

What to do if your student experiences harassment in Williamson County Public Schools



Report the Harassment

- Fill out the Williamson County Schools Bullying Report Form: <https://www.wcs.edu/domain/1205>
- If the incident involved identity-based targeting of your child, be sure to list this explicitly on the form.
- For example, if your child was bullied based on race, be sure to specify the nature of the harassment and include explicitly that “racial bullying” or “race-based bullying” occurred, and describe what happened.

Request the Records

- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) gives you the right to inspect and review any records the school has about your child.
- Review the WCS description of FERPA rights: <https://www.wcs.edu/domain/1203>
- To request records under FERPA:
 - Send an email or physical letter to your school principal (or appropriate administrator) requesting specific records.
 - Find your school principal or administrator: <https://www.wcs.edu/domain/1233>
 - Specify that you would like to exercise your FERPA right as the student’s parent/guardian
 - You should expect to hear back about when/how you can access these records, and you should be given access to them within 45 days. Be sure to follow up if they do not provide a date within a reasonable amount of time.

File A Records Request

- The Tennessee Public Records Act gives you the right to access any government record (including public schools documents) that exists at the time of your request.
- Fill out form (3.604) with your personal information. As a Tennessee citizen, you are the “requestor” of information.
 - PDF link to form: <https://docs.wcs.edu/pdf/boe/procedures/3.604-Public-Records-Request-Form.pdf>
 - For the “Request” portion, you can indicate “Copy/Duplicate.”
 - Under “Records Requested,” be sure to identify:
 - The type of record requested (e.g. All records related to the student, all records related to the harassment report, etc.)
 - The timeframe (e.g. since X date, between certain dates, etc.)
 - The subject matter of that request and any key words related to it (these are usually used to pull files for you)
- Send the completed form to Dana Ausbrooks via email and mail:

dana.ausbrooks@wcs.edu
[Subject line: Public Records Request]
ATTN: Dana Ausbrooks (TPRA)
Williamson County Schools
1320 West Main Street
Franklin, TN 37064
- Reach out to local advocacy or partner organizations if you are having difficulty with this or need help finalizing a request.
<https://onewillco.org/>



View an online version of this guide, with links (use your phone’s camera app to scan this QR code)

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Know (and cite) the school policies

- Review the WCS Student and Parent Bill of Rights, which guarantees a safe learning environment, clarity around grading, access to your child's records, interpretation/translation of information, timely notice about discipline decisions, among other things.
 - WCS Student and Parent Bill of Rights: <https://www.wcs.edu/domain/1206>
- The WCS School Board Policies guide the schools' and districts' responses to reports of harassment and discrimination.
 - WCS School Board Policies: <https://tsba.net/williamson-county-board-of-education-policy-manual/#students>
- Some common board policies that apply to bullying and harassment are:
 - Code of Conduct 6.300: https://onedrive.live.com/view.aspx?resid=C425CC264269ABEF%2181505&authkey=!AGXyt_UzE39vm9w
 - Zero Tolerance Policies 6.309: https://onedrive.live.com/view.aspx?resid=C425CC264269ABEF%2174402&authkey=!AFLADvP_sxjCeM
 - Discrimination and Bullying (including cyber) Policy 6.304: <https://onedrive.live.com/view.aspx?resid=C425CC264269ABEF!74404&ithint=file%2cdocx&authkey=!AHkVAHiDI1856Do>
 - Sexual Harassment Policy 6.3041: <https://onedrive.live.com/view.aspx?resid=C425CC264269ABEF!76253&ithint=file%2cdocx&authkey=!ACPJ0dHQDIMaEjA>
- Be sure to review the policies on the WCS website if these don't seem like the policies that apply to your student's situation.

Put it in writing!

Send an email about it to school officials as soon as you can! Find your child's teacher and school principal contact information here: <https://www.wcs.edu/domain/1233>

It is important to describe and document specifically what happened, how you know, who else you think knows and why, and ask school leadership for support.

- Include if you believe what happened was **racially-motivated or motivated by some part of your child's identity** (disability, gender, ethnicity, language, etc.)
- Ask what actions the school intends to take to **ensure your child is safe** and that this does not happen again. You can also ask for specific actions you want them to take.
- If a school administrator does not get back to you about a concrete action, **be sure to send a follow up request.**
- Ask for a **copy of any documents** referenced or related to the incident, including a report. If desired, ask that all parts of your student's record and the record about the incident (including video footage) be preserved.
- **If your student has an IEP or a 504 plan**, raise it in your communications if relevant or impacted by the harassment or bullying. Also be sure to say whether any solution would impact their plan, and/or if the harassment has impacted their health and ability to participate in school.

