



*After reading this entire document, click on the link below to submit an electronic signature agreeing to all the policies.*

## **Volunteer Policy**

Dear Volunteer:

Avon Community School Corporation would like to thank you for your willingness to assist in the education of our children. A strong base of volunteers is essential to provide the necessary supports to students' academic, social and emotional development. While we welcome volunteers into our school community, we must also be diligent in providing a safe and secure environment for our students. To that end, you are being provided information that was put in place by the Avon School Board.

1. While volunteering I will abide by all board policies and the implementing guidelines, as adopted by the Avon Community School Corporation. Avon board policies can be found here: [www.neola.com/avon-in](http://www.neola.com/avon-in) .
2. I hereby knowingly and voluntarily agree that Avon Community School Corporation shall have the right to review any material stored on any system provided by the school corporation and to edit or remove any material.
3. In consideration for using the internet and having access to public networks, I hereby release Avon Community School Corporation, its officers, employees, and agents from any and all claims or damages arising from misuse, or inability to use the internet.
4. I understand and agree that I will assume full responsibility, financial and otherwise, for any and all costs that I may incur while using district-provided access to the internet that has not been authorized or approved by the school corporation.
5. As a volunteer I will not be compensated for the time I am volunteering. I will be covered under the corporation's liability policy but the corporation will not provide health insurance to cover illness or accident incurred while volunteering nor will I be eligible for workers' compensation.
6. I must report to building or corporation administration within 5 business days any personal arrests or the filing of criminal charges while serving as a volunteer.

## **Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement**

I understand that in the course of my association with the Avon Community School Corporation I share the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all students, student families, and those employed within the corporation that I may have available to me. I understand that it is my responsibility to assure rights and confidentiality of information both written and verbal.



As a volunteer, I will work with the highest standards, committed to the idea that my work will benefit all those served by Avon Community Schools. I agree to abide by all school building rules, visitor/volunteer procedures and board policies.

I agree to comply with all the requests of the classroom teacher or other school employees with whom I am working. I will not criticize any school employee in front of students. If I have a concern I will address it with the employee in private or if I feel it is necessary I can discuss the issue with the building principal. I will not discuss the matter with others.

I understand that in the performance of my duties, I am not to discuss or post any academic or other confidential information regarding students, their families or employees with anyone. Any breach of confidentiality will be carefully reviewed and if substantiated could result in termination of volunteer involvement with the School Corporation.

## **Anti-Bullying Volunteer Training & FAQs**

The Avon Community School Corporation School Board, as demonstrated by Anti-bullying Policy – 5517.01, firmly prohibits bullying within the District. This policy complies with legislative requirements. This overview is being provided so that you understand what is required of those who work with students in the Avon Community School Corporation.

Below are some Frequently Asked Questions to assist with the explanation of the policy and requirements. An overview of this information is provided at the bottom and you will be asked to sign and date which will indicate that you understand as a volunteer in our corporation you will report suspected incidents of bullying. As always, if more questions remain, you should approach your supervising teacher or building administration for clarification or answers.

### **Q. What is the definition of bullying?**

A. "Bullying" means overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including: 1) verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically), 2) physical acts committed, aggression, or 3) any other behaviors, that are committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the other targeted student and create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:

- places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted student's person or property;
- has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health;
- has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's academic performance; or



- has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, and privileges provided by the school.

**Q. What are some of the key characteristics of a bullying situation?**

A. While not inclusive, there are three components that are typically in play in a bullying situation and define bullying in simple terms:

- Unwanted aggressive behavior
- Repeated or potential for repeated behavior
- Real or perceived power imbalance

**Q. How is this student behavior definition different than previous behavior definitions such as “inappropriate behavior,” “classroom disruption,” “insubordination,” etc.?**

A. This definition of “bullying” differs in a few specific ways:

- The act(s) must be repeated
- The act(s) must have the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student’s academic performance.
- The act(s) must have the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student’s ability to participate or benefit from the services, activities and privileges provided by the school.

