



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – LEEWARD DISTRICT
ILIMA INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL
91-884 FORT WEAVER ROAD
EWA BEACH, HAWAII 96706

August 25, 2015

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

As part of our efforts to eliminate bullying at Ilima Intermediate 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 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 indicates that zero-tolerance approaches may actually reinforce negative behavior. Zero-tolerance policies can result in suspensions; 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 a students' behavior. In addition, when suspension and 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.

We address bullying behaviors with a multifaceted approach. We provide:

1. School-wide training on responsible, respectful behavior and bullying prevention (for example, how to respond to bullying behavior and how to report bullying behavior)
2. 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 range includes minor corrections (such as discussion and an immediate timeout from activity), moderate corrections (such as lunch time detention), and serious corrections (such as in-school and out-of-school suspension).
3. Research-based interventions to increase positive and prosocial behaviors for students who engage in bullying behavior (for example, anger management/social skills training, mentoring, and increased supervision or structure).
4. Research-based interventions to provide supports for students who are frequent targets of bullying behavior (for example, increased engagement in school activities, and mentoring).

If you are concerned that your child is being bullied or is engaging in bullying behaviors, please contact 687-9300 for support and 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 students.

Sincerely,

Christopher D. Bonilla,
Principal

