

Hammonton Board of Education District Policy Manual

**Students
Dating Violence**

**Series 5000
Policy 5131.2**

Adopted: June 14, 2012

Revised:

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The Board of Education has determined that a safe and civil environment in school is necessary to learn. Acts or incidents of dating violence whether they are verbal, sexual, physical or emotional will not be tolerated and will be dealt with according to school student code of conduct.

Responsibility of Parents / Guardians

Parents/guardians should play an active role in social aspects of the lives of their children and should interact with school officials to ensure their safety. It is important that parents/guardians know where their children are at all times and with whom they are socializing.

Warning Signs of Dating Violence

A pattern of behaviors may be an important sign that a student is involved in an unhealthy or abusive dating relationship. Warning signs may include but not be limited to the following:

- Name Calling and Put Downs Does one student in the relationship use name-calling or putdowns to belittle or intimidate the other student?
- Extreme Jealousy Does one student in the relationship appear jealous when the other talks with peers?
- Making Excuses Does one student in the relationship make excuses for the other?
- Cancelling or Changing Plans Does one student cancel plans often, and at the last minute? Do the reasons make sense or sound untrue?
- Monitoring Does one student call, text, or check up on the other student constantly. Does one student demand to know the other's whereabouts or plans?
- Uncontrolled Anger Have you seen one of the students in the relationship lose his or her temper or throw and break things in anger?
- Isolation Has one student in the relationship given up spending time with family and friends? Has the student stopped participating in activities that were once very important?
- Dramatic Changes Has the student in the relationships appearance changed? Lost or gained weight? Does the student seem depressed?
- Injuries Does the student in the relationship have unexplained injuries? Does the student give explanations that seem untrue?
- Quick Progression Did the student's relationship get serious very quickly?

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Statistics

- Victims of alleged aggressors of teen dating violence are more likely to bring a weapon to school.
- Victims of teen dating violence have lower academic achievement and grades of D and F.
- 5% of girls reported missing at least one day of school a month due to safety concerns.
- 43% of teen dating violence victims report that the dating violence experience occurred in a school building or on school grounds.⁷
- 83% of the acts or incidents of dating violence that occurred at school was physical abuse.

Procedures for Reporting Incidents of Dating Violence

All acts or incidents of dating violence shall be reported to the principal/designee in compliance with existing school district policy and procedures. School staff should take all reasonable measures to prevent acts or incidents of teen dating violence. This report should be made verbally as soon as possible but no later than the end of the student's school day. A written report regarding the act or incident of dating violence should be submitted to the principal/designee by the reporting staff member no later than one day after the act or incident occurs. Staff members are required to report all acts or incidents of dating violence, including, but not limited to:

- Witnessed or reliable information concerning acts or incidents that are characterized by physical, emotional, verbal or sexual abuse;
- Digital or electronic acts or incidents of dating violence;
- Patterns of behavior that are threatening or controlling.

Guidelines for Responding to Incidents of Dating Violence at School

Protocol for Staff Members

Any school staff member who witnesses or learns of an act or incident of dating violence is required to take the following steps:

- Separate the victim from the aggressor;
- Speak with the victim and the aggressor separately;
- Speak with witnesses or bystanders separately;
- Inform the principal, or his or her designee of the act or incident;

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- Prepare written report of incident for principal/designee;
- Monitor the interactions of the victim and the aggressor. Student safety should be the priority.

Protocol for Administrators

Any school administrator who witnesses or learns of an act of dating violence is required to take the following steps:

- Separate the victim from the aggressor;
- Meet separately with the victim and the aggressor;
- Take written statements from the victim and alleged aggressor;
- Review the victim's and aggressor's written statements to ascertain an understanding of the act or incident. Questions may be asked of either individual for clarification;
- Further investigate the incident by speaking with bystanders/witnesses of the act or incident. All statements should be documented;
- The school administrator should make the determination to involve the School Resource Officer or law enforcement agency serving the district;
- After an assessment by a school social worker, counselor or psychologist a determination is made that the victim or aggressor's mental health has been placed at risk appropriate referrals should be made;
- Contact should be made with the parents/guardians of both the victim and the aggressor. A recommendation of a meeting should be made to discuss the act or incident with the principal/designee;
- Schools must notify both parties in writing of the outcome of the investigation into the act or incident of dating violence.

Protocol for Working with the Victim of an Act or Incident of Dating Violence

Administrators shall consider adopting the following methods for dealing with victims of dating violence.

- Student safety should be the first priority. Interaction between the victim and the alleged aggressor should be avoided. The burden of any schedule changes (classroom, bus etc.) should be taken on by the alleged aggressor.
- Schedule a conference with the victim and their parents/guardians.
- Identify any means or actions that should be taken to increase the victim's safety and ability to learn in a safe and civil school environment.

