



*Helen Y. Davis Leadership Academy
Charter Public School*

23 Leonard Street Boston, MA 02122
Telephone: (617) 474-7950; Fax (617) 474-7957



Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

The Academy is committed to a workplace free of threats, intimidation, violence, and bullying. Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

I. Reporting

1.1. Reporting Overview

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and must be in writing. All reports should be made or relayed to the Principal or Designee. School staff members are required to transmit any reports directly to the Principal.

Information on reporting procedures will be made available each year to all students, families, and staff via the Employee Handbook and the Community Handbook and Student Code of Conduct. Any student or staff member who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action.

1.2. Reporting by Staff

A staff member will report any bullying incidents immediately to the Principal or Designee in addition to following all other customary disciplinary procedures.

1.3. Reporting by Students, Parents, or Guardians, and Others

The school expects all members of the school community who witness an incident of bullying to report it to the Principal or Designee. Reports may be made anonymously, however, no disciplinary action will be taken against and alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

II. Responding to a Report of Bullying or Cyber-bullying or Retaliation

Before investigating, the Principal or Designee will take steps to ensure safety of targets and witnesses.

Upon determining that an incident of bullying has taken place, the Principal or Designee will notify parents of all involved parties as well as the Executive Director. Notice will be consistent with 603 CMR 49.00.

If the reported incident involves students from another school, the Principal will notify by telephone the Principal or Designee of the other school(s) involved in the incident so that each school may take appropriate action.

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If the Principal has reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Principal will notify the police. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00. If an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in the school, the Principal shall contact the police if he/she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

III. Investigation

The Principal or Designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying or retaliation and in doing so will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved. The Principal or Designee will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. To the extent possible, the Principal or Designee will maintain confidentiality during the process. The Principal or Designee will make a written record of the investigation.

IV. Determinations and Responses to Bullying

The Principal or Designee will make a determination based upon all the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Principal or Designee will take steps to ensure:

1. The target and/or reporter (if different from the target) is made to feel safe and is in no way restricted in participating in school or benefitting from school activities. As part of this process, the Principal or Designee will meet with the target and his/her family in order to assess the target's need and to ensure the successful restoration of the target's safety, including a possible counseling referral; and
2. The aggressor faces stiff disciplinary action and that the aggressor and the family of the aggressor are given access to additional educational resources (including possible counseling referral) and further understand that any repeated instance will meet with increasingly severe consequences.
3. If necessary, the Principal or Designee will schedule a mediation session between the target(s), aggressor(s), and respective parents/guardians will take place.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA). All students will be provided with protection under the law and under this policy regardless of their legal status.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination, the Principal or Designee will contact the target and/or reporter (if different from the target) to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the Principal or Designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

The Principal or their designee shall inform the parent/guardian of the target and the aggressor in incidents of bullying about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination. Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the school may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338- 3700. Hard copies of this information will also be made available by the Principal and/or the Executive Director upon request.

V. Collaboration With Families

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The Academy will post its Core Values on the school website.

Each year, The Academy will include its Bullying Prevention Plan in its Community Handbook and Student Code of Conduct (in the family's languages of preference) on its website.

VI. MGL, Chapter 71, Section 370

In June 2013, the Massachusetts anti-bullying law (MGL chapter 71, section 370) was amended in order to extend protections to students who are bullied by a member of the school staff, who are defined to include but are not limited to an "educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional." Based on these amendments, all districts and schools, including Helen Y. Davis Leadership Academy Charter Public School, have updated their Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plans to reflect these changes.

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