

Esau Freeman

Neutral Testimony on HB2143 Policies and Procedures addressing Bullying
Business Representative for School Employees in USD 259 Wichita

My name is Esau Freeman and I am the business representative for service employees international union local 513. I represent employees in USD 259, including classified workers and security officers. Attached are three emails from security officers who are all union members. The word document is a document I (Esau Freeman) read at the Wichita public school board meeting in December so it is now part of the public record. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-OgKYVZy19A&t=3179s>. My testimony begins at 40.01 and is followed by UTW (United teachers of Wichita) President Katie Warren. I would like the opportunity to testify to the committee via WebEx, And I would also like to submit the supporting documents in order to make you aware of the need to put an end to violent behavior in our schools. I believe that it is imperative to hold parents and students accountable for the way they treat staff members with the same enthusiasm that we go after staff members when we think that they've done something inappropriate. Below, you will see many online attachments all directed to the great cause of ending bullying in our schools. Unfortunately, these policies are much like restraining orders, a piece of paper is only as good as its enforcement, and just as easy to walk through as an open door.

While we support the notion of ending bullying in schools, we're not sure that another bill demanding that happen will actually solve anything. What would really be good as if we would enforce the policies that already exist. The bigger problem is how do you enforce them because consequences like suspending students from school, lowers graduation rates and does not get us to our end goal. We need to look at the bigger picture and how we create autonomous individuals who can think for themselves and control, their social and emotional behavior in group and social settings.

HB2143 the bullying prevention bill is written in the spirit of solving a problem we all want to solve. Unfortunately, there are a few key areas that are of concern because they have not yet been addressed.

1. School administrators are already stretched thin with their duties of running the school building and evaluating employees ,Etc. Where is the funding or the personnel to deal with the increased numbers of bullying claims?
2. The school districts have an HR department, and there is already designated individuals who conduct investigations, dealing with discrimination, bullying and hostile work environment. Would it not make sense to just make these departments more robust?
3. Anonymous tips and accusations have been and can be used as forms of retaliation or Weaponized to cause problems for people they don't like. If a tip is anonymous how do you address false accusations?
4. The overall composition of the bills suggest that there are many things that are expected to be followed yet there is no language that defines the consequences. Should the administrator or the district fail to meet their goal. This is much like the current law that state security officers cannot use handcuffs on students. It tells them what they're supposed to do without defining consequences if they do or alternatives to be used when such items are unavailable.
5. Will this be applied evenly across the board to public as well as private schools?
6. Will there be funding for restorative services to teach our students these social emotional lessons?

7. Will there be funding to help integrate better practices in the home?

8. Are you willing to pass a laws banning cell phones in schools? Electronic devices are the number one way that the school fights and abuses are ending up on TikTok and fueling the fire. 15 minutes of fame is incentivizing some of this poor behavior.

9. Are you willing to pass laws holding parents accountable for student behavior?

10. Are you willing to adequately fund schools? It's clear that you're willing to fund schools to the limit that you consider full, but what are you willing to spend to reach adequacy?

11. There is a flaw with allowing all parties involved to know the outcomes of the discipline for persons who violate this policy. While we would all like to know what happened it is an unfortunate violation of the rights of a person being reprimanded.

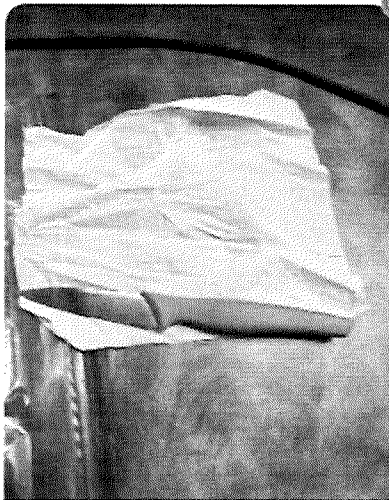
Friday 6:46 PM

Hi Esau, I'm not sure what else has been going on with my grievance, but I can tell you that this week there was another incident that happened at our building. It was in a classroom with a student, but I was asked to keep a knife in my locked desk drawer that a student had brought to school "for protection". It's still locked up there now awaiting his grandma to "come pick it up". Surely this has to show that this has become a hostile and uncontrolled environment to work in given the circumstances. I know the teacher wrote the student up and was not happy that he was not suspended or anything given the zero tolerance policy. I can send you a picture of the knife, if you can wait until Monday. Please let me know what you think I should do. Thanks.