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- Alert the victim and their parents/guardians of school and community based resources that may be appropriate, including their right to file charges, if the act or incident violated the law.
- Monitor the victim's safety as needed. Assist the victim with any plans needed for the school day and after school hours. (e.g. Hallway safety, coordination with parents/guardians for transportation to and from school). An individualized safety plan may be developed if deemed necessary. See Appendix A for examples and additional resources.
- Discuss a school approved Stay Away Agreement between the victim and the alleged aggressor.
- Encourage the victim to self report any and all further acts and incidents of dating violence that occur at-school in writing to the principal, or his or her designee. Document all meetings and action plans that are discussed.

Protocol for Working with the Alleged Aggressor of an Act or Incident of Dating Violence

Administrators shall utilize the following methods for dealing with the alleged aggressor in act or incidents of dating violence:

- Schedule a conference with the aggressor and their parents/guardians.
- Give the alleged aggressor the opportunity to respond in a written statement to the allegations of an act or incident of dating violence at-school;
- Alert the alleged aggressor and their parents/guardians, to both school and community based support and counseling resources that are available;
- Identify and implement counseling, intervention and disciplinary methods that are consistent with school policy for acts or incidents of this nature;
- Review the seriousness of any type of retaliation (verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, electronic/digital) towards the victim who reported the act or incident of dating violence. Address that consequences would be issued consistent with the school's student code of conduct and procedures for any type of retaliation or intimidation towards the victim;
- Document all meetings and action plans that are discussed;

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Protocol for the Documentation and Reporting of an Act or Incident of Dating Violence
Incidents of dating violence that occur at school shall be documented in the following manner:

- Dating violence statements and investigations should be kept in files separate from student academic and discipline records to prevent the inadvertent disclosure of confidential information;
- Every act or incident of dating violence at school that is reported should be documented in an appropriate manner, including statements, planning actions, disciplinary measures as well as counseling and other support resources that are offered and prescribed to the victim or alleged aggressor.

Discipline Procedures Specific to Incidents of Dating Violence at School

The Board of Education requires its school administrators to implement discipline and remedial procedures to address acts or incidents of dating violence at school. These procedures should be consistent with the student code of conduct. The procedures specific to acts or incidents of dating violence at school should be used to address the act or incident as well as serve as remediation, intervention, education, and prevention for all individuals involved. The responses should be tiered with consideration given to the seriousness and the number of previous occurrences of acts or incidents in which both the victim and alleged aggressor have been involved.

The consequences and remedial measures shall include, but not be limited to:

Consequences

- Admonishment
- Temporary removal from the classroom
- Classroom or administrative detention
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Reports to law enforcement
- Expulsion

Remediation/Intervention

- Parent conferences
- Student Counseling (all students involved in a the act or incident)
- Peer support group

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- Corrective instruction or other relevant learning or service experiences
- Supportive student intervention (IR&S)
- Behavioral management plan
- Alternative placements

Resources

Parents/guardians and students will be provided with information on safe, appropriate, school, family, peer and community resources available to address dating violence.

Forms

The district will utilize the forms that follow this policy to report and document incidents of dating violence.

Notice of Policy

Notice of this policy shall appear in all district publications that discuss comprehensive rules, procedures, and student conduct.

Legal References

- NJSA 18A:6-113 Instruction in suicide prevention in public school curriculum
- 18A:11-1 General Mandatory Powers and Duties
- 18A:35-4.19 through -4.22 AIDS Prevention Act of 1999
- 18A:35-4.23a Dating violence into health education curriculum
- 18A:35-5 through -9 Maintenance of physical training courses; features
- 18A:37-33 to 37 Dating violence policy and education

- NJAC 6A:7-1.7 Equality in school and classroom practices
- 6A:8-3.1 Curriculum and instruction
- 6A:8-5.1 Graduation requirements
- 6A:9-5.19 Athletics Personnel
- 6A:9-11.8 Health and physical education
- 6A:16-2.1 et seq. General Provisions for School Health Services
- 6A:32-9.1 General Provisions for School Health Services
- Guide to Preventing Bullying, Teen Dating Violence and Sexual Violence, Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education 2008
- The Model Policy and Guidance for Prohibiting Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying On School Property At School Sponsored Functions and on School Buses, NJDOE April 2011
- 20 U.S.C.A. 1681 et seq. - Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
- The Comprehensive Equity Plan, New Jersey State Department of Education

Possible Cross References

2224, 5145.4, 6121, 6140, 6141, 6142, 6145.1, 6145.2, 6146