

YCS SAWTELLE LEARNING CENTERS POLICY PROHIBITING HARRASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING

The YCS Board and Sawtelle Learning Centers Administrators prohibit acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying. A safe and civil environment in school is necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. Harassment, intimidation or bullying, like other disruptive or violent behaviors, is conduct that disrupts both a student's ability to learn and the YCS Sawtelle Learning Centers' ability to educate its students in a safe environment; and since students learn by example, all administrators, staff and volunteers shall be accountable for demonstrating appropriate behavior, treating others with civility and respect, and refusing to tolerate harassment, intimidation and bullying. Further, all YCS school personnel will be responsible for adhering to the following procedures. N.J.S.A 18A:37-15 (3)(b)(1)

Harassment, intimidation or bullying is defined as any gesture or written (which includes cyber-bullying), verbal or physical act 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, a mental, physical or sensory handicap or by any other distinguishing characteristic, or because of a power differential, that takes place on school property, at any school-sponsored function or on a school bus and that:

- a. A reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, will have the effect of harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his person or damage to his property; or
- b. has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school. N.J.S.A. 18A:37-15 (3)(b)(2)

The YCS Board and Sawtelle Learning Center Administrators expect students to conduct themselves in keeping with their levels of pervasive developmental disability, development, maturity and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students and school staff, the educational purpose underlying all school activities, and the care of school facilities and equipment. Standards for student behavior will be determined cooperatively with students, parents/guardians, staff, and community members to encourage students to grow in self-discipline.

Students are expected to behave to the best of their ability due to the nature of their disability, in a way that creates a supportive learning environment. It is the responsibility of staff to use instances of violations of the code of student conduct as opportunities for helping students learn to assume and accept responsibility for their behavior and the consequences of their behavior. Staff members who interact with students shall apply best practices designed to prevent student conduct problems and foster students' abilities to grow in self-discipline.

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HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING (Con't)**

YCS Sawtelle Learning Center requires its school administrators to implement procedures that ensure both the appropriate consequences and remedial responses for students who commit acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying and the consequences and remedial responses for staff members who commit one or more acts of harassment, intimidation or bullying. A variety of factors will be given consideration by school administrators in the implementation of appropriate consequences and remedial measures. These include but will not be limited to the student's pervasive developmental disability, development, and maturity as well as the nature and severity of the behavior. Consequences may range from behavioral intervention to suspension dependent upon the pervasive development disability and the developmental levels of the involved parties, the level of harm, context and circumstances of the offense and consideration of possible prior offenses.

Standard YCS policy for investigating and reporting behavioral incidents will be followed in cases of harassment, intimidation, and bullying. The behavioral Incident Report form will be used for reporting by staff. Students may use this form or verbally report incidents to any staff member and may remain anonymous if they so desire. A thorough investigation will be conducted of all reports promptly.

Reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of harassment, intimidation or bullying will be strictly prohibited, and consequences and remedial action will be determined in accordance with the totality of the circumstances.

Consequences and remedial action for false accusations used as a means of harassment; intimidation or bullying will be determined in accordance with the totality of the circumstances.

This policy shall be disseminated annually to all school staff, students, and parents/guardians in the parent manual. As appropriate to the developmental levels, this policy will be included in the annual classroom discussions of school and classroom policies, rules and student code of conduct led by each classroom teacher at the start of the school year.

This policy will be included in the review of all school policies and procedures conducted annually prior to the start of the new school year with all school staff. Each staff member will be required to sign a form indicating they have been fully informed and will comply with the policies as set forth.

YCS will provide on-going training and in-services to all staff members through the YCS Training Department.