Today 8:14 AM

Send me a picture of the knife if you still have it today

Please and thank you



Today 10:04 AM

Tina, I did some research and under policy 1456 the principal has the discretion to decide how severe the situation is and what type of punishment should be enacted for the student versus counseling, etc. If you are uncomfortable, giving the knife back to the grandparent you are welcome to ask the principal to have someone else do it. And I understand that this adds to your stress. I'm sorry for that but there's no policy or contract violation.

Ok, thanks for letting me know the policy on this. When did this change from the zero tolerance for weapons?

I'm not sure about the year, but I know it has changed because I checked with some of our security officers. I assumed I would get the direct answer from them rather than contacting administration. I remember a time when you would get sent to a hearing for fingernail clippers.

So strange since the child brought it as protection since he felt threatened. I'm not sure if he has been bullied or what since I'm not in the classroom, but either way, that is quite the knife to bring to school. Again, I appreciate you getting clarification on this for me.

If it's any consolation, I am trying to provide some testimony on a bill at the state house pertaining to bullying and staff as well as students.

Delivered

10,000% increase in bullying of both and the district just turns and looks the other way.

And I am sure my percentage is a low number



Interchange



Safety / Anti-Bullying
google.com

Safety Services / Bullying and Harassment
google.com

No one "asks" or deserves to be bullied, harassed or sexually harassed.

- Not even if other people think you are different.
- Not for the way you dress.
- Not even if you have flirted with or dated someone before.
- Even if you do not confront the harasser.
- Not even if you are "friends" with the other person.

If it is happening to you or someone else, report it!

- Keep telling if it continues.
- Save any notes, pictures, texts, emails, etc. Give these items to a trusted adult.
- Practice safe, appropriate ways to respond
- Talk with your parents and/or a trusted adult at school such as a teacher, coach or counselor

What happens if someone bullies, harasses or sexually harasses someone?

- All complaints will be promptly and thoroughly investigated.
- Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken and may include expulsion from school.
- Intentionally filing a false complaint will result in appropriate disciplinary action up to and including expulsion of the student making the false accusation.

How to stop if you are the bully or harasser:

- Know what constitutes bullying, harassment and sexual harassment.
- Practice empathizing with others. Consider things from the other person's perspective.
- Remove yourself from groups of people who are negative and/or treat others negatively.
- Think before you act.
- If you have trouble managing strong emotions, talk to someone who can help.
- Take responsibility for your actions.

For questions regarding bullying & crimes, please contact:
Safety Services, 316-973-2260

For questions regarding sexual harassment, please contact:
Human Resources—Title IX Office, 316-973-4616



The Wichita Public Schools is committed to creating an environment that is free of discrimination and to fostering a culture of respect, acceptance and inclusion. This includes, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, age, religion, disability, and other legally protected classifications. All programs and activities...

All Wichita Public Schools employees have the responsibility to report this information.

The following persons have been designated to handle inquiries regarding this anti-discrimination statement:

Wichita Title Coordinator for Adults and Title IX Coordinator for Adults and Students
Dorothy Taylor-Jones, 316-973-4616, 316-973-4616

Assistant Title Coordinator for Students
Wendy Smith-Eckman, 316-973-4616, 316-973-4616

**BULLYING,
HARASSMENT
and
SEXUAL
HARASSMENT**

Information for
6th-12th Grade
Students

EVERY STUDENT FUTURE READY

WPS-BullyingHarassment-Brochure-Grades6-12 - ENGLISH
PDF Document · 150 KB

Mead Middle / Mead Middle School
google.com

P1464 PUPIL BEHAVIOR - REGULATIONS

BOARD POLICY:

Each pupil is held responsible for his/her personal actions. The right to attend a Wichita Public School carries with it the obligation to maintain acceptable behavior.

Administrative Implemental Procedures:

1. Behaviors other than those described in this policy may constitute unlawful or prohibited acts. The common standard against which behavior is measured is that which is conducive to learning and a contributor to the general purpose and welfare of the school.
2. Bullying occurs in all forms including, but not limited to, appearance, status with a peer group (social power), intellectual, socio-economic, gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, etc. Bullying in any form is prohibited on school property, in a school vehicle, or at a school-sponsored activity or event. In addition, bullying is prohibited while utilizing school property. Bullying includes Cyberbullying. In compliance with K.S.A. 72-6147 and amendments thereto, the Board developed and adopted a plan that addresses bullying. In addition to disciplinary action described in BOE Policy P5113 - Suspension and/or Expulsion of Students, students who violate the bullying prohibition may be reported to local law enforcement, if appropriate.

