

Bullying

Students & Parents: What you need to know about bullying!

It is Ridge High School's mission to reduce bullying in our building by taking a proactive approach. We are implementing school wide strategies that combat bullying and the long-term negative effects that both the victims and the bullies endure.

Definition of Bullying

"Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any gesture, any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether it be a single incident or a series of incidents, that is reasonably perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic (*such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or a mental, physical or sensory disability, or by any other distinguishing characteristic*) that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function, on a school bus, or off school grounds that substantially disrupts or interferes with the orderly operation of the school or the rights of other students, **and that:**

- will have the effect of physically or emotionally harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear.
- has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students.
- creates a hostile educational environment for the student
- by interfering with a student's education or by severely or pervasively causing physical or emotional harm to the student.

- Examples of Bullying

Examples of being bullied include, but are not limited to, ongoing and unwanted:

- Name calling
- Spreading of rumors/gossip
- Pushing/shoving
- Hitting
- Taunting
- Exclusion
- Inappropriate text messages/cyber bullying
- Threatening looks
- Silently mouthing words or actions
- Stolen/missing items (lunch money, homework, etc.)
- Verbal or non-verbal actions directed towards you or someone else

- Recommended Strategies

We encourage students to implement the following strategies:

- If you experience bullying from another student, calmly confront the bully to inform him/her that his/her actions are not welcomed, and they should stop immediately and then report the incident.
- In the midst of a bullying situation, hold your anger and remember that bullies want control of your emotions. Do your best to walk away and report the situation to an authority figure, such as a principal, assistant principal, counselor, or teacher.
- Students and parents are always encouraged to contact an Administrator to report bullying and to discuss concerns.
- If you are not comfortable **talking** with a principal, an assistant principal, a counselor, or a teacher, **e-mailing** is an effective way to report or share your concerns.

- Reporting

If your child, or someone you know at Ridge High School, is being bullied by another person, it is extremely important to report the incident immediately to an Assistant Principal, Guidance Counselor, Student Assistance Counselor, or Teacher with whom you feel comfortable discussing the situation.

To Report Bullying:

- Visit your principal, assistant principal, counselor, teacher or someone with whom you are comfortable speaking. If you are concerned about repercussions, please understand that every effort will be made to keep the reporting process as confidential as possible.
- Direct your e-mail to RHSReportBullying@Bernardsboe.com or directly to whomever you are comfortable sharing your concerns or bullying situation with. Please include a brief description of the bullying situation.

- The Difference Between Peer Conflict and Bullying

Peer conflict involves "**Mutually**" competitive or opposing action in which both sides have equal power. Some examples of conflict are disagreements, arguments and fights. Although not appropriate and still should be reported if severe enough, conflict is a normal part of human interaction.

Bullying involves the intentional, **one-sided use of power** to physically, verbally, and/or emotionally hurt someone. Although bullying is usually a repeated action, it may also occur as a one-time event. Some examples of bullying include: physical/verbal attacks, name calling, exclusion, making fun of someone for their differences, etc.

- Other Resources

The following are links to sites that are not affiliated with the Bernards Township School District. In addition, the content of these sites does not reflect the opinions, standards, policy or endorsement of the Bernards Township Board of Education.

○ Resource Links:

- www.olweus.org
- www.antibullying.net
- http://kidshealth.org/teen/your_mind