of social  
3 networking.

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5 “Retaliation” means an intentional act or communication intended. False charges shall also be  
6 regarded as a serious offense and will result in disciplinary action or other appropriate sanctions.

- 7  
8 • As revenge against a person who has reported or participated in an investigation of  
9 bullying, harassment, hazing or intimidation; or  
10 • To improperly influence the reporting, investigation, or discipline that result from an  
11 incidence of bullying, harassment, hazing or intimidation.

12  
13 “Third Parties” include, but not limited to, coaches, school volunteers, parents, school visitors,  
14 service contractors or others engaged in District business, such as employees of businesses or  
15 organizations participating in cooperative work programs with the District and others not directly  
16 subject to District control at inter-District athletic competitions or other school events.

17  
18 “District” includes District facilities, District premises, and non-District property in the student  
19 or employee is at any District-sponsored, District-approved, or District-related activity or  
20 function, such as field trips or athletic events, where students are under the control of the District  
21 or where the employees is engaged in District business.

22  
23 “Designated Investigator” is the principal of the school, the designated Title IX coordinator, or a  
24 staff member appointed by the principal responsible for receiving and investigating reports of,  
25 bullying, harassment, hazing, and intimidation. An independent investigator may be designated  
26 by the Superintendent or designee.

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28 Prohibitions

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30 No student, staff member, or third parties will engage in any of the following:

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32 • Bullying, harassment, hazing or intimidation of a student;  
33 • Retaliation against a student or staff member for reporting or thought to have reported an  
34 incident of bullying, harassment, hazing or intimidation; or  
35 • Coercion of another person to commit bullying, harassment, hazing or intimidation.

36  
37 Bullying, harassment, hazing or intimidation is strictly prohibited where the school is responsible  
38 for the student:

- 39  
40 • On school premises;  
41 • During any school sponsored program, activity, or function including on a school bus or  
42 other school-related vehicle; or  
43 • Through the use of electronic communication as defined in 45-8-213, MCA regardless of  
44 when or where it occurs, that substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school or  
45 any school-sponsored program, activity, or function.

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1 Consequences

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3 Any student disciplined will be afforded due process as required by District policy for action  
4 taken by school administration or the Board of Trustees.

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6 Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline up  
7 to and including expulsion. Staff whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be  
8 subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. Third parties whose behavior is found to be in  
9 violation of this policy shall be subject to appropriate sanctions as determined and imposed by  
10 the District Administrator or the Board. Individuals may also be referred to law enforcement  
11 officials.

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13 Intervention

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15 All staff members shall intervene when witnessing potential bullying, harassment, hazing or  
16 intimidating behavior. If the staff member witnesses or receives a report of unresolved bullying,  
17 harassment, hazing or intimidation the staff member will report the matter pursuant to *Reporting*  
18 below.

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20 If it is determined that staff was aware of bullying, harassment, hazing or intimidation and did  
21 nothing to intervene; discipline or remedial action may be invoked.

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23 Reporting

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25 All complaints about behavior that may violate this policy shall be promptly investigated. Any  
26 student or third party who has knowledge of conduct in violations of this policy or feels he/she  
27 has been a victim of hazing, harassment, intimidation, or bullying in violation of this policy is  
28 encouraged to immediately report his/her concerns to the building principal or the District  
29 Administrator who have overall responsibility for such investigations. All employees are  
30 required to immediately report. A student may also report concerns to a teacher or counselor,  
31 who will be responsible for notifying the appropriate District official. Complaints against the  
32 building principal shall be filed with the Superintendent. Complaints against the Superintendent  
33 or District Administrator shall be filed with the Board.

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35 All parties shall be notified of the findings of the investigation and, as appropriate, that remedial  
36 action has been taken.

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38 Exhaustion of Administrative Remedies

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40 A person alleging violation of any form of harassment, intimidation, hazing, or threatening,  
41 insulting, or demeaning gesture or physical contact, including any intentional written, verbal, or  
42 electronic communication, as stated above, may seek redress under any available law, after  
43 exhausting all administrative remedies.

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1 Responsibilities

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3 The District Administrator shall be responsible for ensuring notice of this policy is provided to  
4 students, staff, and third parties and for the development of administrative regulations, including  
5 reporting and investigative procedures, as needed.  
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7 When an employee has actual knowledge that behavior in violation of this policy is sexual  
8 harassment, the employee must contact the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX sexual harassment  
9 grievance process will be followed, if applicable, prior to imposing any discipline that cannot be  
10 imposed without resolution of the Title IX process.  
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12 Retaliation and Reprisal

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14 Retaliation is prohibited against any person who reports or is thought to have reported a  
15 violation, files a complaint, or otherwise participates in an investigation or inquiry. Such  
16 retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of Board policy, whether or not a complaint is  
17 substantiated. False charges shall also be regarded as a serious offense and will result in  
18 disciplinary action or other appropriate sanctions.  
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20 Notification and Training

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22 The District policy and procedures will be included in the student handbook for all grade levels  
23 and posted on the District/school webpages.  
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25 Staff and students will be educated on the policy and procedures, including: recognizing  
26 inappropriate behaviors; using appropriate intervention and remediation; and possible  
27 consequences and discipline.  
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30 Cross References:

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|-----------------|---|
| 31 Policy 3215  | Students: Uniform Complaint Procedure                           |
| 32 Policy 3225  | Sexual Harassment of Students                                   |
| 33 Policy 3225F | Sexual Harassment Reporting – Intake Form for Students          |
| 34 Policy 3310  | Student Discipline  |
| 35 Policy 4226  | Community Relations: Hazing, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying |
| 36 Policy 5226  | Personnel: Hazing, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying           |

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38 Legal References:

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 39 § 20-5-207, MCA      | “Bully-Free Montana Act”                            |
| 40 § 20-5-208, MCA      | Definition  |
| 41 § 20-5-209, MCA      | Bullying of Student Prohibited                      |
| 42 § 20-5-210, MCA      | Enforcement – Exhaustion of Administrative Remedies |
| 43 § 45-8-213, MCA      | Privacy and Communications                          |
| 44 10.55.701(2)(f)      | ARM Board of Trustees                               |
| 45 10.55.719, ARM       | Student Protection Procedures                       |
| 46 10.55.801(1)(d), ARM | School Climate                                      |

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2 Policy History:

3	Adopted on:	May 9, 2005
4	Revised on:	April 24, 2006
5	Revised on:	January 22, 2007
6	Revised on:	February 24, 2014
7	Reviewed on:	November 9, 2016
8	Revised on:	March 12, 2018
9	Revised on:	January 11, 2021