Bullying, as defined in K.S.A. 72-6147, means:

- (A) Any intentional gesture or any intentional written, verbal, electronic or physical act or threat either by any student, staff member or parent towards a student or by any student, staff member or parent towards a staff member that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that such gesture, act or threat creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment that a reasonable person, under the circumstances, knows or should know will have the effect of:
 - (i) Harming a student or staff member, whether physically or mentally;
 - (ii) Damaging a student's or staff member's property;
 - (iii) Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of harm to the student or staff member; or
 - (iv) Placing a student or staff member in reasonable fear of damage to the student's or staff member's property;
- (B) Cyberbullying; or
- (C) Any other form of intimidation or harassment prohibited by the board of education of the school district in policies concerning bullying adopted pursuant to this section or subsection (c) of K.S.A 2017 Supp. 72-1138, and amendments thereto.

"Cyberbullying" means bullying by use of any electronic communication device through means including, but not limited to, e-mail, instant messaging, text messages, blogs, mobile phones, pagers, online games and websites.

3. Fighting will not be permitted at school, on school buses, or at school sponsored activities.
4. Possession and/or use of tobacco or tobacco paraphernalia are not permitted in school buildings or on school campuses. The prohibition against smoking and the use of tobacco should be supported by programs emphasizing the hazards of smoking and tobacco use.
5. Any show of disrespect by word or action toward any staff member is prohibited.

Zero Tolerance Policies - English

PDF Document · 173 KB

Safety Services / SPEAK UP Anonymous Reporting

google.com

Documents and Policies / Bullying and harassment agreement

google.com

Esau Freeman

Business Representative
SEIU local 513
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316-617-1581
esauseiu@gmail.com

Greetings board members, President Reeser, Dr. Thompson, and vice president Headrick.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening.

I'd like to start off by saying thank you for the recognition of these custodians who have long serve the district. I appreciate that you're taking time to point out some of the unsung heroes in our district.

Next, I have a few letters from security officers that I'd like to share with you:

Read letters (Revised)

Letter 1.

At my school, student behavior is the worst it's ever been. The students have the run the school; admin will talk to them, but not much discipline is followed through. Kids refuse to get tardy passes and say the teacher has them when late to class. Also, teachers are scared to write students up due to a data sent out at the start of the year. Teachers do not want to face repercussions. The dress code has gotten worse this past year, as well. Hoodies, hats, and PJs seem to be the main issues. When I ask a student to take down their hoodie, they buck back and say smart aleck things, and I'm called every name in the book. I tell admin, but it just gets swept under the rug. Students walk down the hallways using language like at a night club, and admin will not take care of it. This is page 30 of our student handbook about dress code.

Letter 2.

The Wichita USD 259 public school system is designed to educate students for their futures!

why we are allowing.....

1. Staff and Teachers being cursed out
2. Staff and Teachers being told by the students what they are or aren't going to do!
3. Staff and Teachers being called every name in the book but a child of GOD. Why is it that Teachers don't enjoy teaching anymore?
4. Why are we allowing students to put their hands on any Staff, Administrator, Adult, or Security officers working in the building. If it was PD there would be charges pressed.
5. Why are students with the chronic behavior of not going to class, being overlooked, and ignored
6. Why are we allowing students to come to school dress in tube/ halter tops, exposing their bellies and cleavage or God and everybody to see? Why are there no rules against showing your buttocks via sagging pants, and pajamas? Why are we not enforcing the district dress code
7. Our current policies and procedures for consequences are ineffective and outdated. The consequences that are being applied are ineffective because they are not utilized in the right manner. If we're going to have restorative practices those restorative practices need to be worked out with the person who was harmed. any times a student will kick or hit a staff member or teacher and they are sent to the principal where they behave for the rest of the hour and then return to class with some sort of reward. The only thing you're doing here is reinforcing negative

behavior. We're going to engage in restorative practices let's do it but let's do it right.

8. Sitting in ISS for a day or two or even getting 5 days suspension for fighting is like a slap on the wrist. The consequences for students' inappropriate behavior should be consistent across the district and not vary from school to school. In addition, we must start holding our parents more accountable for their child or children's actions. Parents always want to hold staff accountable but are unwilling to realize that the apples not fallen very far from the tree and the behavior from students and parents is unacceptable on many occasions.

