

ONAWAY AREA COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION SPECIAL MEETING

May 6, 2024

1. Call to Order.

A special meeting of the Onaway Area Community School District's Board of Education was held in the Media Center. Called to Order by President James Rieger at 6:00 p.m. on May 6, 2024.

2. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. Roll Call.

Present: Kowalski, Palmer, Porter, Hart, Rieger, Veal, and Chaskey
Absent:

4. Relax Robert's Rules of Order.

President Rieger- We are going to relax Robert's Rules of Order for this meeting as long as all the Board members agree. All in agreement.

5. Read Bullying Policy.

Chaskey- I wanted to call this meeting. Since we've been elected, including from our student rep, one of the biggest concerns and issues I've heard is bullying. So, I wanted to bring everybody here tonight, relax the rules a bit, have a little bit more open dialogue. Before we start, though, I am going to ask for respect. Please respect; if you have a specific issue, please do not say the staff member's name if you have who that is. You can bring up an overall complaint, but I'm going to be introducing a way to go about this so that way everyone's concerns as a parent, as a custodian, your concerns can be met. So tonight, I ask if you speak, please do not specifically name anyone. You can give an idea of the general problem if that's what you would like to speak on. I'm going to start by reading our actual Bullying Policy, it says:

Anti-Bullying Policy All types of bullying, including cyberbullying, without regard to subject matter or motivating animus, are prohibited.

(A.) Prohibited Conduct

1. Bullying, including cyberbullying, a student at school is prohibited. Bullying is any written, verbal, or physical act, or electronic communication that is intended to or that a reasonable person would know is likely to harm one or more students directly or indirectly by doing any of the following:

- a. substantially interfering with a student's educational opportunities, benefits, or programs;
- b. adversely affecting a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the District's educational programs or activities by placing the student in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing substantial emotional distress;
- c. having an actual and substantial detrimental effect on a student's physical or mental health; or
- d. causing substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the District's orderly operations.

2. Retaliation or false accusations against the target of bullying, anyone reporting bullying, a witness, or another person with reliable information about an act of bullying, are prohibited.

(B.) Reporting an Incident

If a student, staff member, or other person suspects there has been a bullying incident, the person must promptly report the incident to the building principal or designee, or to the Responsible School Official(s), as defined below.

A report may be made in person, by telephone, or in writing (including electronic transmissions). If a bullying incident is reported to a staff member who is not the building principal, designee, or a Responsible School Official, the staff member must promptly report the incident to the building principal, designee, or a Responsible School Official.

To encourage reporting of suspected bullying or related activities, each building principal, after consulting the Responsible School Official(s), will create, publicize, and implement a system for anonymous reports. The system must emphasize that the District's ability to investigate anonymous reports may be limited. Complaints that the building principal has bullied a student must be reported to the Superintendent. Complaints that the Superintendent has bullied a student must be reported to the Board President.

(C.) Investigation

All bullying complaints will be promptly investigated. The building principal or designee will conduct the investigation, unless the building principal or Superintendent is the subject of the investigation. If the building principal is the subject of the investigation, the Superintendent or designee will conduct the investigation. If the Superintendent is the subject of the investigation, the Board President will designate a neutral party to conduct the investigation.

A description of each reported incident, along with all investigation materials and conclusions reached, will be documented and retained.

(D.) Notice to Parent/Guardian

If the investigator determines that a bullying incident has occurred, the District will promptly notify the victim's and perpetrator's parent/guardian in writing.

(E.) Annual Reports: We have switched these to monthly reports. I just don't have the updated one here in my hand.

At least now it's monthly, the building principal or designee, or the Responsible School Official, must report all verified bullying incidents and the resulting consequences, including any disciplinary action or referrals, to the Board.

The District will annually report incidents of bullying to MDE in the form and manner prescribed by MDE.

(F.) Responsible School Official

The Superintendent is the "Responsible School Official" for this Policy and is responsible for ensuring that this Policy is properly implemented. This appointment does not reduce or eliminate the duties and responsibilities of the building principal or designee as described in this Policy.

(G.) Posting/Publication of Policy

The Superintendent or designee will ensure that this Policy is available on the District's website and incorporated into student handbooks and other relevant school publications.

The Superintendent or designee will submit this Policy to the MDE within 30 days after its adoption.

Prevention Task Force. The Responsible School Official may form a bullying prevention task force. The task force will identify, develop, and recommend written materials, training programs, and initiatives to reduce bullying. In its discretion, the task force may involve school staff, students, school clubs or other student groups, administrators, volunteers, parents, law enforcement, community members, and other stakeholders.

Training. The Responsible School Official will provide and require annual training opportunities for District personnel who have significant contact with students on preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Educational Programs. The Responsible School Official will periodically arrange or otherwise provide educational programs for students and parents on preventing,

identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying and cyberbullying. The Responsible School Official may arrange for teachers to address these same issues within the classroom curriculum.

Chaskey- Do we have a bullying task force?

Benson- Not that I know of.

Chaskey- That's something we might want to look into.

H. Definitions

1. "At school" means in a classroom, elsewhere on school premises, on a school bus or other school-related vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event whether it is held on school premises. "At school" also includes any conduct using a telecommunications access device or telecommunications service provider that occurs off school premises if the device or provider is owned by or under the control of the District.

Chaskey- We can go through here, but this talks about the telecommunication different devices. So that is our bully policy.

6. List Number of Reported Bullying Incidences for 2023/2024 School Year.

Chaskey- We get a report each month, and we have zero reports for the high school and zero reports for the elementary. That's what we have received from September to January. I believe it was January when we started asking for monthly.

7. Explanation of What is Considered Bullying.

Explanation of elementary procedures for identifying bullying and bullying/behavioral corrections procedures by Mrs. Benson.

Chaskey- Do you have a definition so everyone knows how you define bullying?

Mrs. Benson- If it is a one-time occurrence and I haven't seen it repeated, then it's not bullying. If it's something that is repeated, then that would be what I would consider bullying if they are going out of their way to target another child more than once.

8. Chain of Command.

Chaskey- Mrs. Benson has informed me that there is a chain of command set up in the handbook.

Chain of Command read aloud by Vice-President Chaskey:

On matters involving instruction/curriculum/homework:

- Classroom Teacher
- Principal
- Superintendent
- Board of Education

On matters involving student discipline:

- Classroom Teacher
- Principal
- Superintendent
- Board of Education

On matters involving transportation:

- Bus Driver
- Transportation Director
- Superintendent
- Board of Education

On matters involving athletics:

- Coach
- Athletic Director
- Superintendent
- Board of Education

Discussion held amongst Board members with community input.

9. Public Comment.

Scott Hill declined to present to the Board. No action taken.

Jocelyn Bergstedt declined to present to the Board. No action taken.

Chuck Abshagen presented to the Board. No action taken.

Sharon Lyon presented to the Board. No action taken.


Chad Chapman presented to the Board. No action taken.

Max Boettger presented to the Board. No action taken.

Anonymous letter ready by Vice-President Chaskey.

10. Adjournment.

Hart moved to adjourn at 7:19 p.m., supported by Chaskey.


Secretary, Board of Education

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Marty Mix, Secondary Principal/ AD
Robin Benson, Elementary Principal

The Onaway School shall not discriminate in its policies and practices because of an individual's race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, height, weight, marital status, political belief, disability or handicap which does not impair an individual's ability to perform adequately in that individual's particular position or activity. Any person suspecting a discriminatory practice should contact the Superintendent at Onaway Area Community Schools, Onaway, MI 49765(989) 733-4956.