Washington County School District
121 West Tabernacle Street
Saint George, Utah 84770
435-673-3553

District Policy 1421

Workplace Violence

Personnel Washington County School District - Adopted 9-11-07

1. Purpose

Washington County School District strives to maintain a violence free work and learning environment.

2. Policy

The District prohibits violence on all district property, including threats of violence. Violent behavior includes, but is not limited to, verbal and/or physical aggression, attacks, threats, harassment, intimidation, or other disruptive actions, which causes or could cause a reasonable person to fear physical harm or damage to property.

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, visitors, and volunteers on district property or in conjunction with any school activity or conducting business with the district, even if not directly affiliated with the district. Violations of this policy will not be tolerated. Students are subject to the provisions of the District Safe Schools Policy 2110.

3. Procedure:

3.1. Definition:

A threat is the expression of intent to cause physical harm or damage to property. An expression, oral, written, or physical gesture constitutes a threat without regard to whether the party communicating the threat has the present ability to carry it out, and without regard to whether the expression is contingent, conditional or future.

Physical attack is unwanted or hostile physical contact such as hitting, fighting, pushing, shoving, or throwing objects.

Intimidation includes, but is not limited to, stalking or engaging in actions intended to frighten, coerce, or induce duress regarding anyone's safety or personal property.

Property damage is intentional damage to property which includes property owned by the district, employees, visitors, or vendors.

Dangerous weapons are any item capable of causing death or serious bodily injury or a facsimile or representation of the item, including firearms, knives, explosives, or other items capable of inflicting serious bodily harm.

Some examples of workplace violence include:

Physical violence against an employee or by an employee against another employee, a student, or an outside person participating in a school sponsored activity.

Verbal threats to inflict bodily harm, including vague or concealed threats.

Verbal harassment, abusive or offensive language, or threatening gestures directed towards supervisors, fellow employees, or the public.

Disorderly behaviors conducted in a threatening and/or intimidating manner, such as shouting, throwing, pushing objects, punching walls, and slamming doors.

Malicious statements made against coworkers, supervisors, or subordinates which could damage their reputations or undermine their authority.

Intentional damage to district and/or personal equipment such as computers, equipment, etc.

Assisting, aiding, or soliciting another person to threaten, intimidate, harass, or haze any employee.

3.2. Reporting Violence

The district expects employees to use common sense and good judgment in dealing with potentially violent situations and violent incidents. Employees are often in a better position than their supervisors to know when a co-worker is in trouble and are encouraged to report anything in the workplace that could lead to a violent incident.

3.3. Failure to Report

Employees must report violent incidents that occur on district property, or at district activities to their immediate supervisors, or to Human Resources. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. Employees are also encouraged to call police or school resource officers and principals when they suspect a violent action has occurred or is about to occur.

3.4. Course of Action

In cases of alleged violation of this policy, administrators will consult with Human Resources and, when appropriate law enforcement officials to determine best course of action. Complaints of violence, assaults, threats, and intimidation will be treated seriously and will be promptly investigated with reasonable steps taken to protect the safety and privacy of all persons involved.

3.5. Early Warning Signs

Workplace violence is difficult to predict in terms of knowing specifically which individuals will commit aggressive acts. However, early warning signs can indicate a tendency for violence. Some early warning signs of workplace violence are:

- sudden changes in behavior,
- erratic job performance and violates school policies,
- blaming others, harboring grudges and portrays victimization,
- irritability, belligerence, and hostility
- excessive focus on guns or weapons collections,
- history of drug and alcohol abuse,
- depression or paranoia,
- over reaction to workplace events, discipline, lay-offs, demotions, and transfers,
- history of reckless, antisocial, or violent behavior,
- aggressive bullying, argumentative, and threatening actions.

3.6. District Premises

Any person who engages in violent acts or threatens violent acts on district property, or while conducting district business off property may be removed from the premises as quickly as safety permits, and may be required to remain off district property pending the outcome of an investigation.

3.7. Disciplinary Action

Any employee who commits such an act may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination defined in district policy 1450.

3.8. Non-Employee Violence

Any non-employee engaged in violent acts on the District or school premises will be reported by employees to the proper authorities. Non-employees who violate this policy will not be allowed to engage in school district related activities or to conduct business with the school district.

3.9. Cooperation

District employees will cooperate fully with law enforcement.