9. Education is a right, but in many of the schools the rights of those students are being violated regularly by students who cannot and will not control themselves or follow the rules. If a student cannot follow the rules of the school/system, that must be taught. We cannot continue to try to design curriculum the teacher's, educators, and staff how to work around the bad behavior exhibited by these students. We understand that many students have trauma. Unfortunately, those undone with traumas have for the past few decades spilled over into the classroom and robbed well behaved students of their learning time. We as Educators and Security Officers and staff shouldn't be fearful to come to work. Or, have the daily concern of what will happen next. We come to work every day to serve the community and this your responsibility to make it safe work environment. Unfortunately, if we were handing out grades USD 259 is struggling to make an F into D-.

**WE SHOULD BE PROVIDING PUBLIC
EDUCATION; but it feels like we are
RUNNING A CORRECTIONAL
INSTITUTIONS!!!**

***THIS MEYHAM HAS TO STOP BEFORE SOMEONE GETS KILLED; OR IS
THAT WHAT HAS TO HAPPEN BEFORE WE GET YOUR ATTENTION???***

Letter #3

This is a note from information compiled from our security team. It seems that our district is not consistent with how they deal with incidents. Certain students get treated different than others. Perhaps this is because the administrators are afraid of the parents and want to avoid conflict, but we can't afford to do that anymore. Over a three day. There were approximately 50 marijuana Vape pens taken from students. It appears that the district believes that it's OK to just slap them on the wrist. Yet to get a job at USD to 590 employees must pass a drug test, oh the irony.

This is an institution of learning, and it should not be a hotbed of drug dealing.

The students who choose to batter and assault one another complete disregard for staff and other adults in the building. Well trying to break up fights' security guards are often jumped by students who are either trying to block their entrance into break up the fight or busy videotaping what's happening so they can post it to Wichita School fights on Tick Tok. Daily you can see school aged tough guys and girls duking it out.

It's been said repeatedly but it's only the select few who are causing the problem. But unfortunately, those few are creating a disruption that's hurting all our students our staff and our community. Parent should be more accountable for their student's behavior and when these things happen there should be zero tolerance consequences that that student and their family must deal with. Last year in negotiations we agreed to a behavior work group unfortunately we've only met twice in the past 8 ½ months and five out of those 8 ½ months there have been near daily altercations throughout the district, but I found guns put children and staff, security, and teachers in the hospital. Cannot continue to try to meet the students where they are as the greater good is suffering for the sinful few. We've had too many staff members suffer life-changing injuries while trying to serve students in USD 259. Enough is enough and we demand drastic changes immediately. We've been patient our patience is gone, and it is your responsibility to provide a safe working environment for your employees.

And one last thing the public often makes the comments that the district is top-heavy and that they have too much administration, I don't know if that's the case, but I certainly know that the people who are making the decisions about the classroom cannot continue to just come in and observe and give advice. If you don't regularly work in the classroom, you really have no idea what's happening in the classroom and all the educated intellectualization about how to fix this problem has not been working. It's time to get back to basics. Enforce the rules fairly and evenly across the board before public education is destroyed due to a lack of an action on those in power.

Deborah Bremer

From: Delana Mock <dmock@usd259.net>
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2022 3:02 PM
To: esauseiu
Cc: Shane Murray; Enefiok Akpan (East)
Subject: thoughts from security

This is a note from our Security Team.

It seems that our district is not consistent with incidents that involve certain students. Allowing students to go into events after THC pens have been found on the student. In a 3 day period there were approximately 50 THC vape pens taken off students. There is a slap on the wrist. They get too many chances. We need to tighten that up. That is more chances for them to traffic the drugs or get students to try it.

The violence and disregard for other students and staff has gone by the wayside. The students that batter one another don't care and staff are getting hurt. Policies that deal with this type of behavior do not seem to be helping. We are just passing the problems around when they get sent to other schools. What happened to Zero Tolerance for certain behaviors. The statement that is being said and repeated often is "The behavior of a few will not be the focus of our district" however the "few" are who we are speaking of that cause a complete High School to go into lock down or more police presence being called in. This not just a few times but more than people know.

Parents should be more accountable for their student when these things happen. We have these Essar funds maybe we can get the parents involved with their students behaviors and needs.

I'm glad they have started reviewing the policies in place that is a start but something drastic needs to happen. How are we preparing these students for life outside of school if we continue to let them do what they want, treat people the way they want and give the disrespect to others continuously. Staff need to feel like they are a top priority as well but allowing these things to happen daily is not acceptable.

Thank you for your time.

