

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

POLICY PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth guidelines for all School District personnel to address domestic violence that may have an impact on employees, students or parents. It has been determined that the occurrence of domestic violence adversely affects the well-being and productivity of school district personnel, students and families. Violence of any kind is a violation of human rights and an obstacle to learning. Domestic violence can cause absenteeism, lack of focus, and mental health concerns. Therefore, it is the policy of the Meridian School District to provide appropriate support and assistance to employees and students and, to identify community resources for parents who are affected by domestic violence.

DEFINITION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive and abusive behavior that includes tactics of physical, sexual, and/or psychological abuse that are intended to establish and maintain control over an intimate partner. Intimate partners include married or formerly married couples, couples who live together or have lived together and those who are or have been dating partners.

STATEMENT OF POSITION

The Meridian School District will not tolerate domestic violence of any kind in or around District offices, facilities, classrooms, work sites, vehicles, or while a student or employee is engaged in District business or activities. This includes the display of any violent or threatening behavior that may result in physical or emotional injury or otherwise places the safety and productivity of District personnel and/or students at risk.

The District will take reasonable measures, to the extent practical and required by law, to foster a safe working environment for all faculty, staff and students. The District will make the safety and confidentiality of victims a top priority at all times. Efforts will be made to educate staff and students on the dynamics and effects of domestic violence and the promotion of healthy relationships. All district personnel are expected to take the problem of domestic violence and its effects in the workplace and on students seriously. School personnel should remain alert and sensitive to students' behavior for signs of the effects of domestic violence. The District will take reasonable measures to keep children safe from the effects of domestic violence while on District property or while engaged in District activities.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Employees: The District is committed to working with employees who are victims of domestic violence to prevent it from occurring in the workplace and to reduce its impact on employee well-being and productivity.

The District will offer assistance to employees impacted by domestic violence by providing:

1. a confidential means for coming forward for help when possible,
2. information on available community resources and
3. other appropriate assistance as feasible.

No employee will be penalized or disciplined solely for being a victim of domestic violence. Any employee who threatens, harasses, or abuses a domestic partner at the workplace or from the workplace using any District resources such as work time, workplace phones, fax machines, mail, e-mail, or other means may be subject to corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employees who are perpetrators of domestic violence will be encouraged to seek domestic violence perpetrator treatment and other assistance as appropriate. The District will provide information regarding counseling and certified treatment resources.

Students: The District is committed to assisting students who have been exposed to domestic violence as well as students who are victims of dating violence in order to reduce the impact on the student. The District will offer assistance to students impacted by domestic or dating violence by providing:

1. a confidential means for coming forward for help when possible,
2. readily available resource and referral information,
3. class schedule adjustments when appropriate,
4. excused absences as needed to obtain assistance and
5. other appropriate assistance as feasible, based on individual need.

No student will be penalized or disciplined solely for being exposed to domestic violence.

Students who are perpetrators of domestic or dating violence will be encouraged to seek assistance. Disciplinary sanctions will be imposed should the student perpetrator engage in any act of domestic or dating violence while at school or while participating in any school activity. The District will provide information regarding counseling and domestic violence perpetrator treatment resources, and work with parents of the perpetrator, when appropriate, to help students access such resources.

Adoption Date: February 21, 2007