

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HO'OKELE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
511 KUNEHI STREET
KAPOLEI, HAWAII 96707

Bullying

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As part of our efforts to eliminate bullying at Ho'okele Elementary School, we would like to educate and inform all members of our school community about the approaches we take to address bullying behavior and the rationale behind these approaches.

We believe that all students have the right to feel safe and respected in the school community. No student has the right to make others feel unsafe or disrespected. Therefore, we implement consequences for bullying behavior as outlined in Chapter 19 and our school policy.

We also recognize that purely punitive and consequence-driven approaches, such as zero-tolerance policies have been shown to be ineffective in changing student behavior in the long term. In fact, some research indicate that zero-tolerance approaches may actually reinforce negative behavior. Zero-tolerance policies can result in suspension; students who are not in school lose opportunities for positive social engagement, and their connections with and engagement in school decreases. When students are not in school, school staff cannot intervene with meaningful solutions that can change the student's behavior. In addition, when suspension or expulsion are used as consequences for bullying, some students and staff members will be less likely to report bullying. These negative effects may increase the likelihood that a student will bully others at school.

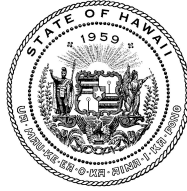
At Ho'okele, we address bullying behaviors with a multi-leveled approach. We provide:

1. School wide TRIBES agreements fostering Mutual Respect, Attentive Listening, Right to Pass and Participate, Safety First and Appreciations-No Put Downs. Students are taught these agreements in TRIBES lessons and activities to promote team and relationship building.
2. Second Step Social and Emotional Learning Program is taught to all grade levels, including specific guidance on how to address bullying.
3. A range of reasonable and consistent responses to bullying behavior that allows the school to match the severity of the consequence to the severity and frequency of the incident. This may range from classroom to office consequences, including corrections and conferences for minor incidents to detention, in-school and out of school suspensions for serious incidents.
4. Research-based interventions and counseling strategies to increase positive and prosocial behaviors for students who engage in bullying behavior.
5. Research-based interventions and counseling to provide support for students who are frequent targets of bullying behavior.

If you are concerned that your student is being bullied or is engaging in bullying behavior, please contact your child's teacher, counselor, or vice-principal at 305-8500 for assistance. We look forward to working together to eliminate bullying in our school and create a safe and positive learning environment for all of our children.

Sincerely,

Laureen Dunn, Principal



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Policy on Threats

In the interest of ensuring that Ho'okele Elementary School is a safe place for everyone, all threats will be taken seriously. Please read and discuss the information on this page with your child.

Threats are no joking matter!

- In the past, if someone said something like, "I am going to shoot those teachers and students who give me a hard time," it may have been treated as a joke or an idle threat. The rules and expectations regarding language related to threats of violence have changed. Due to violent incidents that have taken place in schools, any statement of this type must now be taken very seriously.

"I was only joking" is not a reasonable explanation or defense.

Behavior that will be considered threatening include:

- Stating that you have a weapon or bomb in your possession at school
- Stating that you plan to bring a weapon or bomb to school
- Stating that you plan to cause physical harm to a student or staff member
- Making a false statement that there is a bomb or other destructive device at school
- Any written or verbal indication that you intend to harm any person or damage property.

Note: Physically threatening behaviors are also considered very serious and are subject to Chapter 19 consequences.

In addition to parental notification, outcomes and consequences that may be imposed for making a threat include:

- Further investigation by school personnel
- Detention
- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Further investigation by law enforcement