*Delana Mock
North High*

Security Officer

316-973-6299

316-214-9200

Deborah Bremer

From: Mike Burns (Northeast) <MBurns2@usd259.net>
Sent: Friday, December 9, 2022 7:29 AM
To: esauseiu; Shane Murray; Enefiok Akpan (East); Stephanie Willig

At my school, student behavior is the worst it's ever been. The students have the run the school; admin will talk to them, but not much discipline is followed through. Kids refuse to get tardy passes and say the teacher has them when late to class. Also, teachers are scared to write students up due to a data sent out at the start of the year. Teachers do not want to face repercussions. The dress code has gotten worse this past year, as well. Hoodies, hats, and PJ's seem to be the main issues. When I ask a student to take down their hoodie, they buck back and say smart aleck things, and I'm called every name in the book. I tell admin, but it just gets swept under the rug. Students walk down the hallways using language like at a night club, and admin will not take care of it. This is page 30 of our student handbook about dress code.

Dress Code

Students are expected to dress in an appropriate manner for school. Dress that is offensive or disruptive to learning will not be allowed. The dress code includes all exterior ways students present themselves. All dress code issues are up to the discretion of the Northeast administration.

Specifically:

- No sagging; pants and shorts will be of appropriate size and length, and will be worn at the natural waist.
- Bandanna printed fabric may not be worn on any article of clothing.
- No inappropriate printing, writing, or pictures on clothing such as gang-related signs, symbols, writing, or distinctive method of wearing or placement; foul language or innuendo; tobacco, alcohol, or other illegal substance promotion; anything depicting or promoting violence, or offensive to a religious, ethnic, or other group.
- No hats, bandannas, or other type of head covering (including hoodies) are to be worn in the building.
- No dark glasses will be worn in the building unless the nurse records a medical reason.
- Midribs should be covered.
- Tops and blouses should be appropriate, not cut low. All students should dress modestly with respect to self and others. No spaghetti-strings.
- Foot covering must be worn at all times.
- Any items that could be physically harmful will not be allowed.
- Other inappropriate ways of dressing as determined by the NEM administration will not be allowed.
- No blankets are allowed.

Students whose dress does not conform to the dress code as described above will not be allowed to participate in the school day until they meet the specified requirements or receive a lunch detention. Repeated offenses will result in the student being sent home to change or be dealt with through appropriate disciplinary actions (i.e., parent contact, parent conference, detentions, Saturday School, and suspensions).

LaVonnda McCabe

Security Officer

Wichita West High School

316-973-3758

lmccabe@usd259.net

The Wichita USD 259 public school system is designed to educate students for their futures! We are talking about students from the element level to high school.

with that being said why we are allowing.....

1. Teachers being cursed out—Teachers being told by the students what they are or aren't going to do!

Teachers being called every name in the book but a child of GOD. Why is it that Teachers don't enjoy teaching anymore?

SOLUTION: Any student that curses at a teacher, the parent/guardian will be assessed

a \$250.00 fine payable to the school. If not able to pay, student will remain home and work remotely until fine is paid in full.

2. Why are we allowing students to put their hands on any Staff, Administrator, Adult, or Security working in the building.

Why????

SOLUTION: Any student that puts their hands on aggressively to any Staff, Administrator, Adult, or Security in the building

will be assessed a \$500.00 fine payable to the school. If not able to pay, student will remain home and work remotely until fine is paid in full.

3. Any student that has the chronic behavior of not going to class, why are we forcing him/her to stay?

SOLUTION: Have a parent/guardian meeting and let them know of the situation and the penalty for this

unruly/chronic behavior is a \$100.00 fine payable to the school. If not able to pay, student will remain home and work remotely until fine is paid in full.

4. Why are we allowing students to come to school dress in tube/ halter tops, belly/cleavage showing, buttock/shaggy pants, and pajamas??
SOLUTIONS: Have the entire DISTRICT go to a dress code, LETS DO IT!!
5. Our policies and procedures for consequences are ineffective and outdated. The consequences that are being applied are non-effective and don't affect the students. Sitting in ISS for a day or two or even getting 5 days suspension for fighting is like a slap on the wrist. Consequences must have more GRIT!
We must start holding our parents more accountable for their child(ren) actions!
Parents must have a reason to start making changes in their child(ren) behavior.
6. Education is a privilege, if a student can not follow the rules of the school/system, then maybe public education is not for them! We as Educators and Security Officers shouldn't be fearful to come to work. Or, have the attitude of what's going to happen next.

**WE SHOULD BE PROVIDING PUBLIC EDUCATION;
NOT RUNNING A CORRECTIONAL
INSTITUTIONS!!!**

THIS MAYHEM HAS TO STOP BEFORE SOMEONE GETS KILLED; OR IS THAT WHAT HAS TO HAPPEN BEFORE WE GET YOUR ATTENTION???