**Q. How do I report an incident?**

A. If you believe a student has been a target of bullying or if you are aware of possible bullying behaviors you must report it to the teacher supervising your volunteer work or the building administration (principal, vice principal or counselor). This can be done any number of ways in person, phone call or e-mail. In addition, the district will maintain a system that allows for the anonymous reporting of potential or alleged bullying behavior. This anonymous reporting system is available on the district’s website which can be found [here](#).

Below are some examples of behaviors to assist you in determining if an incident is a bullying incident but when in doubt you can never go wrong reporting an incident and letting the corporation make the determination:

**EXAMPLE #1:** A student strikes another student, knocking books out of the second student’s hands, pushes the student, and begins shouting at the student, “I heard what you told them about me. It’s not true and you know it!” The teacher/staff member intervenes, separates the students, calls for assistance if necessary, and reports the altercation to the administration.



*Without additional information that would indicate bullying – such as knowledge of this being a repeated behavior, or knowledge of an imbalance of power, this incident would typically not be reported as an alleged bullying incident.*

**EXAMPLE #2:** A student strikes another student, knocking books out of the second student's hands, pushes the student, and begins shouting at the student, "I heard what you told them about me. It's not true and you know it! I'm sick of all of you talking behind my back and spreading rumors about me. I've seen what you've said about me on Facebook!" The teacher/staff member intervenes, separates the students, calls for assistance if necessary, and reports the altercation to the administration.

*This situation would typically be reported as alleged bullying. There is evidence that this might be a repeated behavior and evidence that perhaps multiple students have been involved with a concerted effort to harm a fellow student. The administrator will make the ultimate determination regarding the presence of the statutory definition of bullying but the person reporting has a duty to bring the allegation of bullying to the attention of the administrator.*

**EXAMPLE #3:** A student tells you that they have witnessed a boy at lunch who appears to be the target of bullying. They provide a couple examples of behavior and state that the boy has been absent from the bus multiple days in the last month.

*This should be reported as a possible bullying situation.*

**Q. If I am aware of a possible bullying incident, how quickly must I report it?**

A. Anyone who believes that a student has possibly been or is the victim of bullying must **immediately** report the situation to an appropriate staff member such as a teacher, school counselor, or administrator.

**Q. What happens if I fail to report a bullying incident?**

A. Failure to report an incident of bullying could result in a range of results including but not limited to additional training, consultation with a building or central office administrator or loss of volunteer status. Additionally, if a volunteer does not report a bullying incident, the volunteer will not be indemnified under the district policy, should the volunteer be named in any legal action.

**Q. What happens if I falsely report a bullying incident?** *(Falsely reporting is when a person adds false information about an incident or reports an incident that didn't happen. If you suspect a student is being bullied you will not be held responsible if it is determined that the incident wasn't a bullying incident. If in doubt, you cannot go wrong reporting the incident so it can be investigated.)*

A. Falsely reporting (adding false information about an incident or reporting an incident that didn't happen) an incident of bullying could result in a range of results including but not limited to additional



training, consultation with a building or central office administrator or loss of volunteer status. Additionally, if a volunteer does not report a bullying incident, the volunteer will not be indemnified under the district policy, should the volunteer be named in any legal action.

**Q. If I reported an incident between students must I keep reporting if I witness a different incident between the same students?**

A. Each incident needs to be reported. An initial incident may not be defined as bullying however, since bullying is defined as “repeated” it is important to report each incident. The pattern of repetition between students could show that a student is in fact being bullied even if the prior incidents were not defined as such.

**Q. What are appropriate responses to bullying behavior?**

A. Volunteers should intervene when students are exhibiting behavior consistent with bullying. These behaviors can include teasing, excluding fellow students from activities, harassing behaviors, physical aggression toward others, writing mean spirited or derogatory notes to others, or sending harassing messages to others using an electronic format (email, text message, Twitter, KIK, Instagram, etc.) Volunteers should not intervene physically if there is a reasonable chance of personal injury or there is a reasonable fear of personal safety. Informing an administrator, teacher or other District personnel is expected and required.

