



## JCSC FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) Document

May 2025



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| <b>1) How do I report bullying?</b>                | <p>Reporting bullying to the school is the first step in working together to address any concern:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Ask an adult for help. Adults include teachers, counselors and school administrators.</li><li>2) Communicate concerns via email, Parent Square, call the school directly, or use the anonymous bullying report form found on the schools' websites.</li><li>3) Work with the school principal on any unresolved concerns.</li><li>4) If you are in need of further assistance, contact Central Office: Dr. Johnson, Mrs. Manowitz, Mr. Ebinger and Mrs. Sullivan can all be reached at (812) 346-4483.</li></ol> <p>If you report bullying via the online form, you will receive a confirmation of successful submission that looks like this:</p> <div data-bbox="578 1087 1422 1411"></div> <p>School principals receive these reports directly and will follow up within one school day.</p> <p><i>*New for 25-26*- JCSC will have an online reporting app called Say Something that can be used to report concerns.</i></p> |
| <b>2) How are bullying reports followed up on?</b> | <p><b>Step 1:</b> The principal receives a defined bullying report and begins to collect information for the investigation within one instructional day.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Within one instructional day, the principal notifies the</p>  |

parent/guardian of the alleged victim and the reported bully. The investigation begins promptly and must conclude within five instructional days. The principal then communicates the investigation results to the parent/guardian of the alleged victim and reported bully.

Consequences of confirmed bullying may range from behavior interventions to expulsion from school. Consequences will depend on the severity of the offense, the developmental ages of the targeted student and the bully, the bully's disciplinary history, and other relevant factors. Remedial action may include but is not limited to counseling for the targeted student and/or the bully, training of the bully and/or school staff, assignment of a contact person who will provide support to the targeted student, academic assistance or support for the targeted student such as tutoring, a behavioral intervention plan for the bully, a school safety plan agreement, and a change of placement as appropriate for the bully and/or the targeted student.

When permitted by law, the disciplinary action taken against a student found to have engaged in confirmed bullying will be reported to the parents of the targeted student. Typically, however, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibits the disclosure of such information without the written consent of the parents/guardian of the reported bully.

**Step 3:** If the targeted student or reported bully is not satisfied with the decision at Step 2, they may submit a written appeal to the Superintendent or the designee within 5 days of the decision at Step 2. The case will be reviewed within five instructional days after receipt of the appeal and a decision communicated to both parties.

**Step 4:** If the targeted student or reported bully is not satisfied with the decision at Step 3, they may submit a written appeal to School Board within five days. The Board shall conduct a hearing within twenty instructional days. The board shall provide a written decision to the targeted student or reported bully within (10) instructional days following the completion of the hearing.

**Indiana definition of bullying:**

Bullying as defined in State law means overt, unwanted, repeated acts or gestures, including verbal or written communications or images transmitted in any manner (including digitally or electronically), physical acts committed, aggression, or any other behaviors committed by a student or group of students against another student with the intent to harass, ridicule, humiliate, intimidate, or harm the other student and

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|  | <p>create for the targeted student an objectively hostile school environment that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. places the targeted student in reasonable fear of harm to the targeted student's person or property;</li> <li>B. has a substantially detrimental effect on the targeted student's physical or mental health;</li> <li>C. has the effect of substantially interfering with the targeted student's academic performance; or</li> <li>D. 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.</li> </ul> <p><b>Peer conflict definition:</b></p> <p>In cases of mutual conflict between two or more students that does not meet the definition of bullying, the administration will take action to support conflict resolution. Parents/guardians will be notified.</p> <p><b>Retaliation/False Charges:</b></p> <p>Retaliation against a person who reports a complaint or participates in an investigation into bullying is prohibited. Such a violation is considered a serious violation of Board policy. False charges also shall be regarded as a serious offense, and disciplinary measures could include up to expulsion from school.</p> |
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| <p><b>3) How does the school address a student mental health crisis?</b></p>   | <p>Jennings County Schools recognize that depression and self-harm are problems of increasing severity among children and adolescents. Students who experience depression cannot benefit fully from the educational program of the School Corporation, and students who have attempted self-harm pose a danger both to themselves and to other students. The Board has policy and procedures that are intended to increase child suicide awareness and prevention.</p> <p>All Corporation personnel have training to be alert for students who exhibits signs of extreme depression or who threatens or attempts suicide. Any such signs or the report of such signs from another student or staff member are taken with the utmost seriousness.</p> <p>If an individual student concern is noted, the staff member reports to the school counselor or building administrator. A staff member stays with the student at all times during stabilization of the concern and while assessing the risk. Parents/guardians of the student are immediately contacted and asked to come to the school. The family attends a meeting to discuss the concern. They are provided with a resource guide of available community supports for mental health. A referral to local providers can be made if the family would like assistance. Parents/guardians are also provided information about suicide awareness and prevention. A school safety plan may also be put into place for the student's safety and support if warranted. A safety plan can include increased supervision, altered schedules, and other supportive measures needed by the individual student.</p> |
| <p><b>4) What support systems are available to help students and staff cope with the loss of a member of the school community?</b></p> | <p>When a tragedy occurs, the school uses a crisis team to create a supportive plan for the building where the student attended school. A crisis plan involves additional counselors available at the school during the immediate time following the event. We also have local clergy members who provide support when additional staff are needed. The school has additional staff to provide extra support in the days after the event. Parents/guardians are contacted for any student who seeks out individual support from a counselor.</p> <p>Our school counselors follow up with the students and parents who sought out additional support in an ongoing basis. Student support groups (with parent permission) are held at school. If further support is needed, families are given community resource contacts, and expedited referrals are facilitated.</p>   |

