

# *Lakeland Highlands Middle School*

## *Bullying and Harassment Procedure*

*Bullying or harassing behavior is not tolerated at Lakeland Highlands Middle School.*

The administrative team investigates allegations of bullying by following the Polk County Code of Student Conduct and the “Jeffery Johnston Stand Up for All Students Act” 1006 which passed as a Florida State law in the summer 2008.

### **Define Bullying:**

Bullying is the systematically and chronically inflicting of physical hurt or psychological distress on one or more students.

**Symptoms:** Teasing, Social exclusion, Threat, Intimidation, Stalking, Physical violence, Theft, Sexual or racial harassment, Public humiliation, Destruction of property

### **Define Harassment:**

Harassment is defined as threatening, insulting, or dehumanizing gesture, use of data or computer software, or written, verbal, or physical conduct directed against a student or school employee that places a student or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her person or damage to his or her property, has the effect of substantially interfering with a student’s educational performance, opportunities, or benefits, has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of a school.

### **Reporting Bullying or Harassing Behavior:**

Students are encouraged to report situations of bullying or harassing behavior. All Polk County Employees are required to report observed bullying. Students, parents, and staff members may report bullying anonymously through the school web site, to Student Services by filling out a bullying reporting form, placing a note in the TRC box in Student Services, or to administrators by e-mail, phone, or in person.

### **Investigation Procedures following the district and law directives:**

1. Report is made to website, TRC box, Student Services, email, other.
2. Administrative team analyzes reports from all sources.
3. The **Harassment or Bullying Reporting Form** is filled out by staff or student **for each case** regardless if the incident provides evidence of harassment or bullying at a later date.
4. The **Bullying/Harassment Preliminary Review Form** is completed to determine the legitimacy of the claim.
5. If evidence reveals bullying, complete the **Bullying/Harassment Determination and Investigation Form**.
6. If no evidence of bullying. Do not proceed with an investigation. Keep all documents on file.
7. Forms determine notification of parents, principal, law enforcement, SESIR codes, action plans and follow- up.

8. According to state law, all cases will be completed from initial contact to final determination in 10 days.
9. The LHMS Bullying Forms are BLUE. The files for all bullying investigations are GREEN.
10. All administrators are provided with the forms and files. At the completion of the investigation and resolution. The green bullying files are kept in the discipline dean's office for future reference.