

Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation

Below are reminders and response letters to be utilized when conducting an investigation regarding Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation.

Investigation Reminders

1. *It is good practice to review policy 1060 prior to the investigation.*
2. *Take all reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the complainant/victim and the alleged offender.*
3. *It is good practice to keep both the parents of the complainant/victim and the alleged offender informed of the status of the investigation.*
4. *Throughout the investigation, the complainant/victim and the alleged offender must have equal opportunity to present relevant witnesses and evidence.*
5. *If a school permits one party to have a lawyer(s) or other advisor(s) at any stage of the investigation, it must do so for the other party as well.*
6. *It is the responsibility of the school to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety/wellbeing of the complainant/victim throughout the investigation.*
7. *Schools must use a preponderance of the evidence. This preponderance is based on the more convincing evidence and its probable truth or accuracy, and not on the amount of evidence.*
8. ***If there is any indication that the concern involves Policy 1020 Sexual Discrimination, which includes sexual harassment, sexual assault or violence it should be immediately reported to the Title IX Coordinator/Office of Equity Assurance to be in compliance with policy 1020 and federal guidelines at 410-313-6654.***

Response Letters

1. *The response letter to the complainant/victim should include any interim measures that took place during the investigation such as:*
 - a. *Temporarily separating the complainant/victim and alleged offender by changing the homeroom/class assignment, extracurricular activities, or transportation to and from school*
 - b. *Counseling with guidance counselor or other appropriate assistance*
 - c. *Providing an escort to class to ensure moving safely between classes/activities*
2. *The response letter to the complainant/victim should include future measures for continued safety such as:*
 - a. *Participation in ongoing counseling program or other appropriate assistance*
 - b. *No future contact between the complainant/victim and the offender*
 - c. *Academic support*

3. *The names of those interviewed during the investigation should not be disclosed to anyone nor included in the response letter.*

(March, 2018/JRL)

Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation Response Letter Templates

Supervisor/Administrator Response to Complainant - (violation)

Dear _____,

This letter is a follow up to a Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation complaint received on _____ (date) from you on behalf of your _____ (daughter/son).

The investigation was completed on _____ (date) and included interviews with student(s) and/or staff. Based upon the information obtained during the investigation, it was found that a violation of Howard County Public School System's Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation occurred. Corrective action was taken in accordance with the Howard County Public School System's Student Code of Conduct.

During the course of the investigation supports were offered to _____ (daughter/son name). Those supports will continue to be available to _____ (daughter/son name) to help her/him with any issues that have occurred as a byproduct of the harassment. Be advised that the students involved in this complaint should have no contact with each other which includes contact via social media.

Sincerely,

Supervisor/Administrator Response to **Complainant** - (no violation)

Dear _____,

This letter is a follow up to a Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation complaint received on _____ (date) from you on behalf of your _____ (daughter/son).

The investigation was completed on _____ (date) and included interviews with student(s) and/or staff. The information obtained during the investigation did not conclusively determine that the reported incident(s) constitutes a violation of Howard County Public School System's Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation.

As the parent/guardian of _____ (daughter/son name), you have the right to appeal this decision. Your request should be in writing and sent to _____ (appropriate area community superintendent) within ten days of the receipt of this letter.

Sincerely,

Supervisor/Administrator Response to Respondent- (violation)

Dear _____,

This letter is a follow up to allegations of a Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation complaint received on _____ (date) against your _____(daughter/son).

The investigation was completed on _____ (date) and included interviews with student(s) and/or staff. Based upon the information obtained during the investigation, it was found that _____ (daughter/son name) violated Howard County Public School System's Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation.

In light of this policy violation and in accordance with the Howard County Public School System's Student Code of Conduct, the following corrective actions will take place:

(Insert actions here)

_____ (daughter/son name) should have no contact with the student who filed the complaint which includes communication via social media. It should be noted that any form of retaliation toward the student for filing this complaint is also against Howard County Public School System's policy and may result in further corrective actions.

As the parent/guardian of _____ (daughter/son name), you have the right to appeal this decision. Your request should be in writing and sent to _____ (appropriate area community superintendent) within ten days of the receipt of this letter.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like additional information or clarification.

Sincerely,

Supervisor/Administrator Response to Respondent - (no violation)

Dear _____,

This letter is a follow up to allegations of a Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation complaint received on _____ (date) against your _____ (daughter/son).

The investigation was completed on _____ (date) and included interviews with student(s) and/or staff. The information obtained during the investigation did not conclusively determine that _____ (daughter/son name) violated Howard County Public School System's Policy 1060 Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment, or Intimidation.

It should be noted that any form of retaliation toward the student who filed this complaint is against Howard County Public School System's policy and may result in corrective action.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like additional information or clarification.

Sincerely,