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|   | <p>We have partnered with the Riley Hospital for Children, JC Health Department, Centerstone, Purdue Extension Health, and other local mental health supports to provide additional resources for student mental health for our families. We have shared resources and information online and host in-person events. The next upcoming event date with our local community partners will be shared via Parent Square.</p>   |
| <p><b>5) How does the school review mental health and bullying policies and procedures in an ongoing basis?</b></p> | <p>Our school safety team, which has school staff and local law enforcement members, meets monthly to review school safety concerns and updates. We have also added a student wellbeing committee that includes school staff and local partners who will review and discuss topics such as bullying, mental health, and family resources for support.</p> <p>The School Board reviews all school policies on an ongoing basis and approves recommendations for updates based upon new state laws and updated legal guidance.</p>  |
| <p><b>6) How does JCSC comply with Erin's Law or the requirements to teach students about sexual abuse?</b></p>     | <p>We are fully compliant with the law, and it is part of our school policy (PO 2221 Mandatory Curriculum). Each fall, every school counselor uses state-approved resources to cover the mandatory child abuse curriculum prior to the first semester deadline. Each school sends a link to the curriculum and an opportunity to opt out to all parents through their school newsletter at least twice. The sample below is a clip of Parent Square newsletter message sent this school year at one of our elementary schools:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A Word from the Guidance Department</b></p> <p>According to the legislation from the Indiana Department of Education, each public school shall provide age appropriate instruction on child abuse and child sexual abuse to students in kindergarten through grade twelve. This instruction will be happening in the month of November at NVE. The following resource will be the basis for instruction in our elementary school:</p> <p><a href="https://fightchildabuse.org/">https://fightchildabuse.org/</a></p> <p>If you have any questions after reviewing the curriculum or would like your child not to participate, please contact Mrs. Gambrel (<a href="mailto:kgambrel@jcsc.org">kgambrel@jcsc.org</a>) or Mrs. Driver (<a href="mailto:mdriver@jcsc.org">mdriver@jcsc.org</a>) at 812-346-4903. Thank you!</p> |
| <p><b>7) How can I review the license for my child's teacher or other certified school employees?</b></p>           | <p><a href="https://license.doe.in.gov/public_data/educator_licenses/">https://license.doe.in.gov/public_data/educator_licenses/</a></p> <p>JCSC prioritizes hiring fully licensed individuals. When a lack of certified candidates for a position exists, an emergency permit could be issued. JCSC has a low number of emergency permits. We currently (May 2025) have 13 certified staff members on emergency permits of our total 291 certified employees. The criteria for emergency permits from IDOE is as follows:</p>  |

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|   | <p>An Emergency Permit is issued at the request of a school district in a content area for which the district is experiencing difficulty staffing the assignment with a properly licensed educator. The Emergency Permit (EP) is a temporary credential issued to a school corporation or special education cooperative for a person who is not licensed for that assignment. The applicant must possess the minimum of a Bachelor's Degree from a regionally accredited university in order to be eligible for the EP. The individual holding the EP must make a commitment to work toward completion of an approved program to either add the content area(s) of the EP to an existing license or to obtain an Initial Practitioner license for the content area(s). The permit holder must meet with a licensing advisor at an Indiana institution in order to learn about the requirements for completing the appropriate program.</p>  |
| <p><b>8) What should I know about social media and the schools?</b></p> | <p>Our school district must follow guidelines (FERPA) about keeping confidential information about students private, and we are unable to directly comment or clarify information on social media about student concerns. We ask for you to please communicate with us with any concerns directly through the methods listed above so we can work together to resolve any concerns promptly.</p> <p>We also ask for your help in monitoring our students' use of social media. For those who do have social media, we ask for your assistance in regularly monitoring that content. As a school, we do not have access to student's Snapchat, Instagram, or other social media accounts. We become aware of content that is considered inappropriate or concerning when it is submitted to us as a screenshot or picture by other students or by parents. Snapchat is particularly difficult because the messages disappear after they are sent on the device. At that point, it requires law enforcement involvement in order to retrieve the content. We appreciate your partnership in monitoring ongoing social media on student devices and reaching out to the school directly if you need to report any concerning events. In those instances, a screenshot or picture of the content is helpful for administrators.</p> |