**Q. How can I learn more about bullying prevention?**

A. The school’s counseling office or administration can provide information. In addition, there are many resources on the district Bullying Prevention Page as part of the District’s website through this [link](#). The Indiana Department of Education also has resources available through their website found [here](#).

**Q. When is it appropriate to use the word “bullying”?**

A. The term “bullying” has been used and perhaps overused recently in the media. The use of the term “bullying” is now further complicated due to legislation that more narrowly defines the term therefore making the statutory definition of bullying potentially inconsistent with the common use of the term. As stated in an earlier answer, please let your supervising teacher or building administration know if there is inappropriate conduct taking place between students. You may simply state “this is the behavior that is taking place.” The supervising teacher or building administration will be able to determine through questions whether they need to consider the action as an alleged or suspected act of “bullying.” The most important issue at hand is the respectful treatment of others regardless of whether the person is a staff member, community member, or student.



**Q. What steps will be taken by the school after a report is made?**

A. The school administrator will investigate the reported student behaviors. The administration, counselors, or other appropriate school personnel will work with students and parents to resolve the conflict. The behaviors will be considered by comparing the action to the statutory definition of bullying. If the behavior is determined to be bullying, a few additional steps will be taken. First, the student that was the target of bullying will receive information and strategies that intended to assist the student in confronting, and dealing with unwanted behavior. The bully will receive similar strategies as well as consequences for the bullying behavior.

It is important to remember that not all reported incidences of bullying actually meet the narrow legal definition of bullying. That does not mean that the behavior is acceptable. It may need to be addressed.

**Q. What are the expectations for confidentiality?**

A. Bullying situations will be handled in the same manner as all discipline situations. While student confidentiality is important in some cases, addressing student to student behaviors without both or all parties being involved with the resolution is difficult. The administration is under no obligation to share student consequences with other students, parents or volunteers.

A report of bullying or bullying behavior, however, may remain confidential. It is important that all members of the school community feel comfortable reporting instances of potential bullying or any inappropriate conduct to the school administration.

The important message to all in the school community is “If You See Something, Say Something.”

**Q. What are the educational resources the district uses to provide information about how bullying is addressed?**

A. A variety of resources are available to parents, volunteers, and students.

A list of the resources in use at the various grade levels is available on the Bully Prevention page located on the district website. Grades K-8 provide students with programming in large and small groups and embed positive behavior supports within the curriculum through the use of grade appropriate texts and class discussion.

The high school uses a variety of resources to continually expose students to the detrimental effects of bullying, intimidation, harassment, and violence. Student groups produce communication through print and visual media. Pamphlets are distributed by administration and teachers. Bully Prevention Week is promoted and organized by student leaders.

Building administration will be able to address specific questions regarding the unique ways each building addresses the topic of bullying.



**Q. How will staff be educated on bullying?**

A. The new Indiana Anti-Bullying Law as well as Avon Community School Corporation District Policy requires that those staff and volunteers who have ongoing contact with students be provided a minimum level of training. Avon Schools has addressed this requirement in a variety of ways.

Faculty and staff, such as instructional assistants and bus drivers, are required to complete a more in-depth bullying prevention course. Staff members that have infrequent contact with students (custodians, kitchen staff, maintenance staff, etc.) will receive a separate presentation that outlines their responsibilities and makes them aware of signs that may indicate bullying behaviors how to respond.

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If you have any questions feel free to contact your supervising teacher, building administration or the School Safety Coordinator – Deborah Swain-Bayless 317-544-6016, [dsswain-bayless@avon-schools.org](mailto:dsswain-bayless@avon-schools.org)

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**[ACSC Volunteer Electronic Signature Agreement